

TRIFERTES SAGANI

OR

IMMORTAL DISSOLVENT

BEING

A Brief but Candid Discourse of the Matter and Manner of Preparing the *Liquor Alkahest* of *Helmont*, the great *Hilech* of *Paracelsus*, the *Sal Circulatum Minus* of *Ludovicus de Comitibus*: or our Fiery Spirit of the Four Elements.

TOGETHER

With its Use in Preparing Magisteries, Arcana's Quintessences, and other secret Medicines of the *Adepts* from the Animal, Vegitable or Mineral Kingdoms.

BY: **Cleidophorus Mystagogus**

2. Maccab. ch.1.v. 19. to the 23: *The Fire of the Altar turned into thick water.*

2. Esdra. ch. 14.v.39. *And behold, he reached me a full Cup, which was full as it were with water, but the Colour was like Fire.*

Produced by RAMS 1982

# AN EPISTLE TO THE READER

*Various have been the Opinions (Courteous Reader) concerning the Basis and Foundation of this general Dissolvent, commonly known by the name of the Liquor Alkahest; some imagining it to be Mercury Prepared; others, that 'tis in Urine, Blood and the like; which has been the reason of so many and difficult labours made use of, and all in vain; for that the Liquor remains at this day as great a secret in the world as ever, and 'tis like so to continue while Chemical Authors deliver the subject in such Tropes and Metaphors, which horrible and inextricable labyrinth the young Tyro's are so entangled in, that it must be by more than an ordinary Providence, that he can be disentangled and set free.*

*On this account it may be properly said, that these Chemical Writers had as good to have been silent; nay, 'twould have been better for then so many would not have engaged in a search, where so little likelihood of obtaining was seen whereby a great deal of Precious Time and Money might have been saved, and that Perplexity of mind which followes vain Chemical Processes might have been Prevented; for this Reason it is but just in Authores in all their discourses, tending to the instruction of others, to direct to that Subject which is the true Object of that discourse; and tho' I must acknowledge that 'tis not fit to be delivered or disclosed so plainly, as that every Hog that may come to the Honey Pot, yet I say that it may be Clothed with such a decent habit, as to prevent it Abstruse enough, yet by this a certain and harmonious Concord to be seen; as for example, the Object of this discourse is the Alkahest. Man and all creatures have it, for there is no being in Nature, that is rightly and genuinely dissolved, but what may properly and truly be said to be done by this Liquor, but particularly in man after a more evident manner in all Chylifications*

whatever, but in this Act Man sucks the Quintessence of all things so dissolved for his own Nutrition and being Transmuted into Human Species, the Recrements are cast off by the common Emunctories, far more grosse and Imperfect, than the Species themselves were in their first Reception, consequently they are of no fit object to ground the discourse of so pure and Immortal a dissolvent on; nor indeed Man himself, tho' we grant that it is plentifully in him, but 'tis that Salt or Life in him which Concentrates all other Salts in his own Essence as a Catholick Fountain for all the Rivulets to be supplied from. So that there is no taking of it from him but by a violent breaking of the Glass and a Transplanting of the Fountain back again to that Inexhaustible Ocean from whence it first received its being. Therefore, man cannot be the Object of any discourse appertaining to demonstrate the Subject of this Dissolvent; for the pure in him, as already said, cannot be obtained without Death, which is abominable even to think on; but if it were obtained, it would not answer the end; for what is sufficient to dissolve in the Vegetable Kingdom is too weak for the Animal; and that which is strong enough in the Animal is too weak for the Minerals. Therefore, seek it in that and from that, which is the Fountain, that supplies all Creatures and beings with it; for had it not a Source, Nature would soon cease, for as she exhausteth by the Acts of Motion and Agitation of Parts in Generation, so is she on the other hand Immediately Supplied, not only in the Great World, but also in every Individual Part where Life is: Receiving the same through the Air, as the true Vehicle, consequently this Catholick Fountain is the Right object to ground this discourse on, as the true Subject of the said dissolving Liquor; this is a standing Truth, 'twas Truth in the beginning, and will remain so to the end of Time. The Reason and Philosophy of it I can by Mechanical Demonstration make clear to a person worthy of such inspection: therefore by all Clouds, dark vails and Metaphors, I genuinely declare that the matter of this dissolvent is one and the same in essence with that matter from whence all the wise Antients obtained the Universal Medicine one being the Work of Art, the other Nature. One gentle, the other violent: so that by the difference of Operation they are brought to different effects.

Now therefore the Subject of this discourse being the Liquor Alkahest, the object must be the Universal spirit; for 'tis from this grand fountain of nature that our chaos doth proceed; therefore thrice happy is he, that knows those magnets that attract and make a species of this general Genus: for be assured that there is something more than elements in all created beings, even an incorruptible and quintessential spirit, which is the very life of elements themselves; which being taken appears in mist, vapor or water, even that out of which the Antients say all things were generated, However, the right knowledge of this matter is sufficiently abtruse, and the operations thereof yet more abtruse, for I with many others know by experience, that the matter may be known and many doe know it, yet are wholly to seek in the matter and modus of operating thereon; and whatever some foppish and conceited ones may think, viz. that if they had the knowledge of the true matter all difficulty is over; this may prove a grand mistake, for I have been intimately acquainted with some, that have had a true knowledge of the matter, and have wrought thereon; yet to the day of their death, have been to seek of the magistry.

These difficulties have been those sharp stones that have hindered my legal progression in twenty years travel towards the mount helicon of art; so that my labor of body has been excessive, and that of the mind much more. I have passed through the drought and scorching heat of the day, and also through the cold and chilling frosts of the night through a multitude of wants and difficulties even often to the hazard of life itself. How easy soever such, as aforesaid, may think it: I have had no other door to come in at, but hard labour and great expense, for coals and glasses have been my interpreters, and shall be so to every true son of art to the end of time. So that for conscience-sake, I'll write the truth as well knowing that there are too many sophisticated and false proceses in the world, which will not bear the touch-stone of experience; but vanishes like a reprobate metal upon the test.

But passing by all this, and much more that might be said of the like nature; I shall now address myself to the desireres of

Wisdom, and let them know, that I have, as in a Glass, showed them the true manner, in which and by which this Dissolvent is to be obtained. I shall now come to speak concerning its Use, and Utility when obtain'd which will abundantly reward the Possessor for all his costs and paines bestowed about it; for as it hath been deliver'd, that the subject of this menstruum is universal, so are the acts of it the same when prepared, which plainly demonstrates from what fountain it might flow.

This liquor, as an universal fire, dissolves and opens the textures of all beings, in the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms, into their nearest matter, which is saline, sulphureous, aqueous and potable, diffusive in any liquor, and so comes immediately to nature's relief, and by the specifick virtue manifested from power into act, diseases tho' never so deplorable, may be overcome and cut down, as grass or weeds with a scythe in the hand of a mower; especially by those of the mineral kingdom, which may be justly esteemed the physician's crown and philosophers diadem. This is the liquor's virtue in general. In particular, as it universally acts without limitation on all subjects in the world, so in this action there is something remarkable to be observed in every subject; for it fixes volatile spirits, and volatilizes fixed ones. It makes salts sulphureous, and sulphurs saline. May it macerates the gummosities of resinous and gummy things, which the ferment of our stomachs could never do; for it being distilled from amber and terpentine (see Urbigerus "Circul. Minus" HWN) leaves them in a salt of excellent virtue: from the latter I have observed it almost as sweet as honey, and a powerful specifick in the stone; therefore by the help of this liquor of fire a few medicines being prepared will answer in deplorable cases all that the patient can hope for and the true physician expected to perform. For instance, terpentine, so dissolved, or the stone ludus. Infallibly cures the stone in the bladder; amber and hellebore hysteric fits, hypochondriack, melancholy and madness. Cinamonm Unicorn's horn and the liver of an eel, for the speedy delivery of women in childbirth; the sulphur of Venus is an Universal Nephthes, without opium in all diseases: the lilly of antimony for dropsies and all agues; the magistery of gold for malignant

*Fevers Pestilential Palsies and plagues: as also the glorified sulphur of the metallus masculus, by Paracelsus called Vinum Vitae and Membrorum Essentia, which also cures consumption, fixt Mercury or the arcanum coralinum and horizontal gold in leprosy, gout, palsy, epilepsy, cancers, wolves, scorbite, Kings evil, all sorts of the venereal disease without salivation or detaining the patient from business; 'twould be too long to enumerate all those medicines prepared by this fire or liquor; therefore let these suffice, and the reward that may accrew here from, because by this way of practice, the physitian may justly and conscientiously gain honor and riches; and the patients be freed from all those cruel barbarities, which are the Adoequate parts of common practice; as if the pain and terror of death were not enough, but there must be an additional cruelty, viz. of blistering, which to some may exceed the former.*

*Thus having given you a short Scheme of the Rise, Preparation and Use of this Liquor, I shall Conclude this Preface in Consideration of a Person rightly qualified for the Possession hereof:*

*the first and most necessary Qualification is to be rightly Informed in Religious things so as to know God for themselves savingly, by passing through the Holy River of Regeneration, for to walk in the newness of the Spirit, which Divine gift of the Holy Ghost enables every true Christian to walk with that Circumspection, as to be acceptable in the sight of God, to such it is a sure Guide and safe Conductor in this World towards the desired Haven of rest. It is also to them a mouth and wisdom, and that by which their Tongues are bridled and the whole Man Sealed to the Day of his Redemption, giving an earnest opinion - the Eternal Inheritance, and afterward's a dull Possession, when our Mortal shall put on Immortality; this being the Fountain, all others that are true, follow as Rivulets from it, and 'so give a right Qualification for the knowledge of nature and natural things as also a constancy of mind to work upon the one thing alone, and an industrious hand to effect the same. Here a blessing and success may be hoped for, and those incredible rewards for all such as wander in the circumference, and have never been admitted to the center of things; but*

*to the vigilant hidden things, even those hid from the  
foundation of the World, shall be reveal'd: and that this may be  
the portion of every true Laborer in Art is the sincere desires  
of him, who wishes the General Prosperity of Mankind every way.*

*Cleidophorus Mystagogus*

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# TRIFERTES SAGANI OR IMMORTAL DISSOLVENT

## CHAPTER I

CONCERNING THE MISTAKE OF THOSE WHO HAVE SOUGHT THIS  
LIQUOR IN WRONG SUBJECTS AND BY WRONG WAYS,

It is a Saying worthy of Observation, that the Industrious Hand makes Rich; so is it in all manner of Trades and Convers in the World; so is it in Art; but this Industry must be upon a tight Foundation, and, in the Chymical Art, from a Fore-knowledge of Adequate Causes; unto which it is impossible to attain without we are enlightened by that Wisdom, which comes from above, as a Ray from the Holy Heavens and Throne of the Divine Glory; for 'tis she, that must Conduct us in all our Labours to make them Acceptable to the Great God; well therefore might the wise Man esteem of her before Riches, and Prize Understanding above the Merchandise of Silver, Gold, and Precious Stones, because she is the true Conductor to the ways of Peace and Pleasantness; nay even to that Tree of Life, where Substance is to be Inherited: For that she opens the Door of Entrance to all Mysteries Divine and Natural; and consequently without her Men grope, as it were, in the dark, even as a Blind Man does at Noon-day; for Nature God's Hand-maid was Created by him, and Job says, that God by his Spirit has garnished the Heavens, his Hand has formed the crooked Serpent; and tho' there is a Spirit in Man, yet 'tis the

Inspiration of the Almighty that gives Understanding, whence we may readily Conceive, that Human Reason is too short to Comprehend the Dignity of any true Mystery without the Md of God's Spirit.

