



Lecture 01 Prima - mellissa ens - recipe 1

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Ok, what follows is the original recipe for the "Primum Ens Melissa" that I used when I first experimented with this preparation. I will post two other versions of this recipe, later, and I think it will generally be agreed that this one is the most interesting (for reasons I hope are obvious.)

The first transcript of this recipe I made had a note added to it that the source of the recipe was a book by Franz Hartmann. I had originally copied the recipe from a book owned by my teacher, at that time not realising the importance of the preparation I was not careful to ensure I recorded the source with more care. Subsequently, I went back to what I thought was the source publication at a much later date only to discover the recipe wasn't there. So the source remains in question - and I would certainly be interested to hear from anyone who finds the original publication.

After posting the two alternative versions of this process I will come back to this recipe and break it down sentence-by-sentence and explain in detail what is being described.

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The Primum Ens Melissa  
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The "Primum Ens" of a thing is its first beginning, its Prima Materia; an invisible and intangible spiritual substance, which can be incorporated in some material vehicle. "He who wants to separate the Primum Ens from its Corpus must have a great deal of experience in the spagyric art. If he is not a good alchemist his labour will be in vain." ("De Separat. Rer.")

"The Primum Ens Melissa is prepared in the following manner: Take half a pound of pure carbonate of potash, and expose it to the air until it is dissolved (by attracting water from the atmosphere). Filter the fluid, and put as many fresh leaves of the plant Melissa into it as it will hold, so that the fluid will cover the leaves. Let it stand in a well-closed glass and in a moderately warm place for twenty-four hours. The fluid may then be removed from the leaves, and the latter thrown away. On the top of this fluid absolute alcohol is poured, so that it will cover the former to a height of one or two inches, and it is left to remain for one or two days, or until the alcohol becomes of an intensely green colour. This alcohol is then to be taken away and preserved, and fresh alcohol is put upon the alkaline fluid, and the operation is repeated until all the colouring matter is absorbed by the alcohol. This alcoholic fluid is now to be

distilled, and the alcohol evaporated until it becomes of the thickness of syrup, which is the Primum Ens Melissae; but the alcohol that has been distilled away and the liquid potash may be used again. The liquid potash must be of great concentration and the alcohol of great strength, else they would become mixed, and the experiment would not succeed."

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The above text, in Hartman's book, was followed by a post script which provides a detailed understanding of just why this preparation is admired by alchemists. It will be noticed that the explanation given in the postscript agrees with Paracelsus' remarks on regeneration and rejuvenation exactly. (Rubaphilos)

Here follows the post script:

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Lesebure, a physician of Louis XIV of France, gives in his "Guide to Chemistry" ("Chemischer Handleiter," Nuremburg, 1685, page 276), an account of some experiments, witnessed by himself, with the Primum Ens Melissae as follows:- "One of my most intimate friends prepared the Primum Ens Melissae, and his curiosity would not allow him to rest until he had seen with his own eyes the effect of this arcanum, so he might be certain whether or not the accounts given of its virtues were true. He therefore made the experiment, first upon himself, then upon an old female servant, aged seventy years, and afterwards upon an old hen that was kept at his house. First he took, every morning at sunrise, a glass of white wine that was tintured with this remedy, and after using it for fourteen days his finger-nails and toe-nails began to fall out, without, however, causing any pain. He was not courageous enough to continue the experiment, but gave the same remedy to the old female servant. She took it every morning for about ten days, when she began to menstruate again as in former days. At this she was very much surprised, because she did not know that she had been taking a medicine. She became frightened, and refused to continue the experiment. My friend took, therefore, some grain, and soaked it in that wine and gave it to the old hen to eat, and on the sixth day that bird began to loose its feathers, and kept on loosing them until it was perfectly nude, but before two weeks had passed away, new feathers grew, which were much more beautifully coloured; her comb stood up again, and she began again to lay eggs."

In the "life of Cagliostro" some such rejuvenating medicine is mentioned, and the names of some persons who had succeeded in the experiment are given. These and other facts have neither been proved or disproved by science, but are waiting for investigation. The Judges at the trial of Cagliostro, before the Tribunal of the Inquisition at Rome, were only intent to convict him; but he who can read their report "between the lines" will find a great deal that speaks in favour of Cagliostro, and much that has not been explained.

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~rubaphilos