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Alchemical allegories

Alchemical texts often use elaborate extended allegories as a means of communicating key philosophical points, or to illustrate a particular alchemical process. In these allegorical texts a figure, with which the reader is supposed to identify, goes on a journey in search of wisdom or understanding of the mysteries of alchemy. There this figure meets various archetypal characters, kings, queens, various alchemical birds and animals, and witnesses a process of transformation. This parallels the use of series of symbolic illustrations in various alchemical books and manuscripts - these allegories are in essence the working out in text of similar alchemical ideas and processes as are found in the sequences of emblematic symbols.

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Animal Symbolism in the Alchemical Tradition

Adam McLean

Alchemy, as I perceive it, is a spiritual tradition, a means for exploring our inner space and the layers which clothe the precious essence of our innermost soul. It is a path, a way, a practical method for investigating the substance of our being, by meditating upon chemical processes. The alchemists worked with their retorts, heating, calcining, subliming, distilling substances, watching all the while the transformations within their experiments. They used

events in their experiments as seed images for meditations, forming visual mantras from chemical changes. The alchemists reflected and mirrored these outward events into their interior world. They saw the processes in their flasks as an interaction and linking of the spiritual and the material. The spirit rose up, separating from the substance at the bottom of their flasks and descended again to spiritualise the material into an essence or tincture. As the alchemists reworked these experiments over in their souls, they further drew parallels with the greater laboratory of Nature. They saw the work within their flasks as a kind of microcosm of macrocosmic Nature. The living energies and beings in Nature were metaphorically drawn into their retorts, as they began to picture the living alchemical processes through animal symbols. For example, a black toad was a good image for the seething black mass of substance digesting in the flask, while a white eagle was a beautiful way of describing the white steam or fumes which rose up into the neck of the flask from the substance being heated below.

I would just like us to consider some of the more important of these animal symbols. Alchemists were, of course, individualists who worked alone, rather than being members of sodalities or secret orders, yet despite their writings being a result of their own experiences, the animal metaphors rapidly developed into a universal language. In the centuries before the invention of printing, key alchemical manuscripts, often with beautiful illuminated illustrations, circulated quite widely. Works like the *Aurora Consurgens* (attributed to Thomas Aquinas), the *Buch der Heiligen Dreigaltigkeit*, the works of Ramon Lull, Roger Bacon, Arnold of Villa Nova, exist in many manuscript collections from this period, and with this exchange of ideas a quite coherent set of metaphors emerged in the European Alchemical tradition. It was the coherence and universality of this set of alchemical symbols that lead Carl Jung to the concept of the collective unconscious. The alchemists though pursuing their inner work independently as individuals, nevertheless found in their interior descent a coherent language of symbols.

At the core of this was a vision of an alchemical process occurring through a cycle of colour changes, from an initial blackness to the perfection of the quintessence.

The alchemist envisaged each stage of the process being heralded by a colour change and a meeting with certain animals.

Blackening - Black Crow, Raven, Toad, Massa Confusa.

Whitening - White Swan, White Eagle, skeleton.

Greening - Green Lion.

Rapid cycling through iridescent colours - Peacock's Tail.

White Stone - Unicorn.

Reddening - Pelican feeding young with its own blood, cockerel.

Final transmutation - Phoenix reborn from the fire.

The phase of Blackening which usually marked the beginning of the work, was brought about either by heating the prima materia in the process of Calcination (the 'dry way' of the alchemists), or by the process of Putrefaction, a slow rotting or digestion over a period of weeks or months (the so-called 'wet way'). The Black Crow or Raven was often associated with this Calcination, for on vigorous heating the calcined material would usually carbonise and layers would flake off and move like a crow's wings in the flask. The Toad was a better symbol of the Putrefaction, the decaying mass slowly pulsating and shifting as gasses were given off, while the substance rotted down to a black mass. Another symbol of this stage was the dragon, a familiar inhabitant of the alchemists flasks. The dragon is however a more complex symbol and is also used when winged as a symbol for the spiritualising of the earthly substance. Thus to the alchemists the dragon appeared at the beginning and at the end of the work.

The alchemists paralleled these experiences in their souls as a withdrawal into the darkness of their interior space, a darkness pregnant with possibility. We have to a great extent lost the sense that still lived in the medieval and renaissance alchemists, that this darkness contained all potentialities. Like children we fear the dark, and for twentieth century humanity darkness often holds only an existential dread - philosophers of science have in the last decade brought us this terrible image of the 'Black Hole' which swallows up and annihilates everything that comes into its orbit. Perhaps we do not gaze enough at the blackness of the heavens. For if we look deep into the blackness of space on a clear night, we will sense more stars hidden between the known visible stars, especially in the vast star fields of the Milky Way. Cosmic space is pregnant with the possibility of other worlds as yet unseen. It is this image of blackness we must try to recover if we are to become alchemists. An echo of this perhaps remains in the often used phrase "a profound darkness". In alchemy, to meet with the black crow is a good omen. Thus in the Chymical Wedding of Christian Rosenkreutz, as our hero sets out on his journey of transformation, he meets with a Crow

which by a turn of fate decides which among the various paths open to him is the one that will lead him to the Castle of the King.

The temporary phase of whitening which followed on the black stage was symbolised by the white eagle or white swan. As the black mass of the calcination was reacted with other substances and heated, it took on a white crust or dusty layer which sometimes puffed up and flew in a cloud in the flask, as heat exploded bubbles of gas out of the black substance below. This was the White Eagle of the dry way. In the wet way, the dark putrefying matter sometimes began to form white patches, often fungal growths floating on the surface, or white crystals growing out of the mass. This could be pictured as the White Swan, which was at home upon the surface of the water yet fed off of the dark mud at the bottom of the stream or lake. Its whiteness contrasting with the mud on which it is observed to feed, made it a fine symbol of how spiritual purity could be gained from the unpromising primal material.

The whitening is a phase when we sense or have a prevision of the end of the work. It is a polar swing from out of the blackening - the appearance of seeds of the future development of the work. It is that stage of catharsis after some intense experience of being consumed in the crucible, when we glimpse the appearance, however fragmentary, of a new possibility - a flickering light in our souls which draws us towards its promise of change. We all experience these alchemical phases in our inner life, though nowadays, immersed as we are in twentieth century images which often lack a spiritual core, we often fail to recognise these to be of any value, but if we are able to use the alchemical view of inner transformation, which we might need to mould and shape to suite our present consciousness, we can gain much inner perception and growth. For our blackness becomes a pregnant space, and a mere fleeting show of the whiteness, is a significant step towards our goal of integration of the spiritual and the material in our beings.

Thus in alchemy these two phases so fundamentally linked, were sometimes seen as the chaining of a toad and an eagle. The eagle of the spirit is held down by the earthly weight of the toad, while the earthly part of our being (the toad symbol) is lifted up towards the spirit. The hermetic philosopher Michael Maier incorporated this symbol into his coat of arms. The image of the earthly dragon bearing wings was sometimes used to express this same idea. If we can sense within our souls the need to link the spirit and the material, the spiritualising of the material and the materialising of the spirit, then we truly have made progress through the blackening to the stage of the whitening.

At this point the alchemists would often encounter the Peacock's Tail, a sudden appearance of a rush of colours, an iridescence on the surface of the material in the flask, which made some think they had achieved their goal. This could arise through the formation of a layer of oil on the surface of the watery mass (in the wet way) or some oxidation-reduction reactions, say on the surface of liquid metal (in the dry way). It was a fleeting show of colour changes, that pointed to the fact that one was on the right path, and reabsorbed the energies released in initial emergence of the polarities. It was a midway point of the process, which could be seen as a false conclusion. Many people who have this experience in their inner life often falsely assume they have reached the end of the work, and attained inner transformation and enlightenment. The inner vision of the Peacock's Tail, beautiful though it may be, is merely a digestion of the polarities of the black and white stage. These must be transformed further into spiritual tinctures, if we hope to have any permanent transformation within the soul.

Not all alchemists used the symbolism of the Peacock's Tail, and another stage often met at this point in the cycle was the meeting with the Green Lion. Physically the Green Lion was usually a name for vitriol, or the sulphuric acid created by distilling the green crystals of iron sulphate in a flask. Iron sulphate was formed when iron ores rich in sulphides were left to oxidise in the air, so was readily available to medieval alchemists. The sharp penetrating sulphuric acid could create major chemical changes in many materials even to the extent of dissolving metals like iron, and copper. The Green Lion could also be the nitric acid formed from heating saltpeter or nitre and iron sulphate. Nitric acid when mixed with the acid derived from common salt, hydrochloric acid, produced aqua regia, a greenish tinged liquid that could dissolve even the noble metal gold. The Green Lion devouring the sun is a famous image in alchemy being depicted in many manuscripts and engravings, and can be thought of as aqua regia dissolving the solar gold and forming a solution which could readily tinge metals with gold.

To other alchemists who worked primarily with vegetable matter and processes, rather than the mineral work, the Green Lion was an image of the green raw energy of nature, "the green fuse which drives the flower" as Dylan Thomas elegantly expressed it in one of his poems. Here the Green Lion which devours the sun is the green pigment chlorophyll. The green leaves of the plant are formed out of the energy of sunlight. Alchemists often attempted to create living processes in their flasks and looked especially for precipitates or crystallisations which resembled

leaves or plant forms. The Green Lion here could be a plant sap extract which was often the prima materia for their alchemical work. The Gryphon, half-eagle and half-lion, was sometimes associated with the end of this stage. The eagle nature of the Gryphon gave this hybrid being an ability to ascend in the flask, so it marked, in a sense, the spiritualisation of the Green Lion.

In the work with minerals, the metal antimony was referred to as the Grey Wolf, because when molten it greedily swallowed up many other metals, such as copper, tin and lead, by forming alloys. In this sense it behaved like metallic mercury which also readily amalgamated with metals. The Grey Wolf of antimony became especially important in early 17th century alchemy - its curative properties being popularised through the writings published under the name of Basil Valentine. To an extent it became an analogue for the work with minerals of the Green Lion of the work with plant substance.

After the Peacock's Tail or the greening of the Lion, alchemists looked for the appearance of a stage of whitening then a reddening in their flasks marking an new integration of the polarities which had emerged in the initial blackening and whitening and then been digested.

The white stage was the formation of the white tincture or stone, and was derived from though not to be confused with the earlier whitening which followed the calcination or putrefaction, for to have proceeded to this stage meant one was on a higher level of spiritual attainment. This was often pictured as the appearance of a queen dressed in shining white robes in the flask. The white tincture marked a process of inner change when the alchemist was able to experience and bring into an integrated harmony the feminine component of the soul. Often this sexual element is stressed in alchemy. The Rosarium Philosophorum, a key work of the mid 16th century, shows the coupling of the male and female as a central facet of the process. Regrettably, some 20th century commentators have sought to link this symbolism with the practice of so called 'sex-magic', in which people seek to use the sexual act as a basis for magical working. The alchemical manuscripts and books do not seem to support such an interpretation at all. The male and female copulating in the flask were for the alchemists symbols for aspect of our inner being uniting together. They saw metals, plants and minerals as being masculine and feminine in some degree and projected the transformations of these in their retorts into their inner space, in order to explore their own masculine and feminine natures. Acids, for example, which could penetrate and dissolve metal ores, were seen as masculine. Substances exhibited a femininity when they were connected with the forces of growth and nourishment of processes in the flask and the melding of substances together into a new unity. Metallic Mercury was seen as hermaphrodite as it both dissolved and brought together other metals into an amalgam.

The White Stone was sometimes symbolised by the Unicorn, partly because of its white horn, but also because the Unicorn could only be tamed by the touch of a pure woman. Thus the White Tincture can only be experienced by purifying the feminine forces within our beings.

The reddening or formation of the Red Stone was pictured through the symbol of the Pelican. The white pelican bird with its long bill reaching down over its breast, was in medieval times mistakenly observed piercing its breast with its bill and feeding its young on its own blood. What actually happens is that the bird regurgitates food it has caught earlier and its young feed on this ground up fish, bits of which fall onto the breast of the pelican and it appears as if its breast is bleeding. This myth of the sacrificial act of the Pelican in feeding its young on its own blood, was more powerful than the prosaic reality and during medieval times the Pelican became a symbol for Christ's sacrifice of his blood. Alchemists also took this symbol aboard and readily incorporated it into their symbolic menagerie.

The reddening marked the formation of the Red Tincture, which transformed the masculine forces of the soul, ennobled them, and brought them into a new harmony and was often symbolised by the appearance of a Red King in the flask. In our inner work, we begin to possess the red tincture when we have entered on the task of transforming the raw energies of the masculine component of our souls, sometimes pictured by the alchemists as a knight brandishing a sword, into a more creative force.

The tinctures in alchemy relate also to the substances of the Mass, the red wine, the blood, and the white wafer, the body of Christ. Administration of the Sacraments was seen as spiritualising the souls of the partakers. In alchemical terms these white and red stones or tinctures served much the same purpose, though the alchemists achieved this, not through the intermediacy of a priest but by their own inner work of transmutation. Here alchemy links directly with the Grail stories which use similar parallels between the Grail and the Sacraments. The red tincture was occasionally

symbolised by a stag bearing antlers. The stag being seen as a noble masculine animal. This links in with the Unicorn as a symbol of the white or feminine tincture. In some alchemical illustrations, such as that of the late 16th century Book of Lambspring, the Stag and Unicorn meet in the forest of the soul as part of the process of inner transformation.

The final stage of the work was often symbolised by the Phoenix rising from the flames. This goes back to the Greek myth of the Phoenix bird which renewed itself every 500 years by immolating itself on a pyre. This is thus a kind of resurrection and was paralleled with the symbol of Christ rising from the tomb. In interior terms it marks the rebirth of the personality from out of the crucible of transformation. The alchemists in meditating on processes in their flasks threw themselves into a sea of strange experiences, and as they worked these within their meditations and sought to grasp the inner parallels and significance of each of the stages of the process they had embarked upon, in a sense they experienced an inner death and rebirth in attaining the Philosophers' Stone. This stone was actually experienced as the formation of a solid ground within the shifting sea of their inner world. Once this solid ground in the soul was found, the alchemists were able to take hold of their lives in a creative way, they could root their personality on a solid foundation or ground of inner experience.

One symbol of the stone was that of the Ouroboros, the snake holding its tail. As we begin the work, we are all rather unformed (the 'Massa Confusa' or confused mass is a good image) and often victims at the mercy of the sway of polarities in the soul, psychic energies that constantly shift from one pole to another, from joy to despair, from overbearing positivity to deep melancholy and negativity, from light to dark, energy to inertia. Our consciousness naturally follows the cycle of wakefulness and sleep, reflecting the cycle of day and night and the Seasons in Nature. This duality becomes reflected in many of our inner experiences. The snake often was used as a symbol for duality - its long drawn out body separating the polarities of head and tail. Sometimes the figure of a winged dragon was used here in place of the snake, in order to close the circle with the dragon at the beginning of the work. When the snake or dragon seized its tail it united the polarities into a circle, a symbol to the alchemists for achieving solidity amongst the dualistic energies of the soul forces. The creation of the Philosophers' stone, was the formation of solid inner ground upon which the alchemical philosophers could build their personalities, and experience the full potentiality of being human.

Thus alchemists could pursue their cycle of inner transformation as embarking on a journey in which they met with archetypal animal figures. The steps on their journey were paralleled in their experiments in their flasks, and the detailed images of processes of change were worked together with the animal archetypes of that stage into a mandala-like picture which they used as the basis for their meditations.

Quantum Consciousness

Adam McLean ©

The hermetic tradition has long been concerned with the relationship between the inner world of our consciousness and the outer world of nature, between the microcosm and the macrocosm, the below and the above, the material and the spiritual, the centric and the peripheral. The hermetic world view held by such as Robert Fludd, pictured a great chain of being linking our inner spark of consciousness with all the facets of the Great World. There was a grand platonic metaphysical clockwork, as it were, through which our inner world was linked by means of a hierarchy of beings and planes to the highest unity of the Divine.

This view though comforting is philosophically unsound, and the developments in thought since the early 17th century have made such a hermetic world view untenable and philosophically naive. It is impossible to try to argue the case for such an hermetic metaphysics with anyone who has had a philosophical training, for they will quickly and mercilessly reveal deep philosophical contradictions in this world view.

So do we now have to abandon such a beautiful and spiritual world view and adopt the prevailing reductionist materialist conception of the world which has become accepted in the intellectual tradition of the West ?

I am not so sure. There still remains the problem of our consciousness and its relationship to our material form - the Mind / Brain problem. Behavioural psychologists such as Skinner tried to reduce this to one level - the material brain - by viewing the mental or consciousness events from the outside as being merely stimulus-response loops. This simplistic view works fine for basic reflex actions - "I itch therefore I scratch" - but dissolves into absurdity when applied to any real act of the creative intellect or artistic imagination. Skinner's determinism collapses when confronted with trying to explain the creative source of our consciousness revealing itself in an artist at work or a mathematician discovering through his thinking a new property of an abstract mathematical system. The psychologists' attempts to reduce the mind/brain problem to a merely material one of neurophysiology obviously failed. The idea that consciousness is merely a secretion or manifestation of a complex net of electrical impulses working within the mass of cells in our brain, is now discredited. The advocates of this view are strongly motivated by a desire to reduce the world to one level, to get rid of the necessity for "consciousness", "mind" or "spirit" as a real facet of the world.

This materialistic determinism in which everything in the world (including the phenomenon of consciousness) can be reduced to simple interactions on a physical/chemical level, belongs really to the nineteenth century scientific landscape. Nineteenth century science was founded upon a "Newtonian Absolute Physics" which provided a description of the world as an interplay of forces obeying immutable laws and following a predetermined pattern. This is the "billiard ball" view of the world - one in which, provided we are given the initial state of the system (the layout of the balls on the table, and the exact trajectory, momentum and other parameters of the cue ball, etc.) then theoretically the exact layout after each interaction can be precisely calculated to absolute precision. All could be reduced to the determinate interplay of matter obeying the immutable laws of physics. The concept of the "spiritual" was unnecessary, even "mind" was dispensable, and "God" of course had no place in this scheme of things.

This comfortably solid "Newtonian" world view of the materialists has however been entirely undermined by the new physics of the twentieth century, and in particular through Quantum Theory. Physicists investigating the properties of sub-atomic matter, found that the deterministic Newtonian absolutism broke down at the foundation level of matter. An element of probability had to be introduced into the physicists' calculations, and each sub-atomic event was in itself inherently unpredictable - one could only ascribe a probability to the outcome. The simple billiard ball model collapsed at the sub-atomic level. For if the billiard table was intended as a picture of a small region of space on the atomic scale and each ball was to be a particle (an electron, proton, or neutron, etc.), then physicists came to realise that this model could not represent reality on that level. For in Quantum theory one could not define the position and momentum of a particle both at the same moment. As soon as we establish the parameters of motion of a body its position is uncertain and can only be described mathematically as a wave of probability. Our billiard table dissolved into a fluid ever-moving undulating surface, with each ball at one moment focussed to a point then at another dissolving and spreading itself out over an area of the space of the table. Trying to play billiards at this sub-atomic level was rather difficult.

In the Quantum picture of the world, each individual event cannot be determined exactly, but has to be described by a wave of probability. There is a kind of polarity between the position and energy of any particle in which they cannot be simultaneously determined. This was not a failing of experimental method but a property of the kinds of mathematical structures that physicists have to use to describe this realm of the world. The famous equation of Quantum theory embodying Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle is :

Planck's constant = (uncertainty in energy) x (uncertainty in position)

Thus if we try to fix the position of the particle (i.e. reduce the uncertainty in its position to a small factor) then as a consequence of this equation the uncertainty in the energy must increase to balance this, and therefore we cannot find a value for the energy of the particle simultaneous with fixing its position. Planck's constant being very small means that these factors only become dominant on the extremely small scale, that is within the realm of the atom.

So we see that the Quantum picture of reality has at its foundation a non-deterministic view of the fundamental building blocks of matter. Of course, when dealing with large masses of particles these quantum indeterminacies effectively cancel each other out, and physicists can determine and predict the state of large systems. Obviously planets, suns, galaxies being composed of large numbers of particles do not exhibit any uncertainty in their position and energies, for when we look at such large aggregates as a totality, the total quantum uncertainties of the system reduces to zero, and in respect to their large scale properties can effectively be treated as deterministic systems.

Thus on the large scale we can effectively apply a deterministic physics, but when we wish to look in detail at the properties of the sub-atomic realm, lying at the root and foundation of our world, we must enter a domain of quantum uncertainties and find the neat ordered picture dissolving into a sea of ever flowing forces that we cannot tie down or set into fixed patterns.

Some people when faced with this picture of reality find comfort in dismissing the quantum world as having little to do with the "real world" of appearances. We do not live within the sub-atomic level after all. However, it does spill out into our outer world. Most of the various electronic devices of the past decades rely on the quantum tunnelling effect in transistors and silicon chips. The revolution in quantum physics has begun to influence the life sciences, and biologists and botanists are beginning to come up against quantum events as the basis of living systems, in the structure of complex molecules in the living tissues and membranes of cells for example. When we look at the blue of the sky we are looking at a phenomenon only recently understood through quantum theory.

Although the Quantum picture of reality might seem strange indeed, I believe the picture it presents of the foundations of the material world, the ever flowing sea of forces metamorphosing and interacting through the medium of "virtual" or quantum messenger particles, has certain parallels with with nature of our consciousness.

I believe that if we try to examine the nature of our consciousness we will find at its basis it exhibits "quantum" like qualities. Seen from a distant, large scale and external perspective, we seem to be able to structure our consciousness in an exact and precise way, articulating thoughts and linking them together into long chains of arguments and intricate structures. Our consciousness can build complex images through its activity and seems to have all the qualities of predictability and solidity. The consciousness of a talented architect is capable of designing and holding within itself an image of large solid structures such as great cathedrals or public buildings. A mathematician is capable of inwardly picturing an abstract mathematical system, deriving its properties from a set of axioms. A solo cellist is able to hold the whole musical structure of a Elgar's Cello Concerto or Bach's Cello Suites in his or her consciousness when preparing for a performance.

In this sense our consciousness might appear as an ordered and deterministic structure, capable of behaving like and being explicable in the same terms as other large scale structures in the world. However, this is not so. For if we through introspection try to examine the way in which we are conscious, in a sense to look at the atoms of our consciousness, this regular structure disappears. Our consciousness does not actually work in such an ordered way. We only nurture an illusion if we try to hold to the view that our consciousness is at root an ordered deterministic structure. True, we can create the large scale designs of the architect, the abstract mathematical systems, a cello concerto, but anyone who has built such structures within their consciousness knows that this is not achieved by a linear deterministic route.

Our consciousness is at its root a maverick, ever moving, jumping from one perception, feeling, thought, to another. We can never hold it still or focus it at a point for long. Like the quantum nature of matter, the more we try to hold our consciousness to a fixed point, the greater the uncertainty in its energy will become. So when we focus and narrow our consciousness to a fixed centre, it is all the more likely to suddenly jump with a great rush of energy to some seemingly unrelated aspect of our inner life. We all have such experiences each moment of the day. As in our daily work we try to focus our mind upon some problem only to suddenly experience a shift to some other domain in ourselves, another image or emotional current intrudes then vanishes again, like an ephemeral virtual particle in quantum theory.

Those who begin to work upon their consciousness through some kinds of meditative exercises will experience these quantum uncertainties in the field of consciousness in a strong way.

In treating our consciousness as if it were a digital computer or deterministic machine after the model of 19th century science, I believe we foster a limited and false view of our inner world. We must now take the step towards a quantum view of consciousness, recognising that at its base and root our consciousness behaves like the ever flowing sea of the sub-atomic world. The ancient hermeticists pictured consciousness as the "Inner Mercury". Those who have experienced the paradoxical way in which the metal Mercury is both dense and metallic and yet so elusive, flowing and breaking up into small globules, and just as easily coming together again, will see how perceptive the alchemists were of the inner nature of consciousness, in choosing this analogy. Educators who treat

the consciousness of children as if it were a filing cabinet to be filled with ordered arrays of knowledge are hopelessly wrong.

We can I believe go a step further than this recognition of the quantum nature of consciousness, and see just how this overlays and links with the mind/brain problem. The great difficulties in developing a theory of the way in which consciousness/mind is embodied in the activity of the brain, has I believe arisen out of the erroneous attempt to press a deterministic view onto our brain activity. Skinner and the behaviourist psychologists attempted to picture the activity of the brain as a computer where each cell behaved as an input/output device or a complex flip/flop. They saw nerve cells with their axons (output fibres) and dendrites (input fibres) being linked together into complex networks. An electrical impulse travelling onto a dendrite made a cell 'fire' and send an impulse out along its axon so setting some other nerve cell into action. The resulting patterns of nerve impulses constituted a reflex action, an impulse to move a muscle, a thought, a feeling, an intuitive experience. All could be reduced to the behaviour of this web of axons and dendrites of the nerve cells.

This simplistic picture, of course, was insufficient to explain even the behaviour of creatures like worms with primitive nervous systems, and in recent years this approach has largely been abandoned as it is becoming recognised that these events on the membranes of nerve cells are often triggered by shifts in the energy levels of sub-atomic particles such as electrons. In fact, at the root of such interactions lie quantum events, and the activity of the brain must now be seen as reflecting these quantum events.

The brain can no longer be seen as a vast piece of organic clockwork, but as a subtle device amplifying quantum events. If we trace a nerve impulse down to its root, there lies a quantum uncertainty, a sea of probability. So just how is it that this sea of probability can cast up such ordered structures and systems as the conception of a cello concerto or abstract mathematical entities ? Perhaps here we may glimpse a way in which "spirit" can return into our physics.

The inner sea of quantum effects in our brain is in some way coupled to our ever flowing consciousness. When our consciousness focusses to a point, and we concentrate on some abstract problem or outer phenomenon, the physical events in our brain, the pattern of impulses, shifts in some ordered way. In a sense, the probability waves of a number of quantum systems in different parts of the brain, are brought into resonance, and our consciousness is able momentarily to create an ordered pattern that manifests physically through the brain. The thought, feeling, perception is momentarily earthed in physical reality, brought from the realm of the spiritually potential into outer actuality. This focussed ordering of the probability waves of many quantum systems requires an enormous amount of energy, but this can be borrowed in the quantum sense for a short instant of time. Thus we have through this quantum borrowing a virtual quantum state which is the physical embodiment of a thought, feeling, etc. However, as this can only be held for a short time, the quantum debt must be paid and the point of our consciousness is forced to jump to some other quantum state, perhaps in another region of the brain. Thus our thoughts are jumbled up with emotions, perceptions, fantasy images.

The central point within our consciousness, our "spirit" in the hermetic sense, can now be seen as an entity that can work to control quantum probabilities. To our "spirits" our brain is a quantum sea providing a rich realm in which it can incarnate and manifest patterns down into the electrical/chemical impulses of the nervous system. (It has been calculated that the number of interconnections existing in our brains far exceeds the number of atoms in the whole universe - so in this sense the microcosm truly mirrors the macrocosm!). Our "spirit" can through quantum borrowing momentarily press a certain order into this sea and this manifests as a thought, emotion, etc. Such an ordered state can only exist momentarily, before our spirit or point of consciousness is forced to jump and move to other regions of the brain, where at that moment the pattern of probability waves for the particles in these nerve cells, can reflect the form that our spirit is trying to work with.

This quantum borrowing to create regular patterns of probability waves is bought for a high price in that a degree of disorder must inevitably arise whenever the spirit tries to focus and reflect a linked sequential chain of patterns into the brain (such as we would experience as a logical train of thought or inward picture of some elaborate structure). Thus it is not surprising that our consciousness sometimes drifts and jumps about in a seemingly chaotic way. The quantum borrowing might also be behind our need for sleep and dream, allowing the physical brain to rid itself of the shadowy echos of these patterns pressed into it during waking consciousness. Dreaming may be that point in a cycle where consciousness and its vehicle interpenetrate and flow together, allowing the patterns and waves of

probability to appear without any attempt to focus them to a point. In dream and sleep we experience our point of consciousness dissolving, decoupling and defocussing.

The central point of our consciousness when actively thinking or feeling, must of necessity jump around the sea of patterns in our brain. (It is well known through neurophysiology that function cannot be located at a certain point in the brain, but that different areas and groups of nerve cells can take on a variety of different functions.) We all experience this when in meditation we merely let our consciousness move as it will. Then we come to sense the elusive mercurial eternal movement of the point of our consciousness within our inner space. You will find it to be a powerful and convincing experience if you try in meditation to follow the point of your consciousness moving within the space of your skull. Many religious traditions teach methods for experiencing this inner point of spirit.

I believe the movement of this point of consciousness, which appears as a pattern of probability waves in the quantum sea, must occur in extremely short segments of time, of necessity shorter than the time an electron takes to move from one state to another within the molecular structure of the nerve cell membranes. We are thus dealing in time scales significantly less than 10^{-16} of a second and possibly down to 10^{-43} of a second. During such short periods of time, the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle which lies at the basis of quantum theory, means that this central spark of consciousness can borrow a large amount of energy, which explains how it can bring a large degree of ordering into a pattern. Although our point of consciousness lives at this enormously fast speed, our brain which transforms this into a pattern of electro/chemical activity runs at a much slower rate. Between creating each pattern our spark of consciousness must wait almost a eternity for this to be manifested on the physical level. Perhaps this may account for the sense we all have sometimes of taking an enormous leap in consciousness, or travelling though vast realms of ideas, or flashes of images, in what is only a fleeting moment.

At around 10^{-43} of a second, time itself becomes quantised, that is it appears as discontinuous particles of time, for there is no way in which time can manifest in quantities less than 10^{-43} (the so called Planck time). For here the borrowed quantum energies distort the fabric of space turning it back upon itself. There time must have a stop. At such short intervals the energies available are enormous enough to create virtual black holes and wormholes in space-time, and at this level we have only a sea of quantum probabilities - the so called Quantum Foam. Contemporary physics suggests that through these virtual wormholes in space-time there are links with all time past and future, and through the virtual black holes even with parallel universes.

It must be somewhat above this level that our consciousness works, weaving probability waves into patterns and incarnating them in the receptive structure of our brains. Our being or spirit lives in this Quantum Foam, which is thus the Eternal Now, infinite in extent and a plenum of all possibilities. The patterns of everything that has been, that is now, and will come to be, exists latent in this quantum foam. Perhaps this is the realm though which the mystics stepped into timelessness, the eternal present, and sensed the omnipotence and omniscience of the spirit.

I believe that these exciting discoveries of modern physics could be the basis for a new view of consciousness and the way it is coupled to our physical nature in the brain. (Indeed, one of the fascinating aspects of Quantum theory which puzzles and mystifies contemporary physicists is the way in which their quantum description of matter requires that they recognise the consciousness of the observer as a factor in certain experiments. This enigma has caused not a few physicists to take an interest in spirituality especially inclining them to eastern traditions like Taoism or Buddhism, and in time I hope that perhaps even the hermetic traditions might prove worthy of their interest).

An important experiment carried out as recently as summer 1982 by the French physicist, Aspect, has unequivocally demonstrated the fact that physicists cannot get round the Uncertainty Principle and simultaneously determine the quantum states of particles, and confirmed that physicists cannot divorce the consciousness of the observer from the events observed. This experiment (in disproving the separability of quantum measurements) has confirmed what Einstein, Bohr and Heisenberg were only able to philosophically debate over - that with quantum theory we have to leave behind our naive picture of reality as an intricate clockwork. We are challenged by quantum theory to build new ways in which to picture reality, a physics, moreover, in which consciousness plays a central role, in which the observer is inextricably interwoven in the fabric of reality.

In a sense it may now be possible to build a new model of quantum consciousness, compatible with contemporary physics and which allows a space for the inclusion of the hermetic idea of the spirit. It may well be that science has

taken a long roundabout route through the reductionist determinism of the 19th century and returned to a more hermetic conception of our inner world.

In this short essay, incompletely argued though it may be, I hope I have at least presented some of the challenging ideas that lie behind the seeming negativity of our present age. For behind the hopelessness and despair of our times we stand on the brink of a great breakthrough to a new recognition of the vast spiritual depths which live within us all as human beings.

The Alchemical Vessel as Symbol of the Soul

Adam McLean ©

As students of the hermetic tradition we all recognise that the alchemical work takes place on many different levels - the physical work with substances, the experience and manipulation of etheric forces, the interior work on the soul, as well as the spiritual and planetary/cosmic aspects of alchemy. These different facets of the work interpenetrate and overlap each other. Indeed, in a sense, if we are to make any progress in alchemy, we must pursue the different facets concurrently, paralleling interior development with experience of the outer work. One symbol that belongs to all these different realms of this work is that of the alchemical vessel. In this article I would like to outline some ways in which we can use this symbol in our inner exercises.

The tradition of interior development in alchemy, is pursued by mirroring the transformations and processes of alchemy within our soul. As with any esoteric practice, this internalising of alchemical operations can produce disturbing patterns in the powerful psychic energies that we evoke through inner work, unless we find some means of containing these energies. In the tradition of ritual ceremonial magic the operators normally use an opening and closing ritual that acts as a structure to contain and safely dissipate the energies raised through their work. Similarly, in many traditions of meditation, an opening and closing exercise (sometimes based on breathing rhythms) helps to anchor and reconnect the meditators with their normal state of consciousness, so as not to leave them rather dissociated and dangling somewhere in between the outer and interior worlds. In our inner work with alchemical processes we will find the symbol of the alchemical vessel an invaluable means for containing the interior energies and allowing them to unfold within us in a controlled and positive manner. So in a sense, the alchemical vessel can be a protective interior symbol, just like the circle of the ceremonial magician, or the astral temple of a working esoteric lodge, or the breathing exercises of a meditation tradition.

The energies evoked by working with alchemical processes, as I have said, can be powerful and disruptive forces in the psyche, and a direct inner encounter with these transformative energies is not to be had instantaneously. Only through long and repeated interior work do we come to directly experience these energies in their primal and most fundamental form. The initial encounters are usually ephemeral and overlain with emotional currents. Only if we have the patience of alchemists tirelessly repeating interior experiments, brooding over our inner flask, will we attain even a glimpse of the goal of alchemical transmutation. It is therefore important that we understand the nature of the alchemical vessel so that we have some indication of how to use this in our inner work.

We should come to see that symbols are actually patterns of energy. In an exoteric sense this is so, for obviously any symbol held in our consciousness is manifested as an electro-chemical plexus in the neuron net in our brain. However, esoterically on the deepest level, a symbol is the pattern of etheric energy underlying its various different forms. When we meditate on a symbol we will find it shape-shifting and manifesting its different appearances, and through this can come to grasp that the true nature of the symbol is its energy pattern.

There are many different forms of vessel described and depicted in the alchemical literature and emblematic engravings. There are a seeming multiplicity of forms of retort, pelicans, water baths, alembics, cucurbites, stills, etc. However, in the interior work we will find that all these different outer manifestations of the apparatus reduce to three archetypal forms - which we can call the CRUCIBLE, the RETORT and the STILL.

The Crucible is essentially an open vessel, a dish, a mortar, or a cauldron, open to the outside world yet capable of containing material. Substances and energy patterns can be put into the crucible and be acted upon by some agent, and some part of this substance can also be drawn off or removed so enacting a kind of purification. This is often pictured as taking place through the application of heat. In outer terms, an ore is placed in the crucible, which is then heated, the metal forms itself out of the ore and various impurities are given off into the air, or a slag is skimmed off the surface of the metal. Thus the primal substance, the ore, is transformed into new pure metal. The essence, however, of this type of vessel and the inner operations undertaken in it, is that it is open. A transformation can be undertaken because certain energies (or impurities) are allowed to escape or dissipate. Heating is not essential to this archetypal alchemical process. Acting on a salt with an acid to produce an effervescence or release of gases, is another outer example of this process, or the slow precipitation or crystallisation of a solid out of a mother liquor.

When we internalise the crucible in our souls we picture a vessel within our being which is open, allowing impurities or unwanted facets of the work to pass out or to dissipate away, as well as substances and forces to enter in from the universal spiritual. In this sense the crucible in our souls is a chalice, the lower part of which contains and holds a substance or constellation of forces while its upper part is open to universal spiritual influences. Unwanted energies can be allowed to safely flow out of our crucible and dissolve in the universal flow, and in the other direction energies can be gathered from the spiritual and allowed to descend to the bottom of our interior vessel.

This process can be a gentle and slow flowing one, or alternatively one can heat up our inner crucible through generating powerful currents of emotional energy, forcing and pressing for some transformation to occur. Indeed, once we become experienced in using these techniques, we can readily consciously evoke both of these phases, the active fiery phase and the gentle cooling, precipitation or crystallisation, and in a particular working these can be applied alternatively to create a polarity within the interior experience, that greatly helps the work to come to some conclusion.

Thus we normally undertake such exercises by placing some pattern of symbolic energy into our inner crucible, then opening ourselves to the particular transformations that can be evolved by this exercise - calcinations, purifications, crystallisations, dissolvings, etc. I hope to write further on the inner nature of these alchemical processes in a later issue of the Journal.

The Retort in this archetypal case is a sealed flask. In this interior work we picture our soul as entirely sealed off from both the outer world and the universal spiritual realm. When we undertake this exercise we must have everything we need within the sphere of our inner retort, and for the duration of this work we are entirely self-contained and rely on inner change to take place within the components or forces we have within our being at that time. We have to work to bring about a transformation in these inner patterns, without relying on external forces. It is thus very important if we are to undertake such interior exercises in a positive way with any hope of any satisfactory results, to prepare ourselves and place in our inner retort all the energies and symbols that are necessary for the process. Thus working this particular exercise requires some degree of preparation.

The retort exercise is especially valuable for working towards the interior synthesis of polarities. We place the polarised patterns of energy bound up, say, in some particular set of symbols, into our interior flask, seal it up, and allow them to fully unfold, interpenetrate, and come to a new synthesis. The most common symbol of this in alchemical writings is the man and woman in a flask, uniting and giving birth to a child. So the obvious forces to work with through this exercise are our masculine and feminine components. Through putting these patterns of symbolic energies into our inner retort and calling up the manner in which they manifest and resonate within our beings we can bring about an encounter with these psychic components and make them meet in a positive way. Other polarities we might try to work with are our logical thinking and emotional intuitive facets, or body and spirit, even our awe of the spiritual light and our fear of the deep darkness of matter, or the processes of life and death, and growth and decay.

We should try to experience the retort as a womb or matrix in which the process of gestation or new birth arising out of primal components, can safely take place in us. If we work with this retort exercise over a period of time, we will begin to feel the importance of this space in our souls, and value it as a creative interior workplace. The alchemical processes that go on in this retort usually involve the meeting of polarities, such as Separation and Conjunction, or

of Dissolving and Coagulation. Sometimes we find our inner retort will go black, and nothing seems to happen for an extended period, but if we persevere some change will eventually be seen - perhaps at first merely a glimmer - which over a number of repetitions of the exercise might give rise to some new inner experience. At other times the retort will be full of movement and iridescent play of colours and ever changing forms, and here we must wait for some solid and substantial ground to arise in the shifting patterns, upon which our inner experience can grow. A symbol or pattern of energy often experienced at this stage is the tree or flowering plant within the space of the interior retort. Another symbol structure is that of the bird rising and falling in our inner world.

The final interior vessel I would like us to consider is that of the Still. When we try to experience our inner world through this symbol, we should have a sense of extracting an essence out of one of the interior processes, purifying and gathering it within our being so that it becomes an inner source we can touch upon at will. This alchemical operation to some extent corresponds in our everyday outer consciousness to the way in which an experience of coming to an understanding of some aspect of our world can entirely transform our way of interacting with it. For example, our initial reaction to a new piece of technology or an unfamiliar task, is tentative and fraught with difficulties we project upon this device or task. If we can eventually understand just how the device works or gain a picture of the movements needed to accomplish the task, then our way of using the device or of undertaking the task becomes entirely transformed.

Similar processes take place in respect to our interior life through the exercises of inner distillation, though this works on a more subtle plane. Here we take some particular positive quality of our being, such as our creativity, or our sensitivity to others, or our ability to think deeply and clearly, and we find some symbols that capture (or at least envelope) the essence of this quality. We then place these into our interior Still and in our meditation begin to allow these symbol patterns to flow together. At some point in the inner work, we should sense some essence of this process begin to rise out of and separate itself from the specific symbols and feelings connected with this quality. If we encourage this process we can have the inner experience of elevating this essence and allowing it to collect in the upper part of our soul. It then becomes a Tincture.

If, say, we choose to work upon our creativity through this exercise, we place into our interior Still, our understandings of the source of our creativity, picturings of our previous creations or our work in progress, memories of the emotional currents associated with our creative experiences, more universal symbols of creativity, and so on. In a meditative work on this facet, which will take many sessions to bring to fruition, we evoke all this material in our interior Still and attend closely to the processes and changes taking place there. For example, at one point we will experience the 'polarity flipping' of various symbols. We might, say, initially believe our creative impulse lies entirely in the quest for some ideal form, and experience this ideal image flipping (instantaneously interchanging) with its antithesis, some ugly shapelessness, or cycle of metamorphoses, producing disturbing patterns within our being. This stage will eventually resolve and we will find some symbol or feeling-perception that captures the essence of our creativity (or whatever we have chosen to work with) emerging out of the meditative material. If we nurture and sustain this essence, then we can allow it to rise up within our soul and we will feel it remaining as a kind of tincture in our inner world. If this tincture becomes fixed within our being then we can later draw upon it at will. What we find then is that a part of our inner forces retains an echo of all the meditative work we undertook at that time, and we can reconnect with this reservoir whenever we wish. So in the case of creativity, once we possess this inner tincture, then if we have some difficulties (or a block) over some particular piece of creative work, we will find that evoking the inner tincture of this experience, will put us deeply in touch with the ground of our creativity and may enable us to resolve our present problem.

Of course, such exercises are never entirely completed, as we ourselves are changing all the time in response to ongoing experiences, but working with our interior Still will be found invaluable in putting us in touch with the sources of our positive qualities. In alchemical terms the processes associated with the Still include those of Distillation, Exaltation, Fixation, Projection, Multiplication, Quintessence, etc.

I hope these few indications might help us to see how the philosophy and symbolism of the ancient alchemists can still be effectively used today, as a vital living force for the inner spiritual transformation of our souls. The 'open secret' of alchemy is that we must, like the alchemists of old, experience our inner world as these alchemical vessels. Then our inner life will be tinged and transformed with a new richness of spiritual experience.

Emblematic Meditation

by Adam McLean ©

The stream of mystery wisdom we know as the hermetic tradition, embraces many facets. It has a coherent set of metaphysical ideas that continue to make sense even within the currents of present day scientific thought, a spiritual psychology which recognises the importance of the process of change and transmutation very relevant to the present condition of the human soul, and an elaborate system of symbols which can still speak directly to us, and seem to be a map of archetypes etched into our innermost being.

When we begin to look at the material of the hermetic tradition we are quickly struck by the elaborate and beautiful emblematic engravings especially from the late 16th and early 17th centuries, such as those of De Bry, Merian and others, illustrating the works of Robert Fludd, Michael Maier, Mylius, Khunrath, etc, which now seem almost mandatory for inclusion in today's popular books on the 'occult' and related themes.

Only rarely in such present day popular books are the symbolic contents of these emblems addressed by any meaningful or sensitive commentary, and they are all too often used merely as a form of decoration, or to pad out an otherwise inadequate text. Although these emblems have within the last decade or so been rescued from neglect becoming recognised as some of the finest examples of the engravers art, I hope that they will not become too overexposed and familiar as to have their impact on the soul diluted. In my work with the Hermetic Journal and Magnum Opus books, I have focussed especially on these emblems and tried to provide meaningful commentaries rather than using them in a decorative way.

I believe these emblems are too important to be dismissed merely as fine examples of symbolic engravings. Indeed, if we work with them with any sensitivity, we will come to recognise that they possess a kind of inner life, a numinous quality. They are not merely symbolic keys to unlock the mysteries of hermeticism, but can be experienced as bearing a kind of living spiritual force that can still work in our souls today if we are prepared to contemplate them in the right way. In this short article I would like to suggest some ways in which we can work sensitively with this material.

Some Suggestions for working with Emblematic Meditation.

First of all it is important to get good examples of these emblems as so often small details in the symbolism will be found to be important. I prefer to work with them as individual emblems each on separate sheets of paper rather than bound up in a book as they are then free of any context or implication of hierarchy or sequence, and can begin to reveal their own internal architecture. The hermetic emblems are often found forming series as with Michelspacher (4), Rosarium (20), Pandora (20), Splendor Solis (22), Mylius (28), Maier Atalanta (50), Stolcius Hermetic Garden (160).

To begin with we should merely familiarise ourselves with the symbolism of the emblems we have decided to work with, rather than immediately trying to analyse their structure. For until we have fully breathed their complex net of symbols into our souls, initial intellectual analysis usually results merely in our unconsciously projecting our own ideas and preconceptions onto the symbols, rather than allowing them to unfold their being to us. There are quite a few writers who, rushing headlong into an interpretation, reveal their own preconceptions and philosophical outlook rather than truly encountering the inner ground of the emblems they seek to grasp. (A prime example of this is Johannes Fabricius in his book *Alchemy : The Medieval Alchemists and their Royal Art*, in which many hermetic emblems are beautifully illustrated, but are interpreted only through the authors attachment to a Freudian psychological model, and his text often seems to overwhelm and ignore the essence of the emblems.) If we are to work with the emblems we should initially be aware that we have to guard ourselves against such projections.

The sheer density, enigmatic, and at times almost surrealistic nature of the symbols on the emblems allows them to echo back almost anything we care to project upon them. However, I believe we have to recognise that they are not

merely mirrors in which we can narcissistically reflect our own philosophy and view of the world, but in fact they possess a living spirit that transcends such projections.

So with these points in mind, we must begin by trying to build up in ourselves an inner version of the emblem. Beautiful as it may be as fine lines etched on a copper plate and pressed into paper, the essence of an emblem stands outside its particular depiction. Our initial work then involves freeing the content of the emblem from the paper and dissolving it in our soul. Some of us will find copying or redrawing the emblem, and even colouring in its symbols a useful exercise at this stage. As we work in the right way with some series of emblems, we find we are developing a kind of dialogue with the symbols and that slowly they seem to be becoming a part of our inner life. In a sense we are breathing in their essence.

This process is best undertaken sporadically in response to our feelings and inspiration, rather than pushed too hard with the kind of discipline we might apply to learning a mass of facts about a subject, in order to write about it or pass some exam. I find that if I place the particular set of emblems I currently wish to work with, on the wall of my study, or just carry them around as a set of cards that I can bring out whenever I want and spread them on a table or on the floor, then after a few weeks of living with them in this way, even the most elaborate sequences unconsciously, without any stress or pressure, have become woven into my inner world. Indeed, only at the point where we hold its entire complex of symbolism within ourselves, can we begin to work in a creative experiential way with an emblem sequence.

Emblems are flat plates, usually square, rectangular or sometimes circular windows through which we glimpse an elaborate world of symbols. As such we are forced by the format to adopt initially the role of observers at a peep show. It is this format that in fact makes the emblems so powerful. In a sense they are esoterically protected. Profound esoteric exercises have been compressed into these emblems in such a way that they remain entirely harmless to those who are unable to find in themselves the inner resources to work with them and bring them to life, and resurrect them in the activity of their souls. This is not so true of some other methods of transmitting esoteric exercises, such as ritual or group meditations, which can often have an unsettling effect upon the unprepared soul. Rituals used in any public context, outside of a working group of esotericists, should be carefully designed and balanced so as not to unduly disturb any of the participants.

The esoteric content of the hermetic emblems are not so restricted because people initially view them from the outside as observers, and consequently intense and powerful esoteric material is found openly displayed and yet simultaneously hidden in these emblems. An emblem only comes alive, or active esoterically, when one steps through the frame of the picture and becomes a participant and not merely an observer of the symbolic peep show.

Just as the emblem steps towards us, freeing itself from the printed page and rebuilding itself in the imaginative pictures of our inner world, so if we are to truly make relationship with it, we in our turn must step into the sphere of action of the emblem.

[At this point I would like perhaps to expand somewhat the concept of an emblem. Although we can identify them as engravings, woodcuts or coloured drawings in manuscripts, in a sense the hermetic allegories found in various texts should be seen as paralleling emblematic material. Indeed, if we contemplate such an allegory in something of the same way suggested for the emblems, then we arrive at the same point where we bear the emblem or allegory living within our being and have to step into the symbolic action to give it life.]

We have to transform our emblem from a flat plate into a three-dimensional landscape of symbols within which we can stand. At this stage it will be found useful to begin meditating on the symbolic content of the emblem. Say we have chosen to work with a particular series of emblems and have reached the point where we have their symbolic content living within us. Occasionally, without necessarily any great preparation or ritual, we can slip into a visualisation of the emblems as windows upon a landscape of symbols, one after another in the order in which they were originally depicted. The first few occasions we might fail to get through the sequence without tiring, however, this doesn't matter and we should just repeat this short exercise say once a day for a week or so.

After a few sessions, this exercise should become more and more tedious as we are able to easily recall before our inner gaze each emblem in turn, and a point will be reached when we find our seeming good progress is disturbed (in a way in which it wasn't earlier) by symbols shifting around and getting muddled, even though we know quite

well where each of the symbols ought to be the tableau. Unless we have had any indication in the meantime through warning dreams or intuitions, this is the point where we step decisively into the space of the emblem. Now our meditations should become perhaps less casual as we begin to explore this inner landscape of symbols.

At this stage I find it useful to provide a structure within which the emblem is free to unfold and yet is bounded and contained in the soul. For this purpose one can build the image of an inner walled garden say, or a mystical island bound by a calm sea, or a strong fortified castle or palace, an alchemical retort or vessel, or the enclosed sanctuary of a temple. The purpose of such a meditative container is to provide a space within which the emblem can unfold its symbols and allow us to explore them with a sense of inner security, in that we can at any moment in our meditation return into our inner garden, vessel, or sanctuary. If we chose not to use such a technique it is not really a problem for the experienced meditator, but some people find that the symbols in an emblem occasionally lead them off on trains of associations which leave them feeling uncomfortable or disoriented. Although this is not especially troublesome and will wear off in a few hours it can interfere with our everyday work and responsibilities, and such experiences in fact usually lead to people giving up their inner work rather than continuing to feel dissociated. This feeling is in fact a positive one, a sign that psychic energy is being developed by polarities being exchanged between archetypes. The discomfiting aspect arises from it being initially misplaced and unintegrated within the existing patterns of our inner life.

It is not possible to go into great detail on meditative techniques and experiences in such a short article, but I hope given time to be able to write at length on these matters. We will find that there are four different levels of working with emblematic meditation.

Spiritual existential level - pure consciousness of being

Astral - energetic flow of psychic energy, drama

Etheric - weaving into life forces

Physical - encountering the emblem outside ourselves

In the first level we encounter the emblem in its physical manifestation as a pictorial image outside ourselves. We have to take this through our eyes and imprint it in our physical brain so it becomes in a sense a physical pattern within ourselves. However, when we build up an inner picture of an esoteric emblem we find something different occurs from the common process which we do all day long with mundane things we have to remember for our work or everyday life. The emblems contain carefully polarised and balanced symbols that stimulate and resonate with archetypal structures in us. In a sense they begin to send out roots and grow into our being, and at this stage we can say that they have come to life within us released from the dead outer image on paper. In present day esoteric parlance we can say that the emblems have permeated through into our etheric body. Those more attached to physiologically based models of the psyche could well describe this as the fact that the emblem has been transferred from an initial mere mapping of its physical characteristics onto visual memory in the brain, to a less localised pattern of energy ramified throughout our being, free to make associations on different levels. It could be pictured as the movement of the image from the localised receptors in the visual cortex till it becomes non-localised over the two hemispheres analogous to the way all the information borne in a hologram can be found at every point in its two dimensional plate.