This great Defect is too evidently apparent from the deplorable Case of the Chymical Searchers, concerning the Subject Matter of this Discourse; seeing they know not where to ground or fix their Intensions in the choice of a proper Subject, but frames each to himself a different Basis, and so make an Innumerable Number of Errors concerning the same: This Imaginary Matter, which Phansy only has given Birth to, they defend with all the eagerness imaginable, concluding it to be the Genuine Offspring of Truth; when, alas 'tis but a Bastard Brat of their own wandring Imaginations and ungrounded Thoughts, as in the Conclusion proves too Evident: This is an Absurdity so great, so common, that amongst the many Pretenders, I have never met with more than three that have escaped it: How then can it possibly be expected, that such should ever Arrive at the wished for Haven of Rest, when Ignorant both of the way and means by which they must come thither; for the Door of Entrance must not only be known, but also the Key which opens the same, without which they may never expect Admittance into Nature's Treasury:

Therefore consequently must still remain in the horrible Mist of Errors; the most principal that have come Athwart me I shall here lay down and reckon up for Convincing of the Giddy Headed and Rash Searcher, but more Principally for the Edifying and Building up of a Son of Art.

I shall begin first with an Error, which is almost Universally received, viz • that Mercury Vulgar is the Foundation or Basis of this Liquor; this is an Error that the Authors of some Expositors are guilty of, which the Ignorant Searcher has not been aware of, but hath gone to work as confidently on Mercury for the obtaining of the Liquor 441 kahest, as others have done for the making the Mercury of the Philosophers, by several and various Preparations, as endeavouring to break its Body by Spittle, May Dew , Vinegar, and such like soppish Proceedings; also by Sublimation with Salts, and Distillation, and other such like Operations, endeavouring to make it run pe~ deliq .to obtain an Airy and Universal Nature and radical dissolution, even that they call the Magnetic Salt, or Foliated Earth, and Mercurial Chalybs; but all in vain; for that Mercury so prepared is still all one with

common Mercury: And so likewise is that, prepared by Régulus of Antimony , Silver, and *℞*. for Vulgar Mercury is unripe Fruit fallen too soon from the Tree, therefore it must return to its First Fountain or Catholick Mercury to be dissolved its self; consequently is not the Subject of this Liquor; for the Philosophers Introduce Fire, not Water, into Mercury, to make her Medicinal, both in the Particular, and also in the General; by which 'tis brought to be for ever Irreducible to Mercury.

Another Error is in those, who seek for this Dissolvent in Dew and Rain Water, not considering, that this was designed only as Nourishment for the Vegetable, having but such a Portion of the Universal Fire in it, as might serve to dissolve the Salt Nitre of the Earth, and then the Vegetable Seed in order to a new Production; this Fire or dissolver being far remiss to that of Animals, as that of Animals is to Minerals, cannot be the Philosophers Subject of this Dissolvent, for Life would be too short to extract it.

Another Error is that many allow the Matter to be Universal, but is drawn by certain Magical Magnets at select times in the Year; but this is a grand Error, for the Matter is to be found Plentifully at all Seasons of the Year, especially in such places, as are mostly enriched by Mineral Fumes, and the manner of its Attraction is rather for the Necessity of Human Life, than any Point in Art; so that the Artist must not be too curious in endeavouring to perform that which Nature hath already done to his Hand.

Another Error is in those that seek for this Dissolvent by attracting the Air with Alkalized Salts, as Tartar, and *℞*. not considering, that all Alkazated Salts do only attract a Saline Aquosity, which by often Cohobations may be turned wholly into an Elementary Water, whereas the true Philosopher (as already said) does by his Magnets attract a Fire, nay a Fiery Spirit stronger than any Fire in the World: 'tis true Alkalized Salts are noble Subjects, and deservedly claim Preheminency, being Contradistinct to all Acids, and therefore make a Dissolvent next to the great Liquor; but these can never be Volatized without the Universal Medium, or Philosophers Diploma, together with Essential Oyls and Vinous Spirits, and being so Volatilized, they become noble Spirits, yet do notwithstanding spend their Virtue in Dissolving Bodies, and Coagulate upon them into a Salt, retaining their Volatility; so that consequently these are excluded from being the Subject of this Immortal Dissolvent.

Another Error is in seeking for the Matter of this Liquor in the Animal Kingdom, viz, in Man; and indeed a greater in those, who assume to teach others, by their Assertions, that it is there; but having already detected such Writers (in the Preface) and also clearly shewn, that from Man, the Subject Matter of this Liquor can never be attained, altho' I know that this my Assertion does much thwart the general received Opinion, that Urine is the Basis, and-that Van Helmont, Philalethes, Starkey and C. have in their Writings asserted the same, so that I do Contradict the Testimony of these Worthies: Instance Helmont, where he speaks of the dissolution of the Stone Ludus, seems to Assert that it is performed by a Second drawn. from Urine: and Philalethes, in his Treatise extant, has grounded the basis of the Immortal Dissolvent on Urine and Blood; and George Starkey in his Treatise of this Liquor seems to ground the thereof on Urine; nay, an Intimate Acquaintance of his did affirm the very Process to me, which he made use of, viz • the Urine of sound Men, unfermented, which, as soon as it was made, was by Evaporation brought to a Consistence, in order to unite the two Salts, Volatile and Fixed, and so by Distillation and Cohobation till the whole was brought over, and then being digested and de-ulegmed the Alkahest is prepared. Dr. Bacon was, as I have been told, much of this Opinion; but all these are short of Understanding the Truth of the Subject, or of the Authors before mentioned; for it is easy to be collected from Helmont, Philalethes and C. that they never depended upon Human Urine as the Subject of this Immortal Dissolventlor then they would not have directed you to the Chaos of the Ancients; as the true Subject, describing it Figuratively, and Analogizing it with Man; because Man Subsists by and from the Universal Spirit, which is the true Subject of this Dissolvent which they for some secret Reasons would not be so Candid to deliver: the like has Alipili in his Book Intituled, Centrum Naturas Concentratum, which very Title shews, that it is not Man there meant, but the Universal Spirit that being the very Life and Centre of all Centers: Therefore who ever shall assert, that Man is the Basis from whence this Liquor is obtained, let him be respected of Envy or Ignorance; because there is no Subject to be drawn from Man, that will act on Minerals five hundred or a thousand Times, and retain the same Virtue, quantity and quality, as if it had not acted at all:

Therefore I regard not such Fops or such others, that dote upon highly rectified Spirit of Urine, mixed with the true Spirit of Wine, until both Coagulate into a Salt, which is Distilled and Sublimed by the Addition of fresh Spirit of Wine, until they come over in Form of a Fiery Liquor: There are others also that dote on the strong Spirit of Urine united with the Spirit of Vinegar, and Distilled into a Neutral Spirit: but Experience the Mistress of all true Art shews that these are all greatly mistaken, and many others, too long here to Enumerate: Therefore shall pass them by, and only Insist on some few others that remain.

Those are also mistaken, that depend on Acid Spirits, as the Subject of this Liquor, as Nitre, Vitriol, common Salt, Salt Gen, or the Mother Liquors of any of these, or any other Salts growing in or extracted from the Earth; for all of them, none excepted, will by Distillation yield an Acid Spirit, and our Liquor being no Acid, but Contradistinct thereunto, these of Course are all to be rejected, and ought so to be in the Use of the Liquor when prepared: others, that think themselves more prudent dote much on the Spirit of Verdigrease, and more especially if it is First often dissolved in Spirit of Vinegar, and made transparently Pure, and then shot in Spirit of Wine and so Distilled, they then put as great a Price or Value on it, as in Reason can be set upon the Immortal Disaolventits self; but this Men --truurn being Published by Zwelfer, and long before by Hqsil Valentine, whom I take to be the right and true Author of it, and being easy to be prepared, it follows, that the Liquor A l ka he st would be no uncommon or unknown Secret; but that remaining still as the greatest of Secrets, plainly demonstrates, that these are not the Subject, whence that is obtained.

They are also misled, who depend on Mineral Sulphers, or the Vitriols of Metals or that of Venus, described by Pçlemç~nus; because there's none of these, but what are sluggish in themselves, and unactive Beings, and can't be radically opened and separated from their Mercury's, without the Liquors help, and then they become Passive Medicines not an Active Menstruum , so of Course are to be excluded from being the Subject Matter of this .

Another great Mistake and grand Error is in those, that depend upon the Esstneial Oyls, as Wormwood, Mint, Time; or the Oyls of Gums, as Amber,

Benjamin, Turpentine, and these being Chaos'd down and devoured by Corrosives, as Oyl of Vitriol, Aquafortis, and being again revived, then be coming (as they say) the Regenerated Spirit of Wine of the Philosophers; which being Distilled from Tartar, Sal Armoniac and Mercury, each distinctly, till their Bodies are brought over, they are then the Magi's three Universal Menstruums, viz. Minimurn, Minus and Majus: But this mistake has proved too evidently false, to the great Expencc and Disappointment of many worthy Persons in this Kingdom, and indeed no better can be expected from such Heterogeneous and unnatural Mixtures, as being farther Alienated from the Universal Spirit, than some others already Named, and consequently the more remote from being the Subject of this Liquor.

To be short, I do on an Experimental Ground Exclude Animals, Vegetables and Minerals in all and every particular Classic and part thereof from being the Subject of this Liquor; therefore shall omit any farther Discourse of this kind and come nearer to the Matter in Hand, which is to detect the Errors of those, who confound this Liquor with the Mercury of Philosophers, saying they are the same in -the Subject Matter, Identity and Operation; 'tis true, the Mercury of the Philosophers is a natural Dissolvent, but it dissolves in the way of Generation, when as this Circulated Salt or Alkahest dissolves it by way of separation and destruction; so that they differ in Operation, as much as Love and Wrath; the one in Love preserved, the other in Wrath destroys the Life and Motion.

There are also other Ignorant Boasters, who confound them together, yet know neither the one nor the other, yet say, they are both the same in Composition and Digestion, but near the Birth of the Royal Babe, the Matter divides its self into two distinct Parts, the one a Body Permanent, the other a Menstruous Liquor or Blood, which being Distilled is the Alkahest, this shews their great Ignorance, for the same that is a Body is a Spirit, and the Blood is Homogeneous with both the Mercury of the Philosophers and Liquor Alkahest; for -the Mercury can never be prepared without its Aid, as being one of the three Springs; neither can the Spirit of the Body Subsist without the Blood, as every true Philosopher does, with me, know, and that at this State there is no division to be admitted, without a Death to the whole Compound; for the whole Matter in the Production of each being diversly

wrought on produces the different Effect; the one is a Mercury Homogeneous, the other a Ponderous Saline Liquor and in the Production of both there are superfluous Oyls seperated, which tho' Medicinal, are not in the least Homogeneous to either; which clearly Evinces their Ignorance in the Process of Nature, which is to make Bodies Spirits, and Spirits Bodies again, and that this Menstruous Liquor or Blood is the Life which is sown in his own Womb of Mercury for the Exaltation of both; for there the Heterogeneous Faeces are cast off, and so 'tis qualified and united with the Spirit in order to Redeem the Body; and so is a principal Ingredient of the Stone, when as the Alkahest is not: It would be too long to enumerate the vain and false Conceptions of Men concerning this Immortal Liquor, and seeing these distinctions do better become -that Chapter, where the difference is shews between the Liquor Alkahest and Mercury of Philosophers, I shall omit speaking of it any farther in this, and come to shew the Subject of the Dissolvent in the next Chapter, and so Conclude this.

