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Esotericism

The Compound of Alchymy

(the Twelve Gates of the philosopher

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George Ripley

Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum (1652)

Credits

Author	George Ripley
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About:

The Compound of Alchymy is the great alchemical poem of medieval England. It was written in 1471 by George Ripley (c.

1415–1490), an Augustinian canon of Bridlington Priory in Yorkshire who, according to tradition, studied in Italy and came back with the secrets of the art.

Ripley dedicated it to King Edward IV in a verse epistle in which he promises to reveal to the king, by word of mouth only, how the white and red elixirs are made.

The poem circulated in manuscript for more than a century, was first printed in 1591 by Ralph Rabbards, and in 1652 Elias Ashmole placed it at the head of Ripley's works in his Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum, the anthology of the English alchemical poets — that is the text given here, in its old spelling.

The book describes the Great Work, the way to the philosophers' stone, pictured as a castle with twelve gates that the disciple must open one after another: calcination, solution, separation, conjunction, putrefaction, congelation, cibation (the "feeding" of the matter), sublimation, fermentation, exaltation, multiplication and projection, when the finished stone transforms the metals.

Before the gates come the prologue, which asks the "child of this discipline" for a clean and humble life, and the preface, which speaks of the stone as one thing made of body, soul and spirit.

After them come a recapitulation and an admonition in which Ripley tells, with humour, of the wrong recipes he tried and the money he lost.

The poem is written in seven-line rhymed stanzas (Chaucer's "rhyme royal") and speaks in figures: the Sun and Moon, husband and wife, who are joined, the toad, the dragon, the black crow of putrefaction, the colours that appear in the vessel.

It was one of the texts most read by English alchemists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: George Starkey, writing as Eirenaeus Philalethes, wrote whole commentaries on it, and Isaac Newton studied these works in his alchemical papers.

Source: https://github.com/textcreationpartnership/A75719

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Manuscripts and images

Facsimiles and more images:

- Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum (1652), facsimile at the Internet Archive
  https://archive.org/details/theatrumchemicum00ashm

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Explicit (An. Dom. 1471)

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TITULUS OPERIS

✦

1-8 HEre begynneth The Compound of Alchymie,
Made by a Chanon of Bridlington,
After his learning in Italy
At Yxning for tyme he there did wonne:
In which be declared openly
The secrets both of Sunne and Moone,
How they their kinde to multiplye,
In one body togeder must wonne.

9-16 Which Chanon Sir George Ripley hight,
Exempt from Claustrall observance,
For whom pray ye both day and night,
Sith he did labour you to advance.
He turned darknes into light,
Intending to helpe you to happy chaunce,
Gyving Counsell that ye live right,
Doeing to God no displeasaunce.

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GEORGE RIPLEY UNTO KING EDWARD THE FOURTH

✦

1-8 O Honorable Lord, and most victoryous Knyght,
With Grace and Fortune abundantly endewed,
The savegard of England, & maynteyner of right;
That God you loveth indeede he hath well shewed:
Wherefore I trust thys Lond shalbe renewed
With Joy and Riches, with Charyty and Peace,
So that old ranckors understrewed,
Tempestuous troubles and wretchednes shall cease.

9-16 And now syth I see by tokens right evident,
That God you guydeth, and that ye be vertuous,
Hating synne, and such as be insolent,
How that also Manslaughter to you is odious,
Upon the Indygent also that ye be piteous,
Greate ruth it were if ye should not lyve longe:
For of your great fortune ye be not presumptuous,
Nor vengeable of mynde to wreke every wrong.

17-24 Theis considered, with others, in your most noble Estate,
Like as God knoweth, and people doe witnesse beare,
So entyrely me meveth, that I must algate
Recorde the same, and therein be no flatterer:
And that not onely, but also to write here,

And to your Highnes humbly for to present
Great Secretts which I in farre Countryes did lert,
And which by grace to me most unworthy are lent.

25-32 Once to your Lordship such thyngs I did promise,
What tyme ye did command to send unto me;
And since that I wrote in full secret wise,
Unto your Grace from the Universitie
Of Lovayne, when God fortuned me by Grace to see
Greater secretts and moch more profyte,
Which onely to you I wyll disclosed to be:
That is to say the great Elixirs both Red and White.