It does not really matter just how we chose to describe this process to ourselves intellectually, the experience of the emblems coming to life within us remains the same. The next stage of stepping into the frame of the action, can be described in esoteric language, as experiencing the substance of the emblem working in our astral body. It involves relating to the symbols and letting them communicate with us, and at this stage the symbols can dramatically metamorphose, weaving around themselves emotional currents. The emblem often temporarily takes the form of an inner dramatic action, and we will sometimes have the sense of receiving communications or messages from some deep underlying part of ourselves. The symbols begin to speak to us. This process can be disturbing to inexperienced meditators, and it is best if the exercise is pursued with certain safeguards or techniques (for example the meditative

container of the safe inner sanctuary). I will be describing some of these methods in a later article.

The best safeguard is to have a kind of map or model of the process we are undertaking. This gives us an inner vantage point or centre from which we can temporarily withdraw to consider the significance of some inner event experienced in emblematic meditation. Some present day esoteric exercises use a technique of "pathworking" which is underpinned by the kabbalistic Tree of Life system, so that at almost any point one can gain some understanding of what is happening in an inner experience by mapping this onto the Tree of Life and looking at the correspondences.

Of course the Tree of Life system does bear within it certain underlying philosophic and religious structures which may make it unsuited to those individuals who do not wish to work within this Kabbalistic current, and it is not in itself essential for such pathworking or inner journeys. There are other systems for understanding inner polarities and archetypal forces which arise out of the hermetic alchemical tradition and are equally valid. In the longer term I hope to be able to articulate and describe such a map of inner work which can be used to find our way easily through the experiences gained in meditation on hermetic emblems.

This stage of moving the emblem from the etheric to the astral realm within us can give rise to dramatic and exciting experiences, and perhaps the biggest danger here is that we cannot readily digest these experiences, and that they rattle around inside our souls making us feel quite uncomfortable. Such imaginative experiences are inevitable in this kind of inner work, indeed this stage involves the development of just this inner ability of being able to inwardly digest polarised astral energy thrown out by the archetypal symbols. If we persevere then eventually we will come to gain this inner ability, and can then become more inwardly free of the emotional currents generated by the archetypes living within us, which are stimulated by resonances from such emblems.

We are then free to move to a final stage of inner work with an emblem in which we encounter the spiritual being that resides there. Esoteric exercises are in essence merely vehicles for incarnating spiritual being. They are devised to have definite forms which reflect in outer physical symbol, etheric and astral substance, a spiritual principle which has a core or essence we can describe as having an immanence of 'being'. The emblems we are heirs to in the hermetic tradition were devised by people experienced and adept in a wisdom of the spiritual ground of consciousness. Each emblem sequence has had woven into its symbolic web a reflection of some spiritual essence, and it is only when we are able to touch upon this level that we can truly say we have encountered the being of an emblem.

Hermetic emblems thus bear within them seeds of being that can tinge and transform our innermost essence. When we are able to absorb them in our lower vehicles through such meditative work, like drops of quintessence they subtly transmute our souls and make us glow with inner spiritual life. The wise adepts of the hermetic tradition have left to us their most precious treasure, their tincture and philosophers' stone, revealed and yet still hidden from us until we resurrect them within our being through inner work.

The Birds in Alchemy by Adam McLean

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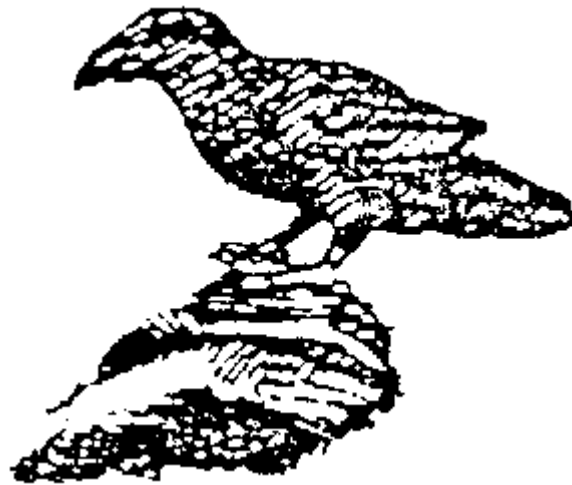
In alchemical writings we meet a seemingly bewildering multiplicity of animal symbols - red lions, white eagles, stags, unicorns, winged dragons and snakes. Although at first glance all this complex mass of symbolism seems tortured and confused there is an inner coherence to these symbols, which the ancient alchemists used in specific ways reflecting their esoteric content. In this article I wish to consider a particularly tight knit group of these animal symbols, the birds of alchemy - the Black Crow, White Swan, Peacock, Pelican, and Phoenix - which are descriptive of certain stages of the alchemical process. Of course it would be wrong to suggest that there are fixed rigid meanings with regard to these symbols. The alchemists always integrated the symbols they used, so that one has to look at the total context, the background against which they stand, but when the birds appear in this sequence it is almost certain that the following interpretation can be applied.

Firstly, let us look at the symbols in general. What did the alchemists wish to symbolise by birds? The essential thing about birds is that they, having as their domain the air element, mediate between the earthly realm and the heaven world. The alchemist in observing the flight of birds, recognised in them a picture of the human soul

undergoing spiritual development. The soul, aspiring upwards, flying free of the restraints of the earth bound body seeking the heavenly light, only to have to return to the earthly consciousness again after the meditation, the alchemist symbolised by the bird. Thus the bird symbols, in alchemy, reflect the inner experiences of soul alchemy, the soaring of the soul free from the earth bound body and the physical senses. The soul, in the meditations of soul alchemy, touches upon the spiritual world, and brings something of this back into the outer life again. The birds as symbols mediate between the physical and spiritual worlds, they reflect certain archetypal experiences encountered by the soul in its development through the alchemical process.

These symbols were used in two ways. Firstly, as a description in a text of one aspect of the process. Thus the alchemist might indicate a certain process as the Pelican stage, and describe certain facets of this by using perhaps other symbols. Secondly, these bird symbols could be used as a subject matter for a meditation, and by inwardly building such a symbol, one connected in soul with the essential experience of the particular stage of the alchemical-soul process.

Now we will look at these in detail. I would like to consider them in the following sequence, one which occurs in various sources: Black Crow - White Swan - Peacock - Pelican - Phoenix - as these correspond to a developing inner experience which involves a progressively deepening encounter with the inner spiritual dimension of our being.



The Black Crow sometimes also the Raven is the beginning of the great work of soul alchemy. This indicates the initial stages of the alchemist's encounter with his inner space, through withdrawing from the outer world of the senses in meditation, and entering what is initially the dark inner world of the soul. Thus this stage is also described in alchemical texts as the blackening, the nigredo experience, and it is often pictured as a death process, as in the caput mortuum, the death's head, or as some alchemical illustrations show, the alchemist dying within a flask. Thus in the symbol of the Black Crow we have the stepping out in consciousness from the world of the physical senses the restrictions that bind us to the physical body.

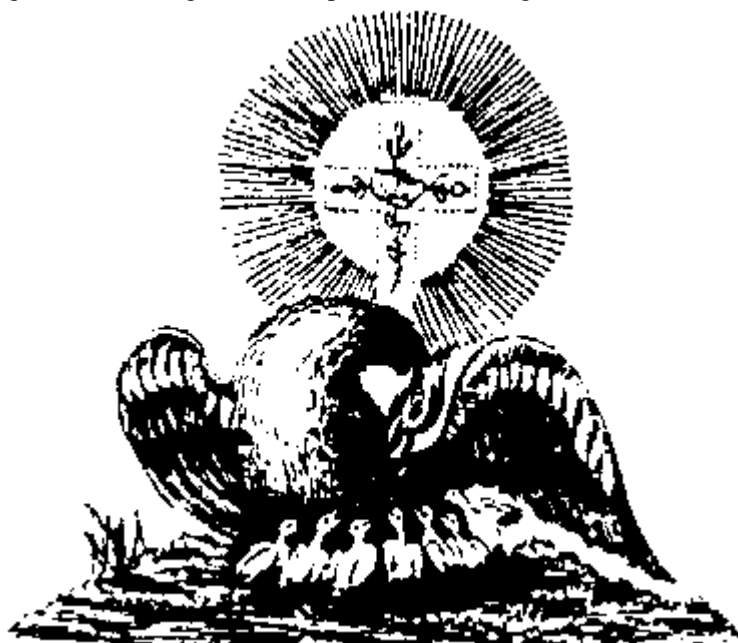


The next stage, is often shown as The White Swan. Now the alchemist begins to experience the inner world as being light filled - the initial inner brightness which is often erroneously mistaken for true illumination. This is merely a first conscious encounter with the etheric world, and in comparison with physical sense experience is for many souls so overpowering as to be pictured as bright white light. The alchemical tradition recognised this and symbolised this stage as the White Swan. The swan is a bird which is rarely seen in flight, but rather swimming upon lake or river, gracefully moving on the surface of water- in soul terms, on the soul's surface, its etheric interface with the physical.



With the Peacock stage, the alchemist has entered into the inner experience of the astral world, which initially appears as ever shifting patterns of colour. This experience is often symbolised in alchemy by the appropriate image of the peacock's tail with its splendid iridescence of colour. In terms of this series of five stages, the turning point is reached with the Peacock. Up until this point the alchemist has experienced aspects of his being which he was

formerly unconscious of - the etheric forces and the astral body. Essentially these experiences have happened to him, although he had to make himself open to the experiences through entering into the initial Black Crow state, however, in order to progress he must begin to work upon his inner being.



This active working with the soul forces is perfectly pictured in the Pelican. The Pelican is shown stabbing its breast with its beak and nourishing its young with its own blood. The alchemist must enter into a kind of sacrificial relationship with his inner being. He must nourish with his own soul forces, the developing spiritual embryo within. Anyone who has made true spiritual development will know well this experience. One's image of one's self must be changed, transformed, sacrificed to the developing spiritual self. This is almost invariably a deeply painful experience, which tests one's inner resources. Out of this will eventually emerge the spiritual self, transformed through the Pelican experience. The Pelican was in this spiritual sense a valid image of the Christ experience and was used as such by the early alchemists.



The Phoenix completes this process of soul development. The Phoenix bird builds its nest which at the same time is its funeral pyre, and then setting it alight cremates itself. But it arises anew from the ashes transformed. Here we have captured the alchemists experience of spiritualisation, He has integrated his being so much, that he is no longer dependent upon his physical body as a foundation for his being. He now stands upon the sureness of the spiritual - he has in this sense attained the Philosopher's Stone, the Spiritual core of his being.

Thus we can sketch shortly the process of Soul alchemy, the integration, purification and transmutation of the soul, as pictured in this series of bird symbols.

withdrawal from depend- ence on the Physical senses	BLACK CROW	PHOENIX	freeing of the spirit from the bounds of the physical
experience of the etheric body	WHITE SWAN	PELICAN	using consciously the forces of the etheric body
	PEACOCK astral body consciousness		

inward immersion integration	point of transformation purification	outward expression transmutation
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The Peacock's Tail is the central experience to this process, the point of inner transformation, which arises from a true consciousness of the astral body. We note also that the other stages mirror each other. Thus the Black Crow and the Phoenix are related as beginning and end of the process, but in a deeper sense they are both connected with death-processes. The dying to the senses of the Black Crow stage is ultimately transformed into the triumph over the death process of the physical, that is pictured by the Phoenix. There is a further mirroring of the White Swan and Pelican stages. The White Swan is an experience of the etheric forces in one's being, and this is later transformed into a conscious mastery and outward expression of these life forces.

The Peacock's Tail stage - the conscious experience of the astral body - stands alone in this picturing of the process, though it was sometimes split into two facets, in the writings of some alchemists - an initial winged dragon phase which resolved into the Peacock's Tail. In the initial encounter with the astral body, the negative distorted aspects of one's being can dominate, and these can be pictured as the winged dragon, but through soul purification, ultimately the full beauty and splendour of the astral body are revealed in the Peacock's Tail.

In the early alchemical texts (and in particular the 'Rosarium philosophorum'), this picture of soul alchemy is developed in parallel with descriptions of what was a sore physical process. Thus it was that the soul development of the alchemist went hand in hand with an actual physical operation, and this operation, the details of which have not been wholly lost, involved colour and form changes within a sealed flask, isomorphic to the inner changes of soul alchemy, described by these bird symbols. Thus we had a physical process which involved a blackening, a whitening; a rapid iridescence of colours, a circular distillation stage, and a final sublimation. Part of the task of modern alchemy must be to rediscover this physical process, and explore its further ramifications.

Allegory of John of the Fountain

The Fountain of the Lovers of the Science,
composed by John Fountain
of Valencienn in the County of Hainault.
Lyons 1590.
The third edition.

[This English translation of this important early alchemical allegory (thought to have been composed in the 15th century) is found in MS. Sloane 3637 in the British Library (a 17th century manuscript). This work was published in French in various editions, the earliest of which I have seen being issued at Paris in 1561, though the Sloane manuscript refers to the edition published at Lyon in 1590. A. McLean.]

[Back to allegories.](#)

It was in the time of the month of May, when one should bury sorrow and care, that I entered into an orchard, whereof Zephyrus was the gardener.

When I passed before the Garden, I was not clothed in silk, but arrayed in sorry garments, that I might not in public appear naked; and diverting myself with a desire to chase away unpleasant thoughts, I heard an harmonious song of many grateful birds. Then I beheld the entrance of the garden which was shut, but as I judged by my sight, Zephyrus soon opened it. He afterwards retired, seeming thereby as if he had not done it. And when I saw the manner of it, I retired a little back, and afterwards I entered in. My teeth not having eaten for a day I was very dry and hungry. But I carried bread with me, which I had saved for a week. Then I perceived a fountain of very clear, pure and fine water, which was under a hawthorn tree. I joyfully sat down by it, and made me pottage of my bread. Then after eating I fell asleep within this pleasant orchard. And according to my apprehension, I slept long enough for the pleasure which I took, being in the dream which I dreamed. You now may know it from my dream, and I after found it a fiction. It is true that methought two comely Ladies with beautiful looks, seeming like the daughters of a King, in respect of their noble attire, came softly towards me, and I humbly saluted them, saying to them, Glorious Ladies, God save you both bodies and souls, May it please you to tell me your names, do not ye deny me this.

One answered very courteously. Friend my name is Knowledge. Behold here Reason which accompanied me, whether it be in the mountains, or in the valleys, or in the fields, she can make you very wise. Then understanding this language and believing myself to be awake, I much wondered at what happened. For I saw issue from the fountain, which is so agreeable and wholesome, seven streams which I had never seen before. Having lain me down in this way, which wetteth me so much, that I was all be-dirtied, the water there gushed out abundantly. Then I desired the Lady Reason who was with Knowledge, to tell me the signification of the fountain, and the streams which are so plentiful and comely, and whose the enclosure was, on all sides well beset with trees and with sweet flowers, moistened with running waters, so that I thought I never saw its equal. But she most gently said to me. You, my friend, shall know how this affair does stand, which you so much desire to know; hearken attentively to me. In it the fountain has a thing, which is most nobly contained. He who shall know it well, will love it above all other things. He who would seek and search it out, and being found put it afterwards into the earth and dry it to a most subtile powder, then again dissolve it in its water, but which has before been separated, then gather the parts together, which the earth shall set to rot in the water which should nourish it. Thence there will a maiden breed, bearing fruit at both her breasts. But that we should remove the rottenness, which neither she nor her fruit does care for, the maid I speak of in many things bestirs herself, and fervently desires it. For she mounts into the air flying on high; afterwards descending down gliding in the valley, and in descending down she fawns the fawn which Nature gives to her.

It is a Dragon which has three throats, hungry and never satiated: all around him everyone assaults or kicks at him, surrounding him just as it were in a street and chasing him with a violent pursuit, so that a sweat do cover his face, (alias But beforehand by heat one drives away the sweat which covers the face) which blackens and beglews it, as with bird lime then impregnates it and [le mengue - an unknown word]. In the same manner she brings forth again (This amorously done) much more powerful than before, then drinks it as the juice of the apple. So the infant according to its manner often drinks, and afterward brings forth again, so that it clearer is than crystal, in truth the work is just so [Ytall - another obscure word]. And when it is so shining in a most strong and powerful water, it thinketh to devour its mother, who has eaten up its brother and father. So as it gives suck and broods, the dragon strikes it with his tail. Into two parts divide its Mother, which does assist it after this division: deliver it then to the three throats, which they have sooner taken it than a gargle.

Tis then the strongest in the World, there's nothing ever does confound it. Tis marvellous and powerful, one ounce is worth a hundred weight of Gold. it is a fire of such a nature, that it overcomes corruption, and transmutes into another substance, since it brings it to its own likeness and cureth every distemper, The imposhume leprosy and gout; and gives youth to ancient bodies, and to the young ones wit and mirth. Tis as a miracle from God. Without this the Treacle cannot be made, nor any thing which is found underneath the heavens, which is experienced by the ancient prophets and doctors who teach us Nature.

But one dare not make more enquiry, for fear of the Governors of the Earth; may such a mischief never happen, for without Sin one may do this. Many Wise loved it much, accursed be he who has defamed it. One ought never to reveal it, but to those who will love God, and those who will have the Victory, to serve God, love or believe. For he to whom God giveth time to live so long that he is some place have wrought this work, has from God obtained for himself grace or favour, know this for certain. Wherefore he should devoutly pray for those holy men who have put it into writing according to their way of discourse. Philosophers and Saints discreet men whose numbers I cannot reckon up. But may God shower all mercy on them who thus far have opened it. And for those who love the Science may God give them estate and patience.

You ought to know that this same serpent, which I at first did mention to you, is governed by the seven streams, which are so amiable and fair. So I was minded to describe it, but I will name otherwise. It is a noble worthy Stone made by a Science divine, in which more virtue does abound, than in any thing which is in the World. Tis found out by Astronomy, and by the true Philosophy. It is produced in the Mountains, where there grows no other strange or foreign thing (alias, they find it grow aloft with all it ought to have). Know it for an approved truth, that many wise men have found it there, and it may there be still found out, with taking pains to labour well. It is the cabinet (or the quarry) of the precious stones of the philosophers which is so amiable and dear. One may have it easily and so tis better that all that can be had. But you will have undergone a deal of toil, before you have found it out. Having it you shall fail of nothing, which we can find upon this earthen world. Now let us return unto the fountain, there to know a certain thing.

This valuable fountain does belong to a Lady of honour who is called Nature. Who ought to be much honoured; for each thing is made by her, and if she fails there all is undone. This Lady I assure you has been a long time established. For as soon as God had made the Elements which are perfect, Water, Air, Earth and Fire, Nature was perfect in them all. Without nature there could not grow a little oyster in the Sea. Natures the Mother of all things in the World. The noblest thing which is in Nature, does very well appear in the figure of a Man which Nature has made, wherein she has erred in nothing. So it does in many things which are produced by Nature. Birds, trees, beasts little flowers, they are all made by Nature. And so likewise it is of metals, which are not alike nor equal. For by herself they are made, very deep within the earth. Of which you will have a fuller account, when Nature shall show it you: whom I desire that you would see, to the end that you may the better follow her way and her path in your work, for she must make the discovery to you.

As she was making this discourse, I saw Nature approaching, and presently without delay I went straight on to meet her, and humbly to salute her. But truly she first bowed to me, giving me the salutation. Then Reason said, see Nature here, let it be all your care to love her, for it is she will make you the prudent Master of her Work.

I hearkened diligently, and she undertook to ask me whence I was and what I sought for in that place, because it was very wild and full of darkness for those who were not clerks. Lady, said I, by the God of the Heavens I came hither as those who know not whether to go to find out some good adventure. But I will tell you without delay and propound my adventure in short.

I have heretofore seen a very great prelate, skillful, a clerk, prudent and cunning, who discoursed in common speech so that he made many a man wise, to know the medicine which he made, very high and very precious: demonstrating its excellence by very great experiment, he spoke with very great reverence of the Philosophers and their Science. He had been at a very good school; then I was put to a school, which was desirous to learn and know a better things than all possessions. And it happened to me to ask him whence this science came at first. If one met with it in writing, and who it was who showed it. He answered me without delay, in this discourse which I will tell you.

The Science is the gift of God, which comes by inspiration, so is knowledge given by God, and is inspired into Man. But with this that one do well improve at school, by his understanding. But before a letter was seen, this surely was a Science known, by people not learned but inspired, who ought highly to be honoured, for many have found out this Science by the divine Wisdom.

And further God is omnipotent, to give to his true servant such a knowledge as he pleases. Wherefore is displeases many clerks, saying that no one is sufficient, if he have not been a student. He who is not a Master of Arts or Doctor, gets no honour among the clerks. And can you blame them for this when they no nought but praising one another. But he who well would punish them must take the books away from them. Then their knowledge will be failing in many clerks, doubt it not. And it will not be in their lays, who make up round rhymes and songs, and who know not how to versify. And many things which many men do freely make a trade of, which they find not in their books. The carpenter and the mason study but very little. No. And they also surely make as good use, as those who study Physick, or Law, or Divinity; for the employment of their Life.

From henceforth I was much incited wholly to apply my mind, so as by true experience to be able to obtain the knowledge of which many men desire, by the favour of the sovereign Lord.

Reason and Nature I assure you hearkened well unto my story. Then said I to Nature, Madame, Alas I am Body and Soul always in care desiring to learn the science, where I cannot fail of having honour in my life, without any envying me. For all my riches I will get as the labourers of the ground, to dig and hough the land, and afterwards to sow their seed, as the true workman do; who make their riches and their praise. And for that reason I would pray you, that you would be pleased to tell me, how they do call this Fountain, which is so amiable and wholesome. She answered; Friends behold, since you desire to know it; It most properly is called, the Fountain of the Lovers. How it must be known to you, that ever since our Mother Eve, that I have governed all the world, as great as tis in all the Circle, nothing without me can rule, unless God would inspire it. I who am called Nature O environed the Earth,

without, within and in the middle. In everything I have taken my place, by the command of God the Father, I of all things am the Mother. To all things I give virtue. Therefore nothing is or ever was without me, a thing which might beneath the Heavens be found, which is not governed by me. But since you reason understand, I will give you a goodly gift, by which if you will use it well, you may purchase Paradise, and great riches in this World. From whence nobility might rise, honour and great Lordships, and all pleasure in thy Life. For you shall use it with delight, and many noble feats behold by this fountain and the Cave, which governs all the seven metals. They rose from thence, that is certain. But I the Fountains Mother am, which is as sweet as honey. And to the seven planets of heaven it is compared, that is to Saturn, Jupiter, Mars and the Moon, the Sun, Mercury and Venus. Observe it well; you are obliged to this. The seven planets which I mentioned, are without all doubt compared to the seven metals coming out of the Earth, which are made of one matter. Now by the Sun we mean Gold, a metal without compare; and by the Moon we mean silver, a noble handsome metal; by Venus, Copper we do mean, this also is a very fitting name. By Mars we mean Iron; and Tin by wholesome Jupiter. And by Saturn good Lead, which we call leprous Gold. Mercury is argent vive, which has all the government of the seven metals, for it is the mother (just so as here they appear) which can make the imperfect perfect. After it I would withdraw [draw] you.

Now understand well what I shall say, and how I shall manifest the Fountain of Dame Nature, which you see here hard by in the Figure. If you know well how to seek Mercury to work as the letter shows, you will make the Medicine of it, whereby you may purchase Paradise, with the honour of this world, where great plenty of riches does abound.

You ought to know by Astronomy and by Philosophy, that Mercury is the matter of the seven metals, and the principal. For by its lead-like heaviness, it keeps in a mass beneath the Earth, notwithstanding it is volatile, and very convertible into the others. And it is found underground, just so as is the dew, and after mounts into the Air of heaven. I Nature tell you so; and thus it may afterwards conceive. He who would have the Mercurial Medicine, must put it into its vessel in a furnace to make Sublimation, which is a noble gift of God, which I will show and represent to you, according to my Power; for if you make not pure Body and Soul, you never will make a good amalgam, nor also a good conclusion. Therefore apply your mind to it.

Now understand, if you would know; (tis better than anything to have good Judgment) take your Body and make a trial of it, as others have done, know it well. You must make your spirits very clean, so that it may incorporate.

There will be a handsome battle. Twenty against seven are requisite without doubt. And if twenty cannot destroy they body in this case it must [muire - an unintelligible word]. So the battle is of Mercury most strong and fierce. it is afterwards requisite to make him restore, so that one can draw out nothing [more]. When your undertaking succeeds according to your desire, then he being taken, if you would have justice from him, you shall shut him up in the prison, from whence he cannot stir. But you must comfort him with one gift, or else for you he will do nothing, so that he will do the contrary. And if you would do him a kindness, it behoves you to set him at large, and set him again in his first estate, and for this you shall be his master. Otherwise you cannot well know that which you seek and which you would have. But by this means you shall know it, and all shall go according to your desire. But what you make of the Body, remember to make it here.

First then you must without contradiction, of thy Body make a Spirit, and the Spirit reincorporate into its Body without any separation. And if you know not how to do all this, be sure do not begin the work. After this conjunction there begins Operation, out of which if you proceed, you'll have the glory of the heavens. But by this book you ought to know, which I Nature deliver to you, that the Mercury of the Sun is not like to that of the Moon, for it should always remain white to make a thing to its own likeness. But that which serveth for the Sun, must openly resemble it, for one must rubify it, and this is the first Work. And then one may conjoin them as in my argument I have said, which you herein have heard before, and which you ought to hearken to. And if you cannot understand it, in your work you may mistake, and perhaps shall lose a deal of time and waste it in vain. And if you know how to work what I have said, you may assuredly proceed therein.

Now you have one point of this Work, which I Nature discover to you. You surely must with a good Judgment make afterwards a congelation of Body and Spirit together, so that one be like the other. And then you must with a right understanding separate the four elements, which you shall make all new, and then shall set them to work. First you must extract the Fire and also the Air for this affair; and afterwards reconcile them. I tell you this here in express words. Earth and water on the other part do serve very well in this Art. As also does the quintessence, for that is the Knowledge of our work. When you shall have found out the four and separated the one from the other, so as I have said before, thy work shall be half done.

Now you may proceed by this means to make what I before have told you in this chapter. You shall put it into a little furnace: this is called a Marriage, when it is made by a wise man: and this is also very properly its name. Now understand the reason well: for the male may well be tied or coupled with the amiable female. And when they are found pure and clean and the one joined with the other, they produce a certain generation. So that this is a glorious

work, and which is of great substance. Just so it is in another similitude of many a man and many a woman, who have good reputation and fame, by their children which they breed, which thing each one ought to esteem. From birds, from beasts and from fruits I could prove it otherwise. Put the seed of a tree skillfully into the earth; after the Putrefaction from thence will come a generation. You may know it by the cork [core]: which is more worth than all things else. By sowing one grain, you'll thence have a thousand. You need not there be very cunning. Nor ever was there any creature who could say to me Nature, I obtained a Birth without seeking after you. You in nothing can reproach me. And so it is of metals, whereof Mercury is the most subtle. Tis put into the furnace where his body is, which I have told you in my relations. And it is very necessary to do this, according as you shall see herein afterward. There tis requisite for him to be in love with his like, and then to work. But first that they may come together they must be parted asunder. But after this separation I assure you they reunite. The first time is the betrothing, the second the marriage, and the third time skillfully united into one nature. This is the perfect marriage in which our total work consists. Now understand well what I've said, for I indeed have falsified in nothing. When you shall have separated them, and by little and little well mended them, you shall afterward reunite them, and join the one to the other. But remember in your lesson, the proverb which Cato spoke: The man who reads and noting understands, is like a hunter who catches nought. Learn then well to understand, that you may not calumniate the books, nor the good workmen, who are perfect understanders. For all those who blame our work, neither know nor understand it. He who well shall understand us, shall very soon come to our Work. It has been opened oftentimes, and by Philosophers approved; But many men esteemed for wise blame it, for which they are fools. And all should lay the blame thereof on them, who have in themselves understanding without gall. But one may well and truly praise all those who such a jewel have, and those who think to find it out by the means of working well. And one should say it is well done: their good work deserveth praise. Now we have told a thing which briefly ought to be disclosed: which is that, if you would well proceed, you make a union of two, so that they may be betrothed in the vessel, which well knows the being or existence, and then separate it for your work. It behoves you to order it well. And to let you know the Way, tis nothing else but dissolution, of which you will have great need. If you would pursue the Work, you out to destroy the Composition, so as you have occasion for it, so that each one be by itself apart. And then having the Earth thirsty, with the water of Heaven in due manner (for they are of one nature all) tis reason it should be moistened, and it shall be governed by me.

Now I have told without any error, how the body shall get a soul, and how you must separate them, and divide them from one another: but the division without doubt, is the key of all our work. It is performed by the fire: without it art would be imperfect. Some say that Fire produces nothing of or by its nature, except ashes. But saving their respect Nature's engrafted in the Fire, for if Nature were not there, the fire neer have any heat. And I will prove it thus. I will take Salt (alias Sol or the Sun) to bear me witness. But now we will leave this discourse and we will speak of other noble subjects. And when I heard this conference, I writ the word down in my heart: and said thou Lady in a bright array, will you hearken to me a while, and let us return to ye (alias the seven) metals, of which Mercury is the principal, and let you and reason make me some interpretation, or I am mistaken in your work, because of what you have said above. For you would have me to destroy that which I made at first: and that you do expressly say. I know not whether these are repetitions, or whether you speak by Parables, for I understand not your schools.

Friend (Nature answered thus) how understand you the Mercury which I have heretofore named to you? I tell you that it is shut up, although it happen oftentimes that it goes and comes through many hands. The Mercury which I commend to you, surnamed De Mercurio, that it of, from or out of Mercury. It is the Mercury of Mercuries; and many folks make it their care to find it out for their affair. For tis not vulgar Mercury, you cannot find it without me. But when you would work therein, you must be very authentical, (versed in good Authors), to arrive at the practise, whereby you may have a very great knowledge of our works. You must know the metals. or your work will not be worth an oyster. Now, the better to know the way, I'll tell you where the work is placed, likewise where it does begin, if you are a Son of the Science. And he who thither would arrive must know how to obtain this point, or his affair will be worth naught, for all the labour he there employs. Therefore I do call ye Fountain, which is so amiable and wholesome Mercury, the true source or fountain head who is the cause of perfection.

Now understand well what I shall say, for indeed I will speak nothing wrong. This Mercury without its equal you may find in the Sun, when he is in his great heat, and that he makes many blossoms appear, for the fruits come after blossoms. I can prove it in this manner, and still a hundred other ways, which to this art are very slight. But this hear is the chief, and I therefore mention it to you. I have not abused you indeed, for it is visibly there to be found. And if you would work in Luna, you may as well there find it out; in Saturn and in Jupiter, and in Mars which I call Iron: in Venus and in Mercury one may find it most securely. But as to me I found it in the Sun and after wrought it. And therefore I made this Book for you, that you may freely understand me. In Luna seek to see or find it: from thence I took my first matter.

Moreover I say to ye understanders, that both the works are but one, except the rubifying, which serveth rarely for

the Sun. And I know not how to tell you more thereof, unless I should show you the practice. And this could not draw you back from error, if you did not see it done. But keep in your memory well, what I have told for you to hear.

Being at dissolution you ought to make imbibition. But do not you begin to act what I have said in this affair, if you have not a perfect proof of the Work, in having well dissolved the imperfect. And if you can get over this step, reincorporate it by the circle, returning to the former work: the other was only a messenger. You may seek it evidently, how it is slightly made: you cannot come to a nearer way, to the highest of your aim. And if you truly understand it, you will not labour in vain. And after this work so performed, you must restore what is undone. Putrefaction is to be seen from whence a noble being should be born: and in this point the masterpiece consists, whereby all our work is put together. And as I have said to you before, all which is fitting does consist in this. The preparation is put into the furnace. You must have like to like: for the sprout must putrefy before it can issue out of the earth. Likewise the seed of man, which I name you for a proof, putrefies in the body of the woman, and becomes blood and after takes a soul, but in the form of a creature. This same secret Nature gives you.

From thence there ought a thing to be born which shall know more than its Master, to suckle the four children who already are all grown great, which are called Elements and separated from one another.

Now you have five things together, and they do much resemble one another, also it is but one substance, all of the same appearance. The Child should there eat up its Mother and afterwards destroy its Father. Flower and milk and fruit with blood, it behoves you to find in one pool.

Now mind from whence the milk does come, and it is needful there to make Blood. If this you cannot well consider, you lose your labour as your work. And if you know how to understand me well, be sure to work without more delay, for you have passed the Pass, where many fools and wise men do stop. There you may pause a while, and afterward begin to work, and so pursue till you make issue forth the perfect fruit which we do call Elixir. For by a mighty skillful work the precious stone is made of the Philosophers of renown, who very well do know the reason. And there's no jewel nor possession, which can be the value of this stone. If you would have me tell you its force; it can cure all diseases, likewise by its most noble acts, it perfects all imperfect metals. And there is nothing in the world but this, where mighty virtue does abound. It is disposed to wonderful things, yet we do call it the Medicine. And of all the other Stones, which many Princes hold for dear, none can so much rejoice a man, as that which I do name to you. And therefore I put you in mind, that you may take it for certain. For above all the Stones in the world, virtue does in ours abound. And therefore you must do your endeavour to gain such noble wealth. If you will well follow me, you may arrive at this end.

Learn well, so it will make you wise, for I have told you all the Practice. In the Furnace you may see it very well, in which all you have ought to be: making by a certain management the circle of Putrefaction. Moreover I have taught you by these divisions your work remains in two parts: I will tell you no more of this, until I shall have seen in you some service for which I may tell it you; otherwise it would be folly. But when you shall have deserved it, I'll tell it you in short words; therefore ask me no more, I have only told over and above too much.

And when I heard Nature, that she cared not to say any more to explain her works, I began to weep most tenderly and said, O dame in bright attire, will you have pity on me, or I shall never despatch that which I have found in a book. Tell me O noble and good Lady beforehand, you will do a charity.

Then she answered, you shall know no more until you have deserved it. Alas, said I, then O dear Lady, will you tell me the way how I may deserve it. For I will always serve you loyally without any other thought. I cannot make you recompense, nor increase your riches. I will serve you incessantly, if you will give me so noble a gift, as to receive me for one of yours.

The Nature answered. Son, you know what I have said. But is you do believe me, you may beforehand be much more knowing. Lady, said I, by the God of Heaven, I would willingly be one of those, who should serve for such a work his whole lifetime without doing any wrong. Will you then tell me your commands, for I will contradict nothing.

Then, said Nature, without mistake, my son in law, you needs must learn to know the seven planets, of which Mercury is the principal, their powers, their infirmities, their changeable qualities. Tis needful afterward to learn whence Sulphur, Salt and Oil do come. Wherefore we put you in mind of what you will still have occasion for. Sulphur is mighty necessary: so will it give you profit or much ado to make it. Without Salt you'll bring to pass nothing useful for your work. From Oil you have a great mystery. (alias you have great occasion for Oil). You'll make without it nothing sweet-scented. This you ought to remember well, if you would arrive at our Work.

I'll tell you one word, now understand it, with which you will be well contented. One metal in one only vessel, you need to put into one furnace. Tis Mercury which I explain to you, and there is no need of ought else there. But the abridgements of your work, I disclose it to you word for word.

Now I will speak to you Gold, which is the treasure of the metals. It is perfect, nothing is more perfect than it, of

those which I have named before. Luna is and it is not perfect. This I certify to you for a Truth. There's but one metal in the world in which our Mercury does abound, and so tis found in all the seven. This I have tried very well. Gold by right is hot and dry, Luna in her nature cold. Saturn is heavy and soft; in this it may be likened to Gold. Many clerks fierce in speech, will nominate it leprous Gold. Venus well resembles Luna in weight and also in the forging. Mercury is cold and moist, witness Jupiter which thence is bred. Mars is hard and heavy and cold. This is the dressing [preparation] of all the rest, be their nature hard or tender, you must understand all seven, as I have named them above, and know their virtues well; and by this means afterward you will make what you will of Mercury.

Indeed, Lady, it shall be done, tell me the work beforehand, and how I may manage what I have seen within your bounds. For never yet since I was born, have I been so much enamoured of any thing in the world. I think a virtue there abound. I esteem it as the secret of God, which is revealed in this place.

Then, said nature, you say true, and this is all the wealth of the World, from from my Fountain there proceed great riches, from which honour comes to many men is diverse ways. I'm like a mine to many people. And because you are come hither without any return or revenue, and that you have the good will to labour as a person desiring to meet good fortune, I will show it you beforehand.

I have told you in a remarkable chapter, I know not whether you remember it, that thy work consists of two parts. I Nature, discover it to you. Make thy penetrative Sulphur by fire become attractive. make it then eat up its mother. So our affair will be accomplished. Put the Mother into the belly of the child, which she has brought forth before: then so it will be both father and son quite made perfect by or of two spirits. Indeed it is no other thing, that what I here expose to you. And if you thereunto would add a foreign thing, or apply any other thing than Sulphur, Salt and Oil, in truth your work will be worth nothing. For the Earth will not bring forth other fruit than what you saw therein. A creature makes a creature, and a beast a beast of its own nature. So of all seeds it likewise is. Take this for the design of my Sciences.

Say not, my son in law that this is gall. All must arise and fall in a most acceptable way, most pleasant, and most amiable. I have preordained the way, just so as is the dew, it must mount up into the air of heaven, and sweetly afterwards descend by a most amicable path (Alias, Our water pure prepared goeth just as does the dew), which one ought to manage well.

In the descension which it makes, it bringeth forth the perfect Sulphur, and if you can obtain this point, you well may say without a lie, that you can have a great quantity of Gold above ground without doing evil; for if all the sea were a metal, such as one would have it, Copper, argent vive, lead or tin, and you should cast one only grain on it when it were heated, there would come out of it a smoke, which would appear in a wonderful dress, and all would afterwards be quiet, and when the smoke should be appeased and all becalmed, the sea would be much finer Gold, than any King has in his Treasure.

Now to our purpose we'll return, as before to govern well. When they sulphur shall be eaten up, your Mercury mortified, keep him in prison forty days, and then you'll see that which you love. And God send you to do so well, as to obtain Paradise. Here you see well ordered, the prison which I have named to you; faith I have given it you there in the figure. Now do you remember Nature, who was willing to afford you so noble a gift, as to reveal the most admirable Science, and venerable in this world. There could not otherwise be made the stone of which I treat with you. Do thou then view the writings well of our books: or else by figures this science is demonstrated. A real thing without any fable; most certain and most true, what is beneath is all just like to what is mutable above, for producing in the end, the miracle of one thing alone. As from one thing were all, and by the thought of one all things which have been produced did grow; so are our works made out of one. The glorious Sun its father is, and the Moon the real mother, the wind does close it in its belly: its nurse indeed is the Earth. It is the father of the treasure of the world, and the great secret has its foundation here, Its power then is quite entire, when it returns back into Earth again. Make separation of the earth from Fire, by skill and in the proper place, and sweetly separate the gross from the subtle, which you shall keep apart. then will it mount up from the earth to heaven, and before your eyes descend, receiving sovereign virtue with its terrestrial power. Thus at great glory you'll arrive, obtaining victory over all the world. This is the power of Powers, where many take great pains and struggle. It will conquer things subtle and the hard it will transpierce. They are very agreeable wonders, whereof we have most excellent reasons.

My name is John of the Fountain. I have not lost my labour in working, for through the world I multiply [or there multiplies and increases] the work of Gold, which I have finished in my lifetime, by my truth (thanks to the holy Trinity) which is the medicine of all evils, true and effectually the finest, which one can search for any where, be it in the seas, or be it in all the earth. And from a metal foul it drives the filth away, so that it renders it a matter pure, that is a metal very delicate, of the species of Gold or Silver. By this means the work is made, and there's no need of any other craft, according to my little sentiment, I do really find it so. Therefore I'll call my book which tells the matter, and declares so precious an artifice, the Fountain of the Lovers of the most useful science, described in my

humble style. It was made by a friendly [Seuvage - an unknown word]. When I was in my youthful days, in the year one thousand four hundred and thirteen, when I was twice sixteen years of age. Twas finished in the month of January in the city of Montpelier.

Some add.

Here does end John of the Fountain,
Who possessed this mighty work,
As the most secret gift of God,
Which ought to make all men discreet.

This Art which is so precious may
Be comprehended in these two verses.

Si fixum solvas faciasque volare solutum,
Et volucrem igas faciet te vivere tutum.

If you dissolve the fixed
And make what is dissolved fly
And fix the volatile
It will make you live happily.

The Fountain allegory of Bernard of Treviso

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When I perceived that I had proceeded a considerable length in this Art, I began most earnestly to court and to frequent the company of those who were learned in it also: for it becomes good men to join themselves to their equals and not to others.

Therefore, when I passed through Apulea, a city in India, I heard that a man resided there who was so very learned in every branch of Science, that he had not his equal in this world. He instituted as a Prize of disputation for all skilled in Art, a book fabricated, both leaves and cover, of pure gold. Therefore, desirous of honour, I did not doubt that my mind would assist me thereto and dispose me to the prescribed disputations, a very learned man adding spurs to my undertaking this province, and it also coming into my mind that the daring and bold were carried to sublime things, while the timid were thrown down and lived in perpetual dejection, I passed manfully into the field of contest and happily obtained the palm of disputation before the audience, and the book of premium was so honourably delivered to me by the faculty of Philosophy, that I was looked upon by all men.

Then for the sake of recreating my mind, fatigued with study, and enquiring for pleasant plains and meadows, I met with a most limpid little fountain, surrounded and fortified with a most beautiful stone in an oaken trunk, and enclosed within a wall, that brutes might not enter nor birds make a bath for themselves there. Sitting above this fountain, I contemplated its beauty and I saw the upper part was shut.

A very venerable old man was coming there. As reverent as a priest, I honourably saluted him and I asked him wherefore that fountain was shut and fortified in that manner, above, below, and on every side.

Having deigned to give me a friendly answer, he said, "What you would know, my friend, is a fountain very terrible and wonderful in virtue before every other fountain in the world. It belongs to the King alone of this country, whom the fount knows very well, and he himself the fountain. It always draws the King, when passing this way, to itself, but is never drawn by the King. In that Bath he remains 282 days, at the end of which so much youthful strength is added to him, that he can afterwards be conquered by nobody however strong. He therefore took care to shut up his little fountain with a round white stone, as you see, in which a clear fountain shines like silver and of celestial colour. That it may also be stronger and lest it should be destroyed by horses or others, he introduced an old oak cleft in the middle, which protects it from the rays of the Sun, forming a shade.

"Then, as you see, he surrounds it with a wall very thick. He shuts it up first with the hard and clear stone, then finally in the cavities of the oak, chiefly because it is so terrible in its nature that once inflamed and irritated, it would make its way through every thing, and also should it escape the fences, there would be an end of us."

I afterwards asked him if he himself saw the King in the said fount, he answered that he indeed saw him enter, but from that time at which he is shut up in it by the Keeper, he does not appear more until the 130th day, at length he emerges bright and splendid. The Keeper Porter assiduously warms the bath, that he may keep up the heat which is occult in the water of the fount, and he warms it night and day without intermission.

I again interrogated what colour was the King?

He answered that the first of his vestures was from the beginning Cloth of Gold, then with a black velvet doublet, a shirt truly white above the snow, his flesh however, or blood is of the richest reds.

I then asked whether the King on coming there brought with him a great concourse of extraneous people low and vulgar along with him?

He answered me friendly but laughing at the question, saying, "When the King purposes to come hither, he dismisses all his counsellors and every stranger and enters alone, nobody approaching the fount except himself and its Keeper alone, the care of which a very simple man has. Verily the simplest man can best supply his place, since he does nothing else than warm the fount."

I again enquired whether the King was a friend to the fount, or the fount a friend to him?

He answered, "They love one another reciprocally in a wonderful manner, the fount attracts the King and not the King the fount, for it is as it were the Mother to the King."

I next interrogated of what kind the King was?

He answered, "He comes from the fount which makes him such as he is without any other thing whatever."

I enquired whether he had many counsellors. He said he has six forsooth who expect the succession, if by any chance or any means the King should die, they will also rule the Kingdom like him; hence it is that they serve him because they hope from him Dominion and possessions.

Then I asked whether he was an old man.

He answered, that he was older than the forest and more mature than any of his own subjects.

How happens it therefore, I asked, that these do not kill the King who expect so much inheritance from his death, since he is so old?

He answered, "Although he is so much advanced in years, nevertheless no one of his subjects is so patient of cold and sweats rains winds and labours as himself. Also no one of them by himself, nor any of them together could kill him."

How then will they possess the Kingdom if he cannot die not be killed by any one?

He answered, "His six subjects are from the fount, from which they possess everything they have, as well as he, wherefore they are chiefly drawn by the fount. The King is killed by that very fount as well as they are resuscitated by it afterwards, from the substance of his Kingdom, which substance is divided into the minutest particles, each of his subjects receives his portion and however minute the particle which any one of them has, he equals the King in power and strength and opulence, and they are made equal among themselves."

I again enquired, how long they might have to wait in this expectation?

Laughing at me again he answered, "Know that the King enters alone without any of his subjects, for although the fount also loves them, yet they do not enter, because they have not yet described this dignity. But the King upon entering throws off his vesture of fine beaten gold, which he delivers to his first Chamber Man called Saturn, who when he has once obtained possession of it keeps it for forty days, sometimes forty two days at most. Then the King throws off the Black Velvet waistcoat, which he delivers to his second Chamber Man, called Jupiter, who keeps it 22 days. Then the King ordering him, Jupiter gives it to Luna, which third person is beautiful and resplendent. She keeps it 20 days. Then the King is in a shift, pure white as snow, or like fine pearls or a white lily, which also he puts off and delivers to Mars, who keeps it 40 days and sometimes two more. Afterwards Mars by the will of God, delivers it to yellow Sol, not clear Sol, who keeps it 40 days. Then comes the most beautiful and blooded Sol who immediately snatches up the shirt."

I then asked him what is the meaning of all this, and he answered, "The fount is then opened, and as he had given them his shift, his waistcoat and his vestment, at this moment he delivers to them his blood red flesh to eat and now at length they have their desire."

Again I asked whether they always waited so long a time, and whether they had remuneration for their services, to induce them to persevere to the end?

He answered, "Four of these Counsellors, the moment they have obtained the white shirt may rejoice if they please, and also enjoy the greatest riches, but this only gives them the half part of the Kingdom. Wherefore, they rather wish to wait a little longer for the end, and wait that they also may be crowned with the Royal Diadem of their Monarch."

I asked whether any Physician attended or anything else whatsoever at that time.

He answered, "No, nor any thing whatever except the Keeper alone, who excites below a continual surrounding and vaporous heat, except this there is nothing else."

I asked whether this Keeper underwent much labour?

He answered, "He suffers more at the beginning than towards the end, because the fount is then heated."

I asked whether many people saw the work.

He answered, "It is done out of the sight of all the world, not one in the world even knows. The whole world have it before their eyes and do not know it."

I asked once more what do they next?

He said, "If these six wish again to purge the King they could do it in the fount in three days, by surrounding the place so as to satisfy the contents, by giving him back on the first day - the waistcoat, on the second - the shirt, and on the third day - his blood red flesh."

I asked to what purpose is all this?

He said, "I am wearied with what I have already told you."

Which when I perceived this, I was unwilling to be troublesome. I bid him farewell giving him many great thanks, and seeing him home to his residence. The old man was so reverend and so very wise, that the heavens obeyed him and all things trembled before him.

I was sleepy and returning to the fountain, I sat down to rest a little, when I could not abstain when sitting upon it from opening all the fastenings in a secret manner. In the meantime when I looked upon the book which was the reward of my disputation, and by its splendour and beauty increased my sleepiness and in a slumber it fell out of my sleepy hands into the fount, which happened very unluckily, for I wished to preserve the memorial of my having the honour of being an adept. And when I looked it had disappeared from my eyes, thinking therefore that it had fallen to the bottom, I began to draw out the water with such great care, however, that nothing more might remain in it than a tenth part of it, with scarcely ten parts, and when I attempted to draw out the whole, they obstinately adhered together.

In the meantime while I was labouring with the work, some people came upon me so that they hindered me from drawing out any more. Before I went away however, I shut all things again lest any body might perceive that I had exhausted or seen the fountain, or lest perhaps they might forcibly steal the Book from me. Then the heat began to be excited round about in the bath for the purpose of bathing the King. But I was taken to prison and detained 40 days for having perpetrated the crime.

After I was relieved, I returned to the fount that I might see it, obscure clouds appeared which lasted a long time. To conclude, I saw every thing at the end that my prize derived without much labour.

It will not torment you very much if you enter upon the right path and not leave it for erroneous ones, but imitate nature in every thing. In concluding I say unto you that whosoever upon reading of this book does not understand the Stone by himself, will never understand the work, however much he may operate. For in this very parable, the whole work is contained, in practice, days, colours, regimens, ways, dispositions and continuations, which I have narrated, moved by piety, charity, and compassion alone towards desolate operators in this most precious secret. Therefore, in making of my book I beseech the Lord God, whose grace is absolute, that he may open the minds of men of good will, to whom if ingenious there will be little difficulty, only they must abstain from the dreaming phantasies and the subtleties of Sophists and always remain in this way of nature which is demonstrated by my speculations.

Farewell in Jesus Christ always and be mindful of the poor, when you obtain this inexhaustible treasure.

Pray to God, who will teach you more.

The Parabola of Madathanus

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As I once was walking in a beautiful, green, young forest, meditating and deploring the difficulties of this life, considering how, through the grievous Fall of our first Parents we came into such wretchedness and grief, I left the accustomed road and came, I know not how, upon a narrow footpath, very rough, untrodden, difficult and overgrown with so many bushes and brambles that it was easy to see it was very seldom used. At this I became frightened and wished to retrace my steps. But this was not possible, especially since a strong wind blew so mightily behind me that I had to take ten steps forward for every one I could take backward. Therefore I had to press on, despite the roughness of the way.

After advancing thus for a good while, I came at last to a lovely meadow, encircled by beautiful fruit-laden trees, and called by the inhabitants, The Field of the Blessed. Here I met a group of old men with snow-white beards, and

one among them was young and had a pointed black beard. A still younger man was present also, whose name I knew, but whose face I did not yet see. These men conversed about many things, particularly about a high and great secret in Nature which God kept hidden from the multitude, revealing it only to the few who loved Him. I listened to them for a long time, and their words pleased me much. But some among them appeared to mutter foolishly, indeed not about the objectives or the work, but about Parabolae, Similitudines and other Parergones. In this they followed the Figmenta of Aristotle, of Pliny and of others, each of whom had copied from the other. At this I could no longer remain silent, but put in a word of my own, answering many futile things on the basis of experience, so that many listened to me, examining me in their speciality, putting me to some very hard tests. But my foundation was so good that I came through with all honors, whereat they all were amazed. However they unanimously accepted me into their Brotherhood, whereat I rejoiced heartily.

But they said that I could not be a full colleague so long as I did not know their Lion and was not fully aware what he could do internally and externally. I was therefore to set about diligently to make him submissive to myself. Confidently I promised them I would do my best, for I enjoyed their company so much that I would not have parted from them for anything in the world.