## CHAPTER II

### OF THE TRUE SUBJECT MATTER OF THIS DISSOLVENT

In the former Chapter, I have laid down the Mistakes concerning the Matter of this Immortal Dissolvent, which Helmont Describes in the Word Latex, which properly Imports an hidden Source or Fountain, so hidden indeed, that he himself says, when this was found Religion stood amazed, and well may the Religious Man be so indeed, when their Descriptions are so Occult; for from the Word Latex, which in Vulgar Reception signified Liquors, which may be properly conceived to be Aqueous and Spiritual, he presently comes to tell you, that the Master-piece at which Art is Levelled, is to find out a Body; which may play with us in such a Symphony or consenting Harmony, by Reason of its exquisit Purity, that no Corruptive Principle can find in it any Heterogenities by which to work in it a Dissipation of Parts; here he immediately calls it a Body; hence we must for certain Conclude that this Source or Fountain, tho' liquid, does contain a Body in it, or else it would have been vain in him to have directed us to such a Body for the Object, and that so Circumspectly and diligently, as to find it by hard Labour and Indus -try, saying you must be careful, or sedulously Industrious about finding out such a Body, which by Examen and Proof is very difficult to be found, because the Words import, that there is no such Body in all Natural Beings, that does Answer what this great Philosopher describes of his, therefore we must Conclude, that these Words also import Art; for that Industry is also recommended, which is as much as if he had said you must seek for the hidden Source or Fountain of Nature, and Universal Spirit, which Art must form into a Body; but this Son of Wisdom doubtless was afraid to speak after this plain blunt manner, as a Tyro does, for fear of exposing the Secret too plain; but 'tis clear, that this was the meaning, because nothing is so hidden in Nature as the Source of this Universal Fountain, and nothing in Nature has Power to reduce Bodies by Symphony or consenting



Harmony but what does arise here from; for in these latter Words he also describes the Nature and Quality of the Matter to have two Faces; for that without there had been a Composition, the word Harmony needed not to have been used; so that in these Words abundance of Matter is couched in little room, every word being a full Sentence; how lightly or slightly soever the Reader may pass them over: 'Tis true Starkey does very Learnedly strike the Mark in his Exposition upon them, yet his Comment is so wisely Regulated as to be kept as obscure, as the Text it self; by this means and method I find, that the Basis of this Liquor was by this Philosopher designed to remain a Secret to the end of time: Therefore or the Benefit of the true desires of Art, I shall deliver the Subject Matter of this Immortal Liquor with much clearness and Candidness, yet hope, that my Stile and Words will be such, as to cloath it by such a Medium, as that it may give Light to the chosen Sons of Wisdom, yet at the same time cast a Mist before the Eyes of the Unworthy:

This Method being agreeable to divine Wisdom its self; for we find, that what was a Light to the Hosts to the Children of Israel, was a Cloud of Darkness of that of the Egyptians.

These Things being Stated, I shall now come to the Consideration and Ulustration of that Subject Matter they Point forth, v i z, the hidden Fountain must be of a double Nature, or what if I should say it must be a Body of Salt appearing under two Faces, which being united makes Symphony or Consenting Harmony; the Reason of which is shews; for then it is a Liquor of that excellent Purity, as to admit of no division of Parts; therefore as I said before, Labour couched in Helmont's Words: The Business of Nature in affording such an universal Fountain to the Artist, that is the Basis of the said Immortal Liquor; and the Business of Art is to know how to make it Corporal, and when so Corporified to contain two Faces, which Faces Philalethes figures forth by Urine and Blood; the first Face is a Body, yet nevertheless may be distilled into a Spirit, nay so Homogeneous as not to leave one Grain of fixedness or Salt behind it, which he describes to Distil over in Veins like Spirit of Wine, and speaking very great of its Active Qualities in dissolving Bodies; the Query is put, whether it is not the Alkahest, the Answer is in the Negative, saying, it could not Subsist without Blood, and then presently comes to the Affirmative concerning the Subject-Matters of the Alkahest,

and says, it is Contained in Blood and Urine; these things may grabble and amuse the Thoughts of the Unwary concerning the Reallity and Possibility of these Assertions, yet nevertheless they are as clear and Perspicuous to the Eye of the Wise, as the Sun in his Lustre upon the Meridien; for the Universal Spirit being Concreted becomes a Mist, Vapor or Chaos, or rather an Unctious and Viscous Water, which is the true Matter of all the AncientPhilosophers, concerning which Chaças1 have written largely in Mercury 's Caduce and have there shewn, that in its Womb is contained the first Essence of all Forms, yet unspecified, and so consequently it contains these two of Urine and Blood which indeed are the Urine and Blood of the great World, and not of Man; but more noble; which my Eyes have seen and my hands have handled made Corporal; therefore I would not have you spend your time in vain, gazing on Husks or the outside Shell of things but Press for the Kernel, or that excellent Sweetness which is placed in the Centre of Beings, which can't be extracted but by profound Meditation, and hard Labours, which must be -thy Interpreters; for 'tis not requisit, that Matters should be discovered more plainly, it is but just and fitting that God should be the sole Dispenser of it, till the fulness of time, when according to the Promise, hidden things shall be made manifest even such as have layn hidden from the Foundation of the World: Therefore, O Son of Art! thou must pray to God, but use the means, and put thy Hand to the Plow, not looking back; then these Instructions will be as Fundamental Rules to begin thy Labours by to obtain this Noble Secret, which is not so much a Product of Nature but of Art: For I have in these Sheets endeavoured to clear up the Matter, so as to qualify thee with Theory, thence to Judge of Sophistical Authors, and the better to enable thee to withdraw thy Mind from their Entanglement, that thou mightst build upon that sure Rock, which will remain in the Storm of Tryals; this I have done in Bowels of Love as well knowing the great Grief and Torture of Mind undergone in my unwearied Search after this Secret, even when the true Subject Matter was known; which said Matter is also the Matter of the Grand Secret of the Antients; but diversified into different Natures by the different Operations, and so far distinct the one from the other, that an Artist may be Master of the one, and not of the other, and therefore he that is a Compleat Master of both, is properly s-tiled Adeptus Duplicatus.

To the Truth of this my Affirmation, I have not only Experience, but also the Concurring Testimony of that renowned Philosopher Ludovicus de Comite who says that the Matter of the Liquor Alkahest and Philosophers Mercury do both proceed from the same Chaos, but by different Operations are brought to different Effects; therefore before thou proceed to the Preparation of this Liquor, thou must learn to understand this general Matter, Mass or rude Chaos, which is the Source or Fountain of so many Mysteries; for this Liquor does not only proceed from it, but also 'tis the Wellspring of the Mineral Life, and while this World hath a being, will be an Inexhaustible Fountain to all those Mysteries, so hiddenly delivered by the Ancients; for once again I say, that not only the Stone, the great Elixir, but also this hidden Fire does proceed therefrom: But here you must Understand the first Chaos, before the Philosophical Mercury is produced therefrom.

Therefore a Body and not Bodies must be sought for, which being found is the Centre of the Universal Influences Concentrated and the Blood of the said Body to be one in Essence with the Body, though it appears to Sight in a twofold diversity, yet distinct in Wuality or Complection, but agrees so Fundamentally, which being United by the Hand of an Artist will make the Symphony or Consenting Harmony before spoken of; for in this Case it may be said of it, as in another place is spoken of-the Mercury of Philosophers, that which is above is as that which is beneath, and so Vice Versa; for that the Essence and Life of the Blood can't be obtained without the Fermentative Spirit of the Earth, or Saturn's Urine; neither can this Spirit of the Earth be Homogeneous and Immortal, without it extracts the Life of the Blood:

George Starkey a Disciple of Nature does in his Treatise of the said Liquor in a Parabolical way deliver himself concerning these two Faces, thus, that most Acute, Subtil and Penetrating Spirit of Mans Urine by the help of another Medium, not of divers Ferment to its self, but Centrally one with it, must be United with an Acid, not Corrosive, sed Naturae suae Gratissimum this Acid must be equally Volatile with the Salt of Urine before it can be Married or United Intimately with it; then by often Circulations it attains that height of Purity to be Entitled Ens Salium Summum alium et Felicissimum, Now that which is Centrally one with this Philosophical Urine is Blood; for the Blood is the Universal Form, as the Body is the Universal Matter, but

these being United by Force is called a Violent way; for 'tis a different thing to sow Gold in his own Matrix of Universal Mercury, and so ferment it and bring it into Spirit; for then it becomes unfit for the work of Multiplication, the Seminal Virtue being then totally Destroyed and Annthilated, which is the very Matter and Case of the Difference of the Mercury of Philosophers and Alkahest.

I have shewn you not only the Matter, but also the Manner and Apparition of the Matter in the Hand of the Artist; I shall now come to shew you the Nature and Internal Property of the same, when the Knowledge thereof is obtained: I say 'tis wholly of a Salinie Nature, which is a middle property held up in the Arms of Nature, and is contradistinct to either Acid or Alkaly so that neither of those, as already shewn in the former, have any right to be the Matter or Foundation of this Dissolvent, but this Saline Quality is the Central one, so that consequently this pure Spirit hath some Garment or a Shell, by which it is Covered and in which it is hatched and brought to Maturation; and to speak plain, Candidly and Honestly 'tis a Combust Sulphur, so wholly Combust, that the Spirit being drawn from the Earth the Faeces will burn without the least Smoak, which shews that there is neither any Mercurial or Saline part remaining; this is a Reduction of the Pure from the Impure, or a Clean from an Unclean, by the Serpents devouring himself, and then renovating into that, over which Death has no Power: Observe, he first begins by biting his own Tail, and so by Degrees devours himself, and last of all his Head, which shews that the Earth or Tail is first to be Dissolved, which then Dissolves -the Head or Blood; and that these are the two Principles spoken of by Philalathes is very plain; for in Pag. 25. of his Secrets Revealed, he calls it the first Ens of Salts, saying the true Philosophers rejected all Salts, one Salt only excepted, which is the first Ens of all Salts, which dissolves all Metals, and by the same Work Coagulates Mercury; but this is not done but by a Violent way and therefore that kind of Agent is again separated both entirely in its weight and Vertue from the thing it is put to:

And in his Exposition upon Ripley's Epistle, speaking of the Separation of the Sulphur from the Mercury of Bodies, he says, 'tis performed by the help of a Liquor drawn from the first Ens of Salts; and Helmont and Starkey say as much calling it Ens Salium, Summum Salium Felicissimum which is

the very same, that I do here assert of it: What shall I say, must I in every word Transgress the Silence of Pythagoras ; No: Be thankful for this, for it had never come to thy Hand, had I not made a Solemn Resolution in the time of my hard Labours, Sweats and Agony of Body and Spirit, that if ever the Almighty Being should bless me with the Knowledge of this Liquor, I would then deliver it so Candid, as that my Writings should be a sure Landmark to the undaunted Coaster in his Intended Voyage to the Haven of Rest; which promise I have here fully Accomplished in shewing the Universal Source or Fountain, from whence this Liquor and the great Elixer doe arise, is one, so that more needs not to be said as to this Point, therefore shall Conclude this Chapter.

## CHAPTER III

### THE TRUE WAY AND MANNER OF PREPARING THE LIQUOR ALKAHEST

The Mistakes and also the true Matter being shewn, I shall now come to shew the true manner of the Preparation of this great Dissolvent which is very difficult; for as Philalethes in his Exposition on Rip leys Gates, Pag. 279. says. the Liquor Alkahest is 100 times more difficult to Prepare than the great Elixir; and that upon good Ground has this worthy Author thus delivered it; for the Elixir is a work of Nature, and the Mercurial Power doth Purge off the Dregs Naturally, and it is called Elixir, so long as it is Water, for as Count Trevisan says, Azoth is drawn out of the Elixir, as Oyl out of Water; therefore as the Elixir is Natural, the Liquor Alkahest is Artificial, and as Ludovicus de Comit, says, very difficult to be searched into; for it may be variously thought of, being Artificial; for the Subject as it tends to Generation and Corruption in order to a more Excellent Birth, is then vile and mutable, Proteus like puts on all Shapes; and what we search for must be pure and clear, and above all things Immutable; so that here is Chymical Faith required to believe before-hand and after sight will Astonish Reason to Contemplate it, crying out with an Holy Admiration, O Lord! how wonderfull art thou in all thy Works.