33-40 For like it you to trust that trewlie I have found
The perfect waye of most secrete Alchimy,
Which I wyll never tr[e]wly for M[a]rke ne for Pounde
Make common but to you, and that conditionally
That to your selfe ye shall keepe it full secretly,
And onely it use as may be to Gods pleasure,
Els in tyme comming, of God I should abye
For my discovering of his secrete treasure.

41-48 Therefore advise you well wyth good delyberation,
For of this Secrete shall know none other Creature
But onely you, as I make faithfull Protestation,
For all the tyme that I here in lyfe endure:
Whereto I wyll your Lordship me to ensure,

To my desyre in thys by othe to agree,
Least I should to me the wrath of God procure;
For my revealing his greate gift and previtie.

49-56 And yet moreover I wyll your Hyghnes to pardon me,
For openly wyth pen I wyll it never wryte,
But when that ye list by practice ye shall se[e];
By Mouth also this pr[e]tious secret most of delyght,
How may be made Elixirs Red and Whyte,
Playne unto your Hyghnes it shall declared be,
And if it please you with easy expence and respyte
To help, I wyll them make by helpe of the Trinitie.

57-64 But notwythstanding for perill that might befall,
Though I dare not here plainly the knot unbinde,
Yet in my writeing I wyll not be so Mysticall,
But that ye may by studie the knowleige finde:
How that eche thing multiplicable is in hys kinde,
And that likenes of bodies Metalline be transmutable
I wyll deelare, that if ye feele me in your minde
Ye shall prove my wryting true and noe fayned fable.

65-72 And if God graunt you by me to wynne thys treasure,
Serve him devoutly with more Laud and thanking,
Praying his Godhead in lyfe ye may so endure,
His gifts of grace and fortune to use to his pleasing,
Most specially intending over all thing,

To your power and connyng his precepts tenne
So to keep, that into no daunger your selfe ye bring;
But that ye may in glorie see him hereafter, Amen.

73-80 As the Philosopher in the boke of Meteors doth wryte,
That the lykenesse of bodyes Metalline be not transmutable,
But after he added theis words of more delyte,
Without they be reduced to theyr beginning materiable.
Wherefore such bodies which in nature be liquable,
Minerall and Mettaline may be Mercurizate,
Conceave ye may that this Scyence is not opinable,
But very true by Raymond and others determynate.

81-88 In the said Boke the Philosopher speaketh also,
Therein if it please your Highnes for to reade,
Of divers Sulphurs, but especially of two;
And of two Mercuryes Joyned to them indede:
Whereby he doth true understanders leade
To the knowledge of the principles which be true;
Both Red most pure, and White, as have I spede,
Which be neverthelesse founden but of right few.

89-96 And these two things be best he addeth anone
For them that worketh the Alchimy to take,
Our Gold and our Silver therewith to make alone;
Wherefore I say, who will our Pearle and Ruby make,
The said principles looke that he not forsake:

For at the beginning if his principles be trewe,
And that he can by crafte them so bake;
Trewly at the end his Worke shall him not rewe.

97-104 But one greate secret ryght nedefull it is to knowe,
That though the Philosophers speake plurally,
All is but one Thing, ye may me trowe,
In kinde, which is our Base principally,
Whereof doth spring both Whyte and Red naturally;
And yet the Whyte must come fyrst of the Red:
Which thyng is not wrought manually,
But naturally, Craft helping oute of our Leade.

105-112 For all the parts of our most precious Stone,
As I can preve, be Coessentiall and concrete;
Moreover there is no true principle but one;
Full longe it was er I therwith could mete:
Who can reduce it, and knoweth his Heate,
And only kinde with kinde can redresse,
Till filth originall be clensed from his Seat,
Likely he is to finde our secrets both more and lesse,

113-120 Onlie therefore worke Kynde, with his owne Kynde,
And all your Elements Ioyne that they not strive,
This poynte also for any thing beare in mynde;
That passive natures ye tourne into active,
Of Water, Fire, and Winde, of Erthe make blive;

And of the Quadrangle make ye a Figure round,
Then have ye honie of our bene hive;
One ounce well worth a thousand pound.

121-128 The principall secrete of secretes all
Is true Proportion which may not be behinde,
Wherein I councell yow be not superficiall,
The true conclusion if ever ye thinke to fynde,
Turne Erth to Water, and Water into Wynde,
Therof make Fire, and beware of the Floode
Of Noe, wherein many one be blinde;
That by this Science thei get but little good.