So they led me to the Lion and very carefully described him to me. But what I was to do with him at first, no one would tell me. Indeed some of them did give me certain hints, but so confusedly that not one in a thousand could understand them. However, when I had tied him and made certain that his sharp claws and pointed teeth could not harm me, they no longer kept anything back. The Lion was very old, fierce and huge; his yellow mane hung over his neck, and he really appeared unconquerable. I was nearly terror-stricken, and had it not been for my agreement and for the old men who stood around me to see how I would begin, I would have run away. Confidently I approached the lion in his cave and began to cajole him, but he looked at me so sharply with his glittering eyes that I nearly let my water for fear. At the same time I remembered that as we went to the Lion's cave one of the old men had told me that many people had attempted to conquer the Lion, but very few had succeeded. Since I did not wish to fail, I recalled many grips I had learned through careful application to athletics, and in addition I was well trained in natural magic, so I forgot about the pleasantries and attacked the Lion so artfully and subtly that before he was aware of it, I had pressed the blood out of his body, indeed out of his heart itself. The blood was beautifully red, but very choleric. But I examined his anatomy further and found many things which greatly surprised me; his bones were white as snow, and they were of greater quantity than his blood.

When my old men, standing round the cave and watching me, realized what I had done, they began to dispute with each other violently so that I could see their gestures. But what they said I could not understand because I was so far inside the cave. And when they began to shout at each other, I heard one who cried, "He must also bring the Lion to life again; otherwise he cannot be our colleague."

I did not wish to make trouble. Therefore I walked out of the cave and crossed a broad space. Then I came, I do not know how, to a very high wall which rose over a hundred ells into the clouds. But above there it did not have the width of a shoe. From the beginning where I started, to the end there ran an iron railing along the top of the wall, well fastened with many supports. I walked along the top of this wall and thought I saw someone going along a little ahead of me on the right side of the railing.

After I followed him a while, I saw someone following behind me on the other side of the railing (to this day I don't know whether it was a man or a woman) who called to me and said that it was better to walk on his side than where I was going. I easily believed this, for the railing which stood in the middle of the wall made the passageway very narrow so that it was difficult to walk along it at such a height. Then behind me I saw some people who wanted to go that same way. So I swung myself under the railing, holding it fast with both hands, and continued along the other side until I came to a place on the wall where it was especially dangerous to descend. Now I regretted that I had not remained on the other side; for I could not pass under the railing again; also it was impossible to turn back and take the other way again. Therefore I summoned my courage, trusted in my sure-footedness, held on tightly, and descended without harm. When I went on for a while, I had indeed forgotten about all dangers and also did not know where the wall and railing had vanished.

After I had descended I saw standing a lovely rosebush on which beautiful red and white roses were growing; but there were more of the red than of the white. I broke off some of them and put them on my hat.

I soon saw a wall encircling a great garden, in which were young fellows. Their maidens also would have liked to be in the garden, but they did not wish to make the great effort of walking the long distance around the wall to the gate. I was sorry for them and returned the whole distance I had come, then followed a smoother path, and I went so fast that I soon came to several houses, where I hoped to find the cottage of the gardener. There I found many people; each had his own room; often two were working together slowly and diligently; but each had his own work. And it appeared to me that all this they were doing, I had done before them, and that I knew it all very well. Then I thought, "Look, if so many other people do such dirty and slovenly work only for appearance's sake, and each according to

his own ideas, but not established in Nature, then you yourself are forgiven." Therefore I would not stay there any longer for I knew that such art would disappear in smoke, so I continued on my destined way.

As I now went toward the garden gate some looked at me sourly, and I feared that they would hinder me in the fulfillment of my intentions. Others, however, said, "See, he wishes to go into the garden; but we who worked for so long in its service have never entered it. We shall laugh at him if he blunders."

But I paid no attention to them, for I knew the plan of the garden better than they, although I had never been in it, and I went straight up to the gate. This was locked fast, and one could not discover even a key-hole from the outside. But in the gate I saw a tiny round hole which one could not distinguish with ordinary eyes, and I thought it was necessary to open the gate there. I took out my skeleton-key, especially prepared for this purpose, unlocked the gate and walked in.

After I was inside the gate I found more locked gates, but I unlocked them without more difficulty. But I found that this was a hallway as if it were in a well-built house, about six shoes wide and twenty long, covered with a ceiling. And although the other gates were still locked, I could see through them sufficiently into the garden as soon as the first gate was opened.

And so in God's Name I wandered further into the garden. There in the midst of it I found a little flower-bed, square, each of its four sides six measuring-rods long, and covered with rosebushes, on which the roses were blossoming beautifully. Since it had rained a little and the sun was shining, a very lovely rainbow appeared. After I left the flower-bed and had come to the place where I was to help the maidens, behold! instead of the walls there stood a low wattled fence. And the most beautiful maiden, dressed all in white satin, with the most handsome youth, clad in scarlet, went past the rose-garden, one leading the other by the arm and carrying many fragrant roses in their hands. I spoke to them, asking how they had come over the fence.

"My dearest bridegroom here helped me over," she said, "and now we are leaving this lovely garden to go to our room to be together."

"I am happy," I replied, "that without further effort of mine you can satisfy your wish. Nevertheless you can see how I ran so long a way in so short a time, only to serve you."

After this I came into a great mill, built within stone walls; inside were no flour-bins nor any other things necessary for milling; moreover, through the wall one saw no waterwheels turning in the stream. I asked myself how this state of affairs came about, and one old miller answered me that the milling-machinery was locked up on the other side. Then I saw the miller's helper go into it by a covered passage-way, and I followed close after him. But as I was going along the passage, with the waterwheels on my left, I paused, amazed at what I saw there. For now the waterwheels were above the level of the passage, the water was coal-black, although the drops from it were white, and the covered passage-way itself was not more than three fingers wide. Nevertheless I risked turning back, holding fast to the beams over the passage-way; thus I crossed over the water safely. Then I asked the old miller how many waterwheels he had. He answered, Ten. This adventure I long remembered and dearly wished I could know what it meant. But when I saw that the miller would not reveal anything, I went on my way.

In front of the mill there arose a high, paved hill; on its summit some of the old men I have mentioned were walking in the warm sunshine. They had a letter from the Brotherhood and were discussing it among themselves. I soon guessed its contents, and that it might concern me, so I went to them and asked, "Sirs, does what you read there concern me?"

"Yes," they replied, "Your wife whom you recently married, you must keep in wedlock or we shall have to report it to the Prince."

I said, "That will be no trouble, for I was born together with her, as it were, was raised with her as a child, and because I have married her I shall keep her always, and death itself shall not part us. For I love her with all my heart."

"What have we to complain of, then?" they asked; "the bride is also happy, and we know her wish is that you must be joined together."

"I am very happy," I replied.

"Well then," said one of them, "the Lion will come back to life, mightier and more powerful than before."

Then I recalled my previous struggle and effort, and for some curious reason I felt this did not concern me but another whom I knew well. At that moment I saw our bridegroom walking with his bride, dressed as before, ready and prepared for the wedding, whereat I was very happy; for I had greatly feared that these things might concern me. When, as has been said, our scarlet-clad bridegroom came to the old men with his dear bride, her white garments gleaming brightly, they were soon united and I greatly wondered that the maiden who might be the bridegroom's mother was nevertheless so young that she seemed newly born, as it were.

Now I do not know how the two had sinned; perhaps as brother and sister, united in love in such a way that they could not be separated, they had been accused of incest. Instead of a bridal bed and brilliant wedding they were

condemned to a strong and everlasting prison. However, because of their noble birth and station, in order that they could do nothing together in secret, and so all their doings would always be visible to their guard, their prison was transparent-clear like crystal and round like a heavenly dome. But before they were placed inside, all the clothing and jewels they wore were taken from them so they had to live together stripped naked in their prison. No one was assigned to serve them, but all their necessities of food and drink -- the latter drawn from the stream mentioned above -- were placed inside before the door of the room was securely closed, locked, sealed with the seal of the Brotherhood, and I was placed on guard outside. And since winter was near I was to heat the room properly so they would neither freeze nor burn, but under no conditions could they come out of the room and escape. But if any harm resulted from my neglect of these instructions, I would undoubtedly receive great and severe punishment.

I did not feel well about this, my fear and worry made me faint-hearted, and I thought to myself, It is no small task which has been assigned to me. I also knew that the Brotherhood did not lie, always did what it said, and certainly performed its work with diligence. However, I could change nothing, and besides, the locked room was situated in the midst of a strong tower, encircled by strong bulwarks and high walls, and since one could warm the room by a moderate but constant fire, I took up my task in God's Name, beginning to heat the room in order to protect the imprisoned married couple from the cold. But what happened? As soon as they felt the faintest breath of warmth, they embraced each other so lovingly that the like of it will not be seen again. And they remained together in such ardor that the heart of the young bridegroom disappeared in burning love, and his entire body melted and sank down in the arms of his beloved. When the latter, who had loved him no less than he had loved her, saw this, she began to lament, weeping bitterly over him and, so to say, buried him in such a flood of tears that one could no longer see what had happened to him. But her lamenting and weeping lasted only for a short time, for because of her great heart-sorrow she did not wish to live longer, and died of her own free will. Ah, woe is me! In what anxiety, grief and distress was I when I saw those two I was to have helped, dissolved entirely to water and lying before me dead. Certain failure was there before my eyes, and moreover, what to me was the bitterest, and what I feared most were the coming taunts and sneers, as well as the punishment I would have to undergo.

I passed a few days in careful thought, considering what I could do, when I recalled how Medea had restored the corpse of Jason to life, and so I asked myself, "If Medea could do it, why cannot you do it also?" Whereat I began to think how to proceed with it, but I did not find any better method than to maintain a steady warmth until the water would recede and I could see the dead bodies of the lovers once again. Then I hoped that I would escape all danger to my great gain and praise. Therefore for forty days I continued with the warmth I had begun, and I saw that the longer I did this, the more the water disappeared, and the dead bodies, black as coal, came to view. And indeed this would have happened sooner had not the room been locked and sealed so tightly. But under no conditions dared I open it. Then I noticed quite clearly that the water rose high toward the clouds, collected on the ceiling of the room, and descended again like rain; nothing could escape, so our bridegroom lay with his beloved bride before my eyes dead and rotten, stinking beyond all measure.

Meanwhile, I saw in the room a rainbow of the most beautiful colors, caused by the sunshine in the moist weather, which heartened me no little in the midst of my sorrows. And soon I became rather happy that I could see my two lovers lying before me. However, no joy is so great that sorrow is not mixed with it; therefore in my joy I was sorrowful because I saw the ones I was to have guarded lying lifeless before me. But since their room was made from such pure and solid material and was shut so tightly, I knew that their soul and their spirit could not escape, but were still enclosed in it, so I continued with my steady warmth day and night, carrying out my duty as prescribed, for I believed that the two would not return to their bodies so long as the moisture was present. This I indeed found to be true. For in many careful observations I observed that many vapors arose from the earth about evening, through the power of the sun, and ascended on high as if the sun itself were drawing up the water. But during the night they gathered into a lovely and fertile dew, descending very early in the morning, enriching the earth and washing the corpses of our dead, so that from day to day, the longer such bathing and washing continued, they became even whiter and more beautiful. But the more beautiful and whiter they became, the more they lost their moisture, until at last when the air became light and clear and all the foggy, damp weather had passed, the spirit and soul of the bride could no longer remain in the pure air, and returned into the transfigured, glorified body of the Queen, and as soon as the body felt their presence, it instantly became living once again. This brought me no little joy, as one can easily imagine, especially as I saw her arise, dressed in a very rich garment, the like of which very few on this earth have seen, wearing a costly crown, adorned with perfect diamonds, and heard her say; "Harken, you children of men, and learn, all of you who are of women born, that the All-Highest has power to enthrone kings and to dethrone them. He makes rich and poor, according to his will. He kills and makes to live again. And all this behold in me as a living example! I was great and I became small. But now after I became humble, I have been made queen over many realms. I was killed and am resurrected again. To me, the poor one, have the great treasures of the wise and mighty been entrusted and given. Therefore have I been given power to make the poor rich, to

extend mercy to the humble, and to bring health to the sick. But not yet am I like my dearest brother, the great, mighty king, who will also be awakened from the dead. When he comes he will prove that my words are true." And as she said this, the sun shone brightly, the days became warmer, and the dog-days were near at hand. But long before the sumptuous and great wedding of our new queen many costly robes were prepared from black velvet, ash-grey coloured damask, grey silk, silver-coloured taffeta, snow-white satin; indeed, a silver piece of extraordinary beauty, embroidered with costly pearls and worked with marvellous, clear-sparkling diamonds was also made ready. And robes for the young king were also made ready, namely of pink, with yellow aureolin colours, costly fabrics, and finally a red velvet garment adorned with costly rubies and carbuncles in very great numbers. But the tailors who made these garments were invisible, and I marvelled when I saw one coat after another, and one garment after another being finished, for I knew that no one except the bridegroom and his bride had entered into the chamber. But what astonished me the most was that as soon as a new coat or garment was finished, the former ones disappeared from before my eyes, and I did not know where they had gone or who had locked them away. And after this costly coat was made ready, the great and mighty king appeared in all his power and glory, and there was nothing like him. And when he discovered he was locked in, he asked me in a friendly manner and with gracious words to open the door for him so he would be able to come out; he said it would result in great blessing for me. Although I was strictly forbidden to open the room, I was so overwhelmed by the great appearance and the gentle persuasive powers of the king that I opened the door willingly. And as he walked out, he was so friendly, gracious, even humble, that one could indeed see that nothing graces noble persons so much as do these virtues. And since he had passed the dog-days in the great heat, he was very thirsty, weak and tired; and he asked me to bring him some of the fast-flowing water from beneath the waterwheels of the mill, which I did, and he drank it with great eagerness. Then he returned to his chamber and told me to lock the door fast behind him, lest someone should disturb him or waken him from his sleep. There he rested for a few days, and then he called me to open the door. But I saw that he had become much more handsome, full-blooded and splendid, and he also noticed it; and he thought that the water was marvellous and healthy. Therefore he asked for more, and drank a larger quantity than he had the first time, and I resolved to enlarge the chamber. After the king had drunk his fill of this wonderful beverage which the ignorant do not value at all, he became so handsome and glorious that in all my life I never saw a more splendid appearance, or anyone more noble in manner and character. Then he led me into his kingdom and showed me all the treasures and riches of the world, so that I must say that not only did the queen speak the truth, but he also gave the greatest part of it to those who know the treasure and can describe it. There were gold and precious carbuncle stones without end, and the rejuvenation and restoration of the natural powers, as well as the recovery of health and the removal of all illnesses were daily occurrences there. But most delightful of all in this kingdom was that the people knew, revered and praised their Creator, receiving from Him wisdom and knowledge, and at last, after this happiness in the world of time, they attained an eternal blessedness. To this may God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit help all of us.

Lumen de lumine

From Thomas Vaughan *Lumen de Lumine, or a New Magical Light*, London, 1651.

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It was about the dawning or daybreak when, tired with a tedious solitude and those pensive thoughts which attend it, after much loss and more labour, I suddenly fell asleep. Here then the day was no sooner born but strangled. I was reduced to a night of a more deep tincture than that which I had formerly spent. My fancy placed me in a region of inexpressible obscurity, and - as I thought - more than natural, but without any terrors. I was in a firm, even temper and, though without encouragements, not only resolute but well pleased. I moved every way for discoveries but was still entertained with darkness and silence; and I thought myself translated to the land of desolation. Being thus troubled to no purpose, and wearied with long endeavours, I resolved to rest myself, and seeing I could find nothing I expected if anything could find me.

I had not long continued in this humour but I could hear the whispers of a soft wind that travelled towards me; and suddenly it was in the leaves of the trees, so that I concluded myself to be in some wood or wilderness. With this gentle breath came a most heavenly, odourous air, much like that of sweet briars, but not so rank and full. This perfume being blown over, there succeeded a pleasant humming of bees amongst flowers; and this did somewhat discompose me, for I judged it not suitable with the complexion of the place, which was dark and like midnight.

Now was I somewhat troubled with these unexpected occurrences when a new appearance diverted my apprehensions. Not far off on my right hand I could discover a white, weak light - not so clear as that of a candle, but misty and much resembling an atmosphere. Towards the centre it was of a purple colour, like the Elysian sunshine, but in the dilation of the circumference milky; and if we consider the joint tincture of the parts, it was a painted Vesper, a figure of that splendour which the old Romans called Sol Mortuorum. Whiles I was taken up with this strange scene there appeared in the middle purple colours a sudden commotion, and out of their very centre did sprout a certain flowery light, as it were the flame of a taper. Very bright it was, sparkling and twinkling like the day-star. The beams of this new planet - issuing forth in small skeins and rivulets - looked like threads of silver, which, being reflected against the trees, discovered a curious green umbrage; and I found myself in a grove of bays. The texture of the branches was so even - the leaves so thick and in that conspiring order - it was not a wood but a building.

I conceived it indeed to be the Temple of Nature, where she had joined discipline to her doctrine. Under this shade and screen did lodge a number of nightingales, which I discovered by their whitish breasts. These, peeping through their leafy cabinets, rejoiced at this strange light, and - having first plumed themselves - stirred the still air with their music. This I thought was very pretty, for the silence of the night, suiting with the solitude of the place, made me judge it heavenly. The ground, both near and far off, presented a pleasing kind of checker, for this new star meeting with some drops of dew made a multitude of bright refractions, as if the earth had been paved with diamonds. These rare and various accidents kept my soul busied, but to interrupt my thoughts, as if it had been unlawful to examine what I had seen, another, more admirable object interposed.

I could see between me and the light a most exquisite, divine beauty - her frame neither long nor short but a mean, decent stature. Attired she was in thin loose silk but so green that I never saw the like, for the colour was not earthly. In some places it was fancied with white and silver ribbons, which looked like lilies in a field of grass. Her head was overcast with a thin, floating tiffany, which she held up with one of her hands and looked as it were from under it. Her eyes were quick, fresh and celestial but had something of a start, as if she had been puzzled with a sudden occurrence. From her black veil did her locks break out, like sunbeams from a mist. They ran dishevelled to her breasts and then returned to her cheeks in curls and rings of gold. Her hair behind her was rolled to a curious globe, with a small short spire, flowered with purple and sky-coloured knots. Her rings were pure, entire emeralds - for she valued no metal - and her pendants of burning carbuncles. To be short, her whole habit was youthful and flowery: it smelt like the East and was thoroughly aired with rich Arabian diapasons. This and no other was her appearance at that time; but whiles I admired her perfections and prepared to make my addresses she prevents me with a voluntary approach. Here indeed I expected some discourse from her; but she, looking very seriously and silently in my face, takes me by the hand and softly whispers I should follow her. This, I confess, sounded strange; but I thought it not amiss to obey so sweet a command, and especially one that promised very much but was able in my opinion to perform more.

The light which I had formerly admired proved now at least to be her attendant, for it moved like an usher before her. This service added much to her glory, and it was my only care to observe her, who though she wandered not yet verily she followed no known path. Her walk was green, being furred with a fine, small grass which felt like plush, for it was very soft, and pearled all the way with daisies and primrose. When we came out of our arbours and court of bays I could perceive a strange clearness in the air, not like that of day, neither can I affirm it was night. The stars indeed perched over us and stood glimmering, as it were, on the tops of high hills; for we were in a most deep bottom and the earth overlooked us, so that I conceived we were near the centre. We had not walked very far when I discovered certain thick, white clouds - for such they seemed to me - which filled all that part of the valley that was before us. This indeed was an error of mine; but it continued not long, for coming nearer I found them to be firm, solid rocks but shining and sparkling like diamonds. This rare and goodly sight did not a little encourage me, and great desire I had to hear my mistress speak - for so I judged her now - that if possible I might receive some information. How to bring this about I did not well know, for she seemed averse from discourse. But having resolved with myself to disturb her, I asked her if she would favour me with her name. To this she replied very familiarly, as if she had known me long before.

"Eugenius" - said she - "I have many names, but my best and dearest is Thalia, for I am always green and shall never wither. Thou dost here behold the Mountains of the Moon, and I will shew thee the original of Nilus; for she springs from these invisible rocks. Look up and peruse the very tops of these pillars and cliffs of salt, for they are the true, philosophical, lunar mountains. Did'st thou ever see such a miraculous, incredible thing?"

This speech made me quickly look up to those glittering turrets of salt, where I could see a stupendous cataract or waterfall. The stream was more large than any river in her full channel; but notwithstanding the height and violence of its fall it descended without any noise. The waters were dashed and their current distracted by those saltish rocks; but for all this they came down with a dead silence - like the still, soft air. Some of this liquor - for it ran by me - I

took up, to see what strange woollen substance it was that did thus steal down like snow. When I had it in my hands it was no common water but a certain kind of oil of a watery complexion. A viscous, fat, mineral nature it was, bright like pearls and transparent like crystal. When I had viewed and searched it well, it appeared somewhat spermatic, and in very truth it was obscene to the sight but much more to the touch. Hereupon Thalia told me it was the First Matter and the very natural, true sperm of the great world. "It is" - said she -

"invisible and therefore few are they that find it; but many believe it is not to be found. They believe indeed that the world is a dead figure, like a body which hath been sometime made and fashioned by that spirit which dwelt in it, but retains that very shape and fashion for some short time after the spirit hath forsaken it. They should rather consider that every frame, when the soul hath left it, doth decompose and can no longer retain its former figure; for the agent that held and kept the parts together is gone. Most excellent then is that speech which I heard some time from one of my own pupils. 'This world' - saith he - 'of such divers and contrary parts, would not have reached unity of form had there not been One who did join together such contrary things. But, being brought together, the very diversity of the natures joined, fighting one with another, had discomposed and separated them, unless there had been One to hold and keep those parts together which He at first did join. Verily the order of Nature could not proceed with such certainty, neither could she move so regularly in several places, times, effects and qualities, unless there were Some One Who disposed and ordered these varieties of motions. This, whatsoever it is, by which the world is preserved and governed, I call by that usual name God.'

"Thou must therefore, Eugenius" - said she - "understand that all compositions are made by an Active, Intelligent Life; for what was done in the composure of the great world in general, the same is performed in the generation of every creature, and its sperm in particular. I suppose thou dost know that water cannot be contained but in some vessel. The natural vessel which God hath appointed for it is the earth. In earth water may be thickened and brought to a figure; but of itself, and without earth, it hath an indefinite flux and is subject to no certain figure whatsoever. Air also is a fleeting and indeterminate substance, but water is his vessel; for water being figured by means of earth the air also is thickened and figured in the water. To ascend higher, the air coagulates the liquid fire, and fire incorporated involves and confines the thin light. These are the means by which God unites and compounds the elements into a sperm, for the earth alters the complexion of the water, and makes it viscous and slimy. Such a water must they seek who would produce any magical, extraordinary effects; for this spermatic water coagulates with the least heat, so that Nature concocts and hardens it into metals. Thou seest the whites of eggs will thicken as soon as they feel the fire; for their moisture is tempered with a pure, subtle earth, and this subtle, animated earth is that which binds their water. Take water then, my Eugenius, from the Mountains of the Moon, which is water and no water. Boil it in the fire of Nature to a twofold earth, white and red; then feed those earths with air of fire and fire of air; and thou hast the two magical luminaries. But because thou hast been a servant of mine for a long time, and that thy patience hath manifested the truth of thy love, I will bring thee to my school, and there will I shew thee what the world is not capable of."

This was no sooner spoken but she passed by those diamond-like, rocky salts and brought me to a rock of adamant, figured to a just, entire cube. It was the basis to a fiery pyramid, a trigon of pure pyrope, whose imprisoned flames did stretch and strive for heaven. To the four-square of the frontlet of this rock was annexed a little portal and in that hung a tablet. It was a painted hedgehog, so rolled and wrapt up in his bag he could not easily be discomposed. Over this stood a dog snarling and hard by him this instruction: Softly, or he pricks.

In we went, and having entered the rocks, the interior parts were of a heavenly, smaragdine colour. Somewhere they shined like leaves of pure gold, and then appeared a third inexpressible, purple tincture. We had not gone very far but we came to an ancient, majestic altar. On the offertory, or very top of it, was figured the trunk of an old rotten tree, plucked up by the roots. Out of this crept a snake - of colour white and green - slow of motion like a snail and very weak, having but newly felt the sun that overlooked her. Towards the foot or basis of this altar was an inscription in old Egyptian hieroglyphics which Thalia expounded, and this is it:

TO THE BLESSED GODS IN THE UNDERWORLD

N.L.

From this place we moved straight forward till we came to a cave of earth. It was very obscure and withal dankish, giving a heavy odour - like that of graves. Here we stayed not long, but passing into this churchyard we came at last to the Sanctuary, where Thalia turning to me made this her short and last speech.

"Eugenius, this is the place which many have desired to see, but saw it not. The preparatives to their admission here were wanting. They did not love me but mine. They coveted indeed the riches of Nature, but Nature herself they did both neglect and corrupt. Some advantages they had in point of assault, had they but studied their opportunities. I was exposed to their hands but they knew me not. I was subject in some measure to their violence, but He that made

me would not suffer me to be rifled. In a word, the ruin of these man was built on their disposition. In their addresses to me they resembled those pitiful things which some call courtiers. These have their antics and raunts, as if they had been trained amongst apes. They scrape - as one hath well expressed it - proportions mathematical, make strange legs and faces, and in that phrase of the same poet

'Vary their mouths as 'twere by magic spell

To figures oval, square and triangle.'

So these impudent sophisters assaulted me with vainglorious humours. When I looked into their hearts there was no room for me. They were full of proud thoughts and dreamed of a certain riotous happiness which must be maintained by my expenses and treasures. In the interim they did not consider that I was plain and simple, one that did not love noise but a private, sweet content. I have, Eugenius, found thee much of my own humour. I have withal found thy expectations patient. Thou canst easily believe where thou hast reason to thy faith. Thou hast all this while served without wages: now is the time come to reward thee. My love I freely give thee, and with it these tokens - my key and seal. The one shuts, the other opens: be sure to use both with discretion. As for the mysteries of this my school, thou hast the liberty to peruse them all; there is not anything here but I will gladly reveal it to thee. I have one precept that I shall command to thee, and this is it: you must be silent. You shall not in your writings exceed my allowances. Remember that I am your love, and you will not make me a prostitute. But because I wish you serviceable to those of your own disposition, I here give you an emblematical type of my Sanctuary, with a full privilege to publish it. This is all, and I am now going to that invisible region where is the abode of the immortals. Let not that proverb take place with you: Out of sight, out of mind. Remember me and be happy."

These were her instructions, which were no sooner delivered but she brought me to a clear, large light; and here I saw those things which I must not speak of. Having thus discovered all the parts of that glorious labyrinth, she did lead me out again with her clue of sunbeams - her light that went shining before us. When we were past the rocks of Nilus she shewed me a secret staircase, by which we ascended from that deep and flowery vale to the face of this our common earth. Here Thalia stopped in a mute ceremony, for I was to be left all alone. She looked upon me in silent smiles, mixed with a pretty kind of sadness, for we were unwilling to part. But her hour of translation was come, and taking - as I thought - our last leave, she passed before my eyes unto the eternal, into the ether of Nature.

An adept's allegory to a certain scholar

An alchemical allegory extracted from "A Dialogue; or Questions put by an Adept Master to a certain Scholar, with his answers", found in MS. Sloane 3637, folios 37-56. A similar work is included in the *Ginaeceum Chemicum*, Ludguni, 1679, though this does not contain this allegory.] [Back to allegories.](#)

Before either the Theban Ogyges or Deucalion of Thessaly, under whose unequal governments the Earth was wasted with deluges, there reigned in Epirus the most pious King of all the Age. And yet he also being grown in years at length submitted to approaching fate. The widow Queen in seven days destroyed with grief and sorrow, departed also to fill her husband's grave. But one small hour before her death, for she had long been big, she was brought to bed of twins. But among her dying groans, the nurses lamentations, and the outcries of the noble ladies that stood around, they all forgot which had the good fortune to be born the first. Although there was a difference in sex, a sundry colour both of hair and skin, and a vast variance in the shape of all their members, yet such a fatal oblivion seized them all, that there was none that dared to vote, either for the one or for the other. What should a people do that had a firm established law, that the first born of whatsoever sex should be exalted to the succession of the Kingdom.

The nobles met, the prudent Senate soon congratulated with themselves for the difference in the sexes of the double birth. Because the Kingdom had another law, that the brother should have the sister for his wife, which being done they hoped that there would be no quarrel about inheritance. So having chosen the most deserving among themselves to govern during the minority of the Princes, and others to take care of their education, they all departed home. They applauded themselves that they had so easily diverted a danger so threatening to the Kingdom. But, alack, by what evil fate shall I say it came to pass, that discord should divide the Royal Family. That differences and strife should there be every day increasing? The prince had red bushy hair, threatening eyes, a stern look, almost a bullock's neck, rough skin and a rapacious hand. To his playfellows always cruel, but to his sister he bore a mortal hatred. But the Princess had a face even to be envied by the Nymphs, her hair was white, but surpassed by her fairer neck, her eyes were sparkling and her countenance cheerful towards all, unless when she, as she was almost always,

was struck with horror at her brother's name. The Governors of the Kingdom knew that unless this antipathy were remedied, no marriage could be made.

Therefore convoking the States again, they often and oftentimes consulted, but found out no redress for such great evils. They went into Dodona's Grove, but the vocal oaks were silent. They sought the sacred Pigeons there, but they were flown away, the one to Delphos, and the other into the furthest regions of the sandy Libya. Ambassadors sent hither return, and nothing's done. In the mean time the rabble made a tumult, the greater part disdaining a female Empire over them demanded the Prince to place him on the Throne. But the better part, although in number less, pitying the fortune of the Princess, and not enduring the injury betake themselves to her.

And now the Kingdom's peace had plainly been despaired of, had not the chiefest of the Senators, Cleobulus, but not without danger of his head, repressed the raging people. For he promised he could effect the so much desired marriage. He told aloud that from the furthest Aethiopia and the Fountains of the Nile, he had bought, and dearly too, a Love-charm, and a potion and a preservative. Prodigies and wonders and things unheard of before are swallowed soonest by the greedy vulgar. So this Hydra being for a time repressed, Cleobulus told the Senators returning to the Counsel house how matters were. That he despaired of making the marriage he had promised, that he thought it best to blunt their first fury, but not being able to sustain a second shock, he would fly his country, and they should consider what was further to be done. They needed haste. The Palace gates were diligently guarded, that nothing should again be spread abroad from thence.

In the meanwhile there are some sent into Egypt to consult, nay even to hire the Magi. The recompense was two parts of the Kingdom divided into seven. A reward so great soon drew great multitudes, that promised golden mountains, while they themselves gaped after sordid gain. To be brief it would surfeit you to relate their frauds, their cheats, their villanies, their tricks, and juggles. While these were doing some busybody courtiers throwing papers out by night betrayed the whole imposture. The raving people besieged the palace, they ask for Cleobulus to be surrendered, but being informed that he had left Epirus, they demanded the King, that they might crown him according to the custom of his ancestors. But those who did desire a Queen, sending her forth by a back door, carried her to another part of the Kingdom to be crowned.

Meanwhile what do the Magi? Truly they rejoiced that the work they knew not how to perform was taken from them. But raising a great clamour they go to the Governor, and, as it is the way of mountebanks, complain that the work being now almost perfected, they were deceived of their wages. They take counsel together among these tumults to break open the treasury by night and take the Crowns and royal jewels. The attempt succeeds well, they get aboard a ship which they had stolen also, and passing down the river, they made a stop at the mouth thereof. Judging it now convenient time and place, each one requires to have his share of the booty in his own possession. It is the manner of robbers to quarrel in dividing the spoil, so they come to handy-blows.

Among these knaves, as in such works all hired men most certainly are, there were, like doves among the crows, two honest men; the first was born at Babylon in Chaldea, the other nine miles from the down-falls of Nilus. The spreading fame of the Epirotical affairs, and not the smell of gain had brought them thither. What should they do? Their counsel about the reconciling of the Princess was always rejected even with laughter, nor yet was there leave given to depart. They consented not to the theft. But when those fled, if they had stayed at Court, they might have lost their heads for the villanies of others. But now being in the extremest danger, they call all their Magia to their assistance, and while the rest were squabbling, they lift the Crown entire together with the Jewels into the Air, and twice as much as was the whole height of the mast, they by their Art keep it suspended there. The fight now ceases and they tremble, astonishment and wonder does invade them.

The two Sophi cast themselves out of the ship. Many others follow, but not knowing the Nature of the River (it is called Cocytus) they are drowned. The other less malicious thieves setting sail, arrive in Egypt but with empty purses. But those two who were truly Sophi, when they by skillful swimming had attained the banks, they go to the Senate, accuse their fugitive Companions of the crime, but that they accompanied them only with intent to save the regalia out of the hands of robbers. Which they also affirm that they have done, and that they had placed them in the Air aloft, at the mouth of the Cocytus. And that moreover now all fear of civil war was vanished, because to whomsoever the realm was destined by the laws of fate, into his hand the Crown should willingly and easily descend.

The prudent Senate mindful of the frauds of late, and having too weak a faith for such great miracles, committing the Magi to faithful keepers, they sent one to the King, the other to the Queen, and also hasty messengers to survey the Mouth of Cocytus. They returning relate that all are true, a Crown of most unheard of beauty pendant in the Air. The astonished senators in haste begin their Journey. Coming to the river they salute the King on the right bank and the Queen sitting on the Left, not knowing to which of them this admirable Crown was destined, for as yet it did incline to neither part. The Magi are called, since they had hung it there, let them command it to descend without delay. This they denying they had power to do unless according to a Law given by the Sophi and the appointed order

of the Fates, by the hasty rabble they are put to death and their bodies enclosed in lead are cast into the River. Time was not long before the ebbing and the flowing tides carried them into the neighbouring shallows, out of their flesh grew up the herbmarine, a succedaneum for a turf to cover the remaining bones.

[I must here insert a verse.

Discoloured weeds and green Mosse intomb you].

But the candidates for the Crown, seeing it yet unmoved begin the lament the Magi. Of all the divers sent down into the water to seek their carcasses. there none returns. The wisdom of the Senate therefore thinks it fit, that there be erected one empty tomb upon the river's bank, and a second on the other, to which the ordinary Priests officiating the holy Rites of the kingdom should strive to call the Magi's wandering Ghosts. In a short time the primroses arising show that the prayers of the just are heard.

After this it was perceived, either the river was little shrunk, or that the tombs receded further from it. But this doubt is soon cleared, because even vulgar eyes do judge that waters are sensibly diminished every day. As they decrease the competitors removing ever anon their tents press forward on the bank and follow them retiring. The less the river, is the nearer they approach, the nearer that they are, the more they seem alike. For as much as the black exhalations of Cocytus do tan the lovely fairness of the Queen, so much the Northern Winds add beauty to the King; so that they who were before so much unlike, have now so much resemblance, that they are scarce distinguished from one another.

Behold another wonder. As they approach, in the same proportioned space the Crown descends from above. Now the King is just about to touch it, and now the Queen is nigh and now they touch it. But neither can the sister without her brother, nor can the brother without his sister, move it. With their joined forces therefore they carry it between them, with the Senate rejoicing, Cleobulus returning, the people applauding, and the realm triumphing. Dodona's vocal forest now resounds again, and instead of doves, the ghosts of the Magi utter prophecies. The willing sister marries to her brother, the brother takes his sister for his wife. From these nuptials there arises a numerous posterity, which to this very day endures and shall endure as long as this whole orb of Earth.

The Duenech allegory

Included in the vast alchemical compendium, *Theatrum Chemicum* III, p.756-757, Ursel, 1602.

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Duenech Allegory

There was an old duke, called Duenech. He saw himself despised in the meeting of monarchs, on account of his deep melancholy. After a deliberation with friends how this melancholy could be suppressed and how the blood with the other excellent temperaments could get the upper hand, he sent for the physician Pharut and offered him a high reward, if he, Pharut, the prince of physicians, could cure him. Thereupon Pharut said that it would be a protracted and difficult cure which only he could bring about and he promised to cure Duenech.

They fixed a time to begin, namely when Saturn was in opposition with the Sun. Thereupon Pharut ordered everybody to leave the duke's house, with the exception of a little fool in gay-coloured garments, who was allowed to stay to entertain the duke.

After Pharut put Duenech in a bed with white sheets and covered him well, so that he might not be killed by the smoke of the nearest furnace. Then he gave him clear water, in consequence of which Duenech began to sweat so strongly that the white sheets were completely stained. The black bile had been dissolved in the whole of Duenech's body. Thereupon Pharut prepared another bed for him, the bolster of which was filled with the feathers of a young, black eagle, and the pillow with swans' feathers; on the bed a black sheet and a white cover were laid. Duenech was put in this bed and all air holes were entirely closed so that neither sweat nor vapour might escape. This bed was heated and Pharut rubbed Duenech's body and feet with evil-smelling oil until the black bile had spread to the top of his head. From the change of colour it was clear that Duenech became unconscious several times. Pharut opened Duenech's mouth and rejoiced when he saw that Duenech's palate was white. At last he laid the exhausted monarch into a third bed and revived him there with water and oil, mixed with sulphur.

When Duenech looked at himself, he saw that he was freed from melancholy and had new, healthy blood, and that he surpassed all his fellow-soldiers in power.

The Globe allegory

This interesting alchemical allegory found in MS. Sloane 3639 in the British Library has echoes of the Kabbalistic cosmology of Isaac Luria. It is a translation of a section from Johann Grasshof, *Aperta Arca arcani artificiosissimi...*, first printed in German at Frankfurt in 1617.

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The Natural round Physick or Philosophy of the Chymical Cabalistical Vision

The Sun and Moon with all the firmament appeared first. They stood still, a colour indeed they had, but gave no light. Beneath them also there appeared the Globe of the Earth having a colour. In whose centre there was a little globe of most white and shining colour like snow. While I beheld all these, there was made a most horrible thunder with a great noise and fiery flash, which much affrightened me. A great cloud came also, which going away a start was seen above the Sun, Moon and firmament, whose shining was so bright, that I could not fix my eye upon it, with its redness it exceeded the redness of the Sun. As soon as ever this Star appeared the whole firmament with the Sun and Moon began to run their race and dance. In the meantime the said Star darted fiery rays from above, through the exterior firmament. Of which sometimes more, sometimes fewer, some also by halves were carried upon the Globe, but the little globe received the smallest part of these rays. Those rays whose halves only entered the Globe, moved the waters, that they might flow, and fish might be seen in them. The other rays made the great Globe begin to live, and bring forth all sorts of trees and fruits, and which also animals and men did walk. But the part of the rays which entered into the small globe, so moved it, that it began to boil like water in a pot, and dispersed out of itself a white clear and pure vapour in the form of a Star even unto the root of the trees and herbs. Then out of this globe or white shining star there began, but yet slowly enough to grow all sorts of trees and herbs, and tended towards the circumference of the globe, and when they almost attained to it; behold, two white stoney Mountains arose and were opened out of each end of the globe. In the meantime I saw the herbs and trees continually go forward in their growth that the Mountain at length bore flowers of all sorts and colours which again were shut and changed into red, yellow, green and white knots. The knots of the Mountain on the right hand were small and transparent, but those on the left greater, but not transparent. In the meantime the superior and greater Star sent continually out more Rays, by the benefit of which more herbs and trees always grew. At last a voice was heard crying out this clearly and aloud, "Blessed be God, who created this Star. This shall be called always the star of Wisdom and the eternal light".

[End of first part - then follow a number of folios of questions and answers in interpreting this vision]

While I was running all this over in my mind, and have harkened to a chiding long enough, I seemed to stand on sharp thorns and stones, and while I contemplated this vision in a deep valley, I took notice of some noise behind me such a one as one clothed in a silken garment used to make by the rustling of his clothes, when I therefore looked about me, Behold, there appeared a certain grey-haired man, who had let his beard grow down as low as his girdle, arrayed in a long black garment, carrying in one hand a pair of compasses, and in the other a square or a rule, who passed silently by, and hastened to the Globe, whose tallness more and more increased, so that he by half the height of his body exceeded the Globe higher than a high house, and with his head reached even to the Sun. This old man having set his compasses on the centre measured the globe about, that it might be made equally round, then having set his compass on the square, he said "Multiplication has been three times made in it". Afterwards he again placed the compasses on the height of the Globe, and took the measure of it even up to the firmament, and from the firmament up to the highest Star, and crying out with a great fearful outcry, he broke forth in these words "This is one of the four cut off by three". He afterwards drew two lines from the highest Star to the Globe, which another drawn a new Globe, white, transparent and resembling the greenness of an Emerald, with a Sun transparent and more clear than ordinary, and the whole firmament, but no burning about as yet being observed. Hence the old man crying out said "Praised be God, that at length malice is oppressed, and truth made manifest. Rejoice ye Sons of Light that an end of Darkness is made. The Sun shall set no more, but shine to you forever, nor shall it ever be obscured from you", who having so said disappeared. To this revelation my principal adding a conclusion said "You must take great care of this figure, because in it the signification of your work is contained. In this figure I say there lies hid the secret of all secrets, as well concerning natural as supernatural things, which surpass mans understanding. Yet if you shall be honest and godly and place your confidence in God you shall get all these".

Golden Age Restored

This was included in Johann Grasshof, *Dyas chymica tripartita...* Frankfurt, 1625, and is ascribed to Henricus Madathanus, a pseudonym of Hadrian à Mynsicht.

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The Golden Age Restored

Whilst I was meditating upon the wonders of the Most High and the secrets of hidden Nature and the fiery and fervent love of the neighbour, I recalled the white harvest which Reuben, the son of Leah, had found in the fields and had given the mandrakes Rachel had gotten from Leah for sleeping with the patriarch Jacob. But my thought went much deeper and led me further to Moses, how he had made a potable of the solar-calf cast by Aaron, and how he had it burned with fire, ground to powder, strewed it upon the waters, and gave it to the Children of Israel to drink. And I marvelled most about this prompt and ingenious destruction which the hand of God had wrought. But after pondering over it for some time my eyes were opened, just as happened with the two disciples at Emmaus who knew the Lord in the Breaking of Bread, and my heart burned within me. But I laid down and began to sleep. And, lo, in my dream King Solomon appeared to me, in all his might, wealth, and glory, leading beside him all the women of his harem: there were threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number, but one was his gentle dove, most beautiful and dearest to his heart, and according to Catholic custom she held a magnificent procession wherein the Centrum was highly honoured and cherished, and its name was like an out-ointment, the fragrance of which surpassed all spices. And its fiery spirit was a key to open the temple, to enter the Holy Place, and to grasp the horns of the altar.

When the procession was ended, Solomon showed unto me the unified Centrum in trigoni centri and opened my understanding to me, and I became aware that behind me stood a nude woman with a bloody wound in her breast, out of which came forth blood and water, but the joints of her thighs were like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman, her navel was like a round goblet, which wanteth not liquor, her belly was like a heap of wheat set about with roses, her two breasts were like two young roses that are twins, her neck was as a tower of ivory, her eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon by the gate of Bathrabbim; her nose was as the tower of Lebanon which looketh towards Damascus. Her head was like Carmel, and the hair of her head was tied in many folds, like king's purple. But her garments, which she threw off, lay at her feet, and were all unsightly, stinking, and poisonous. And she began to speak: "I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me, and took away my veil from me. Then was I stricken with fear and not conscious and fell upon the ground; but Solomon bade me stand up again and said: be not afraid when thou dost see Nature bare, and the most hidden which is beneath heaven and upon the earth. She is beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners, but nevertheless she is the pure chaste virgin out of whom Adam was made and created. Sealed and hidden is the entrance to her house, for she dwelleth in the garden and sleepeth in the twofold caves of Abraham on the field Ephron, and her palace is the depths of the Red Sea, and in the deep transparent chasms, the air hath given her birth and the fire hath brought her up, wherefore she is a queen of the country, milk and honey hath she in her breasts. Yea, her lips are like a dripping honey-comb, honey and milk are under her tongue and the smell of her garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon to the Wise, but an abomination to the ignorant. And Solomon said further: Rouse thee, look upon all my women and see if you can find her equal. And forthwith the woman had to cast off her garments and I looked at her, but my mind had lost the power of judgement, and mine eyes were holden, so that I did not recognise her.

But as Solomon observed my weakness, he separated his women from this nude woman and said: "Thy thoughts are vain and the sun hath burned out thy mind and thy memory is as black as the fog, so thou canst not judge aright, so if thou wouldst not forfeit thy concern and take advantage of the present opportunity, then can the bloody sweat and snow-white tears of this nude virgin again refresh thee, cleanse thine understanding and memory and restore it fully, so that thine eyes may perceive the wonders of the Most High, the height of the uppermost, and thou shalt really fathom the foundations of all Nature, the power and operation of all the Elements, and thine understanding will be as fine silver, and thy memory as gold, the colours of all precious stones will appear before thine eyes and thou wilt know their production, and thou wilt know how to separate good from evil, the goats from the sheep. Thy life will be very peaceful, but the cymbals of Aaron will awaken thee from sleep and the harp of David, my father, from thy slumber."

After Solomon thus spake, I was very much more afraid, and was exceedingly terrified, partly because of his heartbreaking works, also partly because of the great glamour and splendour of the present queenly woman, and

Solomon took me by the hand and led me through a wine cellar into a secret but very stately hall, where he refreshed me with flowers and apples, but its windows were made out of transparent crystals and I looked through them. And he said: "What dost thou see?"

I replied: "I can only see from this hall into the hall I just left, and on the left standeth thy queenly woman, and on the right the nude virgin, and her eyes are redder than wine, her teeth whiter than milk, but her garments at her feet are more unsightly, blacker, and more filthy than the brook of Kidron."

"From all of them choose one", said Solomon, "to be thy beloved. I esteem her and my queen alike and highly, pleased as I am with the loveliness of my wives, so little do I care about the abomination of her garments."

And as soon as the king had thus spoken, he turned around and conversed in a very friendly way with one of his queens. Amongst these was an hundred-year-old stewardess, with a grey cloak, a black cap upon her head, bedecked with numberless snow-white pearls and lined with red velvet, and embroidered and sewn in an artful manner with blue and yellow silk, and her cloak was adorned with divers Turkish colours and Indian figures.

This old woman beckoned to me secretly and swore unto me a holy oath that she was the mother of the nude virgin, that she had been born from her body, and that she was a chaste, pure and secluded virgin, that until now she had not suffered any man to look upon her, and although she had let herself be used everywhere among the many people on the streets, no one had ever seen her naked before now, and no one had touched her, for she was the virgin of whom the Prophet said: Behold, we have a son born unto us in secret, who is transformed beside others; behold, the virgin had brought forth, such a virgin as is called Apdorossa, meaning: secretly, she who cannot suffer others. But while this her daughter was as yet unwed, she had her marriage-portion lying under her feet, because of the present danger of the war, so that she would not be robbed of it by some roving soldiery and denuded of her stately treasure.

However, I should not be frightened because of her disgusting garments, but choose her daughter before all others for the delight of my love and life. Then she would give and reveal to me a lye to clean her garments, and then I would obtain a liquid salt and non-combustible oil for my house-keeping, and an immeasurable treasure, and her right hand would always caress me and her left hand would be under my head.

And as I then wanted to declare myself categorically upon this matter, Solomon turned around again, looked upon me, and said: "I am the wisest man on earth, beautiful and pleasing are my wives and the glamour of my queens surpasseth the gold of Ophir; the adornments of my concubines overshadow the rays of the sun, and the beauty of my virgins surpasseth the rays of the moon, and as heavenly as are my women, my wisdom is unfathomable and my knowledge is inexplicable."

Whereupon I answered and, half afraid, I bowed: "Lo, I have found grace in thine eyes, and since I am poor, give me this nude virgin. I choose her amongst all others for the duration of my life, and though her garments are filthy and torn, I will clean them and love her with all my heart, and she shall be my sister, my bride, because she hath ravished mine heart with one of her eyes, with one chain of her neck."

When I had thus spoken, Solomon gave her unto me, and there was a great commotion in the hall of his women, so that I was awakened by it, and I knew not what had happened to me, nevertheless I believed it to be but a dream and I thought many subtle thoughts about my dream until the morning.

But after I had arisen and said my prayers, Lo! I saw the garments of the nude virgin upon my bed, but no trace of her. And I began to be greatly afraid and all my hair stood upright upon my head and my whole body was bathed in a cold sweat; but I took heart, recalling my dream, and thought about it again in the fear of the Lord. But my thoughts did not explain it, and for this reason I dared not to scrutinise the garments, much less to recognise anything in them. I then changed my sleeping-chamber and I left the garments in it for some length of time *ex mera tamen ignorantia*, in the belief that if I were to touch them or turn them over, something peculiar would happen to me, but in my sleep the smell of the garments had poisoned and inflamed me violently, so that my eyes could not see the time of mercy, and never could my heart recognise the great wisdom of Solomon.

After the above-mentioned garments had lain for five years in my sleeping-chamber and I knew not what they were good for, I finally thought to burn them, in order to clean up the place. And then I spent the whole day going around with such thoughts.

But the next night there appeared to me in my dream the hundred-year-old woman and she spake harshly to me thus: "Thou ungrateful man: for five years I have entrusted to thee my daughter's garments; among them are her most precious jewels, and during all that time thou hast neither cleaned them nor thrown out of them the moths and worms, and now, finally, thou dost want to burn these clothes, and is it not enough that thou art the reason for the death and perishing of my daughter?"

Whereupon I became hot-headed and answered her: "How shall I understand thee, that thou wouldst make a murderer of me? For five years mine eyes have not beheld thy daughter, and not the least did I hear of her, how then can I be the cause of her death?"

But she would not let me finish, and said: "It is all true, but thou hast sinned against God, therefore thou couldst not obtain my daughter, nor the philosophical lixivium I promised thee for washing and cleaning her garments: for in the beginning, when Solomon willingly gave thee my daughter, and when thou didst abhor her garments, that made furious the Planet Saturn, who is her grandfather, and so full of wrath was he that he transformed her again into what she had been before her birth; and since you infuriated Saturn through thine abhorring, thou didst cause her death, putrefaction, and her final destruction, for she is the one of whom Senior saith: Ah, woe! to bring a nude woman unto me, when my first body was not good to look upon, and I had never been mother until I was born again, then I brought forth the power of all roots of herbs, and in mine innermost being I was victorious."

Such and similar heart-breaking words were very strange to me, but nevertheless I withheld my indignation as much as was humanly possible for me, at the same time protesting solemnly against her sayings: that I knew nothing at all about her daughter, much less about her death and putrefaction, and although I kept her garments for five years in my sleeping-chamber, I did not know them for my great blindness nor ever discovered their use, and therefore I was innocent before God and all others.

This, my righteous and well-founded excuse, must have pleased the old woman not a little, for she looked at me and said: "I feel and observe from thy righteous mind, that thou art innocent, and thine innocence shall be rewarded well and plentifully, therefore I will reveal to thee secretly and out of my good heart, namely that my daughter, out of special love and affection towards thee, hath left thee a grey marbled casket as an inheritance amongst her garments, which is covered with a rough, black, dirty case (and meanwhile she gave me a glass filled with lye, and continued speaking), this same little casket thou shalt clean from its stench and dirt which it hath received from the garments. Thou hast no need of a key, but it will open itself, and thou wilt find two things therein: a white silver box, filled with magnificent ground-lead and polished diamonds, and another work of art, adorned with costly solar rubies: and this is the treasure and entire legacy of my deceased daughter which she left for thee to inherit before her transformation. If thou wilt only transfer this treasure and purify it most highly and silently and lock it up with great patience in a warm, hidden, steamy transparent and moist cellar, and protect it from freezing, hail, quick lightning, hot thunder, and other outward destruction till the wheat harvest, then thou wilt first perceive the entire glory of thine inheritance and take part of it."

Meanwhile I awoke for a second time and called upon God, full of fear, praying that He would open mine understanding that I might seek for the casket which was promised me in my dream. And after my prayer was ended I sought with greatest diligence in the garments and found the casket, but the casing was tight around it and seemed grown onto it by nature, so that I was not able to take it off; then I could not clean it with any lye nor split it with iron, steel, or any other metal. I left it alone once more and did not know what to do with it, and held it to be witchcraft, thinking of the prophet's saying: For though thou wash thee with lye, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord God.