Ready! If you would Consider the work of Creation 'twas the very same; for out of the rude Mass or Chaos was not only Produced the most despicable Object we behold, but also the most Glorious Creature that ever was Created, not only Paradise, but also the Transcendent Glorious Angels, so that from this the difficulties do arise, how to proceed by Art in separation of this Chaos, as also the due way and manner of Joyning due Agents and Patients by the separating of things adjoyned, for 'tis not sufficient to understand the Aqua Vitae of the Wise, but you must also know, how to preserve it from its Compeer or Water; for being separated from the strict Tye it had in the

Elements, it would rather pass over than come again to  
Coagulation: Again, 'tis easy to be destroyed, if you take it  
unripe, by the violent Fire of Separation:

These Difficulties did so Amuse and Puzzle me as to keep me  
back from the Possession of the said Liquor many Years, which  
Knowledge I then vained abundantly more than the Possession of  
great Treasures; but however blessed be God I have great Reason  
to say, that one Secret seldom discovers it self alone, for the  
Knowledge of one is a large step of Entrance into the other; for  
that in this Subject both of them lye, invisibly hidden, as it  
were, under the strong folds of a Mine r a l Ens ,which the  
Industrious hand must labour to make Manifest; which being  
Effectuated, his time will be little enough, to Comtemplate and  
Admire at the sight of the Operation its wonderful Effects.

Observe, in the Manifestation 'tis reduced to the smallest  
Attoms immaginable, through which it arises to the Eminent  
Dignity spoken of; for as Helmont and Starkey have it, Ad  
minimos reductus Atomos in Natura possibles, and c. dignius de  
Corpus non reperiens cui Nuberet; This Latex, which is Vile and  
Contemptible, is advanced to the transcendent height of Purity  
and Perfection, which Words, says the Latter, are soon said, but  
not so soon understood, and hardest of all to be done; which is  
the Reason of the many difficulties mentioned in this Chapter,  
concerning its Preparation.

'Tis true, this Operation is in few Words taught by Parace-  
lsus, where he says in his Treatise, De viribus Membrorum Cap.  
de Hepate, the Process of the Alkahest is (Ut a Coagulatione sua  
resolvatur, ac deinde Coaguletur in Formam transmutatum, sicut  
Processus Coagulandi et Resolvendi docet,) Which short Process  
is the greatest Light that acute Philosopher gives concerning  
this Mistery; no marvel then if the Doctrine of its Preparation  
remains so obscure in the World; for Starkey allows, that Hel-  
mont's Doctrine is equally as obscure, as that of Paracelsus,  
and I say that Starkey's is as obscure as either of them, and  
indeed that of Ludovicus de Comit. not much clearer; for that of  
Solution and Intervening Coagulation is the greatest Light, that  
any of the Philosophers have given concerning the Preparation of  
this Liquor; for there is this Reason of such an

Obscuration, the Process by them given is General, and common and alike to most or all Chimycal Maisteries; but more especially to the two Grand Arcana's, viz the Liquor Alkahest and the Philosophers Elixer.

But the manner of Solution and Coagulation is quite different, the one is Natural, as already said, the other Artificial, and therefore very difficult, because it is not easily searched out, and that it may be variously conceived of; but that which has been hitherto known and demonstrated by all true Artists is Solution and Coagulation; we shall a little consider the difference and manner of this Solution in both these Magisteries.

The Dissolution requisit in order to obtain the Alkahest is a dissolving of the Body into a Spirit that will never Coagulate into a Body again, but the Dissolution in order obtain the Mercury of Philosophers is a Dissolution, wherein the Essence of the Body is so Congealed, as to become a Ferment to the Mercury, to Congeal upon the Body again; for as the Worthy Trevisan says concerning the Preparation of the Mercury of Philosophers, the same Matter must abide that the same Form may follow, and that nothing is to be added to it, nor taken from it, but a Superfluous Flegm and red Earth; for when Bodies are to be Renovated it must be done by things in kind; therefore Trevisan makes it a great Error to alter Mercury from its Metallic Species; we may ground, that the Great Work is performed by a dissolution of the Body and Congelation of the Spirit, but the work of the Circulated Salt is a Solution into Secondary Principles, but not into Elements; for nothing of Profit can be expected from thence, yet this Solution ought not to be into every distinct Principle, but into one Saline Liquor, Homogeneous and Immortal. Here this Body of two Faces, or that of old Saturn's Urine and the Blood of the Great World are reduced to one, and that you may know it when so reduced, it is a Fire, yet in form of Water; 'tis an Air, yet Condensed; 'tis no Corrosive, yet the most sharp and perpetual Corrosive; 'tis not Medicinal yet the Crown of all true Medicine, being a Cleanser and Purifier in Nature, a Destroyer and Conqueror of Bodies; 'tis called the Fire of Hell, because the Spirit that comes from the Centre is United to the Blood without the Intermediation of the Heavenly Rays of Mercury, yet Acts with that Purity, as that it finds no Body more noble than its self to joyn withal, therefore is not Commiscible with any Ferment, and so not capable of Transmutation.



These Things being considered I shall now come to give you a short Scheme of what Helmont says concerning this Liquor, the first is what the Artist desires, and is Comprehended in these Words, Art is Solicitous in finding out a Body, which may play with us in such a Symphony or consenting Harmony by reason of its exquisit Purity, that no Corruptive Principle can find in it any Heterogenities, by which to work in it a Dissipation of Parts:

This is the Sum of what the Artist would attain, and is the Chief of all which can be by Art sought for. The Second is, what Art by Industry doth find, Comprehended in these Words, Religion then stood amazed, the Latex being found, which being reduced to the smallest Atoms possible in Nature despises the Wedlock of every Ferment, in vain therefore is its Transmutation sought for, not finding a Body more worthy than its self whereunto it may be joined. The Third discovers the Anomaly of this Production, in these Words; But the Art or Labour of Philosophy hath brought forth an Anomalous Product in Nature, which took its being without Mixture of any Ferment, divers or Heterogeneous to its self and the fourth contains a short Adumbration of the Process, the Serpent bit himself, revived from the Poyson into a pure Essence, over which Death hath no Power. All which to a Son of Wisdom I have with much Candidness already explained; but for the benefit of Tyro's I shall now come to give a farther illustration by way of Mecanic Demonstration.

If Art will from the Latex obtain a Body, it must be begun with Coagulation, and with such Magnetical Earth, as Attracts the Celestial Raies and Universal Spirit, and Concentrates them in the Centre, for that in the Centre the pure Parts of the Starry Fire is digested, and in the Centre all the Influences meet, and from the Centre does the living Ferch proceed; for 'tis the Central Archæus that Sublimes the Mineral Vapour or those pure Spirits that are of a dissolving Nature; this is the Body which Art is Industrious about and desirous to know, even the Body of the Universal Salt and Sulphur of the great World; for in the Mecanical Demonstration from thence proceeds such a Spirit which in all Nature has not its Compeer; but before 'tis brought to that Harmony, as to admit of no Dissipation of parts, it must have time to maturate, and to form to its self some pure Garments or a Compleat Coagulation, which is done by Successive Animations, so as to bring the Spirit of the Earth to permanency before it is taken out of its Nest, and that is done by successive Retrogradations,

or repeated Coagulations to bring this Transverse Work of the Earth the nearer to its purity, for then only it is, that it admits no dissipation of Parts.

The Body being found and thus purified, and its Spirit produced from the small Invisible Putrified Atoms of the same doth cause a Religious Astonishment; that from so dry a Body as the Earth should proceed the Central Latex or the most hidden Rivulet of the great Ocean its self, nothing in the World being so pure it despises to Contract Wedlock with every specified Form whatsoever, and so its Transmutation is impossible, and indeed the oftner this Universal Spirit passes through the Entrails of the Elements, the greater is its Purity and the fitter for Action; for on the other hand Matter could not Subsist, but by the continual additional Rays of its Universality; therefore, Reader, Retain thy Amusement for a time, and thou shalt hear the Philosophical Trumpet calling thee to behold a wonderful rarity, even the Indian Brachman's Famous Water Works, Contradistinct to all others, as it is a well compacted Body of Fire burning in Water, and in full Lustre and not extinguished; for in the Decoction the Blood and Urine is Centrally one, but in the Coagulation they appear under two Faces; Philalethes says as much, speaking of the next Matter of the Alkahest, says 'tis a Salt and the Fire surrounds the Salt, and the Water swallows up the Fire, and yet overcomes it not, and so is made the Philosophers Fire, of which they speak, the Vulgar burn with Fire, and we with Water: it being so transcendently pure then scorns to be joyned with any Compeer, so admits of no Wedlock.

Herein Consists the Excellency of this Liquor that Art and Labour conspire together to produce this Ens or being without any mixture of any ferment Diverse or Heterogeneous to its self; for indeed its Composition is wholly from Universal Principles, or Virgin Elements, and Invisible ones too, for the Earth and the Water of this Fountain is as Invisible to the Eye of the Vulgar as the Fire and Air, but being made Manifest to the Artist do Conspire together to bring forth one Anomalous Birth; therefore be assured, from these Words this Great Philosopher would point forth, that this Liquor is not Compounded of two things of different Natures, for then it would be Subject to Death, but of one thing alone even the most Universal Salt of

Nature, which is divided into two, and returns to one again, so consequently is one in Nature and Essence.

But now the Adumbration of the Process doth also shew the Universality and Uncompoundedness of this Ens, it is represented by a Serpent biting himself and reviving from the Poyson into a pure Essence, over which Death has no Power; observe the Antient Egyptians always by a Serpent understood this Universal Spirit; because of the Subtilty of its Parts, and that Creature of all others is the most Subtil, and therefore well may it figure forth by the holding its Tail in its Mouth Natures Circulation from one Universal Element to another, till all the Elementary Qualities are unbanded, and the pure Essence of all extracted, which moves upon an Immortal Hinge and therefore will admit of no Dissipation of Parts or Evaporation of Moisture; for as it is Homogene, 'tis of an equal Volatility, and being the Celestial Fire made Terrestrial by its own Power can't be destroyed by any specificated Body whatever, therefore well might Helmont say, as there is but one Fire in the World, so there is but one Liquor, none other partaking in Quality with it, as the Adepti do know and can testifie: Which Liquor is that which will, Sampson like, make sport for the Artist, and do more than ever the Lords of the Philistines could have expected from him, plucking down and destroying as he did not Houses, but the most Compact and Solid Bodies of Minerals, and like a Valiant Conqueror maintains his Ground against all -opposing Enemies: but few are the Kings, Lords or Nobles, that have been so happy to see the Battle fought by this Anomalous Combatant, not only for the Reasons afore rendered, but also for the tediousness of the Preparation, which we shall now come to speak of and so Conclude this Chapter.

As to the time of preparing this Liquor 'tis long and tedious, which Helmont also Complains of, but Starkey explains this to be more upon the Account of the Stink in the first Preparation, than of the tediousness or length of time; for he Limits it to a few certain Days, which I know is impossible to be Effected, unless he begins to Calculate from the time that the Body is ripe and fit to be broke by Violence, and to be distilled over into a Spirit, then to Unite the Blood or other Face may be accomplished in his time: But for my part I do comprehend from Helmont what Experience shews, viz that the time is long and tedious, and attended with many difficulties, which Helmont also

knew, or else he would not a Complained so much for the loss of his Bottle; Crying out, O that I had removed my Receiver; from whence we may readily Conceive, that he suffered Loss: Ludovicus de Comitibus puts the Question beyond doubt concerning the tediousness of the time where speaks of the Reduction and Retrogradation saying, it can't be performed by common Labour; but requires both Art and Time, which, he says, is long and therefore whoever thinks to obtain it by Violence and in a short time shall find himself much deceived, for he can never bring it to any final Complement, and consequently will never be able to know what Vertue 'tis Impowered withal, even that Fiery and Vital one; for that it is destroyed by force by his Compeer, which Helmont and Starkey do allow, but tell not what that Compeer is; but that excellent Son of Art Ludovicus aforesaid, says tis Water, therefore I'll attribute to him the Praise, his Writings giving me the first Light of discovery, what this Compeer was.