129-136 I councell you to eate and drinke temperatly,
And be well ware that Iposarcha come not in place;
Nesh not your Wombe by drinking ymmoderatly,
Lest ye quench your naturall Heate in lyttle space;
The colour wyll tell appearing in your Face:
Drinke no more therefore, then ye may eate;
Walke up and downe after an easie pace,
Chafe not your Body too sore for to sweate.

137-144 With easy Fire after meving when ye sweate,
Warme your Body and make it dry againe;
By Rivers and Fountaines walke after meate:
At morrowe tymely visit the high Mountaine,
That Phisicke so byddeth I reade certeyne:

So hygh the Mountaine nevertheles ye not ascende,
But that ye may downeward the way have plaine,
And with your Mantell from cold ye yow defende.

145-152 Such labour is holsome, your sweat if ye wyll drie
With a napkin, and after it take no cold,
For grosse humors be purged by Sweat kindly;
Use Diacameron, then confect with perfect Gold
Hermodactilus for watrie humors good I hold,
Use Hipericon Perforate with mylke of Tithimall;
And Sperma Cete ana with redd Wyne when ye wax old,
And Gotes Mylke sodden with Gold nourisheth moisture radical.

153-160 But a good Phisytian who so intendeth to be,
Our lower Astronomy him nedeth well to knowe
And after that to lerne, well, Urine in a glasse to see,
And if it nede to be chafed, the Fyre to blowe,
Then wyttily, it, by divers wayes to throwe,
And after the cause to make a Medicine blive,
Truly telling the ynfirmities all on a rowe:
Who thus can doo by his Physicke is like to thrive.

161-168 We have an Heauen yncorruptible of the Quintessence,
Ornate with Elements, Signes, Planetts, and Starrs bright,
Which moisteth our Erthe by Suttile influence:
And owt thereof a Secrete Sulphure hid from sight,
It fetteth by vertue of his attractive might;

Like as the Bee fetcheth Hony out of the Flowre
Which thing can doo none other Erthly wight;
Therefore to God only be glory and honour.

169-176 And like as Yse to Water doth relente,
Whereof congealed it was by violence of greate Cold,
Whence Phebus it smiteth with his Heate influent:
Right so to Water mynerall, reduced is our Gold,
(As writeth playnly Albert, Raymond, and Arnold)
With heate and moisture by craft occasionate,
With congelation of the Spyrite, Lo! now have I told
Howe our materialls togeather must be proportionate.

177-184 Att the Dyers craft ye may lerne this Science,
Beholding with Water how they decoctions make
Uppon theyr Woad and Maddre easyly and with patience,
Till the Tinctures appeare which the Cloath doth take
Therein so fixed that they wyll never forsake
The Cloth for washing after they joyned be;
Right so our Tinctures with Water of our Lake
We draw by boyling with Ashes of Hermes tree.

185-192 Which Tinctures when they by craft are made parfite,
So dieth Mettalls with Colours evermore permanent,
After the qualitie of the Medycine Red or White;
That never away by eny Fire, will be brente:
To this Example, if you take good tent

Unto your purpose the rather shall ye wynne,
And see your Fire be easy and not fervent;
Where Nature did leave off, what tyme look ye begynn.

193-200 First Calcine, and after that Putrefye,
Dyssolve, Dystill, Sublyme, Descende, and Fyxe,
With Aquavite oft times, both wash and drie,
And make a marriage the Body and Spirit betwixt;
Which thus togeather naturally if ye can myxe,
In losinge the Body the Water shall congealed bee,
Then shall the Body dy utterly of the Flixe,
Bleeding and chaunging Colours as ye shall see.

201-208 The third daye againe to Life he shall uprise,
And devour Byrds, and Beasts of the Wildernes,
Crowes, Popingayes, Pyes, Pekocks, and Mavies;
The Phenix, the Egle whyte, the Griffon of fearfulnes,
The Greene Lyon and the Red Dragon he shall destres;
The white Dragon also, the Antlope, Unicorne Panther,
With other Byrds, and Beasts both more and lesse;
The Basiliske also which allmost eche one doth feare.