And after a year had passed again and I did not know, after speculating and industriously deliberating, how to remove the casing, I finally went to walk in the garden to rid myself of the melancholy thoughts, and after long promenading, I sat down on a flinty stone and fell into a deep sleep. I slept, but my heart was awake: there appeared unto me the hundred-year-old stewardess and said: "Hast thou received my daughter's inheritance?"

In a sad voice I answered, "No, though I found the casket, but alone it is still impossible for me to separate the casing therefrom, and the lye thou hast given me will not work on the casing."

After this simple speech the old woman smiled and said: "Dost thou want to eat shells and shellfish with the shells? Do they not have to be brought forth and prepared by the very old planet and cook Vulcan? I told thee to clean the grey casket thoroughly with the lye given thee, and which proceeded wholly from it, and was not refined from the outer rough casing. This thou hast especially to burn in the fire of the philosophers, then everything will turn out for the best."

And thereupon she gave me several glowing coals wrapped up in light white taffeta and instructed me further and pointed out that I should make therefrom a philosophical and quite artful fire and burn the casing, then I would soon find the grey casket. And presently every hour a north and south wind rose, both sweeping at the same time through the garden, whereupon I awoke, rubbed the sleep out of mine eyes, and noticed that the glowing coals wrapped in white taffeta lay at my feet; with haste and joy I grasped them, prayed diligently, called upon God, studied and laboured day and night, and thought meanwhile of the great and excellent sayings of the Philosophers, who say: 'Ignis et azoth tibi sufficiunt'.

About this Esdras saith in his fourth book: 'And he gave unto me a full cup which was full of fire, and his form was as of fire, and when I had drunk of it, my heart uttered understanding, and wisdom grew in my breast, for my spirit retained its memory: and my mouth was opened, and shut no more. The Most High gave understanding unto the five men, and they wrote by course the things that were told them, in characters which they knew not. So in forty days were written 204 books, 70 for the wisest alone, who were truly worthy of it, and all were written on boxwood.'

And then I proceeded in silentio et spe, as the old woman had revealed to me in my dream until, according to Solomon's prediction, after a long time my knowledge became silver and my memory became golden. But according to the instructions and teaching of the old stewardess, I enclosed and locked up in a proper and quite artistic manner the treasure of her daughter, namely: the splendid and brilliant lunar diamonds and the solar rubies, both of which came forth and were found from the casket and the landscape.

I heard the voice of Solomon who said: "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a raven. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set. His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips are like roses, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. His hands are as gold rings set with the beryl: his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires. His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem. Therefore shalt thou hold him, and not let him go, until thou bringest him into his mother's house, and into his mother's chamber."

And when Solomon had spoken these words I knew not how to answer him, and I became silent, but I wanted nevertheless to open again the locked-up treasure, with which I might remain unmolested. Then I heard another voice: "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till she please, for she is a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed, the vineyard at Baalhamon, the vineyard at Engeddi, the garden of fruits and spices, the mountain of myrrh, the hill of frankincense, the bed, the litter, the crown, the palm-tree and apple-tree, the flower of Sharon, the sapphire, the turquoise, the wall, tower, and rampart, the garden of joy, the well in the garden, the spring of living water, the king's daughter, and the love of Solomon in his concupiscence: she is the dearest to her mother, and the chosen of her mother, but her head is filled with dew, and her locks with the drops of the night."

Through this discourse and revelation I was so far informed that I knew the purpose of the Wise and did not touch the locked treasure until through God's mercy, the working of noble Nature, and the work of mine own hands, the work was happily completed.

Shortly after this time, just on the day of the month when the moon was new, there occurred an eclipse of the sun, showing itself in all its terrifying power, in the beginning dark green and some mixed colours, until it finally became coal-black, darkened heaven and earth, and many people were much afraid, but I rejoiced, thinking of God's great mercy, and the new birth, as Christ Himself pointed out to us, that a grain of wheat must be cast into the ground, that it may not rot therein, else it bringeth forth no fruit. And then it happened that the darkness was covered with clouds, and the sun began to shine through, yet at the same time three parts of it were still heavily darkened; and lo, an arm broke through the clouds, and my body trembled because of it, and it held in its hand a letter with four seals hanging down from it, on which stood written: 'I am black, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon: Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me, etc. But as soon as the fixum acted in the humidum, a rainbow spanned itself and I thought of the covenant of the Most High, and of the fidelity of my Ductoris, and of what I had learned, and lo, with the help of the planet and the fixed stars, the sun overcame the darkness, and over every mountain and valley there came a lovely and bright day; then all fear and terror had an end, and everything beheld this day and rejoiced, praised the Lord, and said: The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Therefore let us make haste to take the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, that we may gather the grapes in time and with them make and drink wine, and be fed at the right time with milk and honey-comb, that we may eat and be filled. And after the day was done and the evening fell, the whole heaven grew pale, and the seven stars rose with yellow rays and pursued their natural courses through the night, until in the morning they were overshadowed by the breaking of the sun's red dawn.

And behold, the Wise who dwelt in the land arose from their slumber, looked heavenward, and said: Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and there is no spot in her, for her ardour is fiery and not unlike a flame of the Lord: so that no water may extinguish the love, nor any river drown it; therefore we will not leave her, for she is our sister, and though she is yet little, and hath no breasts, we will bring her again into her mother's house, into a shining hall, where she hath been before, to suck her mother's breasts. Then she will come forth like a tower of David, built with ramparts whereon hang a thousand shields, and many arms of the mighty men; and as she went forth the daughter praised her openly, and the queens and the concubines spake well of her: but I fell upon my face, thanked God, and praised His Holy Name.'

Epilogue

And thus is brought to a close, ye beloved and true Sapientiae et doctrinae filii, in all its power and its glory, the great secret of the Wise, and the revelation of the Spirit, about which the Prince and Monarch Theoph. in Apocalpsi

Hermetis saith: 'It is a single Numen, a divine, wondrous, and holy office, while it encloseth the whole world within it, and will become true with all else, and truly overcometh the elements and the five substances. Eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, neither have entered the heart of any man, how the heaven hath naturally embodied to truth of this Spirit, in it the truth doth stand alone, therefore it is called: the voice of truth. To this power Adam and the other patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, owed their bodily health, their long life, and finally prospered in great wealth thereby.

With the aid of this Spirit, the Philosophi founded the seven free arts, and acquired their wealth therewith. With it Noah built the Ark, Moses the Tabernacle, and Solomon the Temple and through this provided the golden vessels from pure gold in the Temple, and for the glory of God, Solomon also wrought with it many fine works and did other great deeds.

With it Esdras again established the Commandment; and with it Miriam, the sister of Moses, was hospitable. And this Spirit was much used and very common amongst the prophets of the Old Testament. Likewise it is a medicine and a cure for all things, and the final revelation, the final and highest secret of Nature.

It is the Spirit of the Lord which hath filled the sphere of the earthly kingdom, and moved upon the face of the waters in the beginning. The world could neither understand nor grasp it without the secret gracious inspiration of the Holy Ghost, or without secret teaching. For the whole world longeth for it because of its great powers, which cannot be appreciated enough by men, and for which the saints have sought from the creation of the world, and have fervently desired to see.

For this Spirit goeth into the seven planets, raiseth the clouds, and dispelleth the mists, giveth light to all things, transformeth everything into gold and silver, giveth health and abundance, treasures, cleanseth leprosy, cureth dropsy and gout, cleareth the face, prolongeth life, strengtheneth the sorrowful, healeth the sick and all the afflicted, yea, it is a secret of all secrets, one secret thing of all secret things, and healing and medicine for all things.

Likewise it is and remaineth unfathomable in nature, and endless power and an invincible might and glory, that is a passionate craving for knowledge, and a lovely thing of all things which are beneath the circle of the moon, with which Nature is made strong, and the heart with all members is renewed, and kept in blossoming youth, age is driven away, weakness destroyed, and the entire world refreshed.

Likewise this Spirit is a spirit chosen above all other heavenly things or spirits, which giveth health, luck, joy, peace, love, expelling altogether all evil, destroying poverty and misery, and also causing that one can neither talk nor think evil; it giveth to men what they desire from the depths of their hearts, worldly honour and long life to the godly, but eternal punishment to the evil-doers, who put it to improper use.

To the Most High, Almighty God who hath created this art and who hath also been pleased to reveal this knowledge unto me, a miserable, sinful man, through a promise and true vow, to Him be given praise, honour, glory and thanks, with an entirely humble and fervent prayer that He will direct my heart, mind, and senses through His Holy Ghost, so governing that I talk to no one about this secret, much less communicate it to some one who doth not fear God, nor reveal it to any other creature, lest I break my vow and oath, and break the heavenly seals, and thus become a perjured Brother *Aurae Crucis*, and utterly offend the Divine Majesty, and thereby commit and perpetrate knowingly an unpardonable mighty sin against the Holy Ghost. Wherefore may God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Most Blessed Trinity, mercifully preserve and protect me constantly. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Greverus

From the *Theatrum Chemicum*, Volume III, Strassburg, 1613.

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"Behold, my beloved son, the harvest-time desired by you has come. Rejoice and render immortal thanks to God Eternal, because he allowed us to be able to understand those things, and directed my words, so that I arrived at a true and clear statement of the idea. And you, my son, adore that God submissively, so that, when you have made a beginning with the investigation, it will please him to reveal those two hidden secrets, just as you - who apply yourself assiduously to the study of the much exalted Philosophy - are also worthy to participate in the very select courses of this sacred banquet, and as you are also worthy of being able to gather the golden apples of the Hesperides in the garden of Tantalus, first having made the always watchful dragon unconscious, as the legends urge. But, as that garden is fenced in by an extremely strong wall, the question has to be put: "In what way can you enter the garden? And how do you recognize the tree bearing the golden apples? And in what way do you gather them?"

Oh, beloved son, did you not see that that garden is laid out on a very high and lonely mountain, the foot of which is always surrounded by the noise caused by the fighting forces of disharmonious winds, and which, as an insatiable chaos, fosters a struggle between coldness and heat. The middle part of the mountain, however, has red and black dragons, which wage a never ceasing fight with the insatiable chaos and the winds. That fight is without end, because, when the fury of the red dragons is inflamed by the increasingly agitating opposites of the winds, they themselves perish by their own glow and the chaos takes their dead bodies in. Nevertheless this eternal struggle knows no rest, because the red dragons, doomed to death, are succeeded by black dragons, which, they themselves also breaking out into rage, are inflamed and perish like the red dragons, while - as is said - others succeed them immediately. But this struggle never ends in all eternity, for neither chaos nor winds are finite nor does the offspring of the black dragons ever disappear. Nevertheless does the guardian and master of the mountain collect the black dragons' offspring at regular intervals and sends them to the centre of the mountain. The top of the mountain, however, shows a threefold change in one single year. In winter it blazes with glowing sparks, like the Etna; in spring, however, the top is flooded with stagnant, hot pools and marshy reedlands, while the entire fire of the winter is hidden. In summer, however, when the waters of the hot swamps are quite dried up, the ashes of things, of which it may be assumed that they were burnt by the wintry fire, appear to be still tepid, although the fiercest heat is gone. In autumn the remainders of the ashes disappear again and very fine sand comes in their stead, which is glowing-hot, it is true, but certainly not red-hot; I think that it is the remainder or the very bottom of the waters that flooded the summit in spring-time.

In this mountain, my son, I think you have seen the royal gardens of the Hesperides; in those gardens the golden and silver roses grow and from there come the purple-coloured apples, the golden and the silver ones, and they bear fruit annually.

The access to this garden, however, is difficult, but the entrance still more difficult and much more difficult is the gathering of the golden or silver apples themselves. For the behaviour of the mountain is of such a nature that nobody is admitted, who has not experienced the wintry cold first. Therefore you also have to approach it in winter, and you must not be intimidated by the cold, for you will scarcely be able to stand the heat prevailing at the entrance. On the top of the mountain you will come upon a very high tower, the guardian of the garden; the tower has two parapets, which are both situated in a blazing fire. He who wants to enter this garden, has to conquer above all the bulls, which blow fire out of their nostrils and has to go through the gate and the fiery parapets. This requires enormous efforts, and one risks one's life. This is such an immense task that one is not ready to force one's way through before the end of the winter. However this may be, the danger that is imminent because of so much fire and such an enormous blaze is not slight. Therefore he who wants to enter must try to get the medicines which Medea once gave to Jason, when the latter tried to enter the garden. Beloved son, if you do not succeed in finding these medicines, exert yourself to find a way by your own industry, by which you can go through the afore-mentioned menaces. For if you only go past them and not through them you will never be allowed to enter the garden. But although I was filled by an overwhelming yearning after the garden, and saw that I could not pass the flames without danger, I did not want to go away before I had seen whether perhaps somebody would come who would show me the way to pass, or whether the blaze might be extinguished. And when nobody came after me and the winter was already wearing away quickly, the tower suddenly began to move strongly, the blaze began to decrease and was quite extinguished some moments later, and tower and parapets had dissolved, as it were, and had disappeared, and when that had happened, I immediately ran to the garden, whilst it was still the same season as when the tower still stood; and I was not at all astonished by the things I had seen happening. But when I had nearly entered the garden, I was cut off from the entrance by stagnant, hot waters on all sides.

The garden was surrounded by a diaphanous wall, strong as iron, and was in the middle of the stagnant, hot waters. But the garden as well as the water were surrounded in their turn by brickwork outside the wall. I saw, however, three steps of a narrow road, along which I hoped to find admittance and, without losing time, I began to follow them, whereupon the brickwork opened before me. And when I was on the first step, I was compelled to stand still for some time, because I was struck by a horrible smell of decomposition. The heat agreed with the tepid warmth of a rotting process. When this had passed I obtained admittance to the second and the third step, where there was something all the time which detained me, even so that, when I thought I was already quite near the garden, there took place an enormous trembling of the mountain, by which the waters disappeared and a deep ditch, surrounded by a brick wall remained; the bottom of the ditch was ablaze with the glowing ashes. In the middle of it was a garden, and three roads from the ditches led to it, having different degrees of heat, which increased in heat in proportion to their distance from the garden. I strained every nerve, till, already on the point of climbing the earthen bank of the third road, I felt another mountain shock, which enveloped the glowing ashes in a dark haze, from which scorching hot sand appeared, which surrounded the garden with a bank on all sides. My expectations were strained to the utmost, as to whether I was near the end of my ordeal; and it turned out to be true. For, as I perceived the

enchancing flowers of the garden from the bank and saw miracles so great that I may not speak about them, I was so thunderstruck by utmost astonishment that I scarcely noticed in what way an old man led me into the garden. This same old man carried seven keys in his hand, with which, I think, he himself opened the bolts of the gates of the garden, while I stood on the bank, dumb with astonishment. This old man led me to the tree with the golden apples, in order to let me venerate the tree. A dragon was lying near the tree, which had been killed just before and by whose blood the golden apples were affected. I was burning with desire to gather the golden apples; the old man knew this and while he surveyed me calmly he said: "Son, lay aside the seductions of earthly desires, for this fruit is only given to Divine Spirits."

His words made me tremble from head to foot, for I had never heard such a voice; I was, as it were, changed by this voice and I got the impression that my consciousness had broadened considerably. It seemed to me that the old man changed his shape; he became a very exalted and, as it were, terrible figure, and I perceived that he was not the gardener whom I had seen just before, but the master of the garden himself. A strong fear came over me that I would be punished for my audacity of having ever thought of penetrating the garden of such a mighty master in a cunning way.

And while, full of doubt, I considered several things and was alternately under the spell of my fear and then filled with desire and hope, he himself stretched out his hand and gathered some golden apples, and whilst he looked in turn at the apples and at me he said: "This Garden is the Garden of happiness and wisdom, and we have laid it out for man's sake and in order to exclude irrational beings we have surrounded it with a wall as strong as iron; we saw that it was threatened by the guile and ruses of man; there is no admittance for anyone of the thinking beings, except for the righteous, the innocent, the modest and the good; and we ourselves attract those. And when we observe that they are persevering and steadfast we finally usher them in here after the ordeal is over, and after we have bestowed upon them gifts of this nature, we let them go again quietly." With these words he handed me the apples he had picked. I threw myself upon the earth before his face in deepest veneration and adoration, and deeply rejoicing I put the apples into my pocket. When I was on the point of thanking him he said: "My son, this is not all, follow me"; and he led me to a work-room, which was purified, the dragon's blood that had bespattered the golden apples having been removed, and after he had taken a slightly sparkling whitish powder out of a wooden box, he handed part of it to me with the words: "This powder blots out every stain, and resuscitates any dead; go away, keep the secrets hidden, purify the moistened (earth) with fire and powder, work the earth and sow what is purified, and let it thrive and sprout and may your earth give you ample fruit." When he had spoken these words, he disappeared from sight. But I was thunderstruck and dazed, and when I came home after that, it seemed to me as if I awakened from sleep, for, nearly exhausted by the long journey and tired by the work, I threw myself onto my bed, and I should truly have believed that I had only seen everything in a dream, if I had not had the golden apples and the powder in my hand, and moreover, such a sharp recollection of all words spoken to me. But, however that may be, whether I really was in the garden then or was only led to it in a vision or saw it in a dream, the name of him be blessed to all eternity, who has seen fit to reveal to me such awe-inspiring mysteries of nature, and has not kept his gift from me, unworthy sinner. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be praised, blessed and exalted, the only God in all eternity, Amen.

Conclusion

My son, here you have the whole process of our work in your hands, without any disruption and without any superfluity and summarized by a competently written eloquence. Therefore, prepare your heart, that you may find favour in God's eyes. For it is a gift of God and it contains the secret of the indivisible unity of the Holy Trinity. O most precious of all sciences, you are the theatre of the whole nature and its anatomy, the earthly astronomy, the truth of God Almighty, the proof of the resurrection of the dead, the example of the remission of sinners, the unmistakable proof of the future Last Judgement and the mirror of eternal bliss. Truly, no science is more exalted than this one; for this one science contains all sciences, without being included in one of them itself.

But, thanks, praise and honour to You only, O ineffable Majesty, because you have not kept your grace from me and have revealed the secrets of your most hidden works to me; therefore your sacred name be praised to all eternity. Amen.

An unwise man will not get to know these things
and a fool will not understand them.

A sack of cummin belongs to a parrot and hay to a cow."

The Allegory of Merlin

In the alchemical tradition we find a number of allegories which involve the transformation of a King, the Duenech and Merlini allegories being among the earliest. I recently uncovered an English translation of the Allegory of

Merlin in a 17th century manuscript in the British Library (MS Sloane 3506, f.74-75), which sparked off my interest in the piece so I have decided to include it here. The allegory (minus the 'Merlin' title) exists in a 14-15th century manuscript in the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris (MS. Lat. 14005), and it was published as 'Merlini-Allegoria, profundissimum Philosophici Lapidis Arcanum perfecte continens', in the alchemical compendium *Artis Auriferae*, I, 420-424, Basel, 1593). The association with the Celtic 'Merlin' figure is obscure and there are no internal references (nor indeed any links with the Merlin myths), which might explain why this name is associated with the allegory. It shows the death and resurrection of the King. The King drinks a special water which kills him, and through drying off this water a transmutation occurs and the King is brought back to life in a more energetic form. This allegory has obvious links with the Duenech allegory (which was published in the vast alchemical compendium, *Theatrum Chemicum* III, p.756-757, Ursel, 1602).

Allegory of Merlin

A King intending to conquer a mighty people prepared himself against them for war, and when he would get upon a horseback, he commanded one of his soldiers to give him a cup of water which he mightily loved.

The soldier answered and said, "My lord, what is this water you ask for?"

And the King said, "The water which I long for is a water which I love, and also the water loves me above all things".

Then considering, he went and brought it, and the King getting it drunk, drank again till all his members were filled, and all his veins inflamed, and he was much discoloured.

Then the soldier spoke to him, "My lord, see the horse here and if you please get upon his back".

However the king answered, "I can not".

But the soldier said "For what reason can you not".

And he answered, "I find myself heavy, and my head aches, and I fancy all my members divide themselves from one another. Therefore I command you that you do bring me into a light chamber, which must be in a warm and dry place, then I shall sweat and the water will be dried in me, and also I will be freed from it".

And they did as he commanded them, and the time being over they opened the chamber and found him most dead.

But his relations went presently to the Alexandrine and Egyptian physicians, and brought them to him and told them what had happened to the King. When they had seen him, they said that without doubt he might be delivered from it.

Then they asked "Who is the Master among you?"

And the Alexandrines answered "We if you please".

But the Egyptians said "We are Masters if you please and we will be it, for we are more ancient than you, also we seem to be younger".

To which the Alexandrines consented.

Then the said Masters did take the King and cut him in very small pieces, grinding these. Then they did mix them with their moistening medicines a little, then they put him also prepared into his chamber in a warm temperate place as before for a day and a night. When this was done, they did take him half-dead, but having yet a little life, and seeing this the King's relations said, "Ach the King is dead".

To which the physicians answered, "He is not dead, do not make a noise as he sleeps".

Now they did take him again and washed him with sweet waters so often till the least of the medicinal waters went off. Then they mixed him again with new medicine and put him again in his place as before, and when they did take him out they found him quite dead.

Then his relations did exclaim, "The King is dead".

To which the physicians did answer "We killed him for the reason that after his resurrection and the Day of Judgement he may become stronger and more powerful in this world as he was before".

When the relations did hear this, they fancied they were impostors, and then taking from them their medicines they forced them to leave the kingdom. When this was over, they deliberated together what should be done with the dead poisoned body, and they concluded that they should bury him that his stink might bring no damage.

When the Alexandrine physicians did hear this, they came and said, "Do not bury him, for if you please, we will make him better and more powerful than before".

The relations began to scorn them saying, "Will you impose on us also as the others have done? And if you do not perfect what you promise you shall not evade our hands".

To which the physicians consented, and they did take the dead king, as the others hath left him and grinding him they washed him well till nothing remained of the others medicines, then they did dry him. Then they did take of salt armoniac one part, and two parts of Alexandrine Nitre. This they did mix with the powder of the dead King. Then they did make a paste of it with linseed oil, and put it into a chamber, made like a perforated crucible, and under the

hole they put another clean crucible. There they left him for one hour, then they covered it with fire blowing till all was melted into the other crucible, descending through the hole. Then the King, also brought from dead to life, cried out "Where are the enemies. Let them know that I will kill them, if they do not obey me immediately".

When they heard this they came before him saying "My Lord, we are ready to obey all your commandments", and from that hour all kings and neighbours did fear him, and when they would see his wonders, they put one ounce of washed mercury into a crucible and projected upon it as much as a grain of linseed of his hairs, nails or blood. When they blowed gently the coals, then they left him to cool, and they found a stone which I know. Of this stone they projected a little upon purified Saturn and presently its form was altered as I know of which afterwards. They put one part upon ten of Venus and it would be all of one goodness and colour. And by another way they did take the said stone powdered and mixed him with salt and Sol as before, and melted him and projected the said dissolved salts into goat's cream, and then it grows good for all things.

Brother, keep secret this treatise for it is of an importance amongst the fools, and no importance amongst wise men, and this is the Royal way of three days, for they will have but little labour and great lucre. Let us glorify the Most High Creator who has taught his faithful Servant to transmute accidents into substances, also that they may bring to action these powers which lay hidden in divers things.

Muller's allegory

Extracted from Patrick Ruthven's commonplace book in Edinburgh University Library.

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The copy of D. M[uller] letter written to the Earl of Argyle, containing the whole work enigmatically as he conceived it, first out of the former wheels and cipher of Trithemius, and then made it with his own hands: copied by me from the original letter under D.M. own hand; copied, I say, anno 1629 October 2 per me Patricium Ruthvenum. Right Honourable,

Your earnest desire to profit in this study of metaphysical philosophy, I thought it good to give your Lordship a taste of such marrow as I have by God's assistance sucked out of the bones of old philosophy. First, therefore, taking it pro confesso, esse artem, quam vocant chemicam ["through confession, to be the art, which they call chemica"], and that the same is most firmly founded and grounded upon invincible maxims, and undeniable principles, as by manifold authorities and apologetic arguments (too strong to admit any contradiction) may fully appear, I say taking that, and diverse other needless doubts daily in contumely of this admirable art, as granted and fully resolved; I have made choice to leave all questions concerning the possibility of the art, and to set down only the very true and lively method and order which I would follow, in case I now were ready to put a practical hand to perform the effect of all my rhetorical speculations.

And therefore where I find by the relation of diverse credible authors, that not far from that famous Neptunian Metropolis, there lurketh in the hidden caverns of one huge Mountain a most ugly venomous, and horrid, flying dragon and that without the living blood of such a one, this great work cannot be performed, I say that he will endeavour to bring this work to effect, must of necessity be of an invincible courage to wage war with so full a Monster, and thither he must, where if he fortune to fail of Hercules strength to get the golden apples of the Hesperides; yet let him be so politic, that he can with Jason insinuate with Medea to master that Monster, so as though he can not possibly quite extinguish and defeat him, that yet he fail not to bring away with him a good share of the strongest and deadliest poison that is within him. If it be the true venom, it will show in the open air the very natural colour of the heaven, but let him be very circumspect in carrying it, lest it breed his bairn, for it is wonderfully subtle and penetrative, and therefore take heed that thou give it no, not the least vent, and keep it part by itself. When thou hast furnished thy self with this strong intoxication, then get thee speedily to another huge mountain consecrate to the Virgin Mary, whom the Gods by one old decree, in the General Council held at the beginning, established and consecrated with the keeping of all the broken and waned moons, who have made choice of that place to be her Gazophylacium for that purpose.

Scoff not at this fiction, though it seem fabulous, and there once arrayed thou shalt be kindly entertained being a stranger especially if thou covet to see that Treasure - where either the doorkeeper or some other employed of trust there, will not stick for small consideration to let thee have a cast of his office and pleasure thee with the broken offals of some of these waned moons. As soon as thou has got it, fly thee to the Cyclops forge, but in any case see that Vulcan be not at home, and get one of them to beat thy old fragment into book leaves upon their subtle anvils, for without the Cyclops help herein to temper thy Moon metal, it would not abide, but would fly from thee quickly

into his own region of the sky, the Sphere of the Moon. This done yet has thou one more journey to make before thou return, namely into North Albion, where is a famous river generally known to be of this virtue, that so often as the Sun shineth brightly upon the same, it retaineth so strongly the influence thereof, that often times in the bottom thereof are found certain rays of the Sun so purely bright and refulgent, as no eye can possibly discern them to be of one other substance, than of the Natural Sun.

Dive for and get thereof a good quantity, and do with this in all respects as I directed thee to do with thy broken Moons: and let each of all these be kept apart till thou have occasion to use them severally.

Thus thoroughly furnished with materials, build thee up a furnace in the forge of Philosophy. Let Zacharius by thy Architect, herein he will either make it for thee himself, or will not stick to let thee have his model: howsoever I would advise thee to take his advice. Thy furnace artificially framed, there is a bird called Hyle bred in the fire that layeth transparent eggs. This bird is most commonly found, near some convent of sable friars, who for the most part love to sit by good and warm fires. Choose one of the purest and clearest eggs, the best have the longest neck. When thy shall is clean washed, and nothing left within it, then take the venomous blood of thy Dragon, and purge it after this manner. Take a hare, and pour it into her body, and presently bind up fast all the vents both behind and before, and course her so long that all the venom sweat out again at her sides. When the hare beginneth to sweat, then have a clean vessel of glass ready to receive the azure drops of the distilling venom, and immediately let it be poured into the translucent eggshell but not above the quantity of nine drops, wherein infuse one of the leaves of thy battered Moon. Then stir them well together, and presently set Hermes Seal upon the vent of thy eggshell, and print it well that thou mayest easily perceive, if any have offered to meddle with thy work. This done carry it into the forge of Philosophy, and place it in thy furnace where art requireth. But now followeth a most hard task to be performed, and that is, thou must of necessity entreat Jupiter, that he would be content to spare thee Vulcan the forger of his thunderclaps, to attend this thy world wondered, for without his continual presence thou canst do nothing, yea all thy labour is lost. And having obtained this at Jupiter's hand, then hast thou himself to entreat, who I assure thee, is of a very crabbed disposition, and sullen demeanour, but never leave using of mild terms, and gentle motives, till thou hast reclaimed him from his churlishness, and made him affable and tractable. All which he will be very willing to perform, if thou cast but procure Venus once to smile upon him, for with one hours dalliance she can enjoin him even a whole years task, without grudging or gainsaying.

He thus reclaimed and lenified, set him to his task, but be sure thou have a watchful eye over him, lest any matter unfortunately crossing his now mild disposition, should unhappily move him to impatience, and so in fury, he might happen to set the forge and all on fire, and then wert thou undone. But if thou canst like a philosopher, keep him in a mild and temperate mood, then shalt thou see his continued temperance show itself in the orderly process of thy work.

Further shalt thou see the Man in the Moon first clad all in a suit of black satin, and after that in due process of time will he appear in another suit as white as snow, and when thou seest these successive alterations, then stroke Vulcan's head, and say he is a good boy and tell him Venus shall thank him for his pains, if he will continue yet a while longer, but in any case take heed you increase not his diet, nor give him no food of a dry or combustible quality, for then all is lost, but keep him yet at a straight diet, and still hold him hard to his task.

When the Man in the Moon hast had on his whitest garment, and that you see him once put on his yellow girdle, then O! then, even then, break open the seal warily, and add to thy composition one leaf of the rays of the Sun which thou must have always in readiness to watch this opportunity withal, ah, then shalt thou see there how gladly friends that have been so long absent will embrace each other, but as soon as ever it is put within the shell, presently clap on the seal again, and see thou remove not the shell out of his place, for the doing thereof. Nor ever let Vulcan's eyes so much as one's wink from his labour, but hold him incessantly at his work, and thou shalt see that if thou and Vulcan prove careful workmen, thy first Man of the Moon will once again in due time, if thou have patience to abide the time, show himself in his former colours.

And first of Black, but much more black and of a far deeper dye in grain, and after in white again fare exceeding the former. If you please here to break off your work, then may you by virtue of this whiteness make daily new moons at your pleasure, but better it were to bide a little longer, and then you shall see this whiteness turn into red, and so little by little, it will wear into a deep sanguine red, in such grain as you cannot imagine a deeper, and this is called the crocus solis, wherewith you may dye every imperfect body into the natural colour of the Sun, and then is your wished work at an end, and now thou mayest give Vulcan leave to sport him for a time, till thy further occasion.

If you will try whither thou hast wrought wisely, take one part of thy red powder and first project it upon 10 parts of thy reserved Sun rays, and it will all become Medicine of Metals, and then project one part of that on ten parts of Mercury, and thou shall see thy Medicine will turn this little star into a bright and perfect shining Sun.

If thy saffron grow scant, then mayest thou easily multiply it into more, then make it anew, and that thou mayest do by continuing thy first course till thou comest to put in thy Sun's rays, and then instead of them, infuse so much of

thy reserved sovereign saffron, and that will hasten the perfection of thy work, and so mayest thou use it to the glory of God that gave it thee, to thy own honour, and to the exceeding great comfort of all the distressed members of Christ, thy own brethren.

I say with this thou may instantly heal all manner of diseases of all living creatures, restore the sick to their health, preserve the whole from sickness, and continue them both, in one assured estate of health, until that hour appointed by God to call them hence for their original sin. Thou mayest also help all the infirmities of vegetables, and of crystal make rubies, and all kinds of precious stones.

Judge then whither this be not the rarest gift, that God hast given to Man, next after his soul, and the salvation of the same.

Use therefore this Sacred Gift as a means whereby to acknowledge the goodness of so Gracious a God, and take heed thou abuse not both Him and His gifts, and think that in this, thou art but God's Steward, and must give to Him a full account, how thou hast used this thy talent, for to whom he lendeth much, of him shalt much be required.

D.M.

Allegory from Ruland

This allegory is included in Martin Ruland's alchemical dictionary, *Lexicon alchemiæ sive dictionarium alchemisticum...* Franckfurt, 1612.

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I was buried in a most profound slumber when it seemed that I beheld a statue of about fifteen feet in height, representing a venerable and ancient man, very handsome, and beautifully proportioned in all the members of his body; he had long silver-coloured hair, falling in waves upon his shoulders; his eyes were like fine turquoises, set with carbuncles in the middle, and the radiation thereof was so brilliant that I could not support the light. His lips were of gold, his teeth of Oriental pearls, and the rest of his body was a most brilliant ruby. His left foot rested on a terrestrial globe which seemed to support him. With his right hand uplifted and outstretched, he seemed to be poising above his head a celestial globe at the end of his finger; his left hand held a key made of a rough diamond. This man approached me, and said: I am the Genius of the Sages; fear not to follow where I lead. Then, taking me by the hair with the hand which held the key, he raised me up carried me away, and caused me to traverse the three regions of the air, the fire, and the heaven of all the planets. Beyond even these did he transport me; then, having enveloped me in a whirlwind, he disappeared, and I found myself on an island floating in a sea of blood. Surprised at finding myself in so remote a region, I walked along the bank or shore, and contemplating the said sea with profound attention, I remarked that the blood of which it was composed was all warm and living. I remarked also that a very gentle wind, which continually agitated it, maintained the heat thereof, and did excite in this sea a bubbling and movement which caused the whole sea to vibrate with a scarcely perceptible motion.

Ravished with admiration in that I was gazing on things so passing strange, I was reflecting on all these marvels, when I looked up, and lo! many persons standing by my side! I apprehended at first that they would seek to molest me, and I passed quickly into a bush of jasmine to conceal myself; but the odour of the said flowers did so speedily cast me into a sleep that they found and took possession of me. The tallest of the gang, who seemed to command the others, required of me in a haughty tone what had made me so rash as to enter from the Low Country into this most exalted empire. I described to him after what manner I had been transported thither. The personage did them immediately change his deportment, manners and accent, and he said unto me: Be thou welcome, O stranger, who hast been here led by our most high and powerful Genius! He thereupon saluted me, as also did all the others, after the fashion of their land, which is first of all to lie flat upon the back, then in like way upon the belly, and so rise. I returned their salutation after the custom of my own country. After this ceremony, the commander notified unto me that he would present me to Hagacestaur, who is their emperor. He solicited me that I would excuse him in that he had no carriage by which he might transport me to the town, from which we were distant one league. He entertained me by the way with an account of the power and grandeur of the said Hagacestaur, telling me that his dominion extended over seven kingdoms, and that he had chosen that which was in the middle of the other six to establish his ordinary residence.

As he remarked that I found it difficult to walk upon the lilies, roses, jasmines, carnations, tuberoses, and a prodigious variety of other flowers, most beautiful and curious to behold, which blossomed even upon the road, he inquired, with a smile, if I feared to harm those plants. I answered that I was well aware they were devoid of a sensitive soul, but seeing they were most rare in my own country, I shrank from trampling them underfoot. Then,

noticing that the whole land seemed to be nothing but flowers and fruits, I asked him where grain was sown therein. He replied that they sowed nothing of the kind, but the sterile portion of the Kingdom abounded in grain, and that Hagacestaur caused the greater portion to be thrown down into the Low Country to give us pleasure. As for the rest, it was devoured by the beasts. For themselves, they made their bread of the most beautiful flowers, kneading it with dew, and baking it by the rays of the sun. As I beheld everywhere an abounding quantity of the finest fruits, I had the curiosity to gather some pears that I might taste their flavour, but they would have prevented me, saying that these also were only eaten by animals. I, nevertheless, found that they were of delicious quality. The commander presently offered me some peaches, melons, and figs, nor ever has Provence, nor yet all Italy, nor Greece itself, produced fruits of such surpassing excellence. He swore unto me by royal Hagacestaur that the said fruits grew wild, that they did nothing to cultivate them, and that they ate nothing else with their bread. I inquired of him after what manner they preserved their flowers and fruits during the winter season, but he answered me that they knew no winter, that their years had three seasons only, to wit, spring and summer, and that of these two there was formed a third, which was autumn. The latter contained in the bodies of the fruits both the spirit of spring and the soul of summer, at which time they harvested the grape and the pomegranate, these being the choicest of their fruits. This personage manifested an extreme astonishment when I informed him that we ate beef and mutton, game, fish, and other animals. He told me that we must possess but a gross or clouded understanding, since we made use of such coarse nourishments. I experienced not fatigue or distraction while listening to his curious and wonderful information, which I heard with great attention. But being counselled to take note of the appearance of the two, from which we were now distant only two hundred paces, I had no sooner raised my eyes to look at it than I beheld nothing, for I had become suddenly blind. At this my conductor fell a laughing, and all his company with him. The vexation of finding all these gentlemen making merry over my ill-chance, caused me more chagrin than the misfortune itself. Seeing that their behaviour displeased me, he who had taken such pains to entertain me consoled me by commending me to a little patience, for I should see clearly in a moment. He then went in search of an herb which he rubbed over my eyes, and I straightaway beheld the light and glittering of this superb town, whereof the houses were built of purest crystal, while the sun illuminated it continually, for in this island no night or darkness did ever fall. On no account would they permit me to enter any of these houses, but I was allowed to look upon what was passing therein through the transparent medium of the walls. I examined the first of these mansions, which were all built on the same model. I remarked that they consisted of one storey only, divided into three apartments, having several chambers and cabinets on the same floor.

The first apartment was dining-room, ornamented with hangings of gold lace, bordered by a fringe of the same precious material. The ground colour of this stuff was variable between red and green, enriched with finest silver, the whole being covered with white gauze. There were also some cabinets garnished with gems of different colours. Next I discovered a chamber entirely furnished with the richest black velvet, laced with very black and very glossy bands of satin, the whole being relieved by embroidery of jet, which had also a most brilliant and iridescent blackness. In the second apartment there was a chamber hung with white watered silk, enriched and relieved by a broidery of very fine Oriental pearls. There were also several cabinets furnished in various colourings, such as blue satin, violet damask, citrine mohair, and carnation glazed silk. In the third apartment was a chamber draped with an eminently resplendent material, purple on a gold ground, beyond all comparison more beautiful and more rich than all the other fabrics I had seen. I inquired where were the master and mistress of this dwelling-place, and learned that they were concealed at the further end of this chamber, and that they must pass to one which was remoter still, and was separated from this one by certain communicating cabinets. The furniture of these cabinets was all of different colours, some yellow, some citrine, some purest and finest gold-brocade. I could not see the fourth apartment, but was told that it consists of a single chamber, the furniture being covered with a tissue of solar rays, the purest and the most concentrated, on a ground of the purple fabric which I had previously remarked.

After having beheld all these curious things, I was informed after what manner marriages took place among the inhabitants of this island. The royal Hagacestaur, having a most perfect knowledge of men and of his subjects' dispositions, from the smallest even to the greatest, assembled the nearest relatives, and placed a young, unspotted maiden with a strong, healthy, and excellent old man. Then he purged and purified the girl, washed and cleansed the old man, who presented his hand to the maiden, and the maiden took the hand of the old man. Thereupon they were conducted to one of these lodgings, the door being sealed with the same substance of which the house itself was built. Thus shut up, they were destined to remain together for a period of nine months, during which time they made all the beautiful furniture and appointments which I had so much admired. At the end of the prescribed time they came forth joined in one and the same body, possessing but one soul, the power whereof is of singular greatness on the earth. Of this Hagacestaur makes use to convert all wicked persons in his kingdoms.

They promised me that I should enter into the palace of Hagacestaur, and should behold the apartments therein, among others a saloon in which there are four statues as old as the world, that in the centre being the most powerful

Seganisseged, who had transported me into this island. The three others, which form a triangle about him, are three women - to wit, Ellugat, Linemalor, and Tripsarecopsen. It was also promised me that I should behold the temple wherein is the image of their divinity, whom they call Elesel Vassergusin; but by this time the cocks had begun to crow, the shepherds were already leading their flocks to pasture, and the husbandmen, yoking their oxen to ploughs, made such a clatter that I awoke, and my dream was altogether dissipated. All that I had seen was but nothing in comparison with what they had promised to reveal me. Nevertheless, I have found abundant consolation when I have reflected on that other and heavenly empire where the Most High is seen seated upon His throne, surrounded with glory, and accompanied by angels, archangels, cherubim, seraphim, thrones, and dominations. There shall we behold what eye hath never seen, shall hear what ear hath never heard, since it is in that place we shall partake of eternal felicity, which God hath promised to all those who seek to make themselves worthy of it, all having been created to participate in this glory. Let us then do our best to merit it. God be praised!

Sendivogius' Enigma of the Sages

This Parable or Enigma of the Sages, was included in Michael Sendivogius *Tractatus de Lapide Philosophorum*. This was first published in 1604, but many editions appeared during the 17th century.
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A Parable, or Enigma of the Sages

Once upon a time, when I had been for many years of my life sailing from the Arctic to the Antarctic Pole, I was cast ashore by the Will of God, on the coast of a certain great ocean; and though I was well acquainted with the properties of that sea, I did not know whether there was generated near those shores that little fish Edieneis, which is so anxiously sought, even unto this present, by men of high and low degree. But as I watched the Naiads and Nymphs disporting themselves in the water, being fatigued with my previous toils, and overwhelmed by the multitude of my thoughts, I was lulled asleep by the soft murmur of the waves; and as I slept sweetly and gently, I beheld a marvellous vision. I saw ancient Neptune, with a trident in his hand, rise, with venerable aspect, from our sea, who after a friendly salutation, carried me to a most beautiful island. This island was situated in the southern hemisphere, and contained all that is required for man's use and delight. It appeared a more pleasant and delightful abode than Virgil's Elysian fields. The shores thereof were fringed with verdant myrtles and cypresses. The meadows were studded with a large variety of beautiful and fragrant flowers. The slopes of the hills were clad with vines, olives, and cedars. The roads were overhung by the intertwining branches of laurels and pomegranate trees, which afforded grateful shade to the wayfarer. The plains were covered with groves of orange and lemon trees. In short, the island was an epitome of earthly beauty.

Concealed under a rock, Neptune shewed me two minerals of that island, gold and chalybs (steel). Then I was conducted to an orchard in the middle of a meadow, which was at no great distance, the same being planted with a great variety of beautiful trees.

Among these he shewed me seven enriched by particular names; and two of them towered above the rest. One bore fruit which shone like the sun, and its leaves resembled gold; the fruit of the other was whiter than lilies, and its leaves were like fine silver. Neptune called the first the Solar, and the second the Lunar tree. The only thing which it was difficult to obtain in the island, was water. The inhabitants had tried to get it from a spring by means of a conduit, and to elicit it from many things. But the result was a poisonous water, and the only water that could be drunk was that condensed out of the rays of the sun and moon. The worst of it was, that no one could attract more than ten parts of this water. It was wonderful water, I can tell you; for I saw it with my eyes, and touched with my hands its dazzling whiteness, which surpassed all the splendour of the snow. While I stood wrapt in admiration, Neptune vanished from my sight, and there stood before me a tall man, on whose forehead the name of Saturn was inscribed. He took a vessel, and scooped up ten parts of the water, in which he placed fruit from the Solar tree; and the fruit was consumed like ice in warm water.

So I said unto him:- "Lord, I behold here a marvellous thing. The water is small in quantity; nevertheless, the fruit of this tree is consumed therein by a gentle heat. To what purpose is all this?"

He graciously replied: "My son, it is true that this thing is wonderful. But this water is the water of life, and has such power to exalt the qualities of this fruit, that it shall afterwards, without sowing or planting - only by its fragrance -

transmute the six trees which remain into its own nature. Moreover, this water is as a woman to the fruit: the fruits of this tree can putrefy nowhere but in this water; and though the fruit by itself be wonderful and precious - yet when it putrefies in this water, it brings forth out of this putrefaction a Salamander that endures the fire; its blood is more precious than all treasures, and has power to render fertile six trees such as you see here, and to make their fruit sweeter than honey."

Then I said unto him:- "Lord, how is this thing done?"

He replied: "I have already told thee that the fruits of the Solar tree are living, and they are sweet; but whereas the fruit while it is cooked in this water can inform but one part, after its coction has been completed it can inform a thousand."

I then enquired whether the fruit was boiled in this water over a fierce fire, and how long?

He answered, "This water has an inward fire, and when this is assisted by continuous outward warmth, it burns up three parts of its own body with this body of the fruit, until nothing but an incredibly small part remains, which, however, possesses the most marvellous virtue. This is cooked by the wise Master first for seven months, and then for ten. But in the meantime, on each fiftieth day, a variety of phenomena is witnessed."

Again I besought him whether this fruit was cooked in several waters, and whether anything was added to it.

He made answer: "There is no water, either in this island or in the whole country, but only this kind alone that can properly penetrate the pores of this fruit; and you should know the Solar tree also grew out of this water, which is collected by magnetic attraction out of the rays of the Sun and Moon. Hence the fruit and the water exhibit a wonderful sympathy and correspondence. If any foreign substance were added to the water, its virtue would only be impaired. Hence nothing should be put into the water but this fruit. After its decoction the fruit has life and blood, and its blood causes all barren trees to bring forth the same precious fruit."

I asked whether the water was obtained by any secret process, or whether it was to be obtained everywhere?

He said, "It is found everywhere, and no one can live without it, but it is best when extracted by means of our Chalybs (steel), which is found in the belly of the Ram. If you ask what is its use, I answer that before the due amount of coction has been performed, it is deadly poison, but afterwards it is the Great Medicine, and yields 29 grains of blood, each one of which produces 864 of the fruits of the Solar tree."

I asked whether it could be still further improved.

"The Sages say," he returned, "that it can be increased first to ten, then to a hundred, then to a thousand, then to ten thousand times its own quantity, and so on."

I asked whether that water was known by any particular name.

He cried aloud, saying: "Few know it, but all have seen it, and see and love it; it has many names, but we call it the water of our sea: the water that does not wet the hands."

"Do they use it for any other purpose?" I enquired; "and is anything born in it?"

"Every created thing," he replied, "uses it, but invisibly. All things owe their birth to it, and live in it. Nothing is, properly speaking, in it, through itself mingles with all things. It can be improved by nothing but the fruit of the Solar tree, without which it is of no use in this work."

I was going to ask him to speak more plainly, when he began to cry out in such a loud voice that I awoke out of my sleep, and Saturn and the hope of getting my questions answered vanished altogether. Be contented, nevertheless, with what I have told you, and be sure that it is impossible to speak more clearly. If you do not understand what I have said, you will never grasp the writings of other philosophers. After a while, I fell into another deep sleep, in which I saw Neptune standing over me, congratulating me on our happy meeting in the Garden of the Hesperides. He held up to me a mirror, in which I saw the whole of Nature unveiled. After we had exchanged a few remarks, I thanked him for conducting me to this beautiful garden, and introducing me to the company of Saturn; and I heartily besought him to resolve for me the difficulties and doubts which Saturn had left uncleared.

"For instance," I said, "I have read and believe that for every act of generation a male and a female are required; and yet Saturn spoke of generation by placing the Solar fruit in the water, or Mercury of the Sages. What did he mean? As the lord of the sea, I know that you are acquainted with these things, and I entreat of you to answer me."

He said, "What you say about the act of generation is true; and yet you know that worms are produced in a different way from quadrupeds, namely by putrefaction, and the place or earth in which this putrefaction occurs is feminine.

In our substance the Mother is the water of which so much has been said, and its offspring is produced by putrefaction, after the manner of worms. Hence the Sages call it the Phoenix and Salamander. Its generation is a resurrection rather than a birth, and for this reason it is immortal or indestructible. Now, whatsoever is conceived of two bodies is subject to the law of death; but the life of this fruit is a separation from all that is corruptible about it. It is the same with the Phoenix, which separates of itself from its corruptible body."

I enquired whether the substance was compound in its nature.

"No," he said, "there is only the Solar fruit that is put into the water, which must be to the fruit in the proportion of ten to one. Believe that what was here revealed to you in a dream by Saturn, after the manner of our island, is not a dream, but a bright reality which will stand the test of broad daylight."

With these words he abruptly left me, without listening to my further questions; and I awoke and found myself at home in Europe. May God shew to you, gentle reader, the full interpretation of my dreams! Farewell!

To the Triune God be Praise and Glory!

Thomas Vaughan's allegory of the Mountain

A second short allegory from Thomas Vaughan *Lumen de Lumine, or a New Magical Light*, London, 1651.

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Every man naturally desires a superiority, to have treasures of gold and silver, and to seem great in the eyes of the world. God indeed created all things for the use of man, that he might rule over them and acknowledge therein the singular goodness and omnipotence of God, give Him thanks for His benefits, honor Him and praise Him. But there is no man looks after these things otherwise than by spending his days idly. They would enjoy them without any previous labor and danger; neither do they look for them in that place where God has treasured them up, Who expects also that man should seek for them there, and to those that seek will He give them. But there is not any that labors for a possession in that place, and therefore these riches are not found. For the way to this place - and the place itself - have been unknown for a long time, and it is hidden from the greatest part of the world. But notwithstanding that it be difficult and laborious to discover this way and place, yet the place should be sought after. But it is not the will of God to conceal anything from those that are His; and therefore in this last age - before the final judgement comes - all these things shall be manifested to those that are worthy. As He Himself - though obscurely, lest it should be manifested to the unworthy - has spoken in a certain place, "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed and hidden that shall not be known." We therefore, being moved by the Spirit of God, do declare the will of God to the world, which we have also already performed and published in several languages. But most men either revile or condemn our Manifesto, or else - waiving the Spirit of God - they expect the proposals thereof from us, supposing that we will straightway teach them how to make gold by art, or furnish them with ample treasures, whereby they may live pompously in the face of the world, swagger and make wars, turn usurers, gluttons and drunkards, live unchastely and defile their whole life with several other sins - all of which are contrary to the blessed will of God. These men should have learned from those ten Virgins - whereof five that were foolish demanded oil for their lamps from those five that were wise - how that the case is much otherwise. It is expedient that every man should labor for this treasure by the assistance of God and his own particular search and industry. But the perverse intentions of these fellows we understand out of their own writings, by the singular grace and revelation of God. We do stop our ears and wrap ourselves, as it were, in clouds to avoid the bellowings and howlings of those men who cry out in vain for gold.

And thus indeed it comes about that they brand us with infinite calumnies and slanders, which nevertheless we do not resent; but God in His good time will judge them for it. But after we had known well - though unknown to you - and perceived by your writing how diligent you are to pursue the Holy Scripture and seek the true knowledge of God, we have out of many thousands thought you worthy of some answer; and we signify this much to you by the will of God and the admonition of the Holy Spirit.

There is a Mountain situated in the midst of the earth or center of the world, which is both small and great. It is soft, also above measure hard and stony. It is far off and near at hand, but by the providence of God invisible. In it are hidden the most ample treasures, which the world is not able to value. This mountain - by envy of the devil, who always opposes the glory of God and the happiness of man - is compassed about with very cruel beasts and ravening birds - which make the way thither both difficult and dangerous. And therefore until now - because the time is not yet come - the way thither could not be sought after nor found out. But now at last the way is to be found by those that are worthy - but nonetheless by every man's self-labor and endeavors.

To this Mountain you shall go in a certain night - when it comes - most long and most dark, and see that you prepare yourselves by prayer. Insist upon the way that leads to the Mountain, but ask not of any man where the way lies.

Only follow your Guide, who will offer himself to you and will meet you in the way. But you are not to know him. This Guide will bring you to the Mountain at midnight, when all things are silent and dark. It is necessary that you arm yourselves with a resolute, heroic courage, lest you fear those things that will happen, and so fall back. You need no sword nor any other bodily weapons; only call upon God sincerely and heartily.

When you have discovered the Mountain the first miracle that will appear is this: A most vehement and very great wind that will shake the Mountain and shatter the rocks to pieces. You will be encountered also by lions and dragons and other terrible beasts; but fear not any of these things. Be resolute and take heed that you turn not back, for your Guide - who brought you thither - will not suffer any evil to befall you. As for the treasure, it is not yet found, but it is very near.