O Reader, thou must of necessity allow that it is a time of Tediousness as well as difficulty to Concentrate the Benignant Spirit of the World, to make such a strong Sulphureous and Saline Liquor of it, as will dissolve the hardest Metals, even those, that oppose Common Fire, are by this Liquor radically opened, it being as we may call it, the very Essence of the Elements Heavenly and Earthly; and what Typifies the Fire of the last Judgment, which is permanent over the Elements in a Quintessential Nature, so that the Degrees of its purity are not to be wondered at; the Artist hath great Cause to Bless and Praise the Lord his God, who hath made him an Instrument to produce a clean thing out of an unclean, which that Good Man Job so much Questioned saying, who can bring a Clean thing out of an Unclean, surely none but God alone; so that we see the best of Men speak but according to that knowledge, which the Almighty thinks fit to reveal unto them; for he disposes of Knowledge as of Rivers, communicating it for the use of all: Therefore Paul's Advice was Sound and Candid, Judge not ignorantly of things thou understandest not: For indeed if we look upon the thing aright 'tis properly the Work of God; for as Trevisan says concerning the Exaltation of the Work in the great Elixir, 'tis done Christi Gratia, Importing that Man can't alter the ordained Course of Nature, but as an Instrument in the Hand of God stands still to see a mighty deliverance;

but we are speaking of that where Art must lend her help, because Nature is altered from her usual Course, and a Clean thing is also required; but this is a Talent not Committed to every one's Trust.

Now this clean thing can never be Produced but by a Radical Union of the foresaid Principles, not only by a bare Association or Apposition of Parts, so that the same may be said of this, as is of that Union of Sulphur and Mercury in the Great Work, viz, they can never more be separated, neither in Love nor Woe, this Radical Union is as Principally required in this Liquor, as it is in Azoth, which is a Volatile Tender Spirit for Whitening Eaton: Now this being separated from many Heterogenities hath no Eminent smell, but is a Ponderous, subtil Liquor, which will not stifle over but in a considerable Degree of Heat in Sand, viz, the third Degree, and admits of its Flegm to be distilled off first, as other Ponderous Spirits do:

Philalethes speaking of the Substance and Preparation of this Liquor delivers himself thus; 'Tis a Noble Circulated Salt prepared with wonderful Art, till it answers the desires of an Ingenious Artist; yet 'tis not any Corporeal Salt made liquid by a bare Solution, but is a Saline Spirit, which Heat cannot Coagulate by evaporation of the Moisture, but is of a Spiritual Uniform Substance, Volatile; which in a gentle Heat will Distil over, leaving nothing behind; that is to be understood in a Requisite Heat of Sand; so is there an Exaltation made far above what Nature was ever able to perform.

Thus I have delivered the difficulties and also touched at the Fire and given you the right way of its Preparation from Point to Point, I have declared the Truth without Defect or Ambiguity of Words; and have as formerly mentioned, shewes you that no strange Ferments are used, the Principles being Centrally contained in the Original Chaos, which being separated and brought again to an Indissoluble Union, is, the Serpents devouring his own Tail and so renovating into that, upon which Death can have no Power: but this cannot be performed, but by the help of Fires of divers sorts, Convenient Vessels, fit Furnaces and Glasses, and a considerable time to boot, without all which it will be impossible for the Artist to obtain his desired end, being as I have delivered, much easier to know the Matter, than to find out the true manner of its Preparation, which is chiefly and principally to be sought for at the Hand of the Almighty; these are Secrets which belong

to the Divine Treasury, and therefore the Aid or free leave of the Triune Power must be implored, to open the Door of Entrance, which may otherwise for ever remain shut to thee.

Yet I have not been wanting in these Sheets to Communicate my Experience, and Candidly to shew the Preparation of this Immortal Liquor, so far as was lawful for me without exposing it to the Hands of debauched Persons and Impostors, and he that can't gather it from what is here delivered will scarcely obtain it from the Voluminous Circumlocutions of other Writers; who have so Intermixt the Preparation and intangled it with the Philosophical Mercury, that the Artist stands in need of Ariadne's Clew to lead him out of that Labyrinth; in which Maze that the Ingenious may be no longer bewildred, I shall in the following Chapter distinctly and clearly discover the difference between the Liquor Alkahest and Mercury of the Philosophers.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS LIQUOR AND THE MERCURY OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

The Labour of the Candid and honest hearted is to untie those difficult Knots, which the envious have always been endeavouring to tye, and to bring the Industrious out of that Labyrinth, where they have been entangled and bewildered, so as to loose the Right Path, and for this end I am willing to lend my Hand to conduct the searcher through this Wood where many an honest hearted and laborious Man I am well satisfied have lost their Way, as not being able to distinguish the different Path of the Liquor Alkahest and Mercury of Philosophers, designing this Chapter as a Plain and knowing Pilot in this Case.

I hope that nothing but Ignorance it self will question the Verity of what I have here delivered concerning the Foundation of the Alkahest and Mercury of Philosopher to be one, seeing I have on my side not only Experience, but also the Testimony of worthy Sons of Art, that they do both proceed from the first Chaos, before Art hath undertaken to work upon it: But here the difference comes, one is prepared in a way agreable to Nature, the other Artificial; and consequently really divested from the Generative Power, being drawn beyond the Predestination of its Natural Seed; the exact Example of which may be seen in a Grain of Wheat, when 'tis sown in its proper Matrix, in order to Multiplication by Generation; or when it is Artificially Prepared and Fermented, and so drawn into Spirit, in which Work the Seminal and Generative Virtue is wholly destroyed: For here there is made an Artificial Solution of the Seed not into Elements but Secondary Principles; and by this violent way of Dissolution 'tis divested of its Metallic Seed, and Consequently made unfit for the Act of Generation, as was shewed just now in the Example of the Grain of Wheat: so by consequence must bring a consi-

derable difference at their Respective Ends.

Yet nevertheless both these as they arise from one Universal Fountain there may be some likeness in them and for this Reason the Description does in some Sence resemble both the one and the other, that few have been able to distinguish the true difference, and the more by the shifting Speeches of Writers, who confound the one with the other, that so the Artist may be easily entangled, because they have not so much as differenced them in Name, Nature or Operation; for Van Helmont says, that the Liquor Alkahest dissolves every Visible and Tangible Matter into the first Ens, preserving its Power, which Words preserving its Power is also attributed to the. Mercury of Philosophers; other Philosophers say, 'tis a fiery Water, and Lightsom, and Turba Philos. and Senior say, our Water is a Fire, and stronger than any Fire for it reduces the Body of Gold into a meer Spirit, which the Common Fire could never be able to do; the like also says Artephius; the very same thing is by others attributed to the Alkahest: Helmont says that as there is but one Fire in the World, so there is but one Liquor in the World, no other partaking in Quality with it; and Geber says, the most high hath given us the Knowledge of this Water, which lights the Candle gives Light to Houses and yields abundance of Riches: It would be too tedious to enumerate the Parallels of this kind concerning the Alkahest and Mercury of Philosopher: so that 'tis very difficult for the unskilful and unwary to distinguish their true difference, which is mostly to be Comprehended from those Words, where 'tis said, the one is a work of Nature, the other of Art; so are they different in appearance, for as a late Author says, that I may prevent a Common Error, viz, the confounding our Natural Dissolvent with our Circulated Salt or Alkahest some Ignorant Boasters who neither know the one, nor the other, having taught that they are both the same, I shall so far shew the Difference, that no Tyro but may effectually distinguish them in his Theory. Know therefore, and Note well this short distinction, there is no Affinity between them either in Matter or Operation: They differ in Matter, as much as one Species doth from another, the one being Metal lin<sup>4</sup> the other Saline: They differ in their Operations, as much as Love and Wrath; the one in Love Preserving, the other in Wrath Destroying, Life and Motion.

This Author by his good leave speaks right in the Operation, but strains



the String too far concerning the Matter, as too many Reformers do, and so cause Errors on the other Hand, equal to those they would Reform, thereby making many to grope for the Door of Entrance, or middle way, which leads directly to the Path of Truth: For be sure as they proceed from one Matter, both Universal, there is something of Assimilation in them; for as much as they are both performed by way of Solution and Coagulation, both tedious and difficult in searching out; and the Subject Matter so far exalted from its former State, as that it becomes a Work of Wonder; and for certain they must have something of likeness, or else those Artists were very Ignorant, who gave them one Denomination, calling them by the like Name, as Fiery Water and Watry Fire, Immortal and Homogeneous Essences, Alkahest, which is all Ghost or Spirit, the first Ens of Salts, and have attributed Supernatural Vertue to both; and from these and such like Universal Terms and Names, 'tis very easy for the Searcher to be deceived.

Wherefore I shall now come to give you a clear and general Account, wherein they agree, and wherein they disagree, and then shew you the Reason, why they are thus described, then give you the true and proper signification of the word Alkahest, and why Helmont gave the Liquor this Name; for I have taken some pains after the Inquiry thereof, so that I am able to render a Satisfactory Reason:

First of all I shall Instance in some particulars, wherein they agree:  
First, the Mercury of the Philosophers and this Circulated Salt agrees, in that they are both Universal, one for the Graduation and Exaltation of Metals, the other for Dissolving all Bodies: Secondly, They agree in this, that as one preserved the Seed in order to Multiplication by Generation, so the other preserves the Crasia and Medicinal Vertue of Species in order to healing; for in the Dissolution it admits of Nothing to fly away in Fume: Thirdly, They agree in this, the one is the Emblem of Man's Regeneration and eternal Salvation, the other of Man's Dissolution and Destruction; for in the Preparation they are both to be seen: Fourthly, They both agree in the Penetration of Bodies; the one enters to the very Central Life of them in order to the Multiplication, the other pierces to their very Centre in order to their Separation and Division; for it separates between their Central Mercury and Sulphur: Fifthly, They agree in the Matter and Manner of Pre-

paration, as to the Matter they both Proceed from the first Ens of Salts, and as to the manner, 'tin by Solution and Intervening Coagulation, till brought to an exalted Perfection: Sixthly and Lastly, They agree in that they are both made from the Universal Chaos, as also in the manner of their Composition; for the Mercury of the Philosophers is Compounded of Sulphur and Mercury; but the Liquor Alkahest of Salt and Fire and Blood; and both brought to such an Indissoluble Bond of Love and Unity, as never to be separated either in Love or Woe; both Homogeneous and Immortal, and both Universal Dissolvents: Having shewn wherein they agree, I shall now come to speak of that wherein they disagree.