209-216 In Bus and Nubi he shall arise and ascend
Up to the Moone, and sith up to the Sonne,
Through the Ocean Sea, which round is without end:
Only Shypped within a little glasen Tonne,
When he commeth thither, then is the Maistrie Wonne:

About which Iourney greate good shall ye not spend,
And yet ye shall be glad that ever it was begonne;
Patiently if ye liste to your worke attend.

217-224 For then both Body and Spirit also both Oyle and Water,
Sowle and Tincture one thing both White and Red,
After Colours variable it conteyneth what so men clatter;
Which also called is when he hath once bene Dedd:
And is revived our Marchasite, our Magnete, and our Lead,
Our Sulphure, our Arsenicke, and our true Calcevive:
Our Sonne, our Moone, our Ferment of our Bread:
Our Toade, our Basiliske, our unknowne Body, our Man, our Wife.

225-232 Our Body thus naturally by crafte when it is renovate
Of the first ordre is Medicine called in our Philosophy,
Which oftentimes must againe be Spiritualizate:
The rounde Whele turning of our foresaid Astronomy:
And so to the Elixir of Spirites must ye come, for why
Till the same of the fixed by the same of the flier be overgone
Elixir of Bodyes named it is only;
And this secrete poynt truly deceaveth many one.

233-240 This naturall processe by helpe of craft thus consummate
Dissolveth the Elixir spirituall in our unctuous Humiditie;
Then in Balneo of Mary togeather let them be Circulat,
Like new Hony or Oyle till they perfectly thicked be,
Then will that Medicine heale all manner Infirmitie,

And turne all Mettalls to Sonne & Moone most perfectly:
Thus shall ye have both greate Elixir, and Aurum Potabile,
By the grace and will of God, to whom be lawd eternally.

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INCIPIT PROLOGUS

✦

1-7 CHyld of thys Dyssyplyne incline to me thyne Ere,
And harkyn to my doctryne with all thy dylygence;
Thes words of wysdome in mynde doe thou bare,
Which of old Fathers be trew in sentence;
Live clene in soule, to God doe none offence:
Exalt thee not but rather keepe thee Lowe,
Ells wyll thy God in thee no Wysdome sowe.

8-14 Fro fayned Doctryne and wycked thought,
The holy spryt doth hym wythdraw;
Nylling to dwell where Syn is wrought,
Dred God therefore and obay his Lawe,
A ryghteous Man forsooke I never sawe:
Nether hys seed begg bread for need,
In holy Scrypture thus doe I rede.

15-21 Make Wysdome therefore thy Sister to be,
And call on Prudence to be thy Frynd,
By pathes of truth they wyll gyde thee,
Wyth love and honesty wher so thou wend:
Both vertuose to be, curteous and hend:
Pray God therefore that thou may fynde
Wysdome and Prudence with mouth and mynde.

22-28 All manner good cum wyth them shall,
And honestie by ther hands innumerable,
Then into combraunce shall thou not fall;
Soe be they in ryches Incomparable:
To worshyp and profyt they wyll thee able,
To conyng and to all manner of grace,
Both here and after thy lyvys space.

29-35 For these benefyts which they don bryng,
In parte ynnumeryd by sapyence,
To them I can compare no thyng;
No rychys, no spyces of redolence:
Above all tresure such is ther exellence,
That whatsoever erthly that precyous ys,
To them comparyd ys but as cley ywys.

36-42 Infynyte treasure to Man they be,
Who usyth them shall fryndshyp have
With God in Heven, and there hym se,
After them vyvelyche therefor thou crave,
For Body and Soule both wyll they save;
And herein Goods doth multiplye,
And afore Prynces they dygnyfy.

43-49 Thynke how Adam lost hys wysdome,
Sampson hys myght that was soe strong,
Kyng Saule also lost hys Kyngdome;
And Davyd was punnyshed soare for hys wrong:

In the Oake by the here fayre Absolon hong,
Kyng Ezeky by sycknesse had punishment,
And many one moe for synne was shent.

50-56 But see how other that livyd well,
And to their God did none offence,
Such chastysment did never fele,
But God shewed ever to them benevolence;
Enok and Ely were caryed hence,
To Paradyse, and other good livers were
Of God rewarded in dyvers manner.

57-63 Sum had gret Fortune, sum gret Cunnynge,
Sum had gret Peace, sum gret Ryches,
Sum conquered Londs to ther wonyng;
Sum were exalted for ther gret mekenes,
Sum other were saved fro the cruelnes
Of Tyrants, Lyons, and hot Fornacys,
As Danyell and other in many places.