After this wind will come an earthquake that will overthrow those things which the wind has left, and will make all flat. But be sure that you do not fall off. The earthquake being past, there will follow a fire that will consume the earthly rubbish and disclose the treasure. But as yet you cannot see it.

After these things and near the daybreak there will be a great calm, and you will see the Day-star arise, the dawn will appear, and you will perceive a great treasure. The most important thing in it and the most perfect is a certain exalted Tincture, with which the world - if it served God and were worthy of such gifts - might be touched and turned into most pure gold.

This Tincture being used as your Guide shall teach you will make you young when you are old, and you will perceive no disease in any part of your bodies. By means of this Tincture also you will find pearls of an excellence which cannot be imagined. But do not you arrogate anything to yourselves because of your present power, but be contented with what your Guide shall communicate to you. Praise God perpetually for this His gift, and have a special care that you do not use it for worldly pride, but employ it in such works as are contrary to the world. Use it rightly and enjoy it as if you had it not. Live a temperate life and beware of all sin. Otherwise your Guide will forsake you and you will be deprived of this happiness. For know of a truth: whosoever abuses this Tincture and does not live exemplarily, purely and devoutly before men, will lose this benefit and scarcely any hope will be left of recovering it afterward.

Zosimos

From the third century A.D. Greek adept Zosimos of Panopolis.

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The composition of the waters, and the movement, and the growth, and the removal and restitution of bodily nature, and the splitting off of the spirit from the body, and the fixation of the spirit on the body are not operations with natures alien one from the other, but, like the hard bodies of metals and the moist fluids of plants, are One Thing, of One Nature, acting upon itself. And in this system, of one kind but many colours, is preserved a research of all things, multiple and various, subject to lunar influence and measure of time, which regulates the cessation and growth by which the One Nature transforms itself.

And saying these things, I slept, and I saw a certain sacrificing priest standing before me and over an altar which had the form of a bowl. And that altar had fifteen steps going up to it.

Then the priest stood up and I heard from above a voice say to me, "I have completed the descent of the fifteen steps and the ascent of the steps of light. And it is the sacrificing priest who renews me, casting off the body's coarseness, and, consecrated by necessity, I have become a spirit."

And when I had heard the voice of him who stood in the altar formed like a bowl, I questioned him, desiring to understand who he was.

He answered me in a weak voice saying, "I am Ion, Priest of the Adytum, and I have borne an intolerable force. For someone came at me headlong in the morning and dismembered me with a sword and tore me apart, according to the rigor of harmony. And, having cut my head off with the sword, he mashed my flesh with my bones and burned them in the fire of the treatment, until, my body transformed, I should learn to become a spirit. And I sustained the same intolerable force."

And even as he said these things to me and I forced him to speak, it was as if his eyes turned to blood and he vomited up all his flesh. And I saw him as a mutilated image of a little man and he was tearing at his flesh and falling away.

And being afraid I woke and considered, "Is this not the composition of the waters?" I thought that I was right and fell asleep again. And I saw the same altar in the shape of a bowl and water bubbled at the top of it, and in it were many people endlessly. And there was no one whom I might question outside of the bowl. And I went up to the altar to view the spectacle.

And I saw a little man, a barber, whitened with age, and he said to me, "What are you looking at?" I answered that I wondered at the boiling water and the men who were burning but remained alive.

And he answered me saying, "The spectacle which you see is at once the entrance and the exit and the process."

I questioned him further, "What is the nature of the process?"

And he answered saying, "It is the place of the practice called the embalming. Men wishing to obtain virtue enter here and, fleeing the body, become spirits."

I said to him, "And are you a spirit?"

And he answered, saying, "Both a spirit and a guardian of spirits."

As he was saying these things to me and the boiling increased and the people wailed, I saw a copper man holding a lead tablet in his hand. He spoke aloud, looking at the tablet, "I counsel all those in mortification to become calm and that each take in his hand a lead tablet and write with his own hand and that each bear his eyes upward and open his mouth until his grapes be grown."

The act followed the word and the master of the house said to me, "Have you stretched your neck up and have you seen what is done?"

And I said that I had and he said to me, "This man of copper whom you have seen is the sacrificial priest and the sacrifice and he who vomited out his own flesh. To him was given authority over the water and over those men in mortification."

And when I had seen these visions, I woke again and said to myself, "What is the cause of this vision? Is this not the white and yellow water, boiling, sulphurous, divine?"

And I found that I understood well. And I said that it was good to speak and good to hear and good to give and good to receive and good to be poor and good to be rich. And how does the Nature learn to give and to receive? The copper man gives and the water-stone receives; the thunder gives the fire that flashed from it. For all things are woven together and all things are taken apart and all things are mingled and all things combined and all things mixed and all things separated and all things are moistened and all things are dried and all things bud and all things blossom in the altar shaped like a bowl. For each, by method and by weight of the four elements, the interlacing and separation of the whole is accomplished for no bond can be made without method. The method is natural, breathing in and breathing out, keeping the orders of the method, increasing and decreasing. And all things by division and union come together in a harmony, the method not being neglected, the Nature is transformed. For the Nature, turning on itself, is changed. And the Nature is both the nature of the virtue and the bond of the world.

And, so that I need not write to you of many things, friend, build a temple of one stone, like ceruse, like alabaster, like marble of Proconnesus in appearance, having neither beginning nor end in its building. Let it have within, a pure stream of water glittering like sunlight. Notice on what side the entry to the temple is and take your sword in hand and seek the entry. For thin-mouthed is the place where the opening is and a serpent lies by it guarding the temple. First seize him in your hands and make a sacrifice of him. And having skinned him, cut his flesh from his bones, divide him, member from member, and having brought together again the members and the bones, make them a stepping stone at the entry to the temple and mount upon them and go in, and there you will find what you seek. For the priest whom you see seated in the stream gathering his colour, is not a man of copper. For he has changed the colour of his nature, and become a man of silver whom, if you wish, after a little time, you will have as a man of gold.

Then, again wishing to ascend the seven steps and to behold the seven mortifications and, as it happened, one day only did I ascend the way. Retracing my steps, I thereupon ascended the way many times. And on returning, I could not find the way, and becoming discouraged, not seeing how to get out, I fell asleep.

And I saw in my sleep a certain little man, a barber, wearing a red robe and royal garments, and he stood outside of the place of the mortifications and said, "What are you doing, Man?"

I said to him, "I stand here because I have missed every road and am lost."

He said, "Follow me".

And going out, I followed him. And being near to the place of the mortifications, I saw the little barber man leading me and he cast into the place of the mortifications and his whole body was consumed by fire.

Seeing this, I fled and trembled from the fear and I woke and said to myself, "What is this that I have seen?" And again I took thought and determined that this barber man is the man of copper. It is necessary for the first step to throw him into the place of the mortifications. My soul again desired to ascend -- the third step also. And again, alone, I went along the way, and as I drew near the place of the mortifications, again I got lost, losing sight of the path, and stood, out of my mind.

And again I saw an old man of hair so white my eyes were blinded by the whiteness. His name was Agathodaemon. And the white old man, turning, looked on me for a whole hour.

And I asked him, "Show me the right way."

He did not turn toward me but hastened to go on the right way. And going and coming in this manner he quickly effected the altar. As I went up to the altar I saw the white old man. He was cast into the mortifications. O Creator-

gods of celestial natures -- straightaway the flames took him up entire, which is a terrible story, my brother. For from the great energy of the mortifications his eyes became full with blood. And I questioned him saying, "Why do you lie there?" And he opened his mouth and said, "I am the man of lead and I am withstanding an intolerable force." And then I woke out of fear and sought in myself the cause of this fact. And again I reflected and said to myself, "I understand well that thus must one cast out the lead -- truly the vision is concerning the combination of liquids." And again I knew the theophany and again the sacred altar and I saw a certain priest clothed in white celebrating those same terrible mysteries and I said, "Who is this?" And answering he said to me, "This is the priest of the Adytum. He wishes to put blood into the bodies, to make the eyes clear, and to raise up the dead." And again I fell asleep for a while and while I was mounting the fourth step I saw one with a sword in his hand coming out of the east. And I saw another behind him, holding a disk, white and shining and beautiful to behold. And it was called the meridian of the Sun and I approached the place of the mortifications and the one who held the sword said to me, "Cut off his head and sacrifice his meat and muscles part by part so that first the flesh may be boiled according to the method and that he might then suffer the mortifications." And waking, I said, "I understand well that these matters concern the liquids of the art of the metals." And the one who held the sword said "You have fulfilled the seven steps beneath." And the other said at the same time as the casting out of the lead by all the liquids, "The Work is completed."

Campanella's City of the Sun

The City of the Sun, by Tommaso Campanella [1568-1639], was originally written in Italian in 1602, just after he was condemned to life imprisonment for sedition and heresy. The original manuscript is in the Bibliotheca Governativa, Lucca, Tuscany. It was later revised and a Latin version was written in 1613-14. The first printed edition in Latin was issued at Frankfurt in 1623. This is one of the most important utopias, and may have influenced Bacon's *New Atlantis*. This English version was prepared by Kirk Crady from scanner output provided by Internet Wiretap.

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The City of the Sun

A Poetical Dialogue between a Grandmaster of the Knights Hospitallers and a Genoese Sea-Captain, his guest.

The City of the Sun, by Tommaso Campanella. Prepared by Kirk Crady from scanner output provided by Internet Wiretap.

The City of the Sun

A Poetical Dialogue between a Grandmaster of the Knights Hospitallers and a Genoese Sea-Captain, his guest.

G.M. Prithee, now, tell me what happened to you during that voyage?

Capt. I have already told you how I wandered over the whole earth. In the course of my journeying I came to Taprobane, and was compelled to go ashore at a place, where through fear of the inhabitants I remained in a wood. When I stepped out of this I found myself on a large plain immediately under the equator.

G.M. And what befell you here?

Capt. I came upon a large crowd of men and armed women, many of whom did not understand our language, and they conducted me forthwith to the City of the Sun.

G.M. Tell me after what plan this city is built and how it is governed.

Capt. The greater part of the city is built upon a high hill, which rises from an extensive plain, but several of its circles extend for some distance beyond the base of the hill, which is of such a size that the diameter of the city is upward of two miles, so that its circumference becomes about seven. On account of the humped shape of the mountain, however, the diameter of the city is really more than if it were built on a plain.

It is divided into seven rings or huge circles named from the seven planets, and the way from one to the other of these is by four streets and through four gates, that look toward the four points of the compass. Furthermore, it is so built that if the first circle were stormed, it would of necessity entail a double amount of energy to storm the second; still more to storm the third; and in each succeeding case the strength and energy would have to be doubled; so that

he who wishes to capture that city must, as it were, storm it seven times. For my own part, however, I think that not even the first wall could be occupied, so thick are the earthworks and so well fortified is it with breastworks, towers, guns, and ditches. When I had been taken through the northern gate (which is shut with an iron door so wrought that it can be raised and let down, and locked in easily and strongly, its projections running into the grooves of the thick posts by a marvellous device), I saw a level space seventy paces[1] wide between the first and second walls. From hence can be seen large palaces, all joined to the wall of the second circuit in such a manner as to appear all one palace. Arches run on a level with the middle height of the palaces, and are continued round the whole ring. There are galleries for promenading upon these arches, which are supported from beneath by thick and well-shaped columns, enclosing arcades like peristyles, or cloisters of an abbey.

But the palaces have no entrances from below, except on the inner or concave partition, from which one enters directly to the lower parts of the building. The higher parts, however, are reached by flights of marble steps, which lead to galleries for promenading on the inside similar to those on the outside. From these one enters the higher rooms, which are very beautiful, and have windows on the concave and convex partitions. These rooms are divided from one another by richly decorated walls. The convex or outer wall of the ring is about eight spans thick; the concave, three; the intermediate walls are one, or perhaps one and a half. Leaving this circle one gets to the second plain, which is nearly three paces narrower than the first. Then the first wall of the second ring is seen adorned above and below with similar galleries for walking, and there is on the inside of it another interior wall enclosing palaces. It has also similar peristyles supported by columns in the lower part, but above are excellent pictures, round the ways into the upper houses. And so on afterward through similar spaces and double walls, enclosing palaces, and adorned with galleries for walking, extending along their outer side, and supported by columns, till the last circuit is reached, the way being still over a level plain.

But when the two gates, that is to say, those of the outmost and the inmost walls, have been passed, one mounts by means of steps so formed that an ascent is scarcely discernible, since it proceeds in a slanting direction, and the steps succeed one another at almost imperceptible heights. On the top of the hill is a rather spacious plain, and in the midst of this there rises a temple built with wondrous art.

G.M. Tell on, I pray you! Tell on! I am dying to hear more.

Capt. The temple is built in the form of a circle; it is not girt with walls, but stands upon thick columns, beautifully grouped. A very large dome, built with great care in the centre or pole, contains another small vault as it were rising out of it, and in this is a spiracle, which is right over the altar. There is but one altar in the middle of the temple, and this is hedged round by columns. The temple itself is on a space of more than 350 paces. Without it, arches measuring about eight paces extend from the heads of the columns outward, whence other columns rise about three paces from the thick, strong, and erect wall. Between these and the former columns there are galleries for walking, with beautiful pavements, and in the recess of the wall, which is adorned with numerous large doors, there are immovable seats, placed as it were between the inside columns, supporting the temple. Portable chairs are not wanting, many and well adorned. Nothing is seen over the altar but a large globe, upon which the heavenly bodies are painted, and another globe upon which there is a representation of the earth. Furthermore, in the vault of the dome there can be discerned representations of all the stars of heaven from the first to the sixth magnitude, with their proper names and power to influence terrestrial things marked in three little verses for each. There are the poles and greater and lesser circles according to the right latitude of the place, but these are not perfect because there is no wall below. They seem, too, to be made in their relation to the globes on the altar. The pavement of the temple is bright with precious stones. Its seven golden lamps hang always burning, and these bear the names of the seven planets. At the top of the building several small and beautiful cells surround the small dome, and behind the level space above the bands or arches of the exterior and interior columns there are many cells, both small and large, where the priests and religious officers dwell to the number of forty-nine.

A revolving flag projects from the smaller dome, and this shows in what quarter the wind is. The flag is marked with figures up to thirty-six, and the priests know what sort of year the different kinds of winds bring and what will be the changes of weather on land and sea. Furthermore, under the flag a book is always kept written with letters of gold.

G.M. I pray you, worthy hero, explain to me their whole system of government; for I am anxious to hear it.

Capt. The great ruler among them is a priest whom they call by the name Hoh, though we should call him Metaphysic. He is head over all, in temporal and spiritual matters, and all business and lawsuits are settled by him, as the supreme authority. Three princes of equal power -- viz., Pon, Sin, and Mor -- assist him, and these in our tongue we should call Power, Wisdom, and Love. To Power belongs the care of all matters relating to war and peace. He attends to the military arts, and, next to Hoh, he is ruler in every affair of a warlike nature. He governs the military magistrates and the soldiers, and has the management of the munitions, the fortifications, the storming of places, the implements of war, the armories, the smiths and workmen connected with matters of this sort.

But Wisdom is the ruler of the liberal arts, of mechanics, of all sciences with their magistrates and doctors, and of the discipline of the schools. As many doctors as there are, are under his control. There is one doctor who is called Astrologus; a second, Cosmographus; a third, Arithmeticus; a fourth, Geometra; a fifth, Historiographus; a sixth, Poeta; a seventh, Logicus; an eighth, Rhetor; a ninth, Grammaticus; a tenth, Medicus; an eleventh, Physiologus; a twelfth, Politicus; a thirteenth, Moralis. They have but one book, which they call Wisdom, and in it all the sciences are written with conciseness and marvellous fluency of expression. This they read to the people after the custom of the Pythagoreans. It is Wisdom who causes the exterior and interior, the higher and lower walls of the city to be adorned with the finest pictures, and to have all the sciences painted upon them in an admirable manner. On the walls of the temple and on the dome, which is let down when the priest gives an address, lest the sounds of his voice, being scattered, should fly away from his audience, there are pictures of stars in their different magnitudes, with the powers and motions of each, expressed separately in three little verses.

On the interior wall of the first circuit all the mathematical figures are conspicuously painted -- figures more in number than Archimedes or Euclid discovered, marked symmetrically, and with the explanation of them neatly written and contained each in a little verse. There are definitions and propositions, etc. On the exterior convex wall is first an immense drawing of the whole earth, given at one view. Following upon this, there are tablets setting forth for every separate country the customs both public and private, the laws, the origins and the power of the inhabitants; and the alphabets the different people use can be seen above that of the City of the Sun.

On the inside of the second circuit, that is to say of the second ring of buildings, paintings of all kinds of precious and common stones, of minerals and metals, are seen; and a little piece of the metal itself is also there with an apposite explanation in two small verses for each metal or stone. On the outside are marked all the seas, rivers, lakes, and streams which are on the face of the earth; as are also the wines and the oils and the different liquids, with the sources from which the last are extracted, their qualities and strength. There are also vessels built into the wall above the arches, and these are full of liquids from one to 300 years old, which cure all diseases. Hail and snow, storms and thunder, and whatever else takes place in the air, are represented with suitable figures and little verses. The inhabitants even have the art of representing in stone all the phenomena of the air, such as the wind, rain, thunder, the rainbow, etc.

On the interior of the third circuit all the different families of trees and herbs are depicted, and there is a live specimen of each plant in earthenware vessels placed upon the outer partition of the arches. With the specimens there are explanations as to where they were first found, what are their powers and natures, and resemblances to celestial things and to metals, to parts of the human body and to things in the sea, and also as to their uses in medicine, etc. On the exterior wall are all the races of fish found in rivers, lakes, and seas, and their habits and values, and ways of breeding, training, and living, the purposes for which they exist in the world, and their uses to man. Further, their resemblances to celestial and terrestrial things, produced both by nature and art, are so given that I was astonished when I saw a fish which was like a bishop, one like a chain, another like a garment, a fourth like a nail, a fifth like a star, and others like images of those things existing among us, the relation in each case being completely manifest. There are sea-urchins to be seen, and the purple shell-fish and mussels; and whatever the watery world possesses worthy of being known is there fully shown in marvellous characters of painting and drawing.

On the fourth interior wall all the different kinds of birds are painted, with their natures, sizes, customs, colors, manner of living, etc.; and the only real phoenix is possessed by the inhabitants of this city. On the exterior are shown all the races of creeping animals, serpents, dragons, and worms; the insects, the flies, gnats, beetles, etc., in their different states, strength, venoms, and uses, and a great deal more than you or I can think of.

On the fifth interior they have all the larger animals of the earth, as many in number as would astonish you. We indeed know not the thousandth part of them, for on the exterior wall also a great many of immense size are also portrayed. To be sure, of horses alone, how great a number of breeds there is and how beautiful are the forms there cleverly displayed!

On the sixth interior are painted all the mechanical arts, with the several instruments for each and their manner of use among different nations. Alongside, the dignity of such is placed, and their several inventors are named. But on the exterior all the inventors in science, in warfare, and in law are represented. There I saw Moses, Osiris, Jupiter, Mercury, Lycurgus, Pompilius, Pythagoras, Zamolxis, Solon, Charondas, Phoroneus, with very many others. They even have Mahomet, whom nevertheless they hate as a false and sordid legislator. In the most dignified position I saw a representation of Jesus Christ and of the twelve Apostles, whom they consider very worthy and hold to be great. Of the representations of men, I perceived Caesar, Alexander, Pyrrhus, and Hannibal in the highest place; and other very renowned heroes in peace and war, especially Roman heroes, were painted in lower positions, under the galleries. And when I asked with astonishment whence they had obtained our history, they told me that among them there was a knowledge of all languages, and that by perseverance they continually send explorers and ambassadors

over the whole earth, who learn thoroughly the customs, forces, rule and histories of the nations, bad and good alike. These they apply all to their own republic, and with this they are well pleased. I learned that cannon and typography were invented by the Chinese before we knew of them. There are magistrates who announce the meaning of the pictures, and boys are accustomed to learn all the sciences, without toil and as if for pleasure; but in the way of history only until they are ten years old.

Love is foremost in attending to the charge of the race. He sees that men and women are so joined together, that they bring forth the best offspring. Indeed, they laugh at us who exhibit a studious care for our breed of horses and dogs, but neglect the breeding of human beings. Thus the education of the children is under his rule. So also is the medicine that is sold, the sowing and collecting of fruits of the earth and of trees, agriculture, pasturage, the preparations for the months, the cooking arrangements, and whatever has any reference to food, clothing, and the intercourse of the sexes. Love himself is ruler, but there are many male and female magistrates dedicated to these arts.

Metaphysic, then, with these three rulers, manages all the above-named matters, and even by himself alone nothing is done; all business is discharged by the four together, but in whatever Metaphysic inclines to the rest are sure to agree.

G.M. Tell me, please, of the magistrates, their services and duties, of the education and mode of living, whether the government is a monarchy, a republic, or an aristocracy.

Capt. This race of men came there from India, flying from the sword of the Magi, a race of plunderers and tyrants who laid waste their country, and they determined to lead a philosophic life in fellowship with one another.

Although the community of wives is not instituted among the other inhabitants of their province, among them it is in use after this manner: All things are common with them, and their dispensation is by the authority of the magistrates. Arts and honors and pleasures are common, and are held in such a manner that no one can appropriate anything to himself.

They say that all private property is acquired and improved for the reason that each one of us by himself has his own home and wife and children. From this, self-love springs. For when we raise a son to riches and dignities, and leave an heir to much wealth, we become either ready to grasp at the property of the State, if in any case fear should be removed from the power which belongs to riches and rank; or avaricious, crafty, and hypocritical, if anyone is of slender purse, little strength, and mean ancestry. But when we have taken away self-love, there remains only love for the State.

G.M. Under such circumstances no one will be willing to labor, while he expects others to work, on the fruit of whose labors he can live, as Aristotle argues against Plato.

Capt. I do not know how to deal with that argument, but I declare to you that they burn with so great a love for their fatherland, as I could scarcely have believed possible; and indeed with much more than the histories tell us belonged to the Romans, who fell willingly for their country, inasmuch as they have to a greater extent surrendered their private property. I think truly that the friars and monks and clergy of our country, if they were not weakened by love for their kindred and friends or by the ambition to rise to higher dignities, would be less fond of property, and more imbued with a spirit of charity toward all, as it was in the time of the apostles, and is now in a great many cases.

G.M. St. Augustine may say that, but I say that among this race of men, friendship is worth nothing, since they have not the chance of conferring mutual benefits on one another.

Capt. Nay, indeed. For it is worth the trouble to see that no one can receive gifts from another. Whatever is necessary they have, they receive it from the community, and the magistrate takes care that no one receives more than he deserves. Yet nothing necessary is denied to anyone. Friendship is recognized among them in war, in infirmity, in the art contests, by which means they aid one another mutually by teaching. Sometimes they improve themselves mutually with praises, with conversation, with actions, and out of the things they need. All those of the same age call one another brothers. They call all over twenty-two years of age, fathers; those that are less than twenty-two are named sons. Moreover, the magistrates govern well, so that no one in the fraternity can do injury to another.

G.M. And how?

Capt. As many names of virtues as there are among us, so many magistrates there are among them. There is a magistrate who is named Magnanimity, another Fortitude, a third Chastity, a fourth Liberality, a fifth Criminal and Civil Justice, a sixth Comfort, a seventh Truth, an eighth Kindness, a tenth Gratitude, an eleventh Cheerfulness, a twelfth Exercise, a thirteenth Sobriety, etc. They are elected to duties of that kind, each one to that duty for excellence in which he is known from boyhood to be most suitable. Wherefore among them neither robbery nor clever murders, nor lewdness, incest, adultery, or other crimes of which we accuse one another, can be found. They accuse themselves of ingratitude and malignity when anyone denies a lawful satisfaction to another of indolence, of sadness, of anger, of scurrility, of slander, and of lying, which curseful thing they thoroughly hate. Accused persons

undergoing punishment are deprived of the common table, and other honors, until the judge thinks that they agree with their correction.

G.M. Tell me the manner in which the magistrates are chosen.

Capt. You would not rightly understand this, unless you first learned their manner of living. That you may know, then, men and women wear the same kind of garment, suited for war. The women wear the toga below the knee, but the men above; and both sexes are instructed in all the arts together. When this has been done as a start, and before their third year, the boys learn the language and the alphabet on the walls by walking round them. They have four leaders, and four elders, the first to direct them, the second to teach them, and these are men approved beyond all others. After some time they exercise themselves with gymnastics, running, quoits, and other games, by means of which all their muscles are strengthened alike. Their feet are always bare, and so are their heads as far as the seventh ring. Afterward they lead them to the offices of the trades, such as shoemaking, cooking, metal-working, carpentry, painting, etc. In order to find out the bent of the genius of each one, after their seventh year, when they have already gone through the mathematics on the walls, they take them to the readings of all the sciences; there are four lectures at each reading, and in the course of four hours the four in their order explain everything.

For some take physical exercise or busy themselves with public services or functions, others apply themselves to reading. Leaving these studies all are devoted to the more abstruse subjects, to mathematics, to medicine, and to other sciences. There are continual debate and studied argument among them, and after a time they become magistrates of those sciences or mechanical arts in which they are the most proficient; for everyone follows the opinion of his leader and judge, and goes out to the plains to the works of the field, and for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the pasturage of the dumb animals. And they consider him the more noble and renowned who has dedicated himself to the study of the most arts and knows how to practise them wisely. Wherefore they laugh at us in that we consider our workmen ignoble, and hold those to be noble who have mastered no pursuit, but live in ease and are so many slaves given over to their own pleasure and lasciviousness; and thus, as it were, from a school of vices so many idle and wicked fellows go forth for the ruin of the State.

The rest of the officials, however, are chosen by the four chiefs, Hoh, Pon, Sin and Mor, and by the teachers of that art over which they are fit to preside. And these teachers know well who is most suited for rule. Certain men are proposed by the magistrates in council, they themselves not seeking to become candidates, and he opposes who knows anything against those brought forward for election, or, if not, speaks in favor of them. But no one attains to the dignity of Hoh except him who knows the histories of the nations, and their customs and sacrifices and laws, and their form of government, whether a republic or a monarchy. He must also know the names of the lawgivers and the inventors in science, and the laws and the history of the earth and the heavenly bodies. They think it also necessary that he should understand all the mechanical arts, the physical sciences, astrology and mathematics. Nearly every two days they teach our mechanical art. They are not allowed to overwork themselves, but frequent practice and the paintings render learning easy to them. Not too much care is given to the cultivation of languages, as they have a goodly number of interpreters who are grammarians in the State. But beyond everything else it is necessary that Hoh should understand metaphysics and theology; that he should know thoroughly the derivations, foundations, and demonstrations of all the arts and sciences; the likeness and difference of things; necessity, fate, and the harmonies of the universe; power, wisdom, and the love of things and of God; the stages of life and its symbols; everything relating to the heavens, the earth, and the sea; and the ideas of God, as much as mortal man can know of him. He must also be well read in the prophets and in astrology. And thus they know long beforehand who will be Hoh. He is not chosen to so great a dignity unless he has attained his thirty-fifth year. And this office is perpetual, because it is not known who may be too wise for it or who too skilled in ruling.

G.M. Who indeed can be so wise? If even anyone has a knowledge of the sciences it seems that he must be unskilled in ruling.

Capt. This very question I asked them and they replied thus: "We, indeed, are more certain that such a very learned man has the knowledge of governing, than you who place ignorant persons in authority, and consider them suitable merely because they have sprung from rulers or have been chosen by a powerful faction. But our Hoh, a man really the most capable to rule, is for all that never cruel nor wicked, nor a tyrant, inasmuch as he possesses so much wisdom. This, moreover, is not unknown to you, that the same argument cannot apply among you, when you consider that man the most learned who knows most of grammar, or logic, or of Aristotle or any other author. For such knowledge as this of yours much servile labor and memory work are required, so that a man is rendered unskilful, since he has contemplated nothing but the words of books and has given his mind with useless result to the consideration of the dead signs of things. Hence he knows not in what way God rules the universe, nor the ways and customs of nature and the nations. Wherefore he is not equal to our Hoh. For that one cannot know so many arts and sciences thoroughly, who is not esteemed for skilled ingenuity, very apt at all things, and therefore at ruling especially. This also is plain to us that he who knows only one science, does not really know either that or the others,

and he who is suited for only one science and has gathered his knowledge from books, is unlearned and unskilled. But this is not the case with intellects prompt and expert in every branch of knowledge and suitable for the consideration of natural objects, as it is necessary that our Hoh should be. Besides in our State the sciences are taught with a facility (as you have seen) by which more scholars are turned out by us in one year than by you in ten, or even fifteen. Make trial, I pray you, of these boys."

In this matter I was struck with astonishment at their truthful discourse and at the trial of their boys, who did not understand my language well. Indeed it is necessary that three of them should be skilled in our tongue, three in Arabic, three in Polish, and three in each of the other languages, and no recreation is allowed them unless they become more learned. For that they go out to the plain for the sake of running about and hurling arrows and lances, and of firing harquebuses, and for the sake of hunting the wild animals and getting a knowledge of plants and stones, and agriculture and pasturage; sometimes the band of boys does one thing, sometimes another.

They do not consider it necessary that the three rulers assisting Hoh should know other than the arts having reference to their rule, and so they have only a historical knowledge of the arts which are common to all. But their own they know well, to which certainly one is dedicated more than another. Thus Power is the most learned in the equestrian art, in marshalling the army, in the marking out of camps, in the manufacture of every kind of weapon and of warlike machines, in planning stratagems, and in every affair of a military nature. And for these reasons, they consider it necessary that these chiefs should have been philosophers, historians, politicians, and physicists.

Concerning the other two triumvirs, understand remarks similar to those I have made about Power.

G.M. I really wish that you would recount all their public duties, and would distinguish between them, and also that you would tell clearly how they are all taught in common.

Capt. They have dwellings in common and dormitories, and couches and other necessities. But at the end of every six months they are separated by the masters. Some shall sleep in this ring, some in another; some in the first apartment, and some in the second; and these apartments are marked by means of the alphabet on the lintel. There are occupations, mechanical and theoretical, common to both men and women, with this difference, that the occupations which require more hard work, and walking a long distance, are practised by men, such as ploughing, sowing, gathering the fruits, working at the threshing-floor, and perchance at the vintage. But it is customary to choose women for milking the cows and for making cheese. In like manner, they go to the gardens near to the outskirts of the city both for collecting the plants and for cultivating them. In fact, all sedentary and stationary pursuits are practised by the women, such as weaving, spinning, sewing, cutting the hair, shaving, dispensing medicines, and making all kinds of garments. They are, however, excluded from working in wood and the manufacture of arms. If a woman is fit to paint, she is not prevented from doing so; nevertheless, music is given over to the women alone, because they please the more, and of a truth to boys also. But the women have not the practise of the drum and the horn.

And they prepare their feasts and arrange the tables in the following manner. It is the peculiar work of the boys and girls under twenty to wait at the tables. In every ring there are suitable kitchens, barns, and stores of utensils for eating and drinking, and over every department an old man and an old woman preside. These two have at once the command of those who serve, and the power of chastising, or causing to be chastised, those who are negligent or disobedient; and they also examine and mark each one, both male and female, who excels in his or her duties.

All the young people wait upon the older ones who have passed the age of forty, and in the evening when they go to sleep the master and mistress command that those should be sent to work in the morning, upon whom in succession the duty falls, one or two to separate apartments. The young people, however, wait upon one another, and that alas! with some unwillingness. They have first and second tables, and on both sides there are seats. On one side sit the women, on the other the men; and as in the refectories of the monks, there is no noise. While they are eating a young man reads a book from a platform, intoning distinctly and sonorously, and often the magistrates question them upon the more important parts of the reading. And truly it is pleasant to observe in what manner these young people, so beautiful and clothed in garments so suitable, attend to them, and to see at the same time so many friends, brothers, sons, fathers, and mothers all in their turn living together with so much honesty, propriety, and love. So each one is given a napkin, a plate, fish, and a dish of food. It is the duty of the medical officers to tell the cooks what repasts shall be prepared on each day, and what food for the old, what for the young, and what for the sick. The magistrates receive the full-grown and fatter portion, and they from their share always distribute something to the boys at the table who have shown themselves more studious in the morning at the lectures and debates concerning wisdom and arms. And this is held to be one of the most distinguished honors. For six days they ordain to sing with music at table. Only a few, however, sing; or there is one voice accompanying the lute and one for each other instrument. And when all alike in service join their hands, nothing is found to be wanting. The old men placed at the head of the cooking business and of the refectories of the servants praise the cleanliness of the streets, the houses, the vessels, the garments, the workshops, and the warehouses.

They wear white under-garments to which adheres a covering, which is at once coat and legging, without wrinkles. The borders of the fastenings are furnished with globular buttons, extended round and caught up here and there by chains. The coverings of the legs descend to the shoes and are continued even to the heels. Then they cover the feet with large socks, or, as it were, half-buskins fastened by buckles, over which they wear a half-boot, and besides, as I have already said, they are clothed with a toga. And so aptly fitting are the garments, that when the toga is destroyed, the different parts of the whole body are straightway discerned, no part being concealed. They change their clothes for different ones four times in the year, that is when the sun enters respectively the constellations Aries, Cancer, Libra, and Capricorn, and according to the circumstances and necessity as decided by the officer of health. The keepers of clothes for the different rings are wont to distribute them, and it is marvellous that they have at the same time as many garments as there is need for, some heavy and some slight, according to the weather. They all use white clothing, and this is washed in each month with lye or soap, as are also the workshops of the lower trades, the kitchens, the pantries the barns, the store-houses, the armories, the refectories, and the baths. Moreover, the clothes are washed at the pillars of the peristyles, and the water is brought down by means of canals which are continued as sewers. In every street of the different rings there are suitable fountains, which send forth their water by means of canals, the water being drawn up from nearly the bottom of the mountain by the sole movement of a cleverly contrived handle. There is water in fountains and in cisterns, whither the rain-water collected from the roofs of the houses is brought through pipes full of sand. They wash their bodies often, according as the doctor and master command. All the mechanical arts are practised under the peristyles, but the speculative are carried on above in the walking galleries and ramparts where are the more splendid paintings, but the more sacred ones are taught in the temple. In the halls and wings of the rings there are solar time-pieces and bells, and hands by which the hours and seasons are marked off.

G.M. Tell me about their children.

Capt. When their women have brought forth children, they suckle and rear them in temples set apart for all. They give milk for two years or more as the physician orders. After that time the weaned child is given into the charge of the mistresses, if it is a female, and to the masters, if it is a male. And then with other young children they are pleasantly instructed in the alphabet, and in the knowledge of the pictures, and in running, walking, and wrestling; also in the historical drawings, and in languages; and they are adorned with a suitable garment of different colors. After their sixth year they are taught natural science, and then the mechanical sciences. The men who are weak in intellect are sent to farms, and when they have become more proficient some of them are received into the State. And those of the same age and born under the same constellation are especially like one another in strength and in appearance, and hence arises much lasting concord in the State, these men honoring one another with mutual love and help. Names are given to them by Metaphysicus, and that not by chance, but designedly, and according to each one's peculiarity, as was the custom among the ancient Romans. Wherefore one is called Beautiful (Pulcher), another the Big-nosed (Naso), another the Fat-legged (Cranipes), another Crooked (Torvus), another Lean (Macer), and so on. But when they have become very skilled in their professions and done any great deed in war or in time of peace, a cognomen from art is given to them, such as Beautiful the Great Painter (Pulcher, Pictor Magnus), the Golden One (Aureus), the Excellent One (Excellens), or the Strong (Strenuus); or from their deeds, such as Naso the Brave (Nason Fortis), or the Cunning, or the Great, or Very Great Conqueror; or from the enemy anyone has overcome, Africanus, Asiaticus, Etruscus; or if anyone has overcome Manfred or Tortelius, he is called Macer Manfred or Tortelius, and so on. All these cognomens are added by the higher magistrates, and very often with a crown suitable to the deed or art, and with the flourish of music. For gold and silver are reckoned of little value among them except as material for their vessels and ornaments, which are common to all.

G.M. Tell me, I pray you, is there no jealousy among them or disappointment to that one who has not been elected to a magistracy, or to any other dignity to which he aspires?

Capt. Certainly not. For no one wants either necessities or luxuries. Moreover, the race is managed for the good of the commonwealth, and not of private individuals, and the magistrates must be obeyed. They deny what we hold -- viz., that it is natural to man to recognize his offspring and to educate them, and to use his wife and house and children as his own. For they say that children are bred for the preservation of the species and not for individual pleasure, as St. Thomas also asserts. Therefore the breeding of children has reference to the commonwealth, and not to individuals, except in so far as they are constituents of the commonwealth. And since individuals for the most part bring forth children wrongly and educate them wrongly, they consider that they remove destruction from the State, and therefore for this reason, with most sacred fear, they commit the education of the children, who, as it were, are the element of the republic, to the care of magistrates; for the safety of the community is not that of a few. And thus they distribute male and female breeders of the best natures according to philosophical rules. Plato thinks that this distribution ought to be made by lot, lest some men seeing that they are kept away from the beautiful women, should rise up with anger and hatred against the magistrates; and he thinks further that those who do not deserve

cohabitation with the more beautiful women, should be deceived while the lots are being led out of the city by the magistrates, so that at all times the women who are suitable should fall to their lot, not those whom they desire. This shrewdness, however, is not necessary among the inhabitants of the City of the Sun. For with them deformity is unknown. When the women are exercised they get a clear complexion, and become strong of limb, tall and agile, and with them beauty consists in tallness and strength. Therefore, if any woman dyes her face, so that it may become beautiful, or uses high-heeled boots so that she may appear tall, or garments with trains to cover her wooden shoes, she is condemned to capital punishment. But if the women should even desire them they have no facility for doing these things. For who indeed would give them this facility? Further, they assert that among us abuses of this kind arise from the leisure and sloth of women. By these means they lose their color and have pale complexions, and become feeble and small. For this reason they are without proper complexions, use high sandals, and become beautiful not from strength, but from slothful tenderness. And thus they ruin their own tempers and natures, and consequently those of their offspring. Furthermore, if at any time a man is taken captive with ardent love for a certain woman, the two are allowed to converse and joke together and to give one another garlands of flowers or leaves, and to make verses. But if the race is endangered, by no means is further union between them permitted. Moreover, the love born of eager desire is not known among them; only that born of friendship.

Domestic affairs and partnerships are of little account, because, excepting the sign of honor, each one receives what he is in need of. To the heroes and heroines of the republic, it is customary to give the pleasing gifts of honor, beautiful wreaths, sweet food, or splendid clothes, while they are feasting. In the daytime all use white garments within the city, but at night or outside the city they use red garments either of wool or silk. They hate black as they do dung, and therefore they dislike the Japanese, who are fond of black. Pride they consider the most execrable vice, and one who acts proudly is chastised with the most ruthless correction. Wherefore no one thinks it lowering to wait at table or to work in the kitchen or fields. All work they call discipline, and thus they say that it is honorable to go on foot, to do any act of nature, to see with the eye, and to speak with the tongue; and when there is need, they distinguish philosophically between tears and spittle.

Every man who, when he is told off to work, does his duty, is considered very honorable. It is not the custom to keep slaves. For they are enough, and more than enough, for themselves. But with us, alas! it is not so. In Naples there exist 70,000 souls, and out of these scarcely 10,000 or 15,000 do any work, and they are always lean from overwork and are getting weaker every day. The rest become a prey to idleness, avarice, ill-health, lasciviousness, usury, and other vices, and contaminate and corrupt very many families by holding them in servitude for their own use, by keeping them in poverty and slavishness, and by imparting to them their own vices. Therefore public slavery ruins them; useful works, in the field, in military service, and in arts, except those which are debasing, are not cultivated, the few who do practise them doing so with much aversion.

But in the City of the Sun, while duty and work are distributed among all, it only falls to each one to work for about four hours every day. The remaining hours are spent in learning joyously, in debating, in reading, in reciting, in writing, in walking, in exercising the mind and body, and with play. They allow no game which is played while sitting, neither the single die nor dice, nor chess, nor others like these. But they play with the ball, with the sack, with the hoop, with wrestling, with hurling at the stake. They say, moreover, that grinding poverty renders men worthless, cunning, sulky, thievish, insidious, vagabonds, liars, false witnesses, etc.; and that wealth makes them insolent, proud, ignorant, traitors, assumers of what they know not, deceivers, boasters, wanting in affection, slanderers, etc. But with them all the rich and poor together make up the community. They are rich because they want nothing, poor because they possess nothing; and consequently they are not slaves to circumstances, but circumstances serve them. And on this point they strongly recommend the religion of the Christians, and especially the life of the apostles.

G.M. This seems excellent and sacred, but the community of women is a thing too difficult to attain. The holy Roman Clement says that wives ought to be common in accordance with the apostolic institution, and praises Plato and Socrates, who thus teach, but the Glossary interprets this community with regard to obedience. And Tertullian agrees with the Glossary, that the first Christians had everything in common except wives.

Capt. These things I know little of. But this I saw among the inhabitants of the City of the Sun, that they did not make this exception. And they defend themselves by the opinion of Socrates, of Cato, of Plato, and of St. Clement; but, as you say, they misunderstand the opinions of these thinkers. And the inhabitants of the solar city ascribe this to their want of education, since they are by no means learned in philosophy. Nevertheless, they send abroad to discover the customs of nations, and the best of these they always adopt. Practice makes the women suitable for war and other duties. Thus they agree with Plato, in whom I have read these same things. The reasoning of our Cajetan does not convince me, and least of all that of Aristotle. This thing, however, existing among them is excellent and worthy of imitation -- viz., that no physical defect renders a man incapable of being serviceable except the decrepitude of old age, since even the deformed are useful for consultation. The lame serve as guards, watching with

the eyes which they possess. The blind card wool with their hands, separating the down from the hairs, with which latter they stuff the couches and sofas; those who are without the use of eyes and hands give the use of their ears or their voice for the convenience of the State, and if one has only one sense he uses it in the farms. And these cripples are well treated, and some become spies, telling the officers of the State what they have heard.

G.M. Tell me now, I pray you, of their military affairs. Then you may explain their arts, ways of life and sciences, and lastly their religion.

Capt. The triumvir, Power, has under him all the magistrates of arms, of artillery, of cavalry, of foot-soldiers, of architects, and of strategists; and the masters and many of the most excellent workmen obey the magistrates, the men of each art paying allegiance to their respective chiefs. Moreover, Power is at the head of all the professors of gymnastics, who teach military exercise, and who are prudent generals, advanced in age. By these the boys are trained after their twelfth year. Before this age, however, they have been accustomed to wrestling, running, throwing the weight, and other minor exercises, under inferior masters. But at twelve they are taught how to strike at the enemy, at horses and elephants, to handle the spear, the sword, the arrow, and the sling; to manage the horse, to advance and to retreat, to remain in order of battle, to help a comrade in arms, to anticipate the enemy by cunning, and to conquer.

The women also are taught these arts under their own magistrates and mistresses, so that they may be able if need be to render assistance to the males in battles near the city. They are taught to watch the fortifications lest at some time a hasty attack should suddenly be made. In this respect they praise the Spartans and Amazons. The women know well also how to let fly fiery balls, and how to make them from lead; how to throw stones from pinnacles and to go in the way of an attack. They are accustomed also to give up wine unmixed altogether, and that one is punished most severely who shows any fear.

The inhabitants of the City of the Sun do not fear death, because they all believe that the soul is immortal, and that when it has left the body it is associated with other spirits, wicked or good, according to the merits of this present life. Although they are partly followers of Brahma and Pythagoras, they do not believe in the transmigration of souls, except in some cases by a distinct decree of God. They do not abstain from injuring an enemy of the republic and of religion, who is unworthy of pity. During the second month the army is reviewed, and every day there is practice of arms, either in the cavalry plain or within the walls. Nor are they ever without lectures on the science of war. They take care that the accounts of Moses, of Joshua, of David, of Judas Maccabaeus, of Caesar, of Alexander, of Scipio, of Hannibal, and other great soldiers should be read. And then each one gives his own opinion as to whether these generals acted well or ill, usefully or honorably, and then the teacher answers and says who are right.

G.M. With whom do they wage war, and for what reasons, since they are so prosperous?

Capt. Wars might never occur, nevertheless they are exercised in military tactics and in hunting, lest perchance they should become effeminate and unprepared for any emergency. Besides, there are four kingdoms in the island, which are very envious of their prosperity, for this reason that the people desire to live after the manner of the inhabitants of the City of the Sun, and to be under their rule rather than that of their own kings. Wherefore the State often makes war upon these because, being neighbors, they are usurpers and live impiously, since they have not an object of worship and do not observe the religion of other nations or of the Brahmins. And other nations of India, to which formerly they were subject, rise up as it were in rebellion, as also do the Taprobanese, whom they wanted to join them at first. The warriors of the City of the Sun, however, are always the victors. As soon as they suffered from insult or disgrace or plunder, or when their allies have been harassed, or a people have been oppressed by a tyrant of the State (for they are always the advocates of liberty), they go immediately to the Council for deliberation. After they have knelt in the presence of God, that he might inspire their consultation, they proceed to examine the merits of the business, and thus war is decided on. Immediately after, a priest, whom they call Forensic, is sent away. He demands from the enemy the restitution of the plunder, asks that the allies should be freed from oppression, or that the tyrant should be deposed. If they deny these things war is declared by invoking the vengeance of God -- the God of Sabaoth -- for destruction of those who maintain an unjust cause. But if the enemy refuse to reply, the priest gives him the space of one hour for his answer, if he is a king, but three if it is a republic, so that they cannot escape giving a response. And in this manner is war undertaken against the insolent enemies of natural rights and of religion. When war has been declared, the deputy of Power performs everything, but Power, like the Roman dictator, plans and wills everything, so that hurtful tardiness may be avoided. And when anything of great moment arises he consults Hoh and Wisdom and Love.

Before this, however, the occasion of war and the justice of making an expedition are declared by a herald in the great Council. All from twenty years and upward are admitted to this Council, and thus the necessities are agreed upon. All kinds of weapons stand in the armories, and these they use often in sham fights. The exterior walls of each ring are full of guns prepared by their labors, and they have other engines for hurling which are called cannons, and which they take into battle upon mules and asses and carriages. When they have arrived in an open plain they

enclose in the middle the provisions, engines of war, chariots, ladders, and machines, and all fight courageously. Then each one returns to the standards, and the enemy thinking that they are giving and preparing to flee, are deceived and relax their order: then the warriors of the City of the Sun, wheeling into wings and columns on each side, regain their breath and strength, and ordering the artillery to discharge their bullets they resume the fight against a disorganized host. And they observe many ruses of this kind. They overcome all mortals with their stratagems and engines. Their camp is fortified after the manner of the Romans. They pitch their tents and fortify with wall and ditch with wonderful quickness. The masters of works, of engines and hurling machines, stand ready, and the soldiers understand the use of the spade and the axe.

Five, eight, or ten leaders learned in the order of battle and in strategy consult together concerning the business of war, and command their bands after consultation. It is their wont to take out with them a body of boys, armed and on horses, so that they may learn to fight, just as the whelps of lions and wolves are accustomed to blood. And these in time of danger betake themselves to a place of safety, along with many armed women. After the battle the women and boys soothe and relieve the pain of the warriors, and wait upon them and encourage them with embraces and pleasant words. How wonderful a help is this! For the soldiers, in order that they may acquit themselves as sturdy men in the eyes of their wives and offspring, endure hardships, and so love makes them conquerors. He who in the fight first scales the enemy's walls receives after the battle of a crown of grass, as a token of honor, and at the presentation the women and boys applaud loudly; that one who affords aid to an ally gets a civic crown of oak-leaves; he who kills a tyrant dedicates his arms in the temple and receives from Hoh the cognomen of his deed, and other warriors obtain other kinds of crowns.

Every horse-soldier carries a spear and two strongly tempered pistols, narrow at the mouth, hanging from his saddle. And to get the barrels of their pistols narrow they pierce the metal which they intend to convert into arms. Further, every cavalry soldier has a sword and a dagger. But the rest, who form the light-armed troops, carry a metal cudgel. For if the foe cannot pierce their metal for pistols and cannot make swords, they attack him with clubs, shatter and overthrow him. Two chains of six spans length hang from the club, and at the end of these are iron balls, and when these are aimed at the enemy they surround his neck and drag him to the ground; and in order that they may be able to use the club more easily, they do not hold the reins with their hands, but use them by means of the feet. If perchance the reins are interchanged above the trappings of the saddle, the ends are fastened to the stirrups with buckles, and not to the feet. And the stirrups have an arrangement for swift movement of the bridle, so that they draw in or let out the rein with marvellous celerity. With the right foot they turn the horse to the left, and with the left to the right. This secret, moreover, is not known to the Tartars. For, although they govern the reins with their feet, they are ignorant nevertheless of turning them and drawing them in and letting them out by means of the block of the stirrups. The light-armed cavalry with them are the first to engage in battle, then the men forming the phalanx with their spears, then the archers for whose services a great price is paid, and who are accustomed to fight in lines crossing one another as the threads of cloth, some rushing forward in their turn and others receding. They have a band of lancers strengthening the line of battle, but they make trial of the swords only at the end.

After the battle they celebrate the military triumphs after the manner of the Romans, and even in a more magnificent way. Prayers by the way of thank-offerings are made to God, and then the general presents himself in the temple, and the deeds, good and bad, are related by the poet or historian, who according to custom was with the expedition. And the greatest chief, Hoh, crowns the general with laurel and distributes little gifts and honors to all the valorous soldiers, who are for some days free from public duties. But this exemption from work is by no means pleasing to them, since they know not what it is to be at leisure, and so they help their companions. On the other hand, they who have been conquered through their own fault, or have lost the victory, are blamed; and they who were the first to take to flight are in no way worthy to escape death, unless when the whole army asks their lives, and each one takes upon himself a part of their punishment. But this indulgence is rarely granted, except when there are good reasons favoring it. But he who did not bear help to an ally or friend is beaten with rods. That one who did not obey orders is given to the beasts, in an enclosure, to be devoured, and a staff is put in his hand, and if he should conquer the lions and the bears that are there, which is almost impossible, he is received into favor again. The conquered States or those willingly delivered up to them, forthwith have all things in common, and receive a garrison and magistrates from the City of the Sun, and by degrees they are accustomed to the ways of the city, the mistress of all, to which they even send their sons to be taught without contributing anything for expense.

It would be too great trouble to tell you about the spies and their master, and about the guards and laws and ceremonies, both within and without the State, which you can of yourself imagine. Since from childhood they are chosen according to their inclination and the star under which they were born, therefore each one working according to his natural propensity does his duty well and pleasantly, because naturally. The same things I may say concerning strategy and the other functions.

There are guards in the city by day and by night, and they are placed at the four gates, and outside the walls of the seventh ring, above the breastworks and towers and inside mounds. These places are guarded in the day by women, in the night by men. And lest the guard should become weary of watching, and in case of a surprise, they change them every three hours, as is the custom with our soldiers. At sunset, when the drum and symphonia sound, the armed guards are distributed. Cavalry and infantry make use of hunting as the symbol of war and practise games and hold festivities in the plains. Then the music strikes up, and freely they pardon the offences and faults of the enemy, and after the victories they are kind to them, if it has been decreed that they should destroy the walls of the enemy's city and take their lives. All these things are done on the same day as the victory, and afterward they never cease to load the conquered with favors, for they say that there ought to be no fighting, except when the conquerors give up the conquered, not when they kill them. If there is a dispute among them concerning injury or any other matter (for they themselves scarcely ever contend except in matters of honor), the chief and his magistrates chastise the accused one secretly, if he has done harm in deeds after he has been first angry. If they wait until the time of the battle for the verbal decision, they must give vent to their anger against the enemy, and he who in battle shows the most daring deeds is considered to have defended the better and truer cause in the struggle, and the other yields, and they are punished justly. Nevertheless, they are not allowed to come to single combat, since right is maintained by the tribunal, and because the unjust cause is often apparent when the more just succumbs, and he who professes to be the better man shows this in public fight.