First, They differ in this, whereas the Work of the Philosophers Mercury is purely Natural, so the Process of the Immortal Dissolvent is meerly Artificial: For as in this Work the Sulphur or Gold is exalted to the highest Pitch and Degree of Perfection so in the preparation of the great Hi lech of Paracelsus, it is reduced from a Natural to a Contranatural State. Secondly, They disagree in this, where the Mercury of the Philosophers is an Homogeneous Metallic Ens Co-essential in all its parts, true Mercury, of a middle Substance clear like pure Silver, being bright Celestial and Shining, and not so Essential to any thing as Gold, it being its Universal Mother does radically congeal upon it; therefore as Trevisan says, no Menstruum is profitable in the Philosophic Work, but that which dissolves the Body in a Generative way, and then recongeals upon the Body dissolved, so the Philosophers Solution of the Body is a Congelation of the Spirit; and upon this Account they have rejected all those Solutions, as Sophistical, where the Dissolvent and Dissolved remain not Permanent together:

Whereas the Alkaheat or Sal Circulatumis a Saline Liquor,, and therefore by Paracelsus sometimes called the Liquor of Salts and doth Dissolve Bodies, but remains not with them, being as easy separable from them, as the Spirit of Sulphuris from Oyl. Thirdly, There is a Disagreement between the Mercury of the Philosophers and Liquor Alkahest in the manner of their Operation and Action on Bodies, for the Mercury dissolves Gold and all Precious Stones and Pearls by way of Generation, and Exaltation, for the Life and Vertue is Multiplied, and they may be reduced to their first Form in greater Vertue and Beauty, and of more Value to the Metallurgist and Jeweller, but the

Liquor Alkahest dissolves not only Gold, but also all the other Metals, by way of Destruction, so that the Generative Virtue is defaced and wholly obliterated, and in this Reduction into their first Matter it gives a certain Testimony of their Diversity, as Metals into Sulphur and Mercury, Stones into a Saline Liquor, and Pearles into a Milky Juice. Fourthly, They disagree in this, the Mercury of Philosophers at the end of its Preparation will become fixt and Permanent abiding all the fiery Tryals, in form of a Caix, yet as fusible as Wax Penetrating. Mercury, and other Volatile Bodies before their Flight and fixes them; whereas the Liquor Alkahest at its respective end of Preparation is a Ponderous Saline Liquor in form of Water, which will moysten the Hand and every thing else, and as it is wholly Saline and Volatile 'twill not endure the Fire, but will remain in its form Distilling over in a Saline Liquor being altogether Incapable of Coagulation, and by that means dissolves all fixt Bodies whatsoever, not into Elements but into more simple Parts. Fifthly, Their Difference consists in this, whereas the Mercury of Philosophers is made by a remiss Fire of Generation, even the Aireal Life and Lunar Fire being the Medium in perfecting it by gentle Decoction from Point to Point, which Regimen of the Fire has been carefully bid by all Artists, in that 'tis called the Vessel of Nature, or Mercurial Vessel, Pondus Naturae; Whereas the Liquor Alkahest is made by the most violent Fire of separation, for the Spirit is by Violence not only Distilled from the Earth in Fiery form; but that is United to the Blood, which produces that Hellish Fire that brings all Imperfect Metals to a greater Imperfectness, though notwithstanding it makes them the more Powerful and Efficacious for the expelling and rooting out of Diseases and Infirmities, for being brought to their first Ens they dissolve and circulate with our Juyces, as being then thin and Spirituous, and so perform that in the curing Diseases, which in their hard and gross Natures could never be expected from them. Sixthly and Lastly, The Philosophers Mercury and Liquor Alkahest differ in this, the one may be brought to an Universal Medicine, the other has no Medicinal Vertues in it:

For as Philalethes says, this Mercury thus renovate or new born, may by the Philosopher be diversly handled; for he may take it from the Fire, and Circulate and Cohobate this Mercury by a Peculiar Operation, which is partly Mechanical, till he have a most admirable, pure, subtil Spirit, in which he

may dissolve Pearls and all Gems, and Multiply them or his Red Stone, before it be united with a Metal in Projection, for the making of Aurum Potabile: and in this Mercury, thus Circulated, is doubtless the Mystery of the never fading Light, which I have actually seen, but yet not Practically made. In a word, every one who hath this exuberate Mercury bath indeed at Command the subject of Wonders, which he may employ himself in many ways, both admirably and pleasantly. And certainly, he that hath this, needs no Information from another; himself now standing in the Center, he may easily view the Circumference, and then Operation will be, next the Spirit of God the best Guide: So that the Mercury of Philosopher, being brought to fixity, may be made an Universal Medicine, for the Curing all Diseases, and Renovating and Restoring to Youthful strength and Vigour; whereas the Liquor Alkahest, be it never so highly multiplied or Exalted, cannot properly be said to be a Medicine, but a Menstruum, which is a Proper help or Medium to prepare Medicines by, and in it self still remains unchangeable, being as Starkey- says, endued with these Qualities; Viz 'Tis a Ponderous Liquor, being indeed all Salt, without any Watry Flegm; it is all Volatile being wholly a Spirit, without any Corporeity left in it, of no eminent Odour, for all things which send out an odour considerable, are for the most part of a very Volatile Nature, or consist of many Heterogenities. It is not therefore Volatile after the manner of Spirit of Wine, Urine, or the like, which fly with the smallest degree of heat, but (like unto a ponderous Spirit, which yeilds its Flegm in the first place) this when it bath dissolved any Vegetable Concrete, and made it Volatile, will suffer the same by a gentle heat of Balneum Maria, to be all separated from its self, and c.

From what has been here said, concerning the Agreement and Disagreement of these two, I hope, the diligent Inquirer after Art will receive good satisfaction, and for the future be freed from those doubts and Errors, which might before occasion much Trouble and Perplexity of mind: This was the end I proposed to my self, throughout the whole of my discourse; this therefore may suffice as to this Point; I shall now proceed to speak of the Proper Names of this Dissolvent.

But by the way (Reader) observe, that the Invention of this Liquor, in these Parts of the World is owing to Paracelsus; thus Philalethes, and also

adds, that among the Moors and Arabians, it hath been, and is at this day, commonly known to the Acuter sort of Chymists, then consequently we must depend, that Paracelsus did give the most significant and Proper Names to it, and 'tis plain from Helmonts own Writings, that he diligently Studied and Traced his Works, and at length through Labour came to understand them, and amongst other things, obtained the Knowledge of such a dissolving Menstruum, as Paracelsus often writes of; and seeing this Liquor to contain an homogeneous Nature, spiritually acting, and after almost innumerable Actions still remaining the same, (Spirits being immortal) and this Liquor proving so, be therefore not improperly called it, Alkahest; although, as I shall shew by and by, this Name doth more properly belong to the Mercury of Philosopher, and that, this was the design of Paracelsus in it; however by the way, I shall examin the derivation or Root, of this Word, which is from the Belgic or rather High Dutch. Language; in Holland or Flanders, where Van Helmont lived, (Geest) is as much as to say in English (Spirit) and in the German Tongue, 'tis much higher and Guttural, being expressed (Alchaest) which signifies (All Spirits or all Spiritual:) which Word (Alchaest) Paracelsus makes mention of in the Tenth Book of his Archidoxes. Chap. 6th. where treating of the Virtue of the Members, says that the Liquor Alchaest, has a great power of Conserving and Comforting the Liver, and consequently of Preserving it from the Dropsie, and all such as arise from the defect of the Liver, and if the Liver is dissolved or broken, it stands in the Place of a new Liver:

The Process thereof is this, it must be resolved from its Coagulated state, and Coagulated again into a Transmuted Form, as the Process, of Coagulation and Dissolution Teaches. This Passage is the only Place, wherein Paracelsus has made use of this Name, it being not to be found elsewhere in all his Writings, so that 'tis plain to us that Belmont has borrowed this Name from him, therefore we must according to Reason and Experience consider, whether Paracelsus meant this Liquor or not; because the Process set down, vizt • Solution and Coagulation is alike and Common, (as hath been already touched at,) not only to the Preparation of both these

but likewise to most Chymical Magisteries.

Now the Liver is the Fountain of the Blood, and is the seat of Life next

the heart, the Blood being there Prepared for a further Elaboration and Purification, in order to give the Body, its Nourishment for the Production of Seed, and Consequently for the maintaining of Life, and c. And 'tis plain by experience; that this Liquor will by greater length of time, dissolve all mixt Beings by its Active, Thin, Spirituous Penetrative, Dissolving and Homogeneous Nature, in a Natural degree of Heat equal to that of the Liver, and separate them into their distinct Substances, suffering not any thing to fly away in Air or Fume; so that to me here arises the difficulty to think, how this should work that different Effect, of healing and restoring the Liver, and not rather dissolve it, as it does other mixt beings: The doubt is beyond my reason at present to give an Answer to, and I suppose will so remain for ever, for I do not so much as once intend to an Experiment, to try its Virtues in this Case; having, besides what is already offered, two Substantial Reasons against it; the First is, that this Liquor being difficult to be prepared, would be too costly to be administered by way of Medicine; for a Reasonable Practise would soon diminish a considerable Quantity, so that this great Treasure would in little time, be exhausted and come to nothing, if given by way of Medicine, whereas 'tis perpetual by way of Menstruum: The Second is, that the Philosophers give no directions for the Exhibition of the White Stone inwardly, but in Epilepsies and Palsies, and other Diseases of the Brain, which is under the dominion of the Moon, much less its White Oyl but for Externals, as Leprosies, Scabs, Virulent Ulcers, Fistulas., Cancers, Noli me Tangere, etc, and the like; how they should then dare to exhibit a Spirit so Active and Fiery, yet much more Crude than these, I know not; neither indeed can I be made to believe, that ever Helmont or any other of the Adepts, did ever once so much as make use of it by way of Medicine, and Consequently could not be this Liquor, which Paracelsus meant, where he speaks of the Cure of the Liver, but rather of the Grand Elixer.

But 'tis abundantly more probable, that they served themselves therewith in the Preparations, of Drugs and all kind of species, in order to bring them to Magisteries, Arcana's, Essences, and Quintessences, which have a superlative Vertue, especially from the Metalline and Mineral Kingdom; be -cause what is resolved by it retains their healing Faculty; so from these

Considerations I can't Conceive that Paracelsus, where he speaks of the Restoring of the Liver, that he meant the Circulatum Minus. or this Liquor , so that 'tis altogether undemonstrable, that this single Dissolving Menstruum should be a safe and good Medicine, and Consequently should Cure the Dropsie as is easy to be gathered from the foregoing Words of Paracelsus, that his Alkahest really was Medicinal; for he expressly says, if the Liver were broken or destroyed, it would be in place of a new Liver; now from the foregoing Considerations, this Liquor can't be said to be a safe and good Medicine, 'tis therefore abundantly more probable that Paracelsus by the Word Alchahest meant the great Elixer, that being all Spirits, a Quintessence, divested of all the Elements, and consequently of all Earthly and Corporal Qualities; for if the Grand Elixer were not Spiritual 'twould never Transmute; for by this Spiritual Act, it works three Effects, first Penetration and Dilatation; secondly by Fermentation and Contraction; thirdly by the Acts of the two former, the combustible Sulphurs are separated, the pure ones manifested with additional Tincture and Permanency so Helmont finding his dissolving Menstruum Spiritual might easily mistake the Words of Paracelsus, and call it Alchahest, and indeed the Name is no ways Improper, although not used for this Liquor by Paracelsus , unless Paracelsus was guilty of speaking one thing and meaning another, as Helmont himself sometimes is; as I can prove from these following Words. The Liquor Alchahest (says he) Reduces all sensible and Tangible Bodies into their first matter, Preserving the Power of their Seed; which as you have all along heard it doth not; but their Medicinal Vertue; the Property of Preserving the seed belongs to Azoth or Philosophical Mercury; So that if he were not guilty here, he was for certain beside the matter; but I am apt to believe he was, seeing he has not in all his Writings given account of the Medicinal Vertue of his Alcahest, as Paracelsus does of his.

From hence it may be clearly Conceived, what I have inserted in my former Doctrine, that the Philosophers were many of them guilty of interweaving these secrets together, and calling them, by one Name, for 'tis clear, that Helmont called this dissolving Menstruum the Liquor Alchahest, yet says it preserves the seminal Vertue, when as Paracelsus by this Passage meant the Grand Elixier; and the more evident in this, in that

he has given other Names to this dissolving Menstruum, and those mostly used by him are the great Hilech and Sal Circulatum; for these are generally to be traced through his Writings, and 'tis easy to be discerned, that he puts a great distinction between this dissolving Liquor and the Mercury of Philosophers ;for the Liquor, he calls Circulatum Minus and Mercury of Philosophers Circulatum Majus as is plainly to be Proved from the Process given, where he saith, thou must extract the first Ens of Mercury by Spirit of Wine, and it will come over in a Liquid substance which (says he) is called by the Philosophers a most sharp Metalline Ace turn, and by us in our Archidoxes Circulatum Majus. Archidox Lib 10. Chapter the 4th.