64-70 Thus to good Livers God send gret grace,
And unto Synners sore ponishment;
Sum to amend in thys lyfe had space,
Sum sodenly with fyre fro Heavyn were brent,
Synfull Sodomyts for ever were shent;
With Dathan and Abyron and other moe,
Which sank for Syn to endles wo.

71-77 Thus ever syth the World was wrought,
God hath rewardyd both evyll and good;
Thus yf it maye rest in thy thought,
Fro synfull livyng wyll chaung thy moode.
Yf synfull people thys understood,
They ought to be aferd God to offend,
And soone ther synfull lyfes to amend.

78-84 Therefore with God looke thou begyne,
That he by grace may dwell with thee,
So shall thou best to Wysdom wyn,
And knowledge of our grete prevyte;
Norysh Vertues, and Vices looke thou flee,
And trustyng thou wylt thee well dispose,
Our secrets to thee I wyll dysclose.

85-91 Keep thou them secret and for me pray,
Looke that you use them to Gods pleasure;
Do good wyth them what ever thou may,
For tyme thou shalt thys lyfe endure,
That after thy endyng thou may be sure
In Hevyn for to rewardyd be,
Whych God graunt both to thee and me.

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THE PREFACE

✦

1-7 O Hygh Yncomprehensyble and gloryous Mageste,
Whose Luminos Bemes obtundyth our speculation;
One-hode in Substance, O Tryne hode in Deite,
Of Hierarchycall Jubylestes the gratulant gloryfycation;
O pytewouse puryfyer of Soules and puer perpetuation;
O deviaunt fro danger, O drawer most deboner;
Fro thys envyos valey of vanyte, O our Exalter.

8-14 O Power, O Wysdom, O Goodnes inexplycable;
Support me, Tech me, and be my Governour,
That never my lyvyng be to thee dysplycable,
But that I aquyte me to thee as a trew professor:
Att thys begynnyng good Lord here my prayer;
Be nygh with Grace for to enforce my wyll,
Graunt well that I may my entent fulfyll.

15-21 Most curyose Coffer and copyose of all tresure
Thou art, fro whom all goodnes doth dessend,
(To Man) and also to every-ech Creature;
Thyne Handy-warke therefore vouchsafe to defend,
That we no tyme in lyvying here myspend,
With truth thou graunt us our lyvelode to wyn
That in no daunger of Synfulnes we renne.

22-28 And for soe much as we have for thy sake
Renowncyd the World, our Wylls, and the Fleshys Lust,
As thyne owne wylfull professyors us take;
Syth in thee only dependyth all our trust,
We can no ferther, to thee enclyne we must:
Thy secret Tresorars, vouchsafe to make us,
Show us thy Secrets, and to us be bounteous.

29-35 Among other which be professyd to thee
I me present, as one wyth humble Submyssyon,
Thy Servant besechyng that I may bee,
And trew in levyng acording to my professyon:
In order Chanon reguler of Brydlyngton;
Besechyng the Lord that thou wylt me spare,
To thy trew Servaunts thy secretts to declare.

36-42 In the begynnyng when thou madyst all of nought,
A globose Mater and darke under confusyon,
By thee Begynner mervelously was wrought,
Conteynyng naturally all thyngs withoute dyvysyon,
Of whych thou madyst in six Dayes dere dystynction;
As Genesys apertly doth recorde
Then Heavyn and Erth perfeytyd were wyth thy word.

43-49 So thorow thy Wyll and Power owte of one Mase
Confusyd was made all thyngs that being ys;
But yn thy glory afore as maker thou was,
Now ys and shall be wythout end I wys:

And puryfyed Sowls upp to thy blys
Shall come a pryncyple, thys may be one,
For the declaryng of our Stone.

50-56 For as of one Mase was made all thyng,
Ryght soe must hyt in our practyse be,
All our secrets of one Image must spryng:
In Phylosophers Bokes therefore who lust to se,
Our Stone ys callyd the lesse World one and three,
Magnesia also of Sulphure and Mercury,
Propotionat by Nature most perfytly.

57-63 But many one mervelyth whych mervel may,
And muse on such a mervelous thyng,
What ys our Stone syth Phylosophers doth say,
To such as ever be hyt sechyng:
Yet Fowles and Fyshys to us doth yt bryng,
Every-ech Man yt hath, and ys in every place,
In thee, in me, in every tyme and space.