G.M. This is worth while, so that factions should not be cherished for the harm of the fatherland, and so that civil wars might not occur, for by means of these a tyrant often arises, as the examples of Rome and Athens show. Now, I pray you, tell me of their works and matter connected therewith.

Capt. I believe that you have already heard about their military affairs and about their agricultural and pastoral life, and in what way these are common to them, and how they honor with the first grade of nobility whoever is considered to have knowledge of these. They who are skilful in more arts than these they consider still nobler, and they set that one apart for teaching the art in which he is most skilful. The occupations which require the most labor, such as working in metals and building, are the most praiseworthy among them. No one declines to go to these occupations, for the reason that from the beginning their propensities are well known, and among them, on account of the distribution of labor, no one does work harmful to him, but only that which is necessary for him. The occupations entailing less labor belong to the women. All of them are expected to know how to swim, and for this reason ponds are dug outside the walls of the city and within them near to the fountains.

Commerce is of little use to them, but they know the value of money, and they count for the use of their ambassadors and explorers, so that with it they may have the means of living. They receive merchants into their States from the different countries of the world, and these buy the superfluous goods of the city. The people of the City of the Sun refuse to take money, but in importing they accept in exchange those things of which they are in need, and sometimes they buy with money; and the young people in the City of the Sun are much amused when they see that for a small price they receive so many things in exchange. The old men, however, do not laugh. They are unwilling that the State should be corrupted by the vicious customs of slaves and foreigners. Therefore they do business at the gates, and sell those whom they have taken in war or keep them for digging ditches and other hard work without the city, and for this reason they always send four bands of soldiers to take care of the fields, and with them there are the laborers. They go out of the four gates from which roads with walls on both sides of them lead to the sea, so that goods might easily be carried over them and foreigners might not meet with difficulty on their way. To strangers they are kind and polite; they keep them for three days at the public expense; after they have first washed their feet, they show them their city and its customs, and they honor them with a seat at the Council and public table, and there are men whose duty it is to take care of and guard the guests. But if strangers should wish to become citizens of their State, they try them first for a month on a farm, and for another month in the city, then they decide concerning them, and admit them with certain ceremonies and oaths.

Agriculture is much followed among them; there is not a span of earth without cultivation, and they observe the winds and propitious stars. With the exception of a few left in the city all go out armed, and with flags and drums and trumpets sounding, to the fields, for the purposes of ploughing, sowing, digging, hoeing, reaping, gathering fruit and grapes; and they set in order everything, and do their work in a very few hours and with much care. They use wagons fitted with sails which are borne along by the wind even when it is contrary, by the marvellous contrivance of wheels within wheels.

And when there is no wind a beast draws along a huge cart, which is a grand sight.

The guardians of the land move about in the meantime, armed and always in their proper turn. They do not use dung and filth for manuring the fields, thinking that the fruit contracts something of their rottenness, and when eaten gives a short and poor subsistence, as women who are beautiful with rouge and from want of exercise bring forth feeble offspring. Wherefore they do not as it were paint the earth, but dig it up well and use secret remedies, so that fruit is

borne quickly and multiplies, and is not destroyed. They have a book for this work, which they call the Georgics. As much of the land as is necessary is cultivated, and the rest is used for the pasturage of cattle.

The excellent occupation of breeding and rearing horses, oxen, sheep, dogs, and all kinds of domestic and tame animals is in the highest esteem among them as it was in the time of Abraham. And the animals are led so to pair that they may be able to breed well.

Fine pictures of oxen, horses, sheep, and other animals are placed before them. They do not turn out horses with mares to feed, but at the proper time they bring them together in an enclosure of the stables in their fields. And this is done when they observe that the constellation Archer is in favorable conjunction with Mars and Jupiter. For the oxen they observe the Bull, for the sheep the Ram, and so on in accordance with art. Under the Pleiades they keep a drove of hens and ducks and geese, which are driven out by the women to feed near the city. The women only do this when it is a pleasure to them. There are also places enclosed, where they make cheese, butter, and milk-food. They also keep capons, fruit, and other things, and for all these matters there is a book which they call the Bucolics. They have an abundance of all things, since everyone likes to be industrious, their labors being slight and profitable. They are docile, and that one among them who is head of the rest in duties of this kind they call king. For they say that this is the proper name of the leaders, and it does not belong to ignorant persons. It is wonderful to see how men and women march together collectively, and always in obedience to the voice of the king. Nor do they regard him with loathing as we do, for they know that although he is greater than themselves, he is for all that their father and brother. They keep groves and woods for wild animals, and they often hunt.

The science of navigation is considered very dignified by them, and they possess rafts and triremes, which go over the waters without rowers or the force of the wind, but by a marvellous contrivance. And other vessels they have which are moved by the winds. They have a correct knowledge of the stars, and of the ebb and flow of the tide. They navigate for the sake of becoming acquainted with nations and different countries and things. They injure nobody, and they do not put up with injury, and they never go to battle unless when provoked. They assert that the whole earth will in time come to live in accordance with their customs, and consequently they always find out whether there be a nation whose manner of living is better and more approved than the rest. They admire the Christian institutions and look for a realization of the apostolic life in vogue among themselves and in us. There are treaties between them and the Chinese and many other nations, both insular and continental, such as Siam and Calicut, which they are only just able to explore. Furthermore, they have artificial fires, battles on sea and land, and many strategic secrets. Therefore they are nearly always victorious.

G.M. Now it would be very pleasant to learn with what foods and drinks they are nourished, and in what way and for how long they live.

Capt. Their food consists of flesh, butter, honey, cheese, garden herbs, and vegetables of various kinds. They were unwilling at first to slay animals, because it seemed cruel; but thinking afterward that it was also cruel to destroy herbs which have a share of sensitive feeling, they saw that they would perish from hunger unless they did an unjustifiable action for the sake of justifiable ones, and so now they all eat meat. Nevertheless, they do not kill willingly useful animals, such as oxen and horses. They observe the difference between useful and harmful foods, and for this they employ the science of medicine. They always change their food. First they eat flesh, then fish, then afterward they go back to flesh, and nature is never incommoded or weakened. The old people use the more digestible kind of food, and take three meals a day, eating only a little. But the general community eat twice, and the boys four times, that they may satisfy nature. The length of their lives is generally 100 years, but often they reach 200.

As regards drinking, they are extremely moderate. Wine is never given to young people until they are ten years old, unless the state of their health demands it. After their tenth year they take it diluted with water, and so do the women, but the old men of fifty and upward use little or no water. They eat the most healthy things, according to the time of the year.

They think nothing harmful which is brought forth by God, except when there has been abuse by taking too much. And therefore in the summer they feed on fruits, because they are moist and juicy and cool, and counteract the heat and dryness. In the winter they feed on dry articles, and in the autumn they eat grapes, since they are given by God to remove melancholy and sadness; and they also make use of scents to a great degree. In the morning, when they have all risen they comb their hair and wash their faces and hands with cold water. Then they chew thyme or rock-parsley or fennel, or rub their hands with these plants. The old men make incense, and with their faces to the east repeat the short prayer which Jesus Christ taught us. After this they go to wait upon the old men, some go to the dance, and others to the duties of the State. Later on they meet at the early lectures, then in the temple, then for bodily exercise. Then for a little while they sit down to rest, and at length they go to dinner.

Among them there is never gout in the hands or feet, nor catarrh, nor sciatica, nor grievous colics, nor flatulency, nor hard breathing. For these diseases are caused by indigestion and flatulency, and by frugality and exercise they

remove every humor and spasm. Therefore it is unseemly in the extreme to be seen vomiting or spitting, since they say that this is a sign either of little exercise, or of ignoble sloth, or of drunkenness, or gluttony. They suffer rather from swellings or from the dry spasm, which they relieve with plenty of good and juicy food. They heal fevers with pleasant baths and with milk-food, and with a pleasant habitation in the country and by gradual exercise. Unclean diseases cannot be prevalent with them because they often clean their bodies by bathing in wine, and soothe them with aromatic oil, and by the sweat of exercise they diffuse the poisonous vapor which corrupts the blood and the marrow. They do suffer a little from consumption, because they cannot perspire at the breast, but they never have asthma, for the humid nature of which a heavy man is required. They cure hot fevers with cold potations of water, but slight ones with sweet smells, with cheese-bread or sleep, with music or dancing. Tertiary fevers are cured by bleeding, by rhubarb or by a similar drawing remedy, or by water soaked in the roots of plants, with purgative and sharp-tasting qualities. But it is rarely that they take purgative medicines. Fevers occurring every fourth day are cured easily by suddenly startling the unprepared patients, and by means of herbs producing effects opposite to the humors of this fever. All these secrets they told me in opposition to their own wishes. They take more diligent pains to cure the lasting fevers, which they fear more, and they strive to counteract these by the observation of stars and of plants, and by prayers to God. Fevers recurring every fifth, sixth, eighth or more days, you never find whenever heavy humors are wanting.

They use baths, and moreover they have warm ones according to the Roman custom, and they make use also of olive oil. They have found out, too, a great many secret cures for the preservation of cleanliness and health. And in other ways they labor to cure the epilepsy, with which they are often troubled.

G.M. A sign this disease is of wonderful cleverness, for from it Hercules, Scotus, Socrates, Callimachus, and Mahomet have suffered.

Capt. They cure by means of prayers to heaven, by strengthening the head, by acids, by planned gymnastics, and with fat cheese-bread sprinkled with the flour of wheaten corn. They are very skilled in making dishes, and in them they put spice, honey, butter, and many highly strengthening spices, and they temper their richness with acids, so that they never vomit. They do not drink ice-cold drinks nor artificial hot drinks, as the Chinese do; for they are not without aid against the humors of the body, on account of the help they get from the natural heat of the water; but they strengthen it with crushed garlic, with vinegar, with wild thyme, with mint, and with basil, in the summer or in time of special heaviness. They know also a secret for renovating life after about the seventieth year, and for ridding it of affliction, and this they do by a pleasing and indeed wonderful art.

G.M. Thus far you have said nothing concerning their sciences and magistrates.

Capt. Undoubtedly I have. But since you are so curious I will add more. Both when it is new moon and full moon they call a council after a sacrifice. To this all from twenty years upward are admitted, and each one is asked separately to say what is wanting in the State, and which of the magistrates have discharged their duties rightly and which wrongly. Then after eight days all the magistrates assemble, to wit, Hoh first, and with him Power, Wisdom, and Love. Each one of the three last has three magistrates under him, making in all thirteen, and they consider the affairs of the arts pertaining to each one of them: Power, of war; Wisdom, of the sciences; Love, of food, clothing, education, and breeding. The masters of all the bands, who are captains of tens, of fifties, of hundreds, also assemble, the women first and then the men. They argue about those things which are for the welfare of the State, and they choose the magistrates from among those who have already been named in the great Council. In this manner they assemble daily, Hoh and his three princes, and they correct, confirm, and execute the matters passing to them, as decisions in the elections; other necessary questions they provide of themselves. They do not use lots unless when they are altogether doubtful how to decide. The eight magistrates under Hoh, Power, Wisdom, and Love are changed according to the wish of the people, but the first four are never changed, unless they, taking counsel with themselves, give up the dignity of one to another, whom among them they know to be wiser, more renowned, and more nearly perfect. And then they are obedient and honorable, since they yield willingly to the wiser man and are taught by him. This, however, rarely happens. The principals of the sciences, except Metaphysic, who is Hoh himself, and is, as it were, the architect of all science, having rule over all, are attached to Wisdom. Hoh is ashamed to be ignorant of any possible thing. Under Wisdom therefore are Grammar, Logic, Physics, Medicine, Astrology, Astronomy, Geometry, Cosmography, Music, Perspective, Arithmetic, Poetry, Rhetoric, Painting, Sculpture. Under the triumvir Love are Breeding, Agriculture, Education, Medicine, Clothing, Pasturage, Coining.

G.M. What about their judges?

Capt. This is the point I was just thinking of explaining. Everyone is judged by the first master of his trade, and thus all the head artificers are judges. They punish with exile, with flogging, with blame, with deprivation of the common table, with exclusion from the church and from the company of women. When there is a case in which great injury has been done, it is punished with death, and they repay an eye with an eye, a nose for a nose, a tooth for a tooth, and so on, according to the law of retaliation. If the offence is wilful the Council decides. When there is strife and it

takes place undesignedly, the sentence is mitigated; nevertheless, not by the judge but by the triumvirate, from whom even it may be referred to Hoh, not on account of justice but of mercy, for Hoh is able to pardon. They have no prisons, except one tower for shutting up rebellious enemies, and there is no written statement of a case, which we commonly call a lawsuit. But the accusation and witnesses are produced in the presence of the judge and Power; the accused person makes his defence, and he is immediately acquitted or condemned by the judge; and if he appeals to the triumvirate, on the following day he is acquitted or condemned. On the third day he is dismissed through the mercy and clemency of Hoh, or receives the inviolable rigor of his sentence. An accused person is reconciled to his accuser and to his witnesses, as it were, with the medicine of his complaint, that is, with embracing and kissing. No one is killed or stoned unless by the hands of the people, the accuser and the witnesses beginning first. For they have no executioners and lictors, lest the State should sink into ruin. The choice of death is given to the rest of the people, who enclose the lifeless remains in little bags and burn them by the application of fire, while exhorters are present for the purpose of advising concerning a good death. Nevertheless, the whole nation laments and beseeches God that his anger may be appeased, being in grief that it should, as it were, have to cut off a rotten member of the State. Certain officers talk to and convince the accused man by means of arguments until he himself acquiesces in the sentence of death passed upon him, or else he does not die. But if a crime has been committed against the liberty of the republic, or against God, or against the supreme magistrates, there is immediate censure without pity. These only are punished with death. He who is about to die is compelled to state in the presence of the people and with religious scrupulousness the reasons for which he does not deserve death, and also the sins of the others who ought to die instead of him, and further the mistakes of the magistrates. If, moreover, it should seem right to the person thus asserting, he must say why the accused ones are deserving of less punishment than he. And if by his arguments he gains the victory he is sent into exile, and appeases the State by means of prayers and sacrifices and good life ensuing. They do not torture those named by the accused person, but they warn them. Sins of frailty and ignorance are punished only with blaming, and with compulsory continuation as learners under the law and discipline of those sciences or arts against which they have sinned. And all these things they have mutually among themselves, since they seem to be in very truth members of the same body, and one of another.

This further I would have you know, that if a transgressor, without waiting to be accused, goes of his own accord before a magistrate, accusing himself and seeking to make amends, that one is liberated from the punishment of a secret crime, and since he has not been accused of such a crime, his punishment is changed into another. They take special care that no one should invent slander, and if this should happen they meet the offence with the punishment of retaliation. Since they always walk about and work in crowds, five witnesses are required for the conviction of a transgressor. If the case is otherwise, after having threatened him, he is released after he has sworn an oath as the warrant of good conduct. Or if he is accused a second or third time, his increased punishment rests on the testimony of three or two witnesses. They have but few laws, and these short and plain, and written upon a flat table and hanging to the doors of the temple, that is between the columns. And on single columns can be seen the essences of things described in the very terse style of Metaphysic -- viz., the essences of God, of the angels, of the world, of the stars, of man, of fate, of virtue, all done with great wisdom. The definitions of all the virtues are also delineated here, and here is the tribunal, where the judges of all the virtues have their seat. The definition of a certain virtue is written under that column where the judges for the aforesaid virtue sit, and when a judge gives judgment he sits and speaks thus: O son, thou hast sinned against this sacred definition of beneficence, or of magnanimity, or of another virtue, as the case may be. And after discussion the judge legally condemns him to the punishment for the crime of which he is accused -- viz., for injury, for despondency, for pride, for ingratitude, for sloth, etc. But the sentences are certain and true correctives, savoring more of clemency than of actual punishment.

G.M. Now you ought to tell me about their priests, their sacrifices, their religion, and their belief.

Capt. The chief priest is Hoh, and it is the duty of all the superior magistrates to pardon sins. Therefore the whole State by secret confession, which we also use, tell their sins to the magistrates, who at once purge their souls and teach those that are inimical to the people. Then the sacred magistrates themselves confess their own sinfulness to the three supreme chiefs, and together they confess the faults of one another, though no special one is named, and they confess especially the heavier faults and those harmful to the State. At length the triumvirs confess their sinfulness to Hoh himself, who forthwith recognizes the kinds of sins that are harmful to the State, and succors with timely remedies. Then he offers sacrifices and prayers to God. And before this he confesses the sins of the whole people, in the presence of God, and publicly in the temple, above the altar, as often as it had been necessary that the fault should be corrected. Nevertheless, no transgressor is spoken of by his name. In this manner he absolves the people by advising them that they should beware of sins of the aforesaid kind. Afterward he offers sacrifice to God, that he should pardon the State and absolve it of its sins, and to teach and defend it. Once in every year the chief priests of each separate subordinate State confess their sins in the presence of Hoh. Thus he is not ignorant of the wrongdoings of the provinces, and forthwith he removes them with all human and heavenly remedies.

Sacrifice is conducted after the following manner: Hoh asks the people which one among them wishes to give himself as a sacrifice to God for the sake of his fellows. He is then placed upon the fourth table, with ceremonies and the offering up of prayers: the table is hung up in a wonderful manner by means of four ropes passing through four cords attached to firm pulley-blocks in the small dome of the temple. This done they cry to the God of mercy, that he may accept the offering, not of a beast as among the heathen, but of a human being. Then Hoh orders the ropes to be drawn and the sacrifice is pulled up above to the centre of the small dome, and there it dedicates itself with the most fervent supplications. Food is given to it through a window by the priests, who live around the dome, but it is allowed a very little to eat, until it has atoned for the sins of the State. There with prayer and fasting he cries to the God of heaven that he might accept its willing offering. And after twenty or thirty days, the anger of God being appeased, the sacrifice becomes a priest, or sometimes, though rarely, returns below by means of the outer way for the priests. Ever after, this man is treated with great benevolence and much honor, for the reason that he offered himself unto death for the sake of his country. But God does not require death.

The priests above twenty-four years of age offer praises from their places in the top of the temple. This they do in the middle of the night, at noon, in the morning and in the evening, to wit, four times a day they sing their chants in the presence of God. It is also their work to observe the stars and to note with the astrolabe their motions and influences upon human things, and to find out their powers. Thus they know in what part of the earth any change has been or will be, and at what time it has taken place, and they send to find whether the matter be as they have it. They make a note of predictions, true and false, so that they may be able from experience to predict most correctly. The priests, moreover, determine the hours for breeding and the days for sowing, reaping, and gathering the vintage, and are, as it were, the ambassadors and intercessors and connection between God and man. And it is from among them mostly that Hoh is elected. They write very learned treatises and search into the sciences. Below they never descend, unless for their dinner and supper, so that the essence of their heads do not descend to the stomachs and liver. Only very seldom, and that as a cure for the ills of solitude, do they have converse with women. On certain days Hoh goes up to them and deliberates with them concerning the matters which he has lately investigated for the benefit of the State and all the nations of the world.

In the temple beneath, one priest always stands near the altar praying for the people, and at the end of every hour another succeeds him, just as we are accustomed in solemn prayer to change every fourth hour. And this method of supplication they call perpetual prayer. After a meal they return thanks to God. Then they sing the deeds of the Christian, Jewish, and Gentile heroes, and of those of all other nations, and this is very delightful to them. Forsooth, no one is envious of another. They sing a hymn to Love, one to Wisdom, and one each to all the other virtues, and this they do under the direction of the ruler of each virtue. Each one takes the woman he loves most, and they dance for exercise with propriety and stateliness under the peristyles. The women wear their long hair all twisted together and collected into one knot on the crown of the head, but in rolling it they leave one curl. The men, however, have one curl only and the rest of their hair around the head is shaven off. Further, they wear a slight covering, and above this a round hat a little larger than the size of their head. In the fields they use caps, but at home each one wears a biretta, white, red, or another color according to his trade or occupation. Moreover, the magistrates use grander and more imposing-looking coverings for the head.

They hold great festivities when the sun enters the four cardinal points of the heavens, that is, when he enters Cancer, Libra, Capricorn, and Aries. On these occasions they have very learned, splendid, and, as it were, comic performances. They celebrate also every full and every new moon with a festival, as also they do the anniversaries of the founding of the city, and of the days when they have won victories or done any other great achievement. The celebrations take place with the music of female voices, with the noise of trumpets and drums, and the firing of salutations. The poets sing the praises of the most renowned leaders and the victories. Nevertheless, if any of them should deceive even by disparaging a foreign hero, he is punished. No one can exercise the function of a poet who invents that which is not true, and a license like this they think to be a pest of our world, for the reason that it puts a premium upon virtue and often assigns it to unworthy persons, either from fear of flattery, or ambition, or avarice. For the praise of no one is a statue erected until after his death; but while he is alive, who has found out new arts and very useful secrets, or who has rendered great service to the State either at home or on the battle-field, his name is written in the book of heroes. They do not bury dead bodies, but burn them, so that a plague may not arise from them, and so that they may be converted into fire, a very noble and powerful thing, which has its coming from the sun and returns to it. And for the above reasons no chance is given for idolatry. The statues and pictures of the heroes, however, are there, and the splendid women set apart to become mothers often look at them. Prayers are made from the State to the four horizontal corners of the world -- in the morning to the rising sun, then to the setting sun, then to the south, and lastly to the north; and in the contrary order in the evening, first to the setting sun, to the rising sun, to the north, and at length to the south. They repeat but one prayer, which asks for health of body and of mind, and happiness for themselves and all people, and they conclude it with the petition "As it seems best to God."

The public prayer for all is long, and it is poured forth to heaven. For this reason the altar is round and is divided crosswise by ways at right angles to one another. By these ways Hoh enters after he has repeated the four prayers, and he prays looking up to heaven. And then a great mystery is seen by them. The priestly vestments are of a beauty and meaning like to those of Aaron. They resemble nature and they surpass Art.

They divide the seasons according to the revolution of the sun, and not of the stars, and they observe yearly by how much time the one precedes the other. They hold that the sun approaches nearer and nearer, and therefore by ever-lessening circles reaches the tropics and the equator every year a little sooner. They measure months by the course of the moon, years by that of the sun. They praise Ptolemy, admire Copernicus, but place Aristarchus and Philolaus before him. They take great pains in endeavoring to understand the construction of the world, and whether or not it will perish, and at what time. They believe that the true oracle of Jesus Christ is by the signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, which signs do not thus appear to many of us foolish ones. Therefore they wait for the renewing of the age, and perchance for its end.

They say that it is very doubtful whether the world was made from nothing, or from the ruins of other worlds, or from chaos, but they certainly think that it was made, and did not exist from eternity. Therefore they disbelieve in Aristotle, whom they consider a logician and not a philosopher. From analogies, they can draw many arguments against the eternity of the world. The sun and the stars they, so to speak, regard as the living representatives and signs of God, as the temples and holy living altars, and they honor but do not worship them. Beyond all other things they venerate the sun, but they consider no created thing worthy the adoration of worship. This they give to God alone, and thus they serve Him, that they may not come into the power of a tyrant and fall into misery by undergoing punishment by creatures of revenge. They contemplate and know God under the image of the Sun, and they call it the sign of God, His face and living image, by means of which light, heat, life, and the making of all things good and bad proceed. Therefore they have built an altar like to the sun in shape, and the priests praise God in the sun and in the stars, as it were His altars, and in the heavens, His temple as it were; and they pray to good angels, who are, so to speak, the intercessors living in the stars, their strong abodes. For God long since set signs of their beauty in heaven, and of His glory in the sun. They say there is but one heaven, and that the planets move and rise of themselves when they approach the sun or are in conjunction with it.

They assert two principles of the physics of things below, namely, that the sun is the father, and the earth the mother; the air is an impure part of the heavens; all fire is derived from the sun. The sea is the sweat of earth, or the fluid of earth combusted, and fused within its bowels, but is the bond of union between air and earth, as the blood is of the spirit and flesh of animals. The world is a great animal, and we live within it as worms live within us. Therefore we do not belong to the system of stars, sun, and earth, but to God only; for in respect to them which seek only to amplify themselves, we are born and live by chance; but in respect to God, whose instruments we are, we are formed by prescience and design, and for a high end. Therefore we are bound to no father but God, and receive all things from Him. They hold as beyond question the immortality of souls, and that these associate with good angels after death, or with bad angels, according as they have likened themselves in this life to either. For all things seek their like. They differ little from us as to places of reward and punishment. They are in doubt whether there are other worlds beyond ours, and account it madness to say there is nothing. Nonentity is incompatible with the infinite entity of God. They lay down two principles of metaphysics, entity which is the highest God, and nothingness which is the defect of entity. Evil and sin come of the propensity to nothingness; the sin having its cause not efficient, but in deficiency. Deficiency is, they say, of power, wisdom, or will. Sin they place in the last of these three, because he who knows and has the power to do good is bound also to have the will, for will arises out of them. They worship God in trinity, saying God is the Supreme Power, whence proceeds the highest Wisdom, which is the same with God, and from these comes Love, which is both power and wisdom; but they do not distinguish persons by name, as in our Christian law, which has not been revealed to them. This religion, when its abuses have been removed, will be the future mistress of the world, as great theologians teach and hope. Therefore Spain found the New World (though its first discoverer, Columbus, greatest of heroes, was a Genoese), that all nations should be gathered under one law. We know not what we do, but God knows, whose instruments we are. They sought new regions for lust of gold and riches, but God works to a higher end. The sun strives to burn up the earth, not to produce plants and men, but God guides the battle to great issues. His the praise, to Him the glory!

G.M. Oh, if you knew what our astrologers say of the coming age, and of our age, that has in it more history within 100 years than all the world had in 4,000 years before! of the wonderful inventions of printing and guns, and the use of the magnet, and how it all comes of Mercury, Mars, the Moon, and the Scorpion!

Capt. Ah, well! God gives all in His good time. They astrologize too much.

[1] A pace was 1-9/25 yard, 1,000 paces making a mile

[End] .

Francis Bacon's New Atlantis

The *New Atlantis*, 1627, is essentially a utopia, in which Bacon outlines an ideal state. It has sometimes been interpreted as an elaborate allegory with hermetic (and even Rosicrucian) undertones. This text was prepared by Kirk Crady from scanner output provided by Internet Wiretap.

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NEW ATLANTIS

We sailed from Peru, where we had continued by the space of one whole year, for China and Japan, by the South Sea, taking with us victuals for twelve months; and had good winds from the east, though soft and weak, for five months' space and more. But then the wind came about, and settled in the west for many days, so as we could make little or no way, and were sometimes in purpose to turn back. But then again there arose strong and great winds from the south, with a point east; which carried us up, for all that we could do, toward the north: by which time our victuals failed us, though we had made good spare of them. So that finding ourselves, in the midst of the greatest wilderness of waters in the world, without victual, we gave ourselves for lost men, and prepared for death. Yet we did lift up our hearts and voices to God above, who showeth His wonders in the deep; beseeching Him of His mercy that as in the beginning He discovered the face of the deep, and brought forth dry land, so He would now discover land to us, that we might not perish.

And it came to pass that the next day about evening we saw within a kenning before us, toward the north, as it were thick clouds, which did put us in some hope of land, knowing how that part of the South Sea was utterly unknown, and might have islands or continents that hitherto were not come to light. Wherefore we bent our course thither, where we saw the appearance of land, all that night; and in the dawning of next day we might plainly discern that it was a land flat to our sight, and full of boscaje, which made it show the more dark. And after an hour and a half's sailing, we entered into a good haven, being the port of a fair city. Not great, indeed, but well built, and that gave a pleasant view from the sea. And we thinking every minute long till we were on land, came close to the shore and offered to land. But straightway we saw divers of the people, with batons in their hands, as it were forbidding us to land: yet without any cries or fierceness, but only as warning us off, by signs that they made. Whereupon being not a little discomfited, we were advising with ourselves what we should do. During which time there made forth to us a small boat, with about eight persons in it, whereof one of them had in his hand a tipstaff of a yellow cane, tipped at both ends with blue, who made aboard our ship, without any show of distrust at all. And when he saw one of our number present himself somewhat afore the rest, he drew forth a little scroll of parchment (somewhat yellower than our parchment, and shining like the leaves of writing-tables, but otherwise soft and flexible), and delivered it to our foremost man. In which scroll were written in ancient Hebrew, and in ancient Greek, and in good Latin of the school, and in Spanish these words: "Land ye not, none of you, and provide to be gone from this coast within sixteen days, except you have further time given you; meanwhile, if you want fresh water, or victual, or help for your sick, or that your ship needeth repair, write down your wants, and you shall have that which belongeth to mercy." This scroll was signed with a stamp of cherubim's wings, not spread, but hanging downward; and by them a cross. This being delivered, the officer returned, and left only a servant with us to receive our answer. Consulting hereupon among ourselves, we were much perplexed. The denial of landing, and hasty warning us away, troubled us much: on the other side, to find that the people had languages, and were so full of humanity, did comfort us not a little. And above all, the sign of the cross to that instrument was to us a great rejoicing, and as it were a certain presage of good. Our answer was in the Spanish tongue, "That for our ship, it was well; for we had rather met with calms and contrary winds, than any tempests. For our sick, they were many, and in very ill case; so that if they were not permitted to land, they ran in danger of their lives." Our other wants we set down in particular, adding, "That we had some little store of merchandise, which if it pleased them to deal for, it might supply our wants, without being chargeable unto them." We offered some reward in pistolets unto the servant, and a piece of crimson velvet to be presented to the officer; but the servant took them not, nor would scarce look upon them; and so left us, and went back in another little boat which was sent for him.

About three hours after we had despatched our answer, there came toward us a person (as it seemed) of a place. He had on him a gown with wide sleeves, of a kind of water chamolet, of an excellent azure color, far more glossy than ours; his under-apparel was green, and so was his hat, being in the form of a turban, daintily made, and not so huge as the Turkish turbans; and the locks of his hair came down below the brims of it. A reverend man was he to behold. He came in a boat, gilt in some part of it, with four persons more only in that boat; and was followed by another

boat, wherein were some twenty. When he was come within a flight-shot of our ship, signs were made to us that we should send forth some to meet him upon the water, which we presently did in our ship-boat, sending the principal man amongst us save one, and four of our number with him. When we were come within six yards of their boat, they called to us to stay, and not to approach farther, which we did.

And thereupon the man, whom I before described, stood up, and with a loud voice in Spanish asked, "Are ye Christians?" We answered, "We were;" fearing the less, because of the cross we had seen in the subscription. At which answer the said person lift up his right hand toward heaven, and drew it softly to his mouth (which is the gesture they use, when they thank God), and then said: "If ye will swear, all of you, by the merits of the Saviour, that ye are no pirates; nor have shed blood, lawfully or unlawfully, within forty days past; you may have license to come on land." We said, "We were all ready to take that oath." Whereupon one of those that were with him, being (as it seemed) a notary, made an entry of this act. Which done, another of the attendants of the great person, which was with him in the same boat, after his lord had spoken a little to him, said aloud: "My lord would have you know that it is not of pride, or greatness, that he cometh not aboard your ship; but for that in your answer you declare that you have many sick amongst you, he was warned by the conservator of health of the city that he should keep a distance." We bowed ourselves toward him and answered: "We were his humble servants; and accounted for great honor and singular humanity toward us, that which was already done; but hoped well that the nature of the sickness of our men was not infectious."

So he returned; and awhile after came the notary to us aboard our ship, holding in his hand a fruit of that country, like an orange, but of color between orange-tawny and scarlet, which cast a most excellent odor. He used it (as it seemed) for a preservative against infection. He gave us our oath, "By the name of Jesus, and His merits," and after told us that the next day, by six of the clock in the morning, we should be sent to, and brought to the strangers' house (so he called it), where we should be accommodated of things, both for our whole and for our sick. So he left us; and when we offered him some pistolets, he smiling, said, "He must not be twice paid for one labor:" meaning (as I take it) that he had salary sufficient of the State for his service. For (as I after learned) they call an officer that taketh rewards twice paid.

The next morning early there came to us the same officer that came to us at first, with his cane, and told us he came to conduct us to the strangers' house; and that he had prevented the hour, because we might have the whole day before us for our business. "For," said he, "if you will follow my advice, there shall first go with me some few of you, and see the place, and how it may be made convenient for you; and then you may send for your sick, and the rest of your number which ye will bring on land." We thanked him and said, "That his care which he took of desolate strangers, God would reward." And so six of us went on land with him; and when we were on land, he went before us, and turned to us and said "he was but our servant and our guide." He led us through three fair streets; and all the way we went there were gathered some people on both sides, standing in a row; but in so civil a fashion, as if it had been, not to wonder at us, but to welcome us; and divers of them, as we passed by them, put their arms a little abroad, which is their gesture when they bid any welcome.

The strangers' house is a fair and spacious house, built of brick, of somewhat a bluer color than our brick; and with handsome windows, some of glass, some of a kind of cambric oiled. He brought us first into a fair parlor above stairs, and then asked us "what number of persons we were? and how many sick?" We answered, "We were in all (sick and whole) one-and-fifty persons, whereof our sick were seventeen." He desired us have patience a little, and to stay till he came back to us, which was about an hour after; and then he led us to see the chambers which were provided for us, being in number nineteen. They having cast it (as it seemeth) that four of those chambers, which were better than the rest, might receive four of the principal men of our company; and lodge them alone by themselves; and the other fifteen chambers were to lodge us, two and two together. The chambers were handsome and cheerful chambers, and furnished civilly. Then he led us to a long gallery, like a dorture, where he showed us all along the one side (for the other side was but wall and window) seventeen cells, very neat ones, having partitions of cedar wood. Which gallery and cells, being in all forty (many more than we needed), were instituted as an infirmary for sick persons. And he told us withal, that as any of our sick waxed well, he might be removed from his cell to a chamber; for which purpose there were set forth ten spare chambers, besides the number we spake of before.

This done, he brought us back to the parlor, and lifting up his cane a little (as they do when they give any charge or command), said to us: "Ye are to know that the custom of the land requireth that after this day and to-morrow (which we give you for removing your people from your ship), you are to keep within doors for three days. But let it not trouble you, nor do not think yourselves restrained, but rather left to your rest and ease. You shall want nothing; and there are six of our people appointed to attend you for any business you may have abroad." We gave him thanks with all affection and respect, and said, "God surely is manifested in this land." We offered him also twenty pistolets; but he smiled, and only said: "What? Twice paid!" And so he left us. Soon after our dinner was served in; which was right good viands, both for bread and meat: better than any collegiate diet that I have known in Europe.

We had also drink of three sorts, all wholesome and good: wine of the grape; a drink of grain, such as is with us our ale, but more clear; and a kind of cider made of a fruit of that country, a wonderful pleasing and refreshing drink. Besides, there were brought in to us great store of those scarlet oranges for our sick; which (they said) were an assured remedy for sickness taken at sea. There was given us also a box of small gray or whitish pills, which they wished our sick should take, one of the pills every night before sleep; which (they said) would hasten their recovery. The next day, after that our trouble of carriage and removing of our men and goods out of our ship was somewhat settled and quiet, I thought good to call our company together, and, when they were assembled, said unto them: "My dear friends, let us know ourselves, and how it standeth with us. We are men cast on land, as Jonas was out of the whale's belly, when we were as buried in the deep; and now we are on land, we are but between death and life, for we are beyond both the Old World and the New; and whether ever we shall see Europe, God only knoweth. It is a kind of miracle hath brought us hither, and it must be little less that shall bring us hence. Therefore in regard of our deliverance past, and our danger present and to come, let us look up to God, and every man reform his own ways. Besides, we are come here among a Christian people, full of piety and humanity. Let us not bring that confusion of face upon ourselves, as to show our vices or unworthiness before them. Yet there is more, for they have by commandment (though in form of courtesy) cloistered us within these walls for three days; who knoweth whether it be not to take some taste of our manners and conditions? And if they find them bad, to banish us straightway; if good, to give us further time. For these men that they have given us for attendance, may withal have an eye upon us. Therefore, for God's love, and as we love the weal of our souls and bodies, let us so behave ourselves as we may be at peace with God and may find grace in the eyes of this people."

Our company with one voice thanked me for my good admonition, and promised me to live soberly and civilly, and without giving any the least occasion of offence. So we spent our three days joyfully, and without care, in expectation what would be done with us when they were expired. During which time, we had every hour joy of the amendment of our sick, who thought themselves cast into some divine pool of healing, they mended so kindly and so fast.

The morrow after our three days were past, there came to us a new man, that we had not seen before, clothed in blue as the former was, save that his turban was white with a small red cross on top. He had also a tippet of fine linen. At his coming in, he did bend to us a little, and put his arms abroad. We of our parts saluted him in a very lowly and submissive manner; as looking that from him we should receive sentence of life or death. He desired to speak with some few of us. Whereupon six of us only stayed, and the rest avoided the room. He said: "I am by office, governor of this house of strangers, and by vocation, I am a Christian priest, and therefore am come to you to offer you my service, both as strangers and chiefly as Christians. Some things I may tell you, which I think you will not be unwilling to hear. The State hath given you license to stay on land for the space of six weeks; and let it not trouble you if your occasions ask further time, for the law in this point is not precise; and I do not doubt but myself shall be able to obtain for you such further time as shall be convenient. Ye shall also understand that the strangers' house is at this time rich and much aforehand; for it hath laid up revenue these thirty-seven years, for so long it is since any stranger arrived in this part; and therefore take ye no care; the State will defray you all the time you stay. Neither shall you stay one day the less for that. As for any merchandise you have brought, ye shall be well used, and have your return, either in merchandise or in gold and silver, for to us it is all one. And if you have any other request to make, hide it not; for ye shall find we will not make your countenance to fall by the answer ye shall receive. Only this I must tell you, that none of you must go above a karan [that is with them a mile and a half] from the walls of the city, without special leave."

We answered, after we had looked awhile upon one another, admiring this gracious and parent-like usage, that we could not tell what to say, for we wanted words to express our thanks; and his noble free offers left us nothing to ask. It seemed to us that we had before us a picture of our salvation in heaven; for we that were awhile since in the jaws of death, were now brought into a place where we found nothing but consolations. For the commandment laid upon us, we would not fail to obey it, though it was impossible but our hearts should be inflamed to tread further upon this happy and holy ground. We added that our tongues should first cleave to the roofs of our mouths ere we should forget either this reverend person or this whole nation, in our prayers. We also most humbly besought him to accept of us as his true servants, by as just a right as ever men on earth were bounden; laying and presenting both our persons and all we had at his feet. He said he was a priest, and looked for a priest's reward, which was our brotherly love and the good of our souls and bodies. So he went from us, not without tears of tenderness in his eyes, and left us also confused with joy and kindness, saying among ourselves that we were come into a land of angels, which did appear to us daily, and prevent us with comforts, which we thought not of, much less expected.

The next day, about ten of the clock; the governor came to us again, and after salutations said familiarly that he was come to visit us, and called for a chair and sat him down; and we, being some ten of us (the rest were of the meaner sort or else gone abroad), sat down with him; and when we were set he began thus: "We of this island of Bensalem

(for so they called it in their language) have this: that by means of our solitary situation, and of the laws of secrecy, which we have for our travellers, and our rare admission of strangers; we know well most part of the habitable world, and are ourselves unknown. Therefore because he that knoweth least is fittest to ask questions it is more reason, for the entertainment of the time, that ye ask me questions, than that I ask you." We answered, that we humbly thanked him that he would give us leave so to do. And that we conceived by the taste we had already, that there was no worldly thing on earth more worthy to be known than the state of that happy land. But above all, we said, since that we were met from the several ends of the world, and hoped assuredly that we should meet one day in the kingdom of heaven (for that we were both parts Christians), we desired to know (in respect that land was so remote, and so divided by vast and unknown seas from the land where our Saviour walked on earth) who was the apostle of that nation, and how it was converted to the faith? It appeared in his face that he took great contentment in this our question; he said: "Ye knit my heart to you by asking this question in the first place; for it showeth that you first seek the kingdom of heaven; and I shall gladly, and briefly, satisfy your demand.

"About twenty years after the ascension of our Saviour it came to pass, that there was seen by the people of Renfusa (a city upon the eastern coast of our island, within sight, the night was cloudy and calm), as it might be some mile in the sea, a great pillar of light; not sharp, but in form of a column, or cylinder, rising from the sea, a great way up toward heaven; and on the top of it was seen a large cross of light, more bright and resplendent than the body of the pillar. Upon which so strange a spectacle, the people of the city gathered apace together upon the sands, to wonder; and so after put themselves into a number of small boats to go nearer to this marvellous sight. But when the boats were come within about sixty yards of the pillar, they found themselves all bound, and could go no further, yet so as they might move to go about, but might not approach nearer; so as the boats stood all as in a theatre, beholding this light, as a heavenly sign. It so fell out that there was in one of the boats one of the wise men of the Society of Saloman's House (which house, or college, my good brethren, is the very eye of this kingdom), who having awhile attentively and devoutly viewed and contemplated this pillar and cross, fell down upon his face; and then raised himself upon his knees, and lifting up his hands to heaven, made his prayers in this manner:

"Lord God of heaven and earth; thou hast vouchsafed of thy grace, to those of our order to know thy works of creation, and true secrets of them; and to discern, as far as appertaineth to the generations of men, between divine miracles, works of nature, works of art and impostures, and illusions of all sorts. I do here acknowledge and testify before this people that the thing we now see before our eyes is thy finger, and a true miracle. And forasmuch as we learn in our books that thou never workest miracles, but to a divine and excellent end (for the laws of nature are thine own laws, and thou exceedest them not but upon great cause), we most humbly beseech thee to prosper this great sign, and to give us the interpretation and use of it in mercy; which thou dost in some part secretly promise, by sending it unto us.'

"When he had made his prayer, he presently found the boat he was in movable and unbound; whereas all the rest remained still fast; and taking that for an assurance of leave to approach, he caused the boat to be softly and with silence rowed toward the pillar; but ere he came near it, the pillar and cross of light broke up, and cast itself abroad, as it were, into a firmament of many stars, which also vanished soon after, and there was nothing left to be seen but a small ark or chest of cedar, dry and not wet at all with water, though it swam; and in the fore end of it, which was toward him, grew a small green branch of palm; and when the wise man had taken it with all reverence into his boat, it opened of itself, and there were found in it a book and a letter, both written in fine parchment, and wrapped in sindons of linen. The book contained all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, according as you have them (for we know well what the churches with you receive), and the Apocalypse itself; and some other books of the New Testament, which were not at that time written, were nevertheless in the book. And for the letter, it was in these words:

"I, Bartholomew, a servant of the Highest, and apostle of Jesus Christ, was warned by an angel that appeared to me in a vision of glory, that I should commit this ark to the floods of the sea. Therefore I do testify and declare unto that people where God shall ordain this ark to come to land, that in the same day is come unto them salvation and peace, and good-will from the Father, and from the Lord Jesus.'

"There was also in both these writings, as well the book as the letter, wrought a great miracle, conform to that of the apostles, in the original gift of tongues. For there being at that time, in this land, Hebrews, Persians, and Indians, besides the natives, everyone read upon the book and letter, as if they had been written in his own language. And thus was this land saved from infidelity (as the remain of the old world was from water) by an ark, through the apostolical and miraculous evangelism of St. Bartholomew." And here he paused, and a messenger came and called him forth from us. So this was all that passed in that conference.

The next day the same governor came again to us immediately after dinner, and excused himself, saying that the day before he was called from us somewhat abruptly, but now he would make us amends, and spend time with us; if we held his company and conference agreeable. We answered that we held it so agreeable and pleasing to us, as we

forgot both dangers past, and fears to come, for the time we heard him speak; and that we thought an hour spent with him was worth years of our former life. He bowed himself a little to us, and after we were set again, he said, "Well, the questions are on your part."

One of our number said, after a little pause, that there was a matter we were no less desirous to know than fearful to ask, lest we might presume too far. But, encouraged by his rare humanity toward us (that could scarce think ourselves strangers, being his vowed and professed servants), we would take the hardness to propound it; humbly beseeching him, if he thought it not fit to be answered, that he would pardon it, though he rejected it. We said, we well observed those his words, which he formerly spake, that this happy island, where we now stood, was known to few, and yet knew most of the nations of the world, which we found to be true, considering they had the languages of Europe, and knew much of our State and business; and yet we in Europe (notwithstanding all the remote discoveries and navigations of this last age) never heard any of the least inkling or glimpse of this island. This we found wonderful strange; for that all nations have interknowledge one of another, either by voyage into foreign parts, or by strangers that come to them; and though the traveller into a foreign country doth commonly know more by the eye than he that stayeth at home can by relation of the traveller; yet both ways suffice to make a mutual knowledge, in some degree, on both parts. But for this island, we never heard tell of any ship of theirs that had been seen to arrive upon any shore of Europe; no, nor of either the East or West Indies, nor yet of any ship of any other part of the world, that had made return for them. And yet the marvel rested not in this. For the situation of it (as his lordship said) in the secret conclave of such a vast sea might cause it. But then, that they should have knowledge of the languages, books, affairs, of those that lie such a distance from them, it was a thing we could not tell what to make of; for that it seemed to us a condition and propriety of divine powers and beings, to be hidden and unseen to others, and yet to have others open, and as in a light to them.

At this speech the governor gave a gracious smile and said that we did well to ask pardon for this question we now asked, for that it imported, as if we thought this land a land of magicians, that sent forth spirits of the air into all parts, to bring them news and intelligence of other countries. It was answered by us all, in all possible humbleness, but yet with a countenance taking knowledge, that we knew that he spake it but merrily. That we were apt enough to think there was somewhat supernatural in this island, but yet rather as angelical than magical. But to let his lordship know truly what it was that made us tender and doubtful to ask this question, it was not any such conceit, but because we remembered he had given a touch in his former speech, that this land had laws of secrecy touching strangers. To this he said, "You remember it aright; and therefore in that I shall say to you, I must reserve some particulars, which it is not lawful for me to reveal, but there will be enough left to give you satisfaction.

"You shall understand (that which perhaps you will scarce think credible) that about 3,000 years ago, or somewhat more, the navigation of the world (especially for remote voyages) was greater than at this day. Do not think with yourselves, that I know not how much it is increased with you, within these threescore years; I know it well, and yet I say, greater then than now; whether it was, that the example of the ark, that saved the remnant of men from the universal deluge, gave men confidence to venture upon the waters, or what it was; but such is the truth. The Phoenicians, and especially the Tyrians, had great fleets; so had the Carthaginians their colony, which is yet farther west. Toward the east the shipping of Egypt, and of Palestine, was likewise great. China also, and the great Atlantis (that you call America), which have now but junks and canoes, abounded then in tall ships. This island (as appeareth by faithful registers of those times) had then 1,500 strong ships, of great content. Of all this there is with you sparing memory, or none; but we have large knowledge thereof.

"At that time this land was known and frequented by the ships and vessels of all the nations before named. And (as it cometh to pass) they had many times men of other countries, that were no sailors, that came with them; as Persians, Chaldeans, Arabians, so as almost all nations of might and fame resorted hither; of whom we have some stirps and little tribes with us at this day. And for our own ships, they went sundry voyages, as well to your straits, which you call the Pillars of Hercules, as to other parts in the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas; as to Paguin (which is the same with Cambalaine) and Quinzy, upon the Oriental seas, as far as to the borders of the East Tartary.

"At the same time, and an age after or more, the inhabitants of the great Atlantis did flourish. For though the narration and description which is made by a great man with you, that the descendants of Neptune planted there, and of the magnificent temple, palace, city, and hill; and the manifold streams of goodly navigable rivers, which as so many chains environed the same site and temple; and the several degrees of ascent, whereby men did climb up to the same, as if it had been a Scala Coeli; be all poetical and fabulous; yet so much is true, that the said country of Atlantis, as well that of Peru, then called Coya, as that of Mexico, then named Tyrambel, were mighty and proud kingdoms, in arms, shipping, and riches; so mighty, as at one time, or at least within the space of ten years, they both made two great expeditions; they of Tyrambel through the Atlantic to the Mediterranean Sea; and they of Coya, through the South Sea upon this our island; and for the former of these, which was into Europe, the same author among you, as it seemeth, had some relation from the Egyptian priest, whom he citeth. For assuredly, such a thing

there was. But whether it were the ancient Athenians that had the glory of the repulse and resistance of those forces, I can say nothing; but certain it is there never came back either ship or man from that voyage. Neither had the other voyage of those of Coya upon us had better fortune, if they had not met with enemies of greater clemency. For the King of this island, by name Altabin, a wise man and a great warrior, knowing well both his own strength and that of his enemies, handled the matter so as he cut off their land forces from their ships, and entailed both their navy and their camp with a greater power than theirs, both by sea and land; and compelled them to render themselves without striking a stroke; and after they were at his mercy, contenting himself only with their oath, that they should no more bear arms against him, dismissed them all in safety.

"But the divine revenge overtook not long after those proud enterprises. For within less than the space of 100 years the Great Atlantis was utterly lost and destroyed; not by a great earthquake, as your man saith, for that whole tract is little subject to earthquakes, but by a particular deluge, or inundation; those countries having at this day far greater rivers, and far higher mountains to pour down waters, than any part of the old world. But it is true that the same inundation was not deep, nor past forty foot, in most places, from the ground, so that although it destroyed man and beast generally, yet some few wild inhabitants of the wood escaped. Birds also were saved by flying to the high trees and woods. For as for men, although they had buildings in many places higher than the depth of the water, yet that inundation, though it were shallow, had a long continuance, whereby they of the vale that were not drowned perished for want of food, and other things necessary. So as marvel you not at the thin population of America, nor at the rudeness and ignorance of the people; for you must account your inhabitants of America as a young people, younger a thousand years at the least than the rest of the world, for that there was so much time between the universal flood and their particular inundation.

"For the poor remnant of human seed which remained in their mountains, peopled the country again slowly, by little and little, and being simple and a savage people (not like Noah and his sons, which was the chief family of the earth), they were not able to leave letters, arts, and civility to their posterity; and having likewise in their mountainous habitations been used, in respect of the extreme cold of those regions, to clothe themselves with the skins of tigers, bears, and great hairy goats, that they have in those parts; when after they came down into the valley, and found the intolerable heats which are there, and knew no means of lighter apparel, they were forced to begin the custom of going naked, which continueth at this day. Only they take great pride and delight in the feathers of birds, and this also they took from those their ancestors of the mountains, who were invited unto it, by the infinite flight of birds, that came up to the high grounds, while the waters stood below. So you see, by this main accident of time, we lost our traffic with the Americans, with whom of all others, in regard they lay nearest to us, we had most commerce. As for the other parts of the world, it is most manifest that in the ages following (whether it were in respect of wars, or by a natural revolution of time) navigation did everywhere greatly decay, and specially far voyages (the rather by the use of galleys, and such vessels as could hardly brook the ocean) were altogether left and omitted. So then, that part of intercourse which could be from other nations to sail to us, you see how it hath long since ceased; except it were by some rare accident, as this of yours. But now of the cessation of that other part of intercourse, which might be by our sailing to other nations, I must yield you some other cause. But I cannot say if I shall say truly, but our shipping, for number, strength, mariners, pilots, and all things that appertain to navigation, is as great as ever; and therefore why we should sit at home, I shall now give you an account by itself; and it will draw nearer, to give you satisfaction, to your principal question.