This Distinction and Process cannot be rightly understood by any, but an Adeptus Duplicatus for to the obtaining of this Spirit of Wine the Work is one, and is Performed by the concurring help of an Assistant; otherwise 'twill be impossible to be obtained but being gotten, the difference Consists in the Forcible way of dissolving the Body and the Natural by the Spirit of Wine, to extract the first Ens of Mercury,, in which the Blood is united and Cleansed, and so brought to the gentle or Benignant Fire of Nature, which is one with Central Salt Nitre and also the Magical Sol; for it unites to the Center with a wonderful Fermentative Power: Now this Spirit of Mercury, or Mercurial Fire and Oyl, is by Artephius not improperly called the Vinegar of Mountains, and by Paracelsus the most sharp Metalline Acetum; for it performs that which common Fire could never do, vizt. dissolves the Body in Preservation of the Form, and brings it to a Spirit, to be exalted aloft in the Air, where Celestial Purity, and the strengthening Multiplicative Vertue is; that Spirit, will again return to and unite with the Body, which Circulation is continued till the Universal Mercury, has extracted the universal Sulphur, and then is it truly and properly called the Circulatum Majus, or Alchahest as thou pleaseth, the Name being proper to the Elixer it self, as may be plainly discerned from the foregoing Passage of the said Author, where he tells you, that when it has overcome its Like, it becomes a Medicine for the Liver, excelling all other Medicines; and towards the end Adds, Verily should the Liver it self be broken or dissolved yet this stands in the place of the whole Liver, no otherwise



than if it had never been broken or dissolved as aforehinted: So that the Medicine (from the Authors own Words,) by which the Liver is cured is no other than Mercury Prepared, Sublimed, Vivified into a new Life; and having passed the gates of Death comes to be united into a twofold Life, Terrestrial and Celestial, and so becomes that Medicinal Tincture, which is a true Emblem of Man's Spiritual Restoration, and is in a far higher degree of Perfection than this Circulated Salt can be conceived to be; seeing it may be so highly exalted, as to be brought to an Elixer of Spirits, which in a Minute penetrates the Center of Bodies, being a Perfect Concatination of an Incombustible fire and light, which will admit of an endless Multiplication, being each time advanced in Vertue, Power and Spirituality; so that it becomes a Medicine not only for Man, but also for Metals, making them both Perfect and Permanent, the which this wrathful Liquor cannot perform.

For this great Magistry hath in it the Exalted Vertue and Universality of Light, a Quintessence or Medicine of the highest Purity in the three Kingdoms of Nature, Animal, Vegetable or Mineral; therefore may be properly said to be a Medicine for the Liver, this being a Member or Part; which so much Concerns the Life of man: Now this will manifest it self here a Medicine above all Medicines in order to restore firm Sanity: And that it may be yet more plainly conceived, that Paracelsus spoke concerning the Philosophers Tincture., I will quote the Words of the famous Arabian Prince Geber in his 4th Book Chap ten 1. There is a Medicine (says he) of a twofold Nature of the third order, yet but one in Essence and manner of working (afterwards cunningly adding) there is notwithstanding an Addition of a Citrine Coloured Sulphur, which is perfected by a most clean substance of fixed Sulphur: Behold how its like is overcome after the first Preparation This plainly shews that the like, which is to be overcome, is the very same, that Paracelsus spoke of, as I have experimental Reason to believe: This from the Testimony of Donnaeus and Ludovicus de Comitibus, is also confirmed to be that of the great Elixer.

Concerning its Spirituality, I shall add a Passage or two more for the greater Confirmation of what is here said: Basil Valentine, (in his last Will and Testament and Allegorical Expressions (Page. 347.) between the Holy Trinity and the Philosophers Stone,) Compares his Mercury to

God the Father, as being a Spiritual Body; and the Philosophers Sulphur or Gold to God the Son, who is God and Man, which Sulphur must dye and rise again for its Brothers and Sisters sake, being then a glorious Body, redeeming and Tinging them to Eternal Life: and when these two come together saith he, they are called Mercury Duplicate; from whence proceeds our third Substance, which is our Glorified and fixed Sol, the Philosophers Stone, or Spiritual Essence of the Philosophers, called the Triune Stone, proceeding from Two, Water and Spirit, Animal and Vegetable in the Mercury and the Mineral living Sulphur of Sol, which are Three, Two, and yet but One. Now observe, this Authors Mercury Duplicate is the same (Like,) with that of Geber and Paracelsus, which the Mercury will overcome, and then it becomes the Medicine or Alchahest spoken of.

Thus having given you some Account and Reason, of the Names imposed by Authors on this Liquor, I shall now come to give you some Reason for our Additional Name, viz. Trifertes Sagani, which is as Proper a Name, for this Liquor, as any given by the Adepts, it being Spirits born in and Predominant over the fire, nay it inhabits the fire, even that fire that hath Power to dissolve the four Elements and Reduce them to its own Nature of Universality. Now this Liquor being thus Prepared is a Compleat Key to the Medicinal Art, and doth open the Treasury of Medicines in the three Kingdoms of Nature, in a way succedeanous to nothing but the great Elixer.

But seeing the use of this Liquor is manifold and various and will require a whole Chapter, I shall omit speaking of it here and refer you to the next; where its vertues are fully shewn; and come a little to consider the Exercise of a laborious Searcher, which he meets withal in his search: The first Exercise is to come to the knowledge of a true Subject Matter which is very difficult: for the Philosophers Words concerning It are so obscure and hidden, and the Matter Involved in such Tropes and Metaphors, that it requires a more than ordinary help to come to a right understanding to dis -tinguish rightly and truly and genuinly what the Matter is, which beyond all Controle is candidly done in these Sheets.

The second Difficulty that the Labourer meets withal, is to distinguish between true Books and those which are false and Sophistically Written, which indeed is a Labyrinth, equally as difficult as the former concerning

the Matter; For a false Author is like a wrong Guide upon a Journey, for if in the beginning of the same, He goes but a few steps in a wrong Path, and then follows the same, may in the Conclusion be led clear contrary to his designed end, and indeed it is of greater Consequence in search, because there is few or none to be met with in all our Course, that can direct to the right way: Now there is in Scripture a Curse pronounced on all those, who put the Blind out of his way, which Curse will take hold on all those Sophistical Writers, In that there is no Blindness greater than the Spiritual Blindness, whether in things Natural or Divine, and therefore 'tis a very great difficulty to distinguish them asunder, which being done the false are to be shuned as much as the Devil himself, who is the Author of all Imposture.

A Third Difficulty is after you distinguish Authors, to come to some knowledge and Understanding of the true, concerning the Scope and Intention of their Writing, both as to Theory and Practice; which indeed is a Difficulty surmounting the former, former for these Reasons: The first is their Circumlacutions and large Descriptions of things when as indeed it may be comprehended in little Compass; the second is their Multiplicity of Repetitions of one and the same thing, only with some variation of Words, only to amuse the Reader: The third is by such voluminous Writings they have the more room and Liberty to Confound their Operations, speaking of one thing where they ought to speak of another; by which Preposterous manner of Writing the Searcher can't fail of being bewildred; this is not a Fault about the Operations only, but also about the time of the Operation, which causes Abundance of difficult Thoughts in the Operator, and makes him many times think those things concerning Time, which are neither Probable in Nature, nor possible for Art to perform: For what is to be gathered from the most concurring Writings of them all is, that the Matter can't pass the first Dissolution in less than five Month and the riper and higher Matters are carried, the sooner and shorter will an Operation be, for in Conclusion it may be brought to the Work of a Months, then of a Week, and lastly of a day, which Operations being misplaced cause this Error; for there is great difference between that Operation, where there is ripe ferment and that where there is not; for 'tis very difficult to bring bread to rise without Yeast.

Now the last and most Principal difficulty of all is, the want of Substance

or Money of your own to carry on your search and Labours; for though you have never so much Knowledge and have overcome all the other difficulties, yet without money to build Furnaces, buy Glasses and Convenient vessels, and Coals, you can't go forward with your Operations; I make no doubt but this was the state of the Cleine Boer, and of that Worthy and famous Count Bernard Earl of Trevisan, to detain him three years from the Possession of the Magistry after he had the true Knowledge of it, and it hath been the Case of many a Worthy Artist, I am sure it hath been very often mine, which is the most difficult and deplorable Case of all, having a large Family and their subsisting while you are in search, for it requires the whole man, and so takes him from all other business, and if he makes a Friend, he is obtained with the greatest of all difficulties; for you must first discover your Subject; secondly your Operations; Thirdly the Time, as to the two former, let him be never so ignorant, he must be the Judge, and if he does not like it, you then loose both your Friend and your Art to boot; and indeed tis very difficult when a man goes about such a thing to know who is Qualified for it, or what use he will make of it when obtained:

And as to the time, he is very nice in it, if he do except of your Proposals, and to have an Operation performed to every Punctilio; and if it is not you must expect Reprimands, and sometimes the loss of your Friend; who, lying as it were, on a Bed of ease, little knows the hardship, Fatigues, Labours, Losses and Dissappointment, which the Artist sustained and is subject to; neither indeed dares he to open the same for fear left they should become his Enemies; these things being rightly Considered may be reason sufficient to deterr many a Worthy Labourer from his Search, to the great loss and Detriment of Art: That none of these, or such like difficulties may be thy Portion, O Reader! is the desire of him, who shall Conclude this Chapter with his Well-wishes to every Sincere Searcher after Art.

## CHAPTER V

### THE USE OF THE LIQUOR ALKAHEST, CIRCULATUM MINUS

#### OR GREAT HILECH OF BELMONT AND PARACELSUS.

In this Chapter, I shall come to shew you the Use of the Circulatum Minus, Liquor Alchahest, or Sal Circulatum of Belmont and Paracelsus in dissolving Universally all sublunary Concretes into their first Matter, none excepted, for nothing opposes it, but its Compeer or Water, and the Central heart, of Mercury; the one destroys, it, and the other remains untouched by its Activity; for all other Beings are so Essentially dissolved, as that they may be brought over the Helm, in their true Essences; nay by Cohobation they may be reduced to an Elementary Water; therefore for the good and Benefit of Mankind, I could be heartily glad that the excellency and Uitlity of this Menstruum, were better known, since Helmont, Paracelsus and Starkey, put such Noble Encomiums on it: for as the first of these says, In Nature there is but one Fire, which is our consuming Vulcan, none other partaking in Virtue and Quality with it, all the true Adepti have an undeniable Proof of, which indeed is far more powerful than any Common Fire, for what will remain there, as unconquerable, is by this Liquor destroyed and Altered radically and fundamentally; the Mechanical Practise with it is thus.

Let this Liquor or Fire be distilled from any Metal soft and Imperfect, and it doth at first or second time leave them in a fusible Substance like Wax, of which the Sulphur or Tincture is dissolvable in the best Spirit of Wine, and from the residue (being kept three days in a vaporating heat) Mercury quick and running may be separated, the same may be done in harder Metals, yea, in Perfect Metals, in a longer time, by oftner reiterated Cohobations.

But this Fire being once distilled from Mercury Vulgar, it leaves it Coagulated and Fixed, so the it will endure the Test of Saturn: It's left spongius like to a Pumice-stone but heavy like Turbith Minerale, brittle and therefore without difficulty Pulverisable, which then Cohobated with Water, distilled from Whites of Eggs it causes that distilled Water to stink, but becomes of the Colour of the best Coral, whence its denominated Arcanum Coralinurn.

This Fire if it be distilled from any Gem or Stone subtilly Pulverised, it turns into a meer Salt of equal Weight to the Gem or Stone; Pearls it resolves into a Milk, which is their first Ens; so also Crabs Eyes (as they are Vulgarly called, being otherwise no Eyes, but Stones found in the head of the Crab,) and all Vegetable Stones, as Peach-stones, Date-stones, or the like.

In a Word, this Fire or Liquor resolves all Vegetables, Animals and Minerals, into their first Ens, and in such Concretes as Contain in them Heterogenities, it doth discover and sever (that it makes separable) the same.

But observe, this dissolution is not performed like that, which is made with the Mercury of Philosophers for that dissolves Bodies by way of Generation, but this by way of Destruction, in that it seperates between the Central Mercury, and Sulphur of Bodies, and although they are very prevalent as to Medicines, yet are they totally bereaved and divested from any generative Power; so that 'twill be in vain for any to expect, Generation therefrom, seeing the Liquor it self is prepared by the way of Wrath; and so it dissolves Bodies; therefore called Ignis Gehennae; the Fire of Hell; but the Medicines prepared by it surpassing others, I shall give you some Particular Examples of it, first of such, as are of an Inferior Rank, as to Preparation, and then of those more difficult and Noble.

Now for small Experiments and for the more ready use of the Aichahest, 'tis good to provide your self of Convenient Vessels, as small as Egg-glasses, thick and strong, with short Necks, wide mouths, and Ground stoppers exactly fitted; also small Retorts with Ground stoppers, which may serve both for digestion and Distillation; but for great Experiments and larger quantities I advise you to use my hard Metal Jugs made sizable with very long Necks, well

tryed which is by putting them into a Pail or Tub of Water within two Inches up to the mouth then blow your Breath, if there be any Air hole, the Water will bubble, then not fit for use; These serve for Digestion, Dissolution, and also Distillation, because you may work them either standing upright, or lying down, as your occasion shall require; being thus provided with Vessels you may begin your Solutions first on Vegetables; which it does Resolve into their first liquid Matter, distinguishing in them all the Heterogenities by several Colours, and distinct places, one above another; in which Resolution there always seats it self in a Distinct place a small Liquor, Eminently distinguishable from the rest in Colour, in which the Crasis of the whole Hearb, Tree or Seed, doth reside: in which Retrogradation of the Concrete, by this way of Dissolution, there is no less of Vertue, but an Exalting of the same by many degrees only whatever virulency is in the Crude Concrete, by this Operation is wholly extinct, with a Preservation notwithstanding of all the specifick Vertue, appertaining to the Concrete in its simplicity.

And furthermore 'tis to be observed, you may dissolve all Herbs into their Principles, liquid without Sediment, of which part will be unctious and fat, especially in Trees, Gums, Seeds and many Roots; and part Aqueous in which the Volatile Salt of the Concrete will appear to the tast, the Liquor with its own Oyl you may Circulate into an Essential Salt, which is indeed the first Ens of the Concrete; but if you would have things done in a lesser time, make your Dissolutions in a stronger heat, and distill over your Liquor with the dissolved Body in a due fire, so will the Oyliness be wholly turned into a Saline Spirit, which in a distillation by Bath will come over in various Colours the Crasis separating it self from the Flegme (both by Colour, Tast and Smell, as also by its Time of Coming over the Helm distinguishable) and your Liquor left behind at bottom, as much in quantity, and as Effectual in virtue, as before; as for example, This Work does happily succeed with Bawm, or any other vegetable which is better dry than Green) which being only Macerated some hours in a gentle warmth, you will see it so dissolved in such a wonderful manner, that you cannot sufficiently admire the Effect; the Alkahest being separated from it (or brought over according to the former direction) out of Bawm you have a Noble Cordial for the heart: and thus out of Helebore you may obtain a Noble specifick against the Gout, Hypocondniack Melancholy

Calenture, and Deleria's in Fevers : out of Colocynthida an excellent Febrifuge ; and out of Caedar an Ens for long life: For which take the Wood Caedar 3 iiiiij of the Dissolvent an equal Proportion and digest twenty four Hours, and it will be wholly dissolved in the Conservation of even the very same odour, the Liquor being separated, it will freely dissolve in Spirit of Wine, or if you first dissolve them in Spirit of Wine, the Liquor will dissolve with it; digest and draw off the Spirit of Wine, and then you may distil off the Alkahest with the Essence of the Concrete, and separate them, as you have been directed: Observe the Dissolution of this for long Life, must be in a gentle heat like that of the Sun in the Spring and after that digested in a like heat till the Oyl and Water be united into an Essential Salt: I should advise all Vegetables to be prepared in the like Nature, if you desire, to have their Eminent Vertue, without losing those peculiar Excellencies, which depend on the Vita Ultima of the Concrete, otherwise a speedier Preparation makes the Medicine no less Effectual for Curing Diseases, though less powerful as to long Life: out of Myrrh, Aloes and Safron, an Excellent Antihectical Medicine, as also against Lypothymy's Deliquia's, Convulsions, and Palsies • Thus much for Vegetables, I shall now give you a short Survey of Stones, Pearl and Coral, and lastly of Minerals: Though I must confess by the way, that if your Liquor does radically dissolve a charcoal, it is as certain a sign, that it is true, as if it did dissolve Gold it self; for according to Belmont, the Work succeeds well upon Charcoal; but 'tis admirable to see how the Operations will be changed and varied according to the Degree of Fire, and diuturnity of digestion.

Take of the Stone Ludus, in Subtil Powder, and of the Dissolvent ana, Q V, digest twenty four hours then distill, and 'twill be converted wholly into a Salt, which being Calcined will in a cold Moist Air easily run p. deliq: which will certainly Cure the Stone with all its Attendants.

Take of Pearl, what quantity you please; and of the Liquor, equal Proportion, which being therein Immersed, 'twill dissolve into a Mucilage (a gentle Maceration of some hours preceding) Resolvable in Spirits of Wine. The same may be done on Crabs Eyes, but sooner: 'Tis an excellent Medicine, for comforting the heart, giving strength to the very Marrow and Bones:



Coral so dissolved is a Medicine that restores sense to those bereaved of it, Comforts the Brain, Memory and Heart, expelling sadness and Melancholly, and making a chearful and healthy Constitution.

Observe with this Liquor you must use no acid Spirit, or Salt, or Corrosive of what sort soever. For where ever such things are used, as Mediums whether for Mercury, or any other, they must be well washed off and made sweet before the Alkahest is put on; therefore in Sulphur fine Flowers are the best: Of these take what quantity you please, of Liquor Equal Proportion Digest for the space of two days, and afterwards Cohobate twice or thrice, they will come over the Helm in form of a very Red Oyl, separable from the Liquor by a separating Glass: Excellent in the Consumption, Coughs , and the like; us not only a Preservative of Man's body but also of Beer, Wines and other Liquors.

If you Abstract this Liquor from the Calx of Lead, twenty four hours digestion being premised; you will have the Lead so Reserated unlocked or opened, as that in Spirit of Wine, 'twill easily let go its Sanguineous and sweet Tincture: which is the Magistry of Lead, and an Excellent Medicine for all burnings and Inflammations whatsoever.

Take of the Flowers of Antimony, sublimed with Sal Ammoniack and dulcified, or of the Alcohol of Antimony, which is better, one Ounce of the Liquor Alkahest, three Ounces, put them into a Retort, and digest six hours, at furthest then still off the Dissolvent, and you will have a true Medicine, which Infallibly Cures the Dropsie.

Take of Precipitate very well edulcorated, made after what manner you please, one Ounce, of the Dissolvent two Ounces, and having been digested 24 hours Distil, and you'll have a fixed Pricipitate, working by stool, sweat and Urine, a certain Remedy for the Leprosy, Scurvy, King's Evil, Gout, and Pox.

Take of the Calx of Gold one Ounce, of the Liquor two Ounces; digest in a Viol with a long Neck (or one of the Egg-glasses, before described which is better) for three days, or until it will give forth no more Tincture; then pour off all that is dissolved into a Retort, and with a gentle Fire draw off the Liquor, and you'll find the Gold dissolved in the Bottom of the Retort, which you may either dissolve in Spirit of Wine, or let run in the Air per -

deliq.; and you have a true Aurum Potabile: The same Process is to be observed in Silver.

Another; Take Gold Calcined into fine Atoms, or Laminated into thin Leaves, one Ounce, of the Liquor Alkahest, three Ounces put them into a Retort with a ground stopper, and let them remain in the heat of a gentle Bath a few daies, or until the Gold be dissolved without Sediment, the Liquor then being distilled from it, leaves it in the form of a Salt fusible which Cohobated often with the Liquor, is made Volatile, and comes over in two Liquors, White and Red; the Red is the Hema tine Tincture, and the White may be reduced into a White Mercurial Body, after the dissolving Liquor is separated from the same: Thus Gold the King of Metals, of Nature most fixed in Corrosives, Test and Cuppel enduring all kind of Martyrdomes without the least diminution, even the most exquisite Tryal of Vulcan is by this Liquor or Fire, wholly mastered and Conquered so as to be brought into its Mineral Ens, which is the highest Preparation of Gold, that can be made by means of this Liquor, being its Fifth Essence, and is of Power to cure the most deplorable Diseases, to which the Nature of Man is subject; but the Magistery of Gold, which is the first Preparation of it, by means of this Liquor , is a most eminent Medicine against all Malignant Feavers the Pestilence, Palsies, the Plague , and é. In the like manner you Prepare the Fifth Essence of Silver; but this following Medicine, is equal if not superior to either.

The Sweet Oyl of Venus Take of the best Danzick or Romin Vitrol, and Calcine it till it be thoroughly wasted in the Fire what will wast; then dulcifie the Colcothar with distilled Rain Water and dry it very well, to the Vitriol thus prepared, add of the Fire or Liquor , equal Parts for it will be dissolved easily and Friendly, distil off your Liquor , and pour it back again; and thus Cohobate it at the least 12 or 15 times, so will all the Body of the Colcothar be brought over the Helm, in form of a Green Liquor; digest this same in the gentle heat of a Bath, for about a Month and then distil it in a slow Fire, so will the whole Metalline substance of the Venus, come over, leaving the Liquor below in the Retort, in its entire Pondus and Virtue: To this Liquor or Spirit put an equal quantity of Sal Armoniack, dissolved in as much Water as will dissolve it, so shall you separate the Green

Liquor from a White Sediment, which White Sediment, will give a White Metal, as fixed as Silver and will abide the Test of Saturn, but yet formally distinct from Silver which thou (if a Philosopher) shalt easily perceive however as good to a Metalurgist as the best Silver; the green Liquor dry up in a Viol Glass, by evaporating all the Moisture, for its the Sulphur of Venus mixed with the Sal Armoniack, by which (Note that) it is fixed so that it will abide all Fire, this Sulphur extract with the most pure Spirit of Wine, which will dissolve it, leaving the Sal Armoniack; distil away then from it (thus dissolved) your Spirit of Wine, and you have left a very fragrant green Oyl of Venus, which is Sulphur Essensicated, by these Operations, as sweet to tast as the best Honey, than which Nature hath not a more Sovereign Remedy for most (not to say all) Diseases: this is the true Nepenthe of Philosophers, causing certain Rest, and asswaging all Paines, but ever after sleep leaving the Party either sensibly amended (in more violent and diuturnal Diseases) or quite well in the less rigid Maladies: Thus also from Lapis Hematitis and Spelter may be had Noble Medicaments, also from the Sulphur of Antimony, and more especially from Common Mercury; for if you Cohobate the Liquor so long till its body is brought over and proceed in all things as in the Sulphur of Venus, you have a Medicine that will effect whatever can be desired by either Patient or Doctor,

Thus having given you a short Landskip (as it were) of this Liquor, I shall here pass it by at present, and Conclude.

**FINIS**