"There reigned in this land, about 1,900 years ago, a King, whose memory of all others we most adore; not superstitiously, but as a divine instrument, though a mortal man: his name was Salomana; and we esteem him as the lawgiver of our nation. This King had a large heart, inscrutable for good; and was wholly bent to make his kingdom and people happy. He, therefore, taking into consideration how sufficient and substantive this land was, to maintain itself without any aid at all of the foreigner; being 5,000 miles in circuit, and of rare fertility of soil, in the greatest part thereof; and finding also the shipping of this country might be plentifully set on work, both by fishing and by transportations from port to port, and likewise by sailing unto some small islands that are not far from us, and are under the crown and laws of this State; and recalling into his memory the happy and flourishing estate wherein this land then was, so as it might be a thousand ways altered to the worse, but scarce any one way to the better; though nothing wanted to his noble and heroic intentions, but only (as far as human foresight might reach) to give perpetuity to that which was in his time so happily established, therefore among his other fundamental laws of this kingdom he did ordain the interdicts and prohibitions which we have touching entrance of strangers; which at that time (though it was after the calamity of America) was frequent; doubting novelties and commixture of manners. It is true, the like law against the admission of strangers without license is an ancient law in the Kingdom of China, and yet continued in use. But there it is a poor thing; and hath made them a curious, ignorant, fearful, foolish nation. But our lawgiver made his law of another temper. For first, he hath preserved all points of humanity, in taking order and making provision for the relief of strangers distressed; whereof you have tasted."

At which speech (as reason was) we all rose up and bowed ourselves. He went on: "That King also still desiring to join humanity and policy together; and thinking it against humanity to detain strangers here against their wills, and against policy that they should return and discover their knowledge of this estate, he took this course; he did ordain, that of the strangers that should be permitted to land, as many at all times might depart as many as would; but as many as would stay, should have very good conditions, and means to live from the State. Wherein he saw so far, that now in so many ages since the prohibition, we have memory not of one ship that ever returned, and but of thirteen persons only, at several times, that chose to return in our bottoms. What those few that returned may have reported abroad, I know not. But you must think, whatsoever they have said, could be taken where they came but for a dream. Now for our travelling from hence into parts abroad, our lawgiver thought fit altogether to restrain it. So is it not in China. For the Chinese sail where they will, or can; which showeth, that their law of keeping out strangers is a law of pusillanimity and fear. But this restraint of ours hath one only exception, which is admirable; preserving the good which cometh by communicating with strangers, and avoiding the hurt: and I will now open it to you.

"And here I shall seem a little to digress, but you will by and by find it pertinent. Ye shall understand, my dear friends, that among the excellent acts of that King, one above all hath the pre-eminence. It was the erection and institution of an order, or society, which we call Saloman's House, the noblest foundation, as we think, that ever was upon the earth, and the lantern of this kingdom. It is dedicated to the study of the works and creatures of God. Some think it beareth the founder's name a little corrupted, as if it should be Solomon's House. But the records write it as it is spoken. So as I take it to be denominate of the King of the Hebrews, which is famous with you, and no strangers to us; for we have some parts of his works which with you are lost; namely, that natural history which he wrote of all plants, from the cedar of Libanus to the moss that groweth out of the wall; and of all things that have life and motion. This maketh me think that our King finding himself to symbolize, in many things, with that King of the Hebrews, which lived many years before him, honored him with the title of this foundation. And I am the rather induced to be of this opinion, for that I find in ancient records, this order or society is sometimes called Solomon's House, and sometimes the College of the Six Days' Works, whereby I am satisfied that our excellent King had learned from the Hebrews that God had created the world and all that therein is within six days: and therefore he instituted that house, for the finding out of the true nature of all things, whereby God might have the more glory in the workmanship of them, and men the more fruit in their use of them, did give it also that second name.

"But now to come to our present purpose. When the King had forbidden to all his people navigation into any part that was not under his crown, he made nevertheless this ordinance; that every twelve years there should be set forth out of this kingdom, two ships, appointed to several voyages; that in either of these ships there should be a mission of three of the fellows or brethren of Saloman's House, whose errand was only to give us knowledge of the affairs and state of those countries to which they were designed; and especially of the sciences, arts, manufactures, and inventions of all the world; and withal to bring unto us books, instruments, and patterns in every kind: that the ships, after they had landed the brethren, should return; and that the brethren should stay abroad till the new mission, the ships are not otherwise fraught than with store of victuals, and good quantity of treasure to remain with the brethren, for the buying of such things, and rewarding of such persons, as they should think fit. Now for me to tell you how the vulgar sort of mariners are contained from being discovered at land, and how they must be put on shore for any time, color themselves under the names of other nations, and to what places these voyages have been designed; and what places of rendezvous are appointed for the new missions, and the like circumstances of the practice, I may not do it, neither is it much to your desire. But thus you see we maintain a trade, not for gold, silver, or jewels, nor for silks, nor for spices, nor any other commodity of matter; but only for God's first creature, which was light; to have light, I say, of the growth of all parts of the world."

And when he had said this, he was silent, and so were we all; for indeed we were all astonished to hear so strange things so probably told. And he perceiving that we were willing to say somewhat, but had it not ready, in great courtesy took us off, and descended to ask us questions of our voyage and fortunes, and in the end concluded that we might do well to think with ourselves what time of stay we would demand of the State, and bade us not to scant ourselves; for he would procure such time as we desired. Whereupon we all rose up and presented ourselves to kiss the skirt of his tippet, but he would not suffer us, and so took his leave. But when it came once among our people that the State used to offer conditions to strangers that would stay, we had work enough to get any of our men to look to our ship, and to keep them from going presently to the governor to crave conditions; but with much ado we restrained them, till we might agree what course to take.

We took ourselves now for freemen, seeing there was no danger of our utter perdition, and lived most joyfully, going abroad and seeing what was to be seen in the city and places adjacent, within our tedder; and obtaining acquaintance with many of the city, not of the meanest quality, at whose hands we found such humanity, and such a freedom and desire to take strangers, as it were, into their bosom, as was enough to make us forget all that was dear to us in our own countries, and continually we met with many things, right worthy of observation and relation; as

indeed, if there be a mirror in the world, worthy to hold men's eyes, it is that country. One day there were two of our company bidden to a feast of the family, as they call it; a most natural, pious, and reverend custom it is, showing that nation to be compounded of all goodness. This is the manner of it; it is granted to any man that shall live to see thirty persons descended of his body, alive together, and all above three years old, to make this feast, which is done at the cost of the State. The father of the family, whom they call the tirsan, two days before the feast, taketh to him three of such friends as he liketh to choose, and is assisted also by the governor of the city or place where the feast is celebrated; and all the persons of the family, of both sexes, are summoned to attend him. These two days the tirsan sitteth in consultation, concerning the good estate of the family. There, if there be any discord or suits between any of the family, they are compounded and appeased. There, if any of the family be distressed or decayed, order is taken for their relief, and competent means to live. There, if any be subject to vice, or take ill-courses, they are reprov'd and censured. So, likewise, direction is given touching marriages, and the courses of life which any of them should take, with divers other the like orders and advices. The governor sitteth to the end, to put in execution, by his public authority, the decrees and orders of the tirsan, if they should be disobeyed, though that seldom needeth; such reverence and obedience they give to the order of nature.

The tirsan doth also then ever choose one man from among his sons, to live in house with him, who is called ever after the Son of the Vine. The reason will hereafter appear. On the feast day, the father, or tirsan, cometh forth after divine service into a large room where the feast is celebrated; which room hath a half-pace at the upper end. Against the wall, in the middle of the half-pace, is a chair placed for him, with a table and carpet before it. Over the chair is a state, made round or oval and it is of ivy; an ivy somewhat whiter than ours, like the leaf of a silver-asp, but more shining; for it is green all winter. And the state is curiously wrought with silver and silk of divers colors, broiding or binding in the ivy; and is ever of the work of some of the daughters of the family, and veiled over at the top, with a fine net of silk and silver. But the substance of it is true ivy; whereof after it is taken down, the friends of the family are desirous to have some leaf or sprig to keep. The tirsan cometh forth with all his generation or lineage, the males before him, and the females following him; and if there be a mother, from whose body the whole lineage is descended, there is a traverse placed in a loft above on the right hand of the chair, with a privy door, and a carved window of glass, leaded with gold and blue; where she sitteth, but is not seen.

When the tirsan is come forth, he sitteth down in the chair; and all the lineage place themselves against the wall, both at his back, and upon the return of the half-pace, in order of their years) without difference of sex, and stand upon their feet. When he is set, the room being always full of company, but well kept and without disorder, after some pause there cometh in from the lower end of the room a taratan (which is as much as a herald), and on either side of him two young lads: whereof one carrieth a scroll of their shining yellow parchment, and the other a cluster of grapes of gold, with a long foot or stalk. The herald and children are clothed with mantles of sea-water-green satin; but the herald's mantle is stream'd with gold, and hath a train. Then the herald with three courtesies, or rather inclinations, cometh up as far as the half-pace, and there first taketh into his hand the scroll. This scroll is the King's charter, containing gift of revenue, and many privileges, exemptions, and points of honor, granted to the father of the family; and it is ever styled and directed, "To such an one, our well-beloved friend and creditor," which is a title proper only to this case. For they say, the King is debtor to no man, but for propagation of his subjects; the seal set to the King's charter is the King's image, embossed or moulded in gold; and though such charters be expedited of course, and as of right, yet they are varied by discretion, according to the number and dignity of the family. This charter the herald readeth aloud; and while it is read, the father, or tirsan, standeth up, supported by two of his sons, such as he chooseth.

Then the herald mounteth the half-pace, and delivereth the charter into his hand: and with that there is an acclamation, by all that are present, in their language, which is thus much, "Happy are the people of Bensalem." Then the herald taketh into his hand from the other child the cluster of grapes, which is of gold; both the stalk, and the grapes. But the grapes are daintily enamelled: and if the males of the family be the greater number, the grapes are enamelled purple, with a little sun set on the top; if the females, then they are enamelled into a greenish yellow, with a crescent on the top. The grapes are in number as many as there are descendants of the family. This golden cluster the herald delivereth also to the tirsan; who presently delivereth it over to that son that he had formerly chosen, to be in house with him: who beareth it before his father, as an ensign of honor, when he goeth in public ever after; and is thereupon called the Son of the Vine. After this ceremony ended the father, or tirsan, retireth, and after some time cometh forth again to dinner, where he sitteth alone under the state, as before; and none of his descendants sit with him, of what degree or dignity so ever, except he hap to be of Saloman's House. He is served only by his own children, such as are male; who perform unto him all service of the table upon the knee, and the women only stand about him, leaning against the wall. The room below his half-pace hath tables on the sides for the guests that are bidden; who are served with great and comely order; and toward the end of dinner (which in the greatest feasts with them lasteth never above an hour and a half) there is a hymn sung, varied according to the

invention of him that composeth it (for they have excellent poesy), but the subject of it is always the praises of Adam, and Noah, and Abraham; whereof the former two peopled the world, and the last was the father of the faithful: concluding ever with a thanksgiving for the nativity of our Saviour, in whose birth the births of all are only blessed.

Dinner being done, the tirsan retireth again; and having withdrawn himself alone into a place, where he maketh some private prayers, he cometh forth the third time, to give the blessing; with all his descendants, who stand about him as at the first. Then he calleth them forth by one and by one, by name as he pleaseth, though seldom the order of age be inverted. The person that is called (the table being before removed) kneeleth down before the chair, and the father layeth his hand upon his head, or her head, and giveth the blessing in these words: "Son of Bensalem (or daughter of Bensalem), thy father saith it; the man by whom thou hast breath and life speaketh the word; the blessing of the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and the Holy Dove be upon thee, and make the days of thy pilgrimage good and many." This he saith to every of them; and that done, if there be any of his sons of eminent merit and virtue, so they be not above two, he calleth for them again, and saith, laying his arm over their shoulders, they standing: "Sons, it is well you are born, give God the praise, and persevere to the end;" and withal delivereth to either of them a jewel, made in the figure of an ear of wheat, which they ever after wear in the front of their turban, or hat; this done, they fall to music and dances, and other recreations, after their manner, for the rest of the day. This is the full order of that feast.

By that time six or seven days were spent, I was fallen into straight acquaintance with a merchant of that city, whose name was Joabin. He was a Jew and circumcised; for they have some few stirps of Jews yet remaining among them, whom they leave to their own religion. Which they may the better do, because they are of a far differing disposition from the Jews in other parts. For whereas they hate the name of Christ, and have a secret inbred rancor against the people among whom they live; these, contrariwise, give unto our Saviour many high attributes, and love the nation of Bensalem extremely. Surely this man of whom I speak would ever acknowledge that Christ was born of a Virgin; and that he was more than a man; and he would tell how God made him ruler of the seraphim, which guard his throne; and they call him also the Milken Way, and the Eliah of the Messiah, and many other high names, which though they be inferior to his divine majesty, yet they are far from the language of other Jews. And for the country of Bensalem, this man would make no end of commending it, being desirous by tradition among the Jews there to have it believed that the people thereof were of the generations of Abraham, by another son, whom they call Nachoran; and that Moses by a secret cabala ordained the laws of Bensalem which they now use; and that when the Messias should come, and sit in his throne at Hierusalem, the King of Bensalem should sit at his feet, whereas other kings should keep a great distance. But yet setting aside these Jewish dreams, the man was a wise man and learned, and of great policy, and excellently seen in the laws and customs of that nation.

Among other discourses one day I told him, I was much affected with the relation I had from some of the company of their custom in holding the feast of the family, for that, methought, I had never heard of a solemnity wherein nature did so much preside. And because propagation of families proceedeth from the nuptial copulation, I desired to know of him what laws and customs they had concerning marriage, and whether they kept marriage well, and whether they were tied to one wife? For that where population is so much affected, and such as with them it seemed to be, there is commonly permission of plurality of wives. To this he said:

"You have reason for to commend that excellent institution of the feast of the family; and indeed we have experience, that those families that are partakers of the blessings of that feast, do flourish and prosper ever after, in an extraordinary manner. But hear me now, and I will tell you what I know. You shall understand that there is not under the heavens so chaste a nation as this of Bensalem, nor so free from all pollution or foulness. It is the virgin of the world; I remember, I have read in one of your European books, of a holy hermit among you, that desired to see the spirit of fornication, and there appeared to him a little foul ugly Ethiope; but if he had desired to see the spirit of chastity of Bensalem, it would have appeared to him in the likeness of a fair beautiful cherub. For there is nothing, among mortal men, more fair and admirable than the chaste minds of this people.

"Know, therefore, that with them there are no stews, no dissolute houses, no courtesans, nor anything of that kind. Nay, they wonder, with detestation, at you in Europe, which permit such things. They say ye have put marriage out of office; for marriage is ordained a remedy for unlawful concupiscence; and natural concupiscence seemeth as a spur to marriage. But when men have at hand a remedy, more agreeable to their corrupt will, marriage is almost expelled. And therefore there are with you seen infinite men that marry not, but choose rather a libertine and impure single life, than to be yoked in marriage; and many that do marry, marry late, when the prime and strength of their years are past. And when they do marry, what is marriage to them but a very bargain; wherein is sought alliance, or portion, or reputation, with some desire (almost indifferent) of issue; and not the faithful nuptial union of man and wife, that was first instituted. Neither is it possible that those that have cast away so basely so much of their strength, should greatly esteem children (being of the same matter) as chaste men do. So likewise during marriage is the case

much amended, as it ought to be if those things were tolerated only for necessity; no, but they remain still as a very affront to marriage.

"The haunting of those dissolute places, or resort to courtesans, are no more punished in married men than in bachelors. And the depraved custom of change, and the delight in meretricious embracements (where sin is turned into art), maketh marriage a dull thing, and a kind of imposition or tax. They hear you defend these things, as done to avoid greater evils; as advoutries, deflowering of virgins, unnatural lust, and the like. But they say this is a preposterous wisdom; and they call it Lot's offer, who to save his guests from abusing, offered his daughters; nay, they say further, that there is little gained in this; for that the same vices and appetites do still remain and abound, unlawful lust being like a furnace, that if you stop the flames altogether it will quench, but if you give it any vent it will rage; as for masculine love, they have no touch of it; and yet there are not so faithful and inviolate friendships in the world again as are there, and to speak generally (as I said before) I have not read of any such chastity in any people as theirs. And their usual saying is that whosoever is unchaste cannot reverence himself; and they say that the reverence of a man's self, is, next religion, the chiefest bridle of all vices."

And when he had said this the good Jew paused a little; whereupon I, far more willing to hear him speak on than to speak myself; yet thinking it decent that upon his pause of speech I should not be altogether silent, said only this; that I would say to him, as the widow of Sarepta said to Elias: "that he was come to bring to memory our sins;" and that I confess the righteousness of Bensalem was greater than the righteousness of Europe. At which speech he bowed his head, and went on this manner:

"They have also many wise and excellent laws, touching marriage. They allow no polygamy. They have ordained that none do intermarry, or contract, until a month be past from their first interview. Marriage without consent of parents they do not make void, but they mulct it in the inheritors; for the children of such marriages are not admitted to inherit above a third part of their parents' inheritance. I have read in a book of one of your men, of a feigned commonwealth, where the married couple are permitted, before they contract, to see one another naked. This they dislike; for they think it a scorn to give a refusal after so familiar knowledge; but because of many hidden defects in men and women's bodies, they have a more civil way; for they have near every town a couple of pools (which they call Adam and Eve's pools), where it is permitted to one of the friends of the man, and another of the friends of the woman, to see them severally bathe naked."

And as we were thus in conference, there came one that seemed to be a messenger, in a rich huke, that spake with the Jew; whereupon he turned to me, and said, "You will pardon me, for I am commanded away in haste." The next morning he came to me again, joyful as it seemed, and said: "There is word come to the governor of the city, that one of the fathers of Salomon's House will be here this day seven-night; we have seen none of them this dozen years. His coming is in state; but the cause of this coming is secret. I will provide you and your fellows of a good standing to see his entry." I thanked him, and told him I was most glad of the news.

The day being come he made his entry. He was a man of middle stature and age, comely of person, and had an aspect as if he pitied men. He was clothed in a robe of fine black cloth and wide sleeves, and a cape: his undergarment was of excellent white linen down to the foot, girt with a girdle of the same; and a sindon or tippet of the same about his neck. He had gloves that were curious, and set with stone; and shoes of peach-colored velvet. His neck was bare to the shoulders. His hat was like a helmet, or Spanish montero; and his locks curled below it decently; they were of color brown. His beard was cut round and of the same color with his hair, somewhat lighter. He was carried in a rich chariot, without wheels, litter-wise, with two horses at either end, richly trapped in blue velvet embroidered; and two footmen on each side in the like attire. The chariot was all of cedar, gilt and adorned with crystal; save that the fore end had panels of sapphires set in borders of gold, and the hinder end the like of emeralds of the Peru color. There was also a sun of gold, radiant upon the top, in the midst; and on the top before a small cherub of gold, with wings displayed. The chariot was covered with cloth-of-gold tissue upon blue. He had before him fifty attendants, young men all, in white satin loose coats up to the mid-leg, and stockings of white silk; and shoes of blue velvet; and hats of blue velvet, with fine plumes of divers colors, set round like hat-bands. Next before the chariot went two men, bare-headed, in linen garments down to the foot, girt, and shoes of blue velvet, who carried the one a crosier, the other a pastoral staff like a sheep-hook; neither of them of metal, but the crosier of balm-wood, the pastoral staff of cedar. Horsemen he had none, neither before nor behind his chariot; as it seemeth, to avoid all tumult and trouble. Behind his chariot went all the officers and principals of the companies of the city. He sat alone, upon cushions, of a kind of excellent plush, blue; and under his foot curious carpets of silk of divers colors, like the Persian, but far finer. He held up his bare hand, as he went, as blessing the people, but in silence. The street was wonderfully well kept; so that there was never any army had their men stand in better battle-array than the people stood. The windows likewise were not crowded, but everyone stood in them, as if they had been placed. When the show was passed, the Jew said to me, "I shall not be able to attend you as I would, in regard of some charge the city hath laid upon me for the entertaining of this great person." Three days after the Jew came to me

again, and said: "Ye are happy men; for the father of Salomon's House taketh knowledge of your being here, and commanded me to tell you that he will admit all your company to his presence, and have private conference with one of you, that ye shall choose; and for this hath appointed the next day after to-morrow. And because he meaneth to give you his blessing, he hath appointed it in the forenoon." We came at our day and hour, and I was chosen by my fellows for the private access. We found him in a fair chamber, richly hanged, and carpeted under foot, without any degrees to the state; he was set upon a low throne richly adorned, and a rich cloth of state over his head of blue satin embroidered. He was alone, save that he had two pages of honor, on either hand one, finely attired in white. His under-garments were the like that we saw him wear in the chariot; but instead of his gown, he had on him a mantle with a cape, of the same fine black, fastened about him. When we came in, as we were taught, we bowed low at our first entrance; and when we were come near his chair, he stood up, holding forth his hand ungloved, and in posture of blessing; and we every one of us stooped down and kissed the end of his tippet. That done, the rest departed, and I remained. Then he warned the pages forth of the room, and caused me to sit down beside him, and spake to me thus in the Spanish tongue:

"God bless thee, my son; I will give thee the greatest jewel I have. For I will impart unto thee, for the love of God and men, a relation of the true state of Salomon's House. Son, to make you know the true state of Salomon's House, I will keep this order. First, I will set forth unto you the end of our foundation. Secondly, the preparations and instruments we have for our works. Thirdly, the several employments and functions whereto our fellows are assigned. And fourthly, the ordinances and rites which we observe.

"The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.

"The preparations and instruments are these: We have large and deep caves of several depths; the deepest are sunk 600 fathoms; and some of them are digged and made under great hills and mountains; so that if you reckon together the depth of the hill and the depth of the cave, they are, some of them, above three miles deep. For we find that the depth of a hill and the depth of a cave from the flat are the same thing; both remote alike from the sun and heaven's beams, and from the open air. These caves we call the lower region. And we use them for all coagulations, indurations, refrigerations, and conservations of bodies. We use them likewise for the imitation of natural mines and the producing also of new artificial metals, by compositions and materials which we use and lay there for many years. We use them also sometimes (which may seem strange) for curing of some diseases, and for prolongation of life, in some hermits that choose to live there, well accommodated of all things necessary, and indeed live very long; by whom also we learn many things.

"We have burials in several earths, where we put divers cements, as the Chinese do their porcelain. But we have them in greater variety, and some of them more fine. We also have great variety of composts and soils, for the making of the earth fruitful.

"We have high towers, the highest about half a mile in height, and some of them likewise set upon high mountains, so that the vantage of the hill with the tower is in the highest of them three miles at least. And these places we call the upper region, account the air between the high places and the low as a middle region.

"We have great lakes, both salt and fresh, whereof we have use for the fish and fowl. We use them also for burials of some natural bodies, for we find a difference in things buried in earth, or in air below the earth, and things buried in water. We have also pools, of which some do strain fresh water out of salt, and others by art do turn fresh water into salt. We have also some rocks in the midst of the sea, and some bays upon the shore for some works, wherein are required the air and vapor of the sea. We have likewise violent streams and cataracts, which serve us for many motions; and likewise engines for multiplying and enforcing of winds to set also on divers motions.

"We have also a number of artificial wells and fountains, made in imitation of the natural sources and baths, as tinted upon vitriol, sulphur, steel, brass, lead, nitre, and other minerals; and again, we have little wells for infusions of many things, where the waters take the virtue quicker and better than in vessels or basins. And among them we have a water, which we call water of paradise, being by that we do it made very sovereign for health and prolongation of life.

"We have also great and spacious houses, where we imitate and demonstrate meteors -- as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightnings; also generations of bodies in air -- as frogs, flies, and divers others.

"We have also certain chambers, which we call chambers of health, where we qualify the air as we think good and proper for the cure of divers diseases and preservation of health.

"We have also fair and large baths, of several mixtures, for the cure of diseases, and the restoring of man's body from arefaction; and others for the confirming of it in strength of sinews, vital parts, and the very juice and substance of the body.

"We have also large and various orchards and gardens, wherein we do not so much respect beauty as variety of ground and soil, proper for divers trees and herbs, and some very spacious, where trees and berries are set, whereof we make divers kinds of drinks, beside the vineyards. In these we practise likewise all conclusions of grafting, and inoculating, as well of wild-trees as fruit-trees, which produceth many effects. And we make by art, in the same orchards and gardens, trees and flowers, to come earlier or later than their seasons, and to come up and bear more speedily than by their natural course they do. We make them also by art greater much than their nature; and their fruit greater and sweeter, and of differing taste, smell, color, and figure, from their nature. And many of them we so order as that they become of medicinal use.

"We have also means to make divers plants rise by mixtures of earths without seeds, and likewise to make divers new plants, differing from the vulgar, and to make one tree or plant turn into another.

"We have also parks, and enclosures of all sorts, of beasts and birds; which we use not only for view or rareness, but likewise for dissections and trials, that thereby may take light what may be wrought upon the body of man. Wherein we find many strange effects: as continuing life in them, though divers parts, which you account vital, be perished and taken forth; resuscitating of some that seem dead in appearance, and the like. We try also all poisons, and other medicines upon them, as well of chirurgery as physic. By art likewise we make them greater or smaller than their kind is, and contrariwise dwarf them and stay their growth; we make them more fruitful and bearing than their kind is, and contrariwise barren and not generative. Also we make them differ in color, shape, activity, many ways. We find means to make commixtures and copulations of divers kinds, which have produced many new kinds, and them not barren, as the general opinion is. We make a number of kinds of serpents, worms, flies, fishes of putrefaction, whereof some are advanced (in effect) to be perfect creatures, like beasts or birds, and have sexes, and do propagate. Neither do we this by chance, but we know beforehand of what matter and commixture, what kind of those creatures will arise.

"We have also particular pools where we make trials upon fishes, as we have said before of beasts and birds.

"We have also places for breed and generation of those kinds of worms and flies which are of special use; such as are with you your silkworms and bees.

"I will not hold you long with recounting of our brew-houses, bake-houses, and kitchens, where are made divers drinks, breads, and meats, rare and of special effects. Wines we have of grapes, and drinks of other juice, of fruits, of grains, and of roots, and of mixtures with honey, sugar, manna, and fruits dried and decocted; also of the tears or wounding of trees and of the pulp of canes. And these drinks are of several ages, some to the age or last of forty years. We have drinks also brewed with several herbs and roots and spices; yea, with several fleshs and white meats; whereof some of the drinks are such as they are in effect meat and drink both, so that divers, especially in age, do desire to live with them with little or no meat or bread. And above all we strive to have drinks of extreme thin parts, to insinuate into the body, and yet without all biting, sharpness, or fretting; insomuch as some of them put upon the back of your hand, will with a little stay pass through to the palm, and yet taste mild to the mouth. We have also waters, which we ripen in that fashion, as they become nourishing, so that they are indeed excellent drinks, and many will use no other. Bread we have of several grains, roots, and kernels; yea, and some of flesh, and fish, dried; with divers kinds of leavings and seasonings; so that some do extremely move appetites, some do nourish so as divers do live of them, without any other meat, who live very long. So for meats, we have some of them so beaten, and made tender, and mortified, yet without all corrupting, as a weak heat of the stomach will turn them into good chylus, as well as a strong heat would meat otherwise prepared. We have some meats also and bread, and drinks, which, taken by men, enable them to fast long after; and some other, that used make the very flesh of men's bodies sensibly more hard and tough, and their strength far greater than otherwise it would be.

"We have dispensatories or shops of medicines; wherein you may easily think, if we have such variety of plants, and living creatures, more than you have in Europe (for we know what you have), the simples, drugs, and ingredients of medicines, must likewise be in so much the greater variety. We have them likewise of divers ages, and long fermentations. And for their preparations, we have not only all manner of exquisite distillations, and separations, and especially by gentle heats, and percolations through divers strainers, yea, and substances; but also exact forms of composition, whereby they incorporate almost as they were natural simples.

"We have also divers mechanical arts, which you have not; and stuffs made by them, as papers, linen, silks, tissues, dainty works of feathers of wonderful lustre, excellent dyes, and many others, and shops likewise as well for such as are not brought into vulgar use among us, as for those that are. For you must know, that of the things before recited, many of them are grown into use throughout the kingdom, but yet, if they did flow from our invention, we have of them also for patterns and principals.

"We have also furnaces of great diversities, and that keep great diversity of heats; fierce and quick, strong and constant, soft and mild, blown, quiet, dry, moist, and the like. But above all we have heats, in imitation of the sun's and heavenly bodies' heats, that pass divers inequalities, and as it were orbs, progresses, and returns whereby we

produce admirable effects. Besides, we have heats of dungs, and of bellies and maws of living creatures and of their bloods and bodies, and of hays and herbs laid up moist, of lime unquenched, and such like. Instruments also which generate heat only by motion. And farther, places for strong insulations; and, again, places under the earth, which by nature or art yield heat. These divers heats we use as the nature of the operation which we intend requireth.

"We have also perspective houses, where we make demonstrations of all lights and radiations and of all colors; and out of things uncolored and transparent we can represent unto you all several colors, not in rainbows, as it is in gems and prisms, but of themselves single. We represent also all multiplications of light, which we carry to great distance, and make so sharp as to discern small points and lines. Also all colorations of light: all delusions and deceits of the sight, in figures, magnitudes, motions, colors; all demonstrations of shadows. We find also divers means, yet unknown to you, of producing of light, originally from divers bodies. We procure means of seeing objects afar off, as in the heaven and remote places; and represent things near as afar off, and things afar off as near; making feigned distances. We have also helps for the sight far above spectacles and glasses in use; we have also glasses and means to see small and minute bodies, perfectly and distinctly; as the shapes and colors of small flies and worms, grains, and flaws in gems which cannot otherwise be seen, observations in urine and blood not otherwise to be seen. We make artificial rainbows, halos, and circles about light. We represent also all manner of reflections, refractions, and multiplications of visual beams of objects.

"We have also precious stones, of all kinds, many of them of great beauty and to you unknown, crystals likewise, and glasses of divers kind; and among them some of metals vitrified, and other materials, besides those of which you make glass. Also a number of fossils and imperfect minerals, which you have not. Likewise loadstones of prodigious virtue, and other rare stones, both natural and artificial.

"We have also sound-houses, where we practise and demonstrate all sounds and their generation. We have harmony which you have not, of quarter-sounds and lesser slides of sounds. Divers instruments of music likewise to you unknown, some sweeter than any you have; with bells and rings that are dainty and sweet. We represent small sounds as great and deep, likewise great sounds extenuate and sharp; we make divers tremblings and warblings of sounds, which in their original are entire. We represent and imitate all articulate sounds and letters, and the voices and notes of beasts and birds. We have certain helps which, set to the ear, do further the hearing greatly; we have also divers strange and artificial echoes, reflecting the voice many times, and, as it were, tossing it; and some that give back the voice louder than it came, some shriller and some deeper; yea, some rendering the voice, differing in the letters or articulate sound from that they receive. We have all means to convey sounds in trunks and pipes, in strange lines and distances.

"We have also perfume-houses, wherewith we join also practices of taste. We multiply smells which may seem strange: we imitate smells, making all smells to breathe out of other mixtures than those that give them. We make divers imitations of taste likewise, so that they will deceive any man's taste. And in this house we contain also a confiture-house, where we make all sweatmeats, dry and moist, and divers pleasant wines, milks, broths, and salads, far in greater variety than you have.

"We have also engine-houses, where are prepared engines and instruments for all sorts of motions. There we imitate and practise to make swifter motions than any you have, either out of your muskets or any engine that you have; and to make them and multiply them more easily and with small force, by wheels and other means, and to make them stronger and more violent than yours are, exceeding your greatest cannons and basilisks. We represent also ordnance and instruments of war and engines of all kinds; and likewise new mixtures and compositions of gunpowder, wild-fires burning in water and unquenchable, also fire-works of all variety, both for pleasure and use. We imitate also flights of birds; we have some degrees of flying in the air. We have ships and boats for going under water and brooking of seas, also swimming-girdles and supporters. We have divers curious clocks and other like motions of return, and some perpetual motions. We imitate also motions of living creatures by images of men, beasts, birds, fishes, and serpents; we have also a great number of other various motions, strange for equality, fineness, and subtilty.

"We have also a mathematical-house, where are represented all instruments, as well of geometry as astronomy, exquisitely made.

"We have also houses of deceits of the senses, where we represent all manner of feats of juggling, false apparitions, impostures and illusions, and their fallacies. And surely you will easily believe that we, that have so many things truly natural which induce admiration, could in a world of particulars deceive the senses if we would disguise those things, and labor to make them more miraculous. But we do hate all impostures and lies, insomuch as we have severely forbidden it to all our fellows, under pain of ignominy and fines, that they do not show any natural work or thing adorned or swelling, but only pure as it is, and without all affectation of strangeness.

"These are, my son, the riches of Salomon's House.

"For the several employments and offices of our fellows, we have twelve that sail into foreign countries under the names of other nations (for our own we conceal), who bring us the books and abstracts, and patterns of experiments of all other parts. These we call merchants of light.

"We have three that collect the experiments which are in all books. These we call depredators.

"We have three that collect the experiments of all mechanical arts, and also of liberal sciences, and also of practices which are not brought into arts. These we call mystery-men.

"We have three that try new experiments, such as themselves think good. These we call pioneers or miners.

"We have three that draw the experiments of the former four into titles and tables, to give the better light for the drawing of observations and axioms out of them. These we call compilers. We have three that bend themselves, looking into the experiments of their fellows, and cast about how to draw out of them things of use and practice for man's life and knowledge, as well for works as for plain demonstration of causes, means of natural divinations, and the easy and clear discovery of the virtues and parts of bodies. These we call dowry-men or benefactors.

"Then after divers meetings and consults of our whole number, to consider of the former labors and collections, we have three that take care out of them to direct new experiments, of a higher light, more penetrating into nature than the former. These we call lamps.

"We have three others that do execute the experiments so directed, and report them. These we call inoculators.

"Lastly, we have three that raise the former discoveries by experiments into greater observations, axioms, and aphorisms. These we call interpreters of nature.

"We have also, as you must think, novices and apprentices, that the succession of the former employed men do not fail; besides a great number of servants and attendants, men and women. And this we do also: we have consultations, which of the inventions and experiences which we have discovered shall be published, and which not; and take all an oath of secrecy for the concealing of those which we think fit to keep secret; though some of those we do reveal sometime to the State, and some not.

"For our ordinances and rites we have two very long and fair galleries. In one of these we place patterns and samples of all manner of the more rare and excellent inventions; in the other we place the statues of all principal inventors. There we have the statue of your Columbus, that discovered the West Indies, also the inventor of ships, your monk that was the inventor of ordnance and of gunpowder, the inventor of music, the inventor of letters, the inventor of printing, the inventor of observations of astronomy, the inventor of works in metal, the inventor of glass, the inventor of silk of the worm, the inventor of wine, the inventor of corn and bread, the inventor of sugars; and all these by more certain tradition than you have. Then we have divers inventors of our own, of excellent works; which, since you have not seen) it were too long to make descriptions of them; and besides, in the right understanding of those descriptions you might easily err. For upon every invention of value we erect a statue to the inventor, and give him a liberal and honorable reward. These statues are some of brass, some of marble and touchstone, some of cedar and other special woods gilt and adorned; some of iron, some of silver, some of gold.

"We have certain hymns and services, which we say daily, of laud and thanks to God for His marvellous works. And forms of prayers, imploring His aid and blessing for the illumination of our labors; and turning them into good and holy uses.

"Lastly, we have circuits or visits, of divers principal cities of the kingdom; where as it cometh to pass we do publish such new profitable inventions as we think good. And we do also declare natural divinations of diseases, plagues, swarms of hurtful creatures, scarcity, tempest, earthquakes, great inundations, comets, temperature of the year, and divers other things; and we give counsel thereupon, what the people shall do for the prevention and remedy of them."

And when he had said this he stood up, and I, as I had been taught, knelt down; and he laid his right hand upon my head, and said: "God bless thee, my son, and God bless this relation which I have made. I give thee leave to publish it, for the good of other nations; for we here are in God's bosom, a land unknown." And so he left me; having assigned a value of about 2,000 ducats for a bounty to me and my fellows. For they give great largesses, where they come, upon all occasions.[THE REST WAS NOT PERFECTED.]

Novalis

There is an interesting allegorical tale with definite alchemical undertones in the German romantic author Novalis' novel *Heinrich von Ofterdingen* which has some parallels with Goethe's *Fairy tale of the Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*.

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The long night had just commenced.

The aged Hero struck his shield so that it sounded far and wide through the empty city streets. Three times he did the same, signalling: at which the lofty stained glass windows of the palace began to brighten from within, and the figures on them moved.

Their movements quickened as the fiery light grew in strength and spread onto the streets. The great pillars and walls were also illumined gradually, standing forth, at the last, in the purest milk-blue shimmer shot through with subtle colours.

The whole region was now visible, and the reflection of the figures... the melee of lances and swords, shields and helmets, bowing down on every side to the crowns which appeared here and there, and which in turn finally withdrew and retreated before a simple green wreath, to form a wide circle around it... all this was mirrored in the frozen sea encircling the mountain on which the city stood.

The distant chain of mountains that enclosed the sea was also bathed to its roots in the soft glow. Nothing could be discerned clearly, but a strange noise echoed through the peaks as if from a far off mighty forge.

The city, by contrast, appeared bright and clear. The gorgeous rays reflected from its smooth glass-like walls and discovered the laudable symmetry and noble design of all the buildings and their pleasant allocation. Set before each window stood a fine earthenware vase filled with blossoms of snow and ice which glittered enchantingly.

Prominent above all else in splendour was the garden in the great square before the palace; a garden wrought with metal trees and crystal plants, and scattered with flower and fruit of jewel. The diversity and elegance of these forms, and the richness of light and colour, created the most sumptuous spectacle; its magnificence crowned by a lofty fountain frozen to ice at the centre of the garden. Slowly, the aged Hero passed in front of the palace gate. A voice from within called his name. He pushed against the gate, which opened with a gentle ringing sound, and stepped into the hall, holding his shield before his eyes.

"Have you discovered nothing yet?" said the beautiful daughter of Arcturus in an anguished voice. She lay against silken cushions, upon a throne fashioned skilfully from one huge sulphur crystal, while her delicate limbs, which seemed as if they blended together the whiteness of milk with the crimson of roses, were massaged thoroughly by several maids-in-waiting. A brilliance radiated from beneath their hands, and a sweet-smelling breeze wafted through the hall.

The Hero was silent.

"Let me touch your shield," she said, softly.

He moved towards the throne and stood upon the costly carpet. She took his hand, pressed it tenderly to her heavenly breast, and touched his shield. His armour rang, and a pervasive strength re-vitalised his body. His eyes flashed, and his heart could be heard as it beat against his breastplate. The beautiful Freya seemed happier, and the light streaming from her grew more intense.

"The King approaches!" cried a splendid bird, perched in a recess of the throne. The handmaidens drew a sky-blue coverlet around the princess, arranging it above her breast. The Hero lowered his shield and looked toward the dome, from which a broad staircase wound to each side of the hall. Soft music preceded the King, who appeared soon after in the dome and descended with a numerous retinue. The splendid bird spread its dazzling wings, stirred them gently, and sang to the King as if with a thousand voices:

Soon will the noble stranger come, and Time

His endless reign begin: The warmth return!

The Queen will waken from the sway of Dream

When Earth and Sea, enjoined by Love, are one.

Once Fable has her ancient right reclaimed

The cold of Night from all this realm will leave:

In Freya's womb, the World awake enflamed,

And every lover chance upon his love.

The King embraced his daughter tenderly. The spirits of the constellations grouped themselves around the throne, and the Hero took his place among them. An infinite multitude of stars filled the hall in decorative clusters. The maids-in-waiting carried in a table and a casket holding several cards which bore holy and profound symbols formed entirely from patterns of stars. The King kissed the cards with reverence, shuffled them carefully, and handed a part of them to his daughter. The rest he withheld for himself. The princess drew them forth, one after another, and laid them on the table. Then the King studied his own, and made his selection with great care before adding one to those others. At times he seemed compelled to choose a certain card: but often his delight was quite apparent when, by virtue of some happy circumstance, he was able to arrange the signs and symbols in a beautiful harmony.

As play began the spectators showed signs of a deep involvement and, as if each one held some invisible instrument in his hand, wielding it excitedly, they made the strangest movements and gesticulations. At the same time, a soft but soul-stirring music carried on the air; the seeming product of the stars interweaving wondrously in the hall and the other strange activities. The stars flew by, now slowly, now swiftly, in ever-changing patterns and, in keeping with the rhythms of the music, they conformed to the figures on the cards in the most skilful fashion. The music, like the symbols on the table, was in continual flux; but, despite the frequently exotic and complex transitions, a simple theme lent it the effect of unity. With astonishing grace the stars flew, echoing the patterns: Now they were all together in a dense constellation: Now disposed in beauteous clusters: Now the long processional scattered, like a beam of light, into countless sparks: Now, as they formed into smaller groups and concentrations, a vast over-all design would suddenly emerge.

Throughout this time the figures in the stained-glass windows remained still. The bird displayed his coat of dazzling feathers with endless invention. Hitherto, the aged Hero had been busy with his own, unseen work, when suddenly the King cried out in joy:

‘All will be well! Iron, cast your sword into the world, that it may know where peace is to be found.’ The Hero freed the sword at his side, held it pointing toward the sky, then took and hurled it through the open window, beyond the city and beyond the sea of ice. It sped through the air like a comet, and seemed to shatter against the circle of mountains, for it rang distantly and fell in a glitter of sparks.

At this same time, the handsome boy Eros slept peacefully in his cradle while Ginnistan, his nurse, rocked him and gave the breast to his foster-sister Fable. So that the glare of the brightly burning lamp which the Scribe had set before himself might not disturb the baby boy, she had spread her gaily coloured shawl over the cradle. The Scribe wrote tirelessly, glancing sourly at the children once in a while, and scowling darkly at the nurse. She smiled back pleasantly and kept silent.

The Father of the children came in and out continually, looking over to the babes each time, and nodding amiably to Ginnistan. He always had something to tell the Scribe who, listening with a keen attention, would note it down and then hand the pages to a noble, almost divine, woman who reclined against an altar. A dark bowl of water stood there into which she dipped the pages every time, glancing down with a contented smile. If, upon drawing them out, she perceived that certain passages held fast and shone brightly, she would give the page back to the Scribe to be fastened in a large book. Often, should his labours prove fruitless and all be washed away, he would seem disgruntled.

At times, the woman would turn to Ginnistan and the children, dip her finger in the bowl, and sprinkle several droplets over them. As soon as they touched the nurse, the baby, or the cradle, they dispelled in a blue mist which contained a thousand intriguing visions, always changing and hovering at hand. If a droplet chanced to hit the Scribe a cascade of numbers and geometrical figures poured to the ground. Laboriously, he strung them on a thread and hung them round his neck by way of adornment.

The boy's Mother, the very incarnation of grace and charm, came in frequently. She was invariably busy and always left with some article of the household furnishings. If the suspicious Scribe, who perused her with prying glances, should chance to remark this, he started on a lengthy harangue, to which no-one paid the slightest attention. They were all, it appeared, quite accustomed to his pointless objections.

Once in a while the Mother took little Fable to her breast, but soon she would be called away once again and Ginnistan take back the child, who seemed to prefer to suck at the nurse's breast. Suddenly, the Father brought in a slender rod of iron which he had found in the courtyard. The Scribe examined it, turning it over in his hands with great excitement, and soon discovered that if suspended by a thread at its point of balance, it pointed North of its own accord. Ginnistan also took it in her hand, bent it, shaped it, breathed on it and, in a short while, fashioned it like a snake surprised in the act of biting its own tail. The Scribe soon wearied of his investigation, but recorded the facts precisely and proposed in great detail the uses this discovery might yield. How mortified he was when his entire script failed to stand the test and the page emerged blank from the bowl.

The nurse went on playing, sometimes touching the cradle with the snake. The boy would waken then, throwing back his covers, and reach with one hand for the light and with the other for the serpent. Once able to grasp it, he leapt vigorously from the cradle so that Ginnistan was startled and the Scribe almost slipped from his stool in terror. Covered only by long golden hair he stood there in the room and, delighted beyond words, gazed on the prize as it strained to the North in his hands and shook him, so it seemed, to the core of his being.

He grew visibly.

"Sophia," he said to the woman in a touching voice, "Let me drink from the bowl."

She handed it to him on the instant and he drank without halt while the bowl seemed to keep itself replenished. Finally he returned it and embraced the noble woman fervently. Hugging Ginnistan, he begged of her the brightly coloured shawl and tied it modestly around his hips. He took up little Fable in his arms. She appeared to take a great

delight in his company and began to prattle. Ginnistan fussed about him. She looked exceedingly charming and alluring, and drew him to her with the eagerness of a bride. With a whispered word she led him to the chamber door, but Sophia motioned urgently and pointed to the snake. And then his Mother entered and he ran to her at once with scalding tears of welcome. The Scribe had left in a fury.

The Father came in, and when he saw mother and son in their silent embrace he passed behind them toward the seductive Ginnistan and caressed her. Sophia climbed the stair. Little Fable took up the Scribe's pen and began to write. Mother and son were deep in whispered conversation, and the Father stole away to a chamber with Ginnistan, to restore himself in her arms after the day's labour. At length Sophia returned, and the Scribe entered. The Father left the chamber and went back to his work. Ginnistan came in with flushed cheeks. In a torrent of abuse the Scribe drove little Fable from the stool, and found that it took some time to put his effects in order. He handed the leaves that Fable had written to Sophia, thinking to get them back quite clean, but flared at once into high dudgeon when Sophia retrieved the pages from the bowl and laid them before him shining and unscathed. Fable held close to her Mother, who comforted her and then swept out the room, opened the windows, let in fresh air and began to prepare an appetising meal.

Through the windows one could contemplate the finest of views, and a clear sky stretching over the earth. In the courtyard the Father worked busily. Whenever he tired he looked up to the casement where Ginnistan stood throwing all manner of sweetmeats down to him. The Mother and son assisted everywhere, making their preparations for the plan they had conceived. The Scribe scratched away with his pen, grimacing sourly if ever he needed recourse to Ginnistan, whose memory was exceptional and retained all that had happened.

Presently Eros arrived, clad in superb armour, with the gaily coloured shawl tied round it like a sash, and asked for Sophia's advice concerning how and when he should embark upon his journey. The Scribe interposed at once and hurriedly offered a detailed itinerary, but his proposals were ignored.

"You may start your journey immediately, with Ginnistan for a companion," said Sophia. "She is acquainted with the road and well-known everywhere. She will assume the semblance of your Mother, in order to keep you from temptation. If you find the King, think of me and I will come to help you."

Ginnistan and the Mother exchanged forms, thus giving, it seemed, great pleasure to the Father. The Scribe was happy that the pair were leaving, especially as Ginnistan made him a farewell gift of her pocket-book in which the history of the house was recorded in detail. Only little Fable remained as a thorn in his flesh; for the sake of peace and quiet he could have wished for nothing better than to number her among those departing. Sophia spoke a blessing as they knelt before her and gave them a vessel filled with water from the bowl to carry on their journey. The Mother was extremely anxious. Little Fable wished to go as well; but the Father, too involved outside the house, took little interest in the leave-taking. It was night, and the moon was overhead, when they left on their travels.

"Dear Eros," said Ginnistan, "we must hurry to reach my father; it is a long time since he saw me last, and he has searched for me tirelessly across the face of the earth. Do you see his pale face lined with grief? Your testimony will make me known to him in this unfamiliar body."

Eros took the paths of night

By the pallid Moon espied:

All in rarest gem bedight

The realm of Shadow opened wide.

Covered with a mist of blue

Hemmed with a golden seam,

He followed Fancy as she drew

Him over land and stream.

Courage filled the panting breast;

The youthful heart, desire:

Future joy upon him pressed

And fed his growing fire.

Yearning wept, all unaware

That Love came on apace:

Lines of tearfulness and care

Deepened on her face.

The little snake was true and firm

And pointed to the North.

They followed, with no fear of harm,

The guide that led them forth.

Through desert and the clouds' demesne

The cheerless path of Eros ran,
Til he before the Moon was seen,
Hand in hand with Ginnistan.
The Moon sat on his silver throne,
Torn by grief, and set apart:
But when his daughter's voice was known
He drew her to his heart.

Eros stood by, deeply touched at their affectionate embraces. The old man, profoundly shaken, finally recollected himself and welcomed his guest. He seized a great horn and blew upon it with all his might, sounding a tremendous call throughout the primeval castle. The pointed towers, with their glistening gargoyles and steep black roofs, trembled. The castle came to rest; for it had passed over to the mountains beyond the sea. Servants swept in from every side. Their strange appearance and attire did not unnerve brave Eros, and to Ginnistan they were a source of great delight. She greeted her old acquaintances and they assembled before her with fresh heart, each, in accord with its nature, exulting.

The boisterous spirit of High Tide followed on gentle Ebb. Ancient Hurricanes lay down on the throbbing breasts of fiery, passionate Earthquakes. Showers of fine Rain searched for the many-coloured Rainbow who stood there paling, away from the Sun which holds a greater attraction for him. Berating the foolishness of young Lightnings, Thunder growled from behind innumerable Clouds which hovered in thousand fold charm and urged on the fiery youngsters. The two lovely sisters, Morning and Eve, took especial joy in the arrival of the two visitors and wept quietly as they embraced them. Words could not convey the spectacle of this strange retinue. The old king did not tire of gazing on his daughter. She felt a tenfold happiness in her father's castle, and never wearied of watching the familiar marvels and rarities. When the king gave her the key to his Treasure House, and granted her permission to arrange an entertainment for Eros, to divert him until the signal was given to retire, her joy was inexpressible.

The Treasure House was an extensive garden which, in variety and wealth, defied description. Among the imposing weather-trees stood countless fantastical castles of awesome design, each one surpassing the last. Everywhere there roamed large flocks of sheep with silver-white, golden and rose-coloured fleece, and the strangest creatures peopled the grove. Remarkable tableaux stood here and there and the attention was caught constantly by festive processions and strange vehicles which appeared everywhere. The flower-beds were full of the brightest blossoms, and the buildings piled high with all manner of weaponry; filled with the richest of rugs and tapestries; curtains, drinking bowls and every type of utensil and tool in an endless array. From a height they looked out upon a romantic country studded with cities and castles, temples and sepulchres: All the charm of inhabited plains offered alongside the fearful attraction of wastes and towering mountains. The most beautiful colours were shown in the happiest blends. The mountain peaks flared like beacons in their caps of snow and ice. The plains rejoiced in freshest green. The distance was clothed in every shade of blue, and on the dark face of the sea there fluttered multi-coloured pennants from innumerable fleets. Here, in the background, a shipwreck could be seen, and in the foreground jovial peasants intent on a rustic meal: There, the sublime eruption of a volcano and the ravages of an earthquake: Here, lovers caressing fondly in the shade of trees. On one side, a fearsome battle, and below it an arena filled with absurd masqueraders: In another quarter of the foreground, an inconsolable lover gripping the corpse of a youth on a bier, with the weeping parents close by: In the distance, a fond mother with a baby at her breast and angels sitting at her feet or gazing down from the branches overhead.

The scenes changed continually and finally transformed into one vast mystic spectacle. Heaven and Earth were reduced to Chaos. All horrors had broken loose. A mighty voice gave the alarm. Ghastly multitudes of skeletons with black banners came down like a storm from the dark mountains and attacked Life which, in youthful congregations, was involved in joyous festivity on the plain, foreseeing no attack. An awful confusion raged: The Earth trembled: The storm roared, and the night was lit by the glare of frightful meteors. With unimaginable cruelty the army of spectres tore the young limbs of the living apart. A funeral pyre was erected and, amid the most fearful lamentations, the children of Life were consumed by the flames. Suddenly, from the heap of black ash, a milky-blue stream sprang forth in all directions. The spectres made to flee, but the flood grew visibly and engulfed the hideous brood. Soon each horror was destroyed. Heaven and Earth commingled in sweet music. A beautiful, wondrous flower gleamed and floated on the gentle waves. A shining bow arched over the waters, peopled on either side with god-like beings seated on resplendent thrones. At the zenith sat Sophia holding the bowl in her hand and, beside her, a forceful man with a wreath of oak-leaves in his hair and a palm of peace carried in place of a sceptre in his right hand. A lily leaf dipped over the calyx of the floating flower and upon it sat little Fable singing the sweetest songs to the accompaniment of her harp. In the bowl of the flower lay Eros himself, bent over a beautiful, sleeping maiden who held him tightly in her arms. A smaller blossom closed over them, so that below the waist they appeared transformed into a flower.

The enraptured Eros thanked Ginnistan profusely. He took her lovingly in his arms, and she returned his caresses. Exhausted by the rigours of the journey and the great variety of the scenes he had witnessed, he longed for comfort and rest. Ginnistan, who felt warmly attracted to the handsome youth, was careful to make no mention of the water Sophia had given him to carry. She led him to a distant bathing place, took off his armour, and arrayed herself in a night-gown in which she looked mysterious and seductive. Eros plunged into the stormy waves and emerged exultant. Ginnistan dried him and rubbed his strong limbs which were taut with youthful freshness. In the heat of desire he recalled his beloved and, in sweet delusion, embraced the alluring Ginnistan. Without further thought he succumbed to a heedless passion and at last, after the most voluptuous delights, he fell asleep on her enchanting breast.

During this time a sad transformation had come about at home. The Scribe had enlisted the servants in a dangerous conspiracy. His hostile mind had long sought the opportunity to take control of the household management and to relieve himself of his burdens. He had discovered it. Firstly his underlings seized the Mother and put her in chains of iron. The Father was held likewise, kept on bread and water. Little Fable heard the uproar in the room. She crept behind the altar and, discovering a secret door in its rear side, managed with great skill to open it and find a stairway leading down inside. She pulled the door closed behind her and climbed down the steps in darkness. The Scribe burst violently into the chamber to revenge himself on little Fable and to take Sophia captive. Neither was to be found. The bowl was also missing. In his fury he shattered the altar in a thousand pieces without, however, remarking the secret stairway.

Little Fable descended for quite some time. Finally she emerged into an open courtyard enclosed by a majestic colonnade and shut off by a huge gate. Everything was dark here. The air was like a monstrous shadow: Black rays beamed from a body in the sky. All the forms were clearly distinguishable, since each object presented a different shade of black and cast a faint radiance behind. It seemed that light and shade had reversed their roles here. Fable was delighted to be in this novel world. She examined everything with childlike curiosity. At last she came to the gate before which, on a massy pedestal, there lay a beautiful Sphinx.

"What is it you seek?" said the Sphinx.

"My own inheritance," replied Fable.

"Where do you come from?"

"From ancient times."

"You are still a child."

"And shall stay a child forever."

"Who will stand by you?"

"I stand alone. Where are the Sisters?" asked Fable.

"Everywhere and nowhere," answered the Sphinx.

"Do you know me?"

"Not yet."

"Where is Love?"

"In the imagination."

"And Sophia?"

The Sphinx muttered inaudibly to herself and rustled her wings.

"Sophia and Love!" cried Fable triumphantly, and passed through the gate.

She stepped into an awesome cavern and went cheerfully towards the ancient Sisters who plied at their mysterious labour by the miserly light of a lamp which gave forth darkness. They pretended ignorance of their small visitor, who moved busily from one to another with sweet endearments. Finally one of them, eyeing her askint, croaked in a harsh voice:

"What do you want here, you n'er-do-well? Who lets you in? Your childish prancing disturbs this steady flame and the oil is used up to no purpose. Can you not be seated and find some work?"

"Dear kinswoman," said Fable, "It matters little to me if I am idle. I really had to laugh at your doorkeeper. She would have liked to hug me to her breast, but she must have eaten too much: She was unable to stand. Let me sit beyond the door and give me something to spin: I cannot see very well here and, what is more, I need leave to sing and chatter, and that might disturb you in your profound meditations."

"You shall not go outside, but, in the side room a ray of light from the upper world breaks through a crack in the rocks. You may spin there if you have skill enough. There are great heaps of scraps and oddments here. Twist them together. But be wary; if you are lackadaisical, or if the thread snaps, then the twine will bind you and strangle you." The old woman chuckled maliciously and continued her spinning. Fable gathered an armful of threads, took a distaff and spindle, and skipped singing into the side room. She looked through the crevice and saw the constellation of Phoenix. Pleased with this good omen she began to spin joyfully and, with the door left ajar, sang in a quiet voice:

Children of the past,
Within your cells awake:
Leave the beds of rest,
For soon the dawn will break.
I weave your threads of life
Into one web alone!
Farewell, the years of strife:
Your being shall be one!
Each in the other dwell
And, in the one, live all:
One heart within you swell:
One breath arise and fall.
Sorcery and Dream
And things of Spirit yet,
Into the cavern stream:
The holy Sisters fret!

The spindle whirled with unbelievable proficiency between her little feet while she twisted the slender thread with both hands. As she sang, numerous tiny flames appeared slipping through the opening in the door and swarming through the cavern in the semblance of hideous spectres. The old crones meanwhile, had kept on with their spinning in a bad temper, waiting for the abject cries of little Fable; how terrified they were when, without warning, a monstrous nose peered over their shoulders and, on looking around, they saw the entire cavern filled with grotesque beings bent on every kind of mischief. The Sisters clung to each other, wailing in fearful chorus, and would have turned to stone from sheer fright had not the Scribe entered the cavern at this moment bearing a mandrake root. The tiny flames withdrew into the cleft in the rock and, because the black lamp had been overturned in the confusion and extinguished, the cavern itself became bright. The old hags were pleased when they heard the Scribe approaching, but filled with hatred for little Fable. They called her forth, snarled fiercely at her, and forbade her to spin anymore. The Scribe sneered complacently because he thought that little Fable was now in his power and he said:

"It is fortunate that you are here and can be put to work. I hope that there will be no lack of punishments. Your good genius guided you here. I wish you long life and great satisfaction."

"I thank you for your good wishes," said Fable. "It seems apparent that the day is yours. All you require is an hourglass and scythe to look just like the brother of my kinswomen here. If you should ever have need of goose-quills, just pluck a handful of that soft down from your cheeks."

The Scribe seemed on the point of attacking her, but she smiled and said:

"If you value that fine heads of hair and your bright eyes, be careful and consider my nails; you have little else to lose."

Suppressing his rage he turned to the Sisters who were wiping their eyes and groping for their distaffs; for, since the lamp had been extinguished, they could find nothing and so heaped insults on Fable.

"Give her leave to catch Tarantulas for the preparation of your oil," he said cunningly. "I am happy to tell you, by way of consolation, that Eros flies about ceaselessly and will keep your shears in good use. His Mother, who so often forced you to spin the threads longer, will fall a prey to the flames tomorrow."

When he saw that Fable shed a few tears at this news, he tickled himself to induce laughter and, handing part of the root to the old crones, he walked away with his nose in the air. With angry voices the Sisters ordered Fable to search out Tarantulas, albeit they kept a store of oil, and she hurried away. She pretended to open the gate but, instead, slammed it shut noisily and slipped silently to the back of the cavern where a ladder hung down. She climbed it rapidly and soon reached a trapdoor which opened on the chamber of Arcturus.

The King sat surrounded by his counsellors when Fable appeared. The Northern Crown graced his head. In his left hand he held the Lily, in his right hand the Scales. The Eagle and the Lion sat at his feet.

"Monarch," said Fable, as she bowed to him respectfully: "Hail to your well-founded throne! Glad news for your suffering heart! A speedy return of Wisdom! An eternal awakening to peace! Rest to restless love! Transfiguration of the heart! Long life to antiquity and form to futurity!"

The King touched her with the Lily on her guileless brow.

"Whatever you ask will be granted you."

"I will ask three times. When the fourth time comes, Love will be at the door. Now, give me the Lyre."

"Eridanus! Bring it here!" cried the King.

Eridanus streamed from the ceiling with a rushing sound, and Fable drew the Lyre from his sparkling waters.

Several times Fable sounded the Lyre prophetically. The King ordered a goblet to be passed to her. She drank a little from it and then, with many expressions of thanks, hastened away. She glided across the sea of ice in beautiful curves and sweeps, invoking a joyous music from the strings. Beneath her feet the ice gave forth the most glorious sounds. The Rock of Grief took them for the voices of his returning children searching out their way and answered with a thousand-fold echo.

Fable soon arrived at the shore. She met with her mother, who looked haggard and wan, and had become thin and solemn, revealing in her noble features traces of hopeless sorrow and touching faith.

"What has happened to you, dear mother?" said Fable. "You appear to have changed completely. But for my intuition I would not have recognised you. I had hoped to refresh myself once again at your breast. I have pined a long time for you."

"I thought from the first," she said, "that the Scribe would not catch you. The sight of you restores me. My circumstances are wretched and poor enough but I shall soon find consolation. Perhaps a moment of rest will fall to me. Eros is close by: If he sees you and you distract him with idle conversation perhaps he will stay for a while. In the meantime, you may come to my breast. I will give you what I have."

She took the little one upon her lap, gave her the breast and, as she smiled down on the child enjoying her refreshment, continued:

"It is I who am to blame for the wildness and inconstancy of Eros. Yet I cannot regret it, for the hours that I spent in his arms have made me immortal. I thought I would melt away beneath his fiery caresses. Like a god-like brigand it seemed as if he wished to destroy me cruelly and to triumph proudly over his quivering prey. We awoke late from our forbidden frenzy in a state of curious transformation. Long silver-white wings covered his pale shoulders and hid the delicious fullness and curves of his body. The power which had surged to speed his growth from boy to youth seemed to have passed into those splendid wings, as he had become a boy again. The constant ardour of his face was transformed into the wayward fire of a will-of-the-wisp, his profound earnestness into artful roguery, his thoughtful calm into childish whimsicality, his noble poise into clownish restlessness.

"I was drawn irresistibly to this wilful boy by a powerful compulsion, and felt keenly his mocking smiles and indifference to my pitiable entreaties. I saw my aspect change. My carefree contentment disappeared and gave way to a sad affliction, a sensitive timidity. I would have preferred to conceal myself with Eros from the eyes of the world. I did not have the courage to meet his quizzical gaze and felt horribly shamed and humiliated. I thought of nothing but him and would have sacrificed my life to deliver him from his hurtful ways. Yet I could only adore him, however deeply he might wound my feelings.

"Since the time when he arose and deserted me, however touchingly I called on him with burning tears to remain, I have followed him everywhere. He seems fully determined to torment me. Hardly do I catch up with him when away he flies, maliciously. His bow plants confusion everywhere. Although in need of comfort myself I can do nothing but comfort the unhappy ones. The voices which cry to me point out his way and their woeful lamentation when I am forced to leave them cuts me to the heart. The Scribe pursues us in a terrible fury and vents his spite on the wretched stricken ones.

"The fruit of that strange night was a host of mysterious children who resemble their grandfather and who take their name from him. Winged like their father they accompany him constantly and torment the poor creatures who are struck by his arrows.

"But here comes the procession of the happy ones. I must leave. Farewell, sweet child. His nearness fires my passion. May you prosper in your undertaking."

Eros swept by without so much as a friendly glance for Ginnistan, who hastened towards him. But he turned to Fable amiably and his small companions danced happily around her. Fable was delighted to see her foster-brother again and sang a merry song to the accomplishment of her Lyre. Eros seemed to verge upon reflection and let fall his bow. The little ones fell asleep on the grass. Ginnistan was able to hold him, and he suffered her tender caresses. Finally, Eros himself began to sway, nestled in Ginnistan's lap, and drifted into slumber, covering her with his wings. The weary Ginnistan was filled with joy and never took her eyes away from the handsome sleeper. During the singing, Tarantulas appeared on every side, drawing a glittering net over the blades of grass and moving nimbly along their threads in time to the rhythm. At this point Fable comforted her mother and promised her help soon. The music echoed softly from the cliff: A lullaby for those who slept. Ginnistan sprinkled a few droplets from the closely guarded vessel and the sweetest dreams descended on them. Fable took the vial and proceeded on her journey. The strings of her Lyre were never stilled and the Tarantulas followed the enchanting sounds on hastily spun thread.

Presently she saw the leaping flames of the funeral pyre in the distance, towering above the green forest. Sadly, she looked up to the sky and was heartened to catch a sight of Sophia's blue veil which floated and swirled over the earth, covering the vast depths eternally. The Sun hung in the sky, fiery red with anger; but the powerful flame

sucked at the light and stole it and, however hard the Sun tried to hold its own, it grew paler and more flecked. The conflagration became white and intense as the Sun went into its decline. It drew off the light with increasing power and soon the glory of the daystar was consumed and it remained merely as a faint glowing disc whose every convulsion of envy and rage hastened the flight of the escaping rays of light. Finally nothing was left of the sun but a black, burnt-out cinder, which fell into the sea. The flame had become brilliant beyond words. The funeral pyre was consumed. The flame lifted slowly and moved towards the North.

Fable went into the courtyard, which looked desolate: The house, also, was fallen into ruin. Briars grew from the cracks in the window ledges and all manner of vermin swarmed over the fallen stairways. In the chamber she heard a fearful uproar. The Scribe and his followers had been gloating over the Mother's death in the flames, but were now in an awful panic witnessing the destruction of the Sun.

They had striven in vain to quell the flame and had not escaped without injury from their enterprise. Pain and fear drew fearsome curses and lamentations from them. Their terror increased when Fable stepped into the room and they rushed at her with cries of rage in order to vent their fury on her. Fable slipped behind the cradle and her pursuers rushed blindly into the web of the Tarantulas, which took vengeance on them with countless bites. The whole assembly began at once to dance wildly; at which Fable played a sprightly tune. Laughing roundly at their ludicrous antics she walked to the altar and cleared the ruins to uncover the hidden stairway, down which she passed with her retinue of Tarantulas.

The Sphinx asked: "What strikes more suddenly than lightning?"

"Vengeance," said Fable.

"What is most transitory?"

"Wrongful possession."

"Who knows the world?"

"He who knows himself."

"What is the eternal mystery?"

"Love."

"With whom does it reside?"

"With Sophia."

The Sphinx drew back abjectly and Fable entered the cavern.

"I have brought Tarantulas for you," she said to the old Sisters, who had lit their lamp again and were very busy at their work. They started with fear, and one of them ran to her to stab her with the shears. Inadvertently, she stepped on a Tarantula which stung her in the foot. She screamed piteously. The others attempted to help her and were likewise stung by the enraged Tarantulas. Hereafter they could not lay hands upon Fable, but sprang about wildly.

"Spin us light dancing clothes at once," they cried furiously to the little girl. "We cannot move in these stiff skirts and we are stifling in the heat. But be sure to soak the thread in spider-juice so that it will not snap. And weave into it flowers that have grown in fire, otherwise your life is forfeit."

"Gladly," said Fable, and stepped into the side room.

"I will bring you three choice flies," she said to the garden spiders which had fastened their delicate webs all around the ceiling and walls. "But first you must spin me three light and pretty dresses. I will fetch the flowers that are to be woven into them at once."

The garden spiders were willing and began to weave rapidly. Fable stole across to the ladder and made her way to Arcturus.

"Monarch," she said. "The wicked are dancing and the good rest. Has the flame arrived?"

"It has arrived," said the King. "The night is passed and the ice is melting. My consort can be seen in the distance: She who was my enemy is burned. Everything begins to live. I may not show myself yet, for by myself I am no King. Ask what you will."

"I need," said Fable, "flowers that have grown in fire. I understand you have a skilful gardener who knows how to grow them."

"Zinc!" cried the King. "Give us flowers!"

The flower gardener came forward from the ranks, brought a pot full of fire, and sowed it with gleaming pollen. In a short while the flowers sprang up. Fable gathered them in her apron and started back. The spiders had worked hard and nothing remained but to fasten on the flowers; a task which they undertook at once with taste and skill. Fable was careful not to snap the ends of the threads which still held to the weavers.

She carried the dresses through to the exhausted dancers, who had collapsed, dripping with perspiration, to recover awhile from their novel exertions. With great dexterity she undressed the scrawny beauties, who were not without abuse for their little handmaid, and clothed them in the new garments which were neatly made and fitted perfectly. While thus occupied, she praised the charm and sweet disposition of her mistresses, and the crones were well

pleased with her flattery and the daintiness of the dresses. They had found their breath again, meanwhile, and inspired by a fresh desire to dance they whirled around jauntily, artfully promising the young child a long life and great reward.

Fable went into the side room and addressed the garden spiders: "You may now feast on the flies I have put into your webs."

The spiders were already impatient with the pulling and tugging, for the ends of the threads were still inside them and the old crones leapt about wildly, so they ran out and fell upon the dancers. The old women looked to defend themselves with their shears but Fable had silently made away with them. As a result, they succumbed to their hungry fellow-craftsmen, who had not tasted such delicious fare for a long time and sucked them to the very marrow. Fable looked up through the cleft in the rock and caught sight of Perseus with his mighty iron shield. The shears flew to the shield of their own accord, and Fable requested him to clip Eros' wings with them, and then to immortalise the Sisters with his shield and so finish his great work. She then left the subterranean realm and ascended joyously to the palace of Arcturus.

"The Flax is spun: The lifeless is again without Life: The living will rule, shaping and using the lifeless: The inward will be revealed and the outward hidden: The curtain will rise soon and the play commence. I shall petition you once more, and then spin days of eternity."

"Blessed child," said the Monarch, touched. "You are our liberator."

"I am merely the godchild of Sophia," said the little girl. "Grant that Turmaline, the flower gardener, and Gold may accompany me. I must gather up the ashes of my foster-mother, and the ancient Bearer must rise again so that the Earth may float and not lie upon Chaos."

The King summoned all three and commanded them to attend on little Fable. The city was bright and the streets were bustling. The sea broke with a roar against the hollow crags and Fable travelled across in the Kings' chariot with her companions. Turmaline gathered the flying ashes carefully. They circled the Earth until they reached the old Giant, down whose shoulders they climbed. He seemed to be paralysed by a stroke and could not move a limb. Gold placed a coin in his mouth and the flower gardener thrust a bowl below his loins. Fable touched his eyes and emptied her small jug on his brow. As soon as the water had flowed over his eyes, into his mouth, and down his body into the bowl, a spark of life quivered through all his muscles. He opened his eyes and drew himself up vigorously. Fable sprang back to join her companions on the rising Earth and bade him a friendly good morning. "Are you here once again, dear child?" said the old Giant. "I have dreamed of you time and again. I had always thought you would appear before the Earth any my eyes grew too heavy for me. I must have been sleeping for a long time."

"The Earth is light again, as it always has been for the good," said Fable. "The ancient times are returning. Soon you will be amongst old acquaintances. I shall spin happy days for you, and you will not be without a helper, moreover, so that you may sometimes share in our joys, and breathe youth and strength in the arms of a lover. Where are our old, generous friends, the Hesperides?"

"At Sophia's side. Soon their garden will bloom again and the golden fruits send forth their fragrance. Even now they move about and gather the drooping plants."

Fable departed and hurried to the house. It had fallen into complete ruin. Ivy grew over the walls. High bushes cast their shade on the former courtyard and soft moss cushioned the ancient stairways. She entered the room. Sophia was standing by the resurrected altar. Eros lay at her feet in full armour, looking grave and nobler than ever before. A magnificent chandelier hung from the ceiling. The floor was paved with a variety of stone, and a wide circle, consisting entirely of noble and apposite figures, was inlaid around the altar. Ginnistan was bending over a bier on which the Father lay, apparently in deep sleep. She was weeping. Her bloom of sweetness was infinitely enhanced by this evidence of devotion and love. Fable offered the urn, in which the ashes were collected, to the holy Sophia who took it tenderly in her arms.

"Sweet child," she said. "Your zeal and loyalty have won a place for you among the eternal stars. You chose that part of you which is immortal. The Phoenix belongs to you. You will be the soul to our life. Rouse the bridegroom now. The herald will call and Eros must seek out Freya and awaken her."

Fable was indescribably happy to hear these words. She called her companions, Gold and Zinc, and approached the bier. Ginnistan followed their actions expectantly. Gold melted a coin and filled the hollow in which the father lay with a glittering flood. Zinc wound a chain around Ginnistan's breast. The body floated on the shimmering waves. "Bend down, dear mother," said Fable, "and lay your hand on the heart of your beloved."

Ginnistan leant forward. She saw her reflection multiplied many times. The chain touched the waves, her hand his heart. He awoke and drew the enraptured bride to his bosom. The metal was becalmed and became a bright mirror. The Father rose, his eyes flashed and, handsome and regular as his form was, his whole body seemed nonetheless to be an exquisite infinitely mobile liquid which revealed each impression by the most sensitive movements.

The happy pair approached Sophia who pronounced blessing over them and admonished them to take due counsel of the mirror, which reflected everything in its true state, destroyed all illusion and held fast eternally to the primal archetypes. She then took up the urn and emptied the ashes into the bowl on the altar. A gentle turbulence signalled their dissolution and a light breeze ruffled the garments and tresses of the bystanders.

Sophia handed the bowl to Eros, who passed it to the others. All partook of the divine drink and, with ineffable joy, were inwardly aware of the Mother's friendly greeting. She was there in all, and here mysterious presence seemed to transfigure everyone.

Their expectation was fulfilled and surpassed. They perceived what hitherto they had lacked, and the room became an assembly of the blessed. Sophia said: "The great mystery has been revealed to all, and yet remains eternally unfathomed. The new world is born from suffering and the ashes are dissolved in tears to become the drink of eternal life. The heavenly Mother dwells in everyone, in order that each child be born eternally. Do you feel the sweet birth in the beating of your hearts?"

She poured the remnants in the bowl down into the altar. The Earth quaked in its depths. Sophia said: "Eros, hasten with your sister to your beloved. You will see me again presently."

Fable and Eros hurried away with their companions.

A mighty springtime had spread across the Earth. Everything rose up and stirred. The Earth floated closer beneath the veil. The moon and clouds moved Northwards in joyful turmoil. The castle of the King shone with radiant splendour over the sea, and the King stood at the parapet with his retainers in all his magnificence. Everywhere they could see whirlwinds of dust in which familiar figures seemed to be forming. They met numerous bands of youths and maidens who streamed to the castle and welcomed them with shouts of delight. On many a hill sat a happy, newly-risen couple in a long-awaited embrace, taking the new world for a dream and ceaselessly reassuring themselves of the beautiful truth.

The flowers and trees grew, putting forth greenery with all their might. Everything was renewed in spirit. Everyone talked and sang. Fable greeted old acquaintances everywhere. Animals drew near to the awakened humans in friendly deference, and plants waited on them with fruit and fragrance, adorning them most prettily. No stone lay any longer on a human heart, and very burden fell away to form a solid footing.

Fable and Eros came to the sea. A barque of polished steel was moored by the shore. They went on board and slipped the rope. The prow turned itself to the North, and the vessel cut through the dallying waves as if it were flying. Whispering reeds checked the headlong flight, and it touched gently ashore.

They hurried up the broad steps. Eros marvelled at the regal city and its treasures. The fountain, come to life again, played in the courtyard: The grove murmured with the sweetest music, and a wondrous life seemed to wake and pulse through its ardent stems and leaves, its fruits and brilliant flowers. The aged Hero received them at the gates of the palace.

"Venerable ancient," said Fable. "Eros has need of your sword. Gold has given him a chain, one end of which reaches down to the sea, whilst the other winds about his heart. Take hold of it with me, and lead us into the hall where the princess rests."

Eros took the sword from the Hero's hand, placed the hilt against his breast, and set the point forward. The double doors of the hall flew open and Eros approached the sleeping Freya in ecstasy. Suddenly there was a crash of thunder. A glowing spark leapt from the princess to the sword; the sword and chain grew bright. The Hero caught up little Fable, who was close to fainting. The plume of Eros' helmet waved erect.

"Cast down the sword," cried Fable, "and awaken your beloved."

Eros let the sword fall, flew to the princess, and kissed her sweet lips passionately. She opened her large, dark eyes and recognised her beloved. A long kiss sealed the eternal union.

The King descended from the dome, leading Sophia by the hand. The constellations and the spirits of Nature followed in glittering ranks. Inexpressibly bright daylight filled the hall, the palace, the city, and the sky. A countless throng crowded into the wide, royal hall and in silent reverence watched the lovers kneel before the King and Queen, who blessed them solemnly. The King took from his head a diadem and set it on the golden locks of Eros. The aged Hero dismantled Eros' armour and the King wrapped his cloak around him. Then he placed the Lily in his left hand and Sophia fastened a rich bracelet over the clasped hands of the lovers. At the same time, she set her crown to Freya's brown hair.

"Hail to our sovereigns of old!" the people cried: "They dwelt among us always, and we did not know them! Blessings upon us! They will reign over us for ever! Bless us also!"

Sophia said to the new Queen: "Cast the bracelet of your union into the air so that the people and the world may remain united with you."

The bracelet dissolved on the air, and presently, circlets of light could be seen around every head, and a shining aureole formed over the city and the sea and the Earth, which celebrated an eternal festival of spring.

Perseus entered, carrying a spindle and a small basket. He presented the basket to the new King. "Here," he said, "are the remains of your enemies." Within it lay a slab of stone, in squares of black and white, and beside it a number of figures of alabaster and black marble.

"It is a chess set," said Sophia. "All war is conjured onto this board and into these pieces. It is a memorial of the past, fraught times."

Perseus turned to Fable and gave her the spindle.

"In your hands this spindle will delight us for ever, and from your own being you will spin an unbreakable golden thread for us."

The Phoenix flew with a melodious sound to her feet and spread its wings before her, whereupon Fable mounted and it soared with her above the throne and hovered there. She sang a heavenly song and began to spin: Thread which seemingly unwound from her own breast. The people succumbed to further ecstasy and all eyes fastened on the sweet child. A fresh shout of joy came from those by the door. The old Moon entered with his strange retinue, and behind him the people bore Ginnistan and her bridegroom in a triumphal entry.

They were garlanded with flowers. The regal family received them with the most heartfelt tenderness, and the new royal couple proclaimed them their regents on Earth.

"Grant me," said the Moon, "the realm of the Fates, whose strange dwellings are at this moment newly risen in the courtyard of the palace. There I will delight you with festivities, in which Fable shall aid me."

The King granted his request; Fable nodded her assent; and the people looked forward with pleasure to the odd and entertaining diversions.

The Hesperides congratulated the new monarchs on their accession and asked for protection in their gardens. The King made them welcome, and countless joyful ambassadors came likewise in their turn. At the same time, the throne had changed imperceptibly into a magnificent bridal bed, over whose canopy hovered the Phoenix with little Fable. Three caryatids of dark porphyry held up the rear, whilst the front was borne on a sphinx of basalt.

The King embraced his blushing beloved, and the people, following the King's example, embraced each other.

Nothing could be heard but sweet endearments and the whisper of kisses.

Finally Sophia said: "The Mother is among us. Her presence will gladden us for ever. Follow us into our dwelling: There, in the temple, we shall dwell eternally and guard the mystery of the world."

The empire of Eternity is founded;

In Love and Peace all opposition ended.

Gone forever is the woeful dream of pain:

Sophia, priestess of all hearts, will ever reign.

The Mystic Tower

This intricate allegory is included in Fairfax Cartwright's *The Mystic Rose from the Garden of the King*.

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In my wanderings in the Strange Land this did I see:

A Temple built like a Tower, rising to a great height, surrounded at its base by a circular colonnade.

Impelled by desire to learn, I knocked at the Gate of the Temple and prayed for admittance. A venerable old man - the Sage of that Temple - opened the Gate and said to me, 'What seekest thou?' I replied, 'Knowledge.' He said, 'Hast thou the strength and determination to climb to the topmost chamber of the Tower!' I said, 'The desire have I if thou wilt be my guide to show me the way.' Then he stretched out his hand and raised me up, saying: (If thy heart is stout, cross the threshold of the Temple of Human Knowledge.' I seized the proffered hand, and with the Sage I passed under the mighty Gateway of the Temple. When I had entered the precincts of the building, I saw that a stately colonnade ran in a circle round the triangular Tower, which seemed to rise to a giddy height above me; and presently as I looked I perceived that the wall behind the colonnade was covered with representations of human figures, and my Guide spoke: 'Behold, the Cycle of Human Life! See Man as he appeareth to the human eye!'

Then I looked again, and I saw that the first picture, by the Entrance Gate, represented the Childhood of Man, and the Angel of Life was drawing back the Veil, beyond which lay the World with all its dangers and possibilities, and the children full of joyance were marching forward to enter the Promised Land; but I saw that there was a look of pity on the face of the Angel, for in the darkness by the Veil crouched the figure of Satan, marking with his claws upon the sand the number of those whom he would devour. And as I gazed longer at the children, I began to perceive that each child represented some type of Humanity. There I saw the young King approaching the Veil with

firm step, but with awe upon his face, as he gazed upon that unknown World which he would be called upon to govern, and by his side was a youth with vicious face and envy in his heart, seeking to Push aside the young King that he might enter first into possession of the World. Many children I saw bubbling over with the exuberance of youth, pleased with what lay around them, and looking not far ahead into that mysterious World which was being disclosed to them. One maiden I noticed gazing earnestly at the Star of Love, which from above shone down upon the World of Youth, and another maiden - in whom was the Soul of the wanton - was bending down to the ground to pluck a rose, and in her haste to seize it a thorn had pricked her finger.

I followed my Guide around the colonnade, and at each step I saw the same children grown older - having advanced a little on the Journey of Life; and I saw many fall by the way, and when I came to the last Picture I saw that few were left-the ascetic Dervish, worn and emaciated - the man who had sought for God through the Spirit - and the aged King, full of gravity - the man who had sought for God by striving to act according to his lights in the World; loneliness was around these two, but they heeded it not, and behind the throne of the King stood, with her arms crossed and on her face a look of impenetrableness, the Angel of Life, now changed into the Angel of Death. Saddened by what I had seen, I withdrew from the colonnade, and in the sunshine 'of the pleasant garden round the base of the Tower I sat for a long while meditating on the vanity of human existence.

Then my Guide touched me upon the shoulder and said: 'Thine eye hath seen but the outer shell of Humanity, and thou art depressed thereby. Seekest thou now to know what hath been revealed to the Soul of Man, and what are the limits of Human Knowledge!'

I replied: 'I am willing, for my heart thirsteth for Knowledge.'

My Guide with his wand touched a small and hidden door in the rugged walls of the triangular Tower, which opened and admitted us; then he turned to me and said: 'The Tower is high and it containeth seven levels, and on each level are three Chambers, and above all lieth one Chamber, and the ascent thereto is long and wearisome.' I replied: 'My Master, thy footsteps will I follow. Then we began the ascent, and when we had reached the first level my Guide turned to me and said: 'Behold the First Chamber!' A heavy veil closed the entrance; my Guide pushed it aside and we entered within the Chamber. There we found ourselves in darkness, and awe seized me, so that I poured my Soul out in prayer, craving in humility of spirit for illumination. And when I had been there some time I lifted up my eyes, and it seemed to me that my head was encircled by soul-inspiring light, while my feet remained lost in the darkness of Unreality; and my Intelligence was quickened by a message from above, and I knew that the Soul of Man - the reflection of the Unity - is suspended between the Light and the Darkness, and through the opposition of the Light and the Darkness the Soul of Man gains consciousness of the Unknown which veils the Eternal Unity. And the mystic symbol of the Unity shone forth upon the walls of this Chamber.

When I retired my Guide led me to the Second Chamber. There I saw a stately Woman deeply veiled, wearing on her head a crown with the crescent moon at top, and on her lap lay a great book closed. With deep respect I prostrated myself before her, saying: 'Teach me, thou noble woman, that I may learn.' She replied: 'I am the Recipient - the Passive; I am the complement of that which thou hast seen in the First Chamber. I am the Link between the Unity and Man. I am the Holy Sanctuary. I hold the Book of Knowledge which he can only read who has the power to lift my veil.' And as I contemplated her more steadfastly I saw that her veil grew dimmer and dimmer, until for an instant I beheld the beauty of her face; then she vanished from my sight.

My Guide then seized my hand and bade me follow him to the next Chamber. When I had penetrated through the veil which closed the entrance, again I saw a throne upon which a Woman was seated, clothed in Majesty, and wearing the Crown of Authority. By her side was an Eagle, and above her was a canopy which seemed to be formed of the Wings of Angels.

When I had made obeisance to her, she opened her lips and said: 'I am the termination of the First and the Second; in me is the Equilibrium completed. I am the Law of the World; with my Sceptre do I govern it. With one hand do I draw down the Spirit and with the other do I raise up its Negation, and in my Womb is Man conceived.'

When with my Guide I had issued from the last Chamber, he bade me for a while to meditate on what I had seen; then he led me up a steep flight of steps to the Second Level of the Tower. When we had reached it he said to me: 'We have now attained to another plane of thought, to another aspect of things. Enter now the Fourth Chamber which lies above the First Chamber below.

I did as I was bidden, and when I had penetrated into the Chamber I beheld a King upon his throne, and before the Majesty of his face I prostrated myself. Presently I heard him say: 'I am not the Absolute Absolute; I am for Humanity the Realization of the Absolute; I am the will of the Unity; my Sceptre is the sign of Power; with it I rule Mankind, for my Law shall be his Law; to me man must turn for all that relateth to the World in which he moveth.'

Then I withdrew from the presence of the King, and followed my Guide into the Fifth Chamber. Here likewise I beheld a man seated upon a throne, but he wore not on his head the crown of a King of this World but a Mystic Sign, and he was arrayed in the white robes of Sanctity. And these words he spoke to me: 'Kneel and worship, for I am not

a King of this World; my Sceptre is the Sign of Authority; with it I rule the Souls of Men. I am the Voice of the Law of the Spirit. I am the bond of Reunion between man created and the Breath from which his creation proceeded.' When he had ceased speaking, with awe in my heart I withdrew, following my Guide to the Sixth Chamber, which lay in the third angle of the Second Level of the Tower. When I had entered it I found myself in darkness, but gradually a dim light seemed to descend from the summit of the Chamber, and it grew in intensity, and when I looked up I beheld with astonishment as it were the Eye of a Spiritual Being looking down upon me. Then my Guide said unto me: 'Behold the Eye of the World! Through it the mind realizes the Beauty of the Manifestation of the Unity - through it Love reaches the Soul, bringing Man and Woman to the completion of their Destinies. Learn and understand the Mystery of this Sign. This is the Point from which two Roads diverge; along the one descends the Spirit of Light; along the other descends the Spirit of Darkness.'

The Vision faded from my sight, and meditating deeply on what I had seen, I followed my Guide, who led me out of the Chamber.

With my Guide I began the ascent to the Third Level of the Tower, and when we had reached it we entered together the Seventh Chamber, which lay above the Fourth Chamber and the First Chamber below. Therein I saw nothing for a time; then I heard the whizz of an arrow, and beheld in the misty distance a noble stag struck down by it. Looking round, there appeared to me the majestic vision of a man, radiant like a conqueror, holding in his extended hand the bow of Power from which the arrow had been discharged. He said to me: 'What seest thou' I said: 'I saw the weak overcome by the strong.' He said to me: 'Behold, I am the Man Conqueror; Man as the Emblem of the Creator. I am more than Nature, I am Nature illuminated by the Spirit of the Eternal, and therefore do I overcome mere Nature.'

When this Vision had disappeared from my sight, I passed with my Guide to the Eighth Chamber. Herein I saw a Sword standing unsupported on the point of its hilt, and in astonishment I exclaimed: 'What meaneth this Sign!' My Guide replied: 'Between Man and Nature a permanent struggle exists; what man attaineth by labour he loseth again if his labour should cease. This is the Sign of Equilibrium, the balance between opposing Forces, between Good and Evil in the Created World. This is the Sign of the Spirit of Justice which with the Power of the Sword separates the opposing combatants.

When I had gazed for some time upon this symbol, I proceeded to the last Chamber on this Level of the Tower, which was the Ninth Chamber. When the veil by the entrance had fallen behind me, I found myself face to face with an aged Dervish, whose countenance was serene and radiant; for him age seemed to have no afflictions, and Wisdom shone forth from his eyes. In his right hand he held aloft a burning lamp, and in his left hand he held a staff, on which he leant. I saluted him with reverence, and he addressed me thus: 'When I was young I selected the Path of Light, and my reward has been great. Wisdom have I imprisoned in the lamp which illuminates my Path. Round my Soul have I drawn the Mantle of Protection which shall ward off Evil when it shall assail it. This staff of strength have I found upon my path, and on it I can lean with security in the ascent towards Truth.'

The serenity of this old man filled my Soul with elation, and the glow of Divine Love seemed to penetrate into myself like a precious gift from his presence.

When I issued from the last Chamber I followed my Guide up the ascent to the next Level of the Tower, where with him I entered the Tenth Chamber, which lay above the Seventh and the Fourth and the First Chamber below. Here I beheld a Circle turning upon no visible axis, and my Guide said to me: 'Behold the Symbol of Eternity, the Symbol of the incessant action of Time. The Circle is ever moving; it ascendeth and descendeth; so ascendeth the Spirit of God to the summit, so descendeth the Spirit of Evil to the abyss; yet the Circle is unbroken: so from Good the descent to Evil is possible, so from Evil the ascent to Good is possible. This is a Chamber of Equilibrium. Below in the Seventh Chamber hast thou seen the Conqueror - the Holder of Power, the Symbol of Creative Force. In the Chamber above thou shalt see the Symbol of Destruction. Here thou seest the ascent and the descent, yet the Circle is one and unbroken; but a vaster Circle existeth which the eye of man cannot see; it turneth and turneth through Eternity without ceasing; the Spirit of Creation createth, and the Spirit of Destruction destroyeth; and the Circle is the Equilibrium without which there would be no Manifestation of the Unity, and if there were no Manifestation of the Unity the Unity would be dead and Unconscious of Himself.'

When my Guide had ceased speaking he led me to the Eleventh Chamber, and there I saw a Virgin standing before me radiant in all the splendour of youth and strength. With a voice which had the ring of silver without tremor and without fear she spoke to me thus: 'In me lies hid the germ of Vitality. To thee my hand seems weak, but strength lieth in the Spirit, and because my heart is pure, know I no fear, and with my foot do I curb the Dragon beneath me.' It was so sweet a vision that it made my heart leap with joy, and when it vanished from my sight, pensively I followed my Guide to the Twelfth Chamber, with my mind still full of the beautiful young Virgin who had appeared to me.

In this Chamber I found myself in complete obscurity, but as I gazed into the darkness a sign appeared to me by degrees in the form of a Cross. My Guide said: 'Behold the Sign of the Revealed Law; out of the Darkness it

proceedeth, and Man must bow to it.' As I gazed more intently, the face of a man seemed to appear to me enclosed by a triangle hanging downwards at the base of the Cross, and I marvelled and exclaimed: 'What meaneth this transformation!' My Guide replied: 'Woe unto the man who filled with Pride presumeth to rebel against the Revealed Law, for on him waiteth destruction. Vain is it of Man to seek to rebel against that which the Eternal hath revealed unto him; by submission he will rise, by rebellion his face will be turned away from the Light, and his advancement delayed.'

When my Guide had ceased speaking, we left the Chamber and proceeded to ascend to the Fifth Level of the Tower; there we entered together the Thirteenth Chamber, and this Vision appeared to me. A luxuriant meadow spread out before my eyes like the plain of the World; it was filled with variety, and the luxuriant flowers nodded to each other in their joy of existence. Presently, however, the breath of winter approached and its icy blast chilled my Soul; and as I gazed I saw the Vision of Death looming up before me; in one hand he held a scimitar, and in the other an empty basket; and he mowed down the flowers and threw them into the basket; and it seemed to me that they turned into dead men's heads; and some wore crowns and others the humble hood of the Dervish; and some had the golden hair of youth, and others the whitened locks of old age. And in my fear I cried aloud: 'O Terror of the World! what art thou?' And a Voice replied: 'I am the Link between the Known and the Unknown. That which seems gold in the World I will turn it into base metal, and that which seems base metal I will turn into gold. As the Ocean dissolveth and absorbeth the Salt of the World, so do I, for I am the Solvent of Humanity, and out of that which is do I make that which shall be.'

When the Voice ceased, the Vision of Death departed from me, and I saw again the green meadow filled with flowers. Then my Guide said to me:

The Spirit of Life is the antagonist of the Spirit of Stagnation, for Stagnation is the Negation of Life. In the Unity nothing is created, nothing is destroyed. To the Sage, therefore, Death hath no terrors, for he knoweth that without Death there could be no Life, without Darkness no Light, without the Negation no Manifestation of the Reality. Death is the Key which opens unto Man a further stage on the Path of the Manifestation of the Unity.

From this Chamber my Guide led me to the Fourteenth Chamber, where I saw before me an Angel who poured out of a pitcher into a receiver beneath the Water of Life. My Guide said to me: 'The meaning is this. In the World in which thou livest, the mind perceiveth the existence of Individuality, which is caused by the Water of Life descending in varying degrees into Matter, its Opposite. Now the Angel, when fertilizing the World by pouring upon it the Water of Life, giveth unto Man the conception of justice, which is to be the Light which is to guide him upon the path through the Material World. The Angel whom thou seest is, therefore, the Emblem of Temperance, which is the principle which should govern the individual creature in the World.'

Then with my Guide I proceeded to the last Chamber on this level of the Tower, which was the Fifteenth in Number. Here I found myself in complete darkness, but Presently out of the profundity of the gloom glowed forth the Beast of Evil, the Dragon biting his tail. Seized with fear I clung to my Guide, who threw around me the Mantle of Protection, and said: 'Behold the Sign! This is the Circle of Evil. Woe unto the man who steppeth into the shadow of the Light, for the gloom shall grow greater and greater, and against the fatal power of the Dragon's Ring man's will struggleth in vain. Who falleth into the Magic Circle him no regrets can avail, for an Eternity seemeth to separate him from the Path of Reunion.'

Overcome with dread, I issued from the last Chamber, and began the ascent to the next Level of the Tower, where when I had reached it I entered with my Guide the Sixteenth Chamber. Here I saw before me a Tower of great strength, and the Master of the Tower and his attendants were enjoying their security behind the battlements of their stronghold. And I said to myself: 'So cunning seemeth to have been the skill of the architect that this Tower will not perish but with the destruction of the World.' But presently I heard a great roar, and I beheld a thunderbolt descending from a cloud, and it struck the mighty Tower, and the battlements parted asunder, and the Master and his attendants were hurled to the ground. In amazement I exclaimed: 'What meaneth this Sign?' My Guide replied: 'Behold the Sign of the Fall! Man who was Spiritual has entered the World and put on the burden of the material body. Behold the Symbol of the Spirit of the Unity, which to thine eyes is invisible, incarnated in the World which lieth open unto thy senses.'

When the Vision had passed away I followed my Guide to the Seventeenth Chamber, and as I entered it I felt the Breath of Spring upon me, and my heart, which had been saddened at the sight of the ruined Tower, leapt for joy; and as I looked I saw before me the Vision of a lovely maiden, and her golden tresses were crowned with a diadem of seven stars; she sat in the midst of a green meadow enamelled with the glory of flowers, and by her side was a fountain from which poured forth the pure Water of the Earth. Presently the lovely maiden opened her lips and spoke, and my Soul was so stirred, that tears flowed from my eyes for joy of the softness of her voice, which was like the music of a harp in the stillness of the night. And she said: 'I am the Voice of Hope in the World. I am the Eternal Youth of Nature. In the depth of the Material World lieth hid the Water which welleteth up in the Fountain of

Immortality. The Glory of the Sun have I absorbed in my golden tresses: from my diadem of stars do I draw down the Spirit into the Body of Man; into his fallen Soul I breathe the Hope of Redemption; through me cometh to man the Courage to struggle against the bondage in which he is placed.'

I tarried long in contemplation of this beautiful Vision, until my Guide with his wand of Power caused it to vanish; then I followed him to the last Chamber on this Level of the Tower, which was the Eighteenth in Number. Here again I found myself in utter darkness, but after a few moments I heard my Guide saying to me: 'Watch, and thou shalt see.' Then I gazed again into the gloom, and there grew before me a Vision which filled my Soul with despondency, for it seemed to me that I saw the World spread out before me, illuminated only by the pale and sickly light of the Moon; and man was struggling against man, and wild beast against wild beast; and the reptiles of the Earth came out of their hiding places to gather their spoil. And in my sorrow I exclaimed aloud: 'What meaneth this Sign?' My Guide replied: 'This is the last Term. This is the ultimate descent of the Spirit of the Unity into the depths of the Abyss of Negation. This is the Realm of Chaos; in the World the Kingdom of the Passions let loose. This is the Triumph of Matter, Matter absorbing the Spirit and on the verge of throttling it.

The sight of this Vision inspired me with so great a terror that my eyes had no tears to weep, and I felt as if a mountain of Matter were piled upon my Soul to crush it, so that beneath the strain my mind gave way and I fell back in a swoon into the arms of my Guide. When I recovered the use of my senses the Vision had departed, and like a child I was led without this Chamber of Despair; but when I sought to begin the ascent to the next Level of the Tower, my Guide checked me and said: 'Ere we proceed any further pause and reflect. Thus far hast thou ascended through Six Levels of the Tower, and thou hast visited Eighteen Chambers therein. Now this is the meaning of what thou hast seen. In the first Six Chambers thou hast gained Knowledge of the Principles of the Universe; in the next Six Chambers thou hast moved in the World of Law and gained Knowledge of the Spirit of Preservation; in the last Six Chambers thou hast gained Knowledge of the World of Facts. The total which thou hast seen hath had this for meaning: the Breath of the Unity descending towards the Abyss of Darkness; what thou shalt see now is the Yearning for Reunion raising the Spirit of the Eternal back to the Unity from which it proceeded.'

When he had spoken thus my Guide led the way up a long flight of steps, narrow and steep at the beginning but broadening out and more easy as we advanced, and when we had reached the top of them we found ourselves on a higher Level of the Tower, and here we entered the Nineteenth Chamber. Here at first I saw nothing, but surrounding me lay as it were a shapeless mist permeated by a vivifying luminosity. Presently in the uniformity of the mist I saw as it were a germ forming, a point of condensation; gradually it assumed a more definite shape, and then it appeared to me like a pure crystal of salt suspended in the Ocean. Then the crystal vanished slowly, and through the spot where it had been I saw the hills forming; then they became more distinct and I saw the shapes of trees appearing, and flowers of every hue, with butterflies and insects buzzing among them, and the fishes were leaping in the rivers; and as I marvelled the glory of the Light broke through the mist, and I saw beneath me a lovely Garden in which the children of men, youths and maidens, played among the flowers, rejoicing in the gift of Life. Then I heard my Guide exclaim: 'Behold, the Spirit of the Eternal through the Chaos of the Material World hath reached to the Manifestation of Humanity!'

When the Mist began to close round me again I followed my Guide to the Twentieth Chamber. Here I saw spread out before me the Field of Solitude-the Burial Place of Humanity - and no living thing stirred therein and no noise was known to be. And as I gazed upon the waste of Life I heard the sound of a great trumpet, the voice of Israfael calling to Humanity. And I saw in the centre of the Field of Solitude Azrael - the Angel of Death - sitting in meditation; and at the sound of the trumpet he rose and flapped his sable pinions like a tired bird about to retire to his rest, and then he drew his great wings around his form, for the sleep of Eternity was upon him. And in the Field of Solitude I saw the graves open and the dead rising therefrom, and the rending of their grave-clothes was like the roar of the sea seeking to break down the barrier of the land.

My Guide seizing my trembling hand, said to me: 'Fear not; it is the Voice of the Eternal calling to Humanity. Behold the Breath of the Unity rising to the Spirit World and casting aside the shackles of the Material World!' When the vision had faded away I followed my Guide to the last Chamber on this elevated Level of the Tower, and it was the Twenty-first in Number. Here there appeared to me a young man riding on a fine horse, and with eyes burning with desire he gazed steadfastly at a Young girl who danced before him glorious in her nakedness, and her hair was adorned with garlands of roses. By his side an old hag hobbled along, holding his stirrup with one hand, while she held an hour-glass in the other, in which I saw that the sand was fast running out. As I looked I saw of a sudden a deep precipice ahead, and at that moment a hideous dog rushed forth and bit the legs of the horse to urge him on his career. As the rider grew closer to the precipice, the young girl who danced before him changed in my sight, and the colour in her cheek changed into the waxen hue of Death, while the petals of the roses on her head shrivelled and fell to the ground, and I saw her hair spreading out across the sky like the grey threads of a spider's web. Then the young man, having no power to check the fury of his steed, passed away and was lost in the abyss.

While my heart was heavy with pity for this young man, I heard my Guide saying to me: 'Watch and behold!' Again a young man appeared to me, and he was clad in armour, and in his hand was a goodly spear. Wild and dangerous beasts I saw striding across his path, but he looked neither to the right hand nor to the left hand, but with the power of his spear he drove them away. And I saw him begin the ascent of a steep mountain full of obstacles, but they seemed to cede before him, and as he reached the summit the sun shone forth illuminating his armour, and in the glory of that light the vision faded from my sight.

Then my Guide said to me: 'In the First Chamber on this Level of the Tower thou sawest the Divine Spirit rising through Matter to the Human World. In the next Chamber thou wast shown the rise of the Divine Spirit from the Human World to the Spiritual World. Now this is the meaning of what thou hast seen in this Chamber. In the World in which thou livest an Equilibrium existeth between Matter and the Divine Spirit. Now in the heart of each man a point lieth hid on which this Equilibrium is poised, and this point is the Mystery of his Individuality, which hath the power of turning the balance to the right hand or to the left hand, towards Matter which leadeth to the Abyss, or towards the Divine Spirit which accelerates the moment of Reunion with the Unity. Woe unto him therefore who in the Human World letteth the idleness of one hour impair the power of his Individuality to turn the balance towards the Light.'

Then my Guide led me without the Chamber, and said to me: 'All have I shown thee, yet one Chamber remaineth.' I said to him: 'Are my eyes worthy to see what is therein?' He replied: 'If thou desirest to see, thou must rise to it alone.' Then he Pointed the way to a steep and tortuous flight of steps which led to the highest pinnacle of the Tower; these with toil and pain I began to ascend alone, and when I had reached to a great height I saw before me the entrance to a Chamber closed by a heavy Veil. I pushed it aside and penetrated within, and when the Veil had fallen back behind me it seemed to me that the gravestone had fallen upon the grave, and that I was severed for ever from the World of Humanity. A feeling of solitude crept upon me and a desire to pray, and kneeling down I worshipped the Unknown, seeking for Illumination, and by degrees the knowledge of the things which I had seen increased within me, and when I lifted up my eyes I saw that the Chamber in which I was formed like an Ellipse, and that in the centre thereof a Figure sat upon a Throne, neither Man nor Woman, but- Humanity in the Womb of Time - the Ellipse of the Absolute. And as I gazed and marvelled, I saw a Mystic Flower at the summit of the Chamber open its four great petals, on each of which a Sign was burnt in fire, and from the depths of the Flower three rays of light descended upon the Figure beneath illuminating it with splendour, so that I saw the overpowering serenity of its face - ever youthful - on which no wrinkle was writ. Then the Figure crossed its hands, so that forefinger was extended against forefinger, and with the tips of the forefingers it touched its lips, placing thereon the Seal of Silence. Then my soul grew bewildered with the beauty of that face, and I covered myself with my hands, and when again I opened my eyes I felt the breath of dawn upon my face, and I heard the lark singing above, and the joy of calm was in my heart, and the morning star shone in all its glory above the Solitude of the Desert.