64-70 To thys I answer, that Mercury it ys I wys
But not the comyn callyd Quicksylver by name,
But Mercury withoute whych nothyng beyng ys;
All true Phylosophers record and say the same:
But symple serchers puttyth them in blame,
Saying they hyd hyt, but they beblame worthy,
Which be no Clerks, and medlyth with Phylosophy.

71-84 But though hyt Mercury be yett wysely understond,
Wherein it ys, where thou shalt it seech,
Ells I thee Councell take not this warke in hond,
For Philosophers flattryth Foolys with fayre Speche:
But lyst to me, for trewly I wyll thee teche,
Whych ys thy Mercury most profyttable,
Beyng to thee nothing dysseveable.
It ys more nythe in sum things than in sum,
Therefore take tent what I unto the wryt,
For yf thou never to the knowledge cum,
Therof yet shalt thou me not twytt:
For I wyll trewly now thee excite,
To understand well Mercurys three,
The keys which of our Scyens be.

85-91 Raymond hys Menstrues doth them call,
Without which trewly no truth ys done,
But two of them are Superfycyall:
The third essentyall of Soon and Moone;
Theyr propertyes I wyll declare ryght soone,
And Mercury of other Mettalls essencyall,
Ys the pryncipall of our Stone materyall.

92-98 In Soon and Moone our Menstrue ys not sene
Hyt not appeareth but by effect to syght,
That ys the Stone of whych we mene;
Who so our wrytyng concevyth aryght,

Hyt ys a Soule, a substance bryght:
Of Soon and Moone, a subtyll influence,
By whych the Erth receyveth resplendence.

99-105 For what ys Gold and Sylver sayth Avycen,
But Erth whych ys pure Whyte and Red,
Take fro that the sayd clernes, and then
That Erth wyll stond but lyttyll in stede;
The hole compound ys called our Lede,
The qualyte of clernes fro Soon and Moone doth com
These be our Menstrues both all and sum.

106-112 Bodyes wyth the fyrst we Calcene naturally
Perfyt, but none whych be unclene,
Except one whych usually
Namyd by Phylosophers the Lyon Greene,
He ys the meane the Soon and Moone betweene:
Of joynyng Tynctures wyth perfytnes,
As Geber thereto beryth wytnes.

113-119 Wyth the Second whych ys an Humydyte
Vegetable revyvyng that earst was dede,
Both pryncyples materyalls must loosed be;
And formalls, els standyth they lytle in stead:
The Menstrues therefore know I the rede:
Wythout whych neyther trew Calcynatyon,
Don may be, nether yet naturall Dyssolutyon.

120-126 Wyth the thyrd humydyty most permanent
Incombustyble and unctuous in hys nature,
Hermes Tre to ashes must be brent:
Hyt is our Naturall Fyre most sure,
Our Mercury, or Sulphure, or Tyncture pure:
Our Soule, our Stone, borne up wyth wynd
In the E[r]the ingendered, bere thys in thy mynde.

127-133 Thys Stone alsoe tell thee I dare,
Is the vapor of Mettalls potentyall,
How thou shall gett hyt thou must beware:
For invysible ys truly thys Menstruall:
Howbehytt with the second Water phylosophycall,
By seperatyon of Elements yt may appeare,
To syght in forme of Water cleere.

134-140 Of our Menstrue by labour exuberate
And wyth hyt may be made Sulphure of nature
If itt be well and kyndly acuate;
And cyrculate into a Spryt pure:
Then to dyssolve thou must be sure
Thy Base wyth hyt in dyvers wyse,
As thou shalt know by thy practyse.

141-147 That poynt therefore in hys dew place
I wyll declare wyth other mo,
If God wyll graunt me space and grace:
And me preserve in lyfe from wo;

As I thee teche loke thou doe so,
And for thy fyrst ground pryncypall
Understond thy Water menstruall.

148-154 And when thou hast made true Calcination,
Encresyng and not Wastyng moysture radycall,
Tyll thy Base by ofter subtylyatyon
Wyll lyghtly flow as Wex uppon Mettall;
Then lowse hyt wyth thy vegetable Menstruall,
Tyll thou have Oyle thereof in Colour bryght,
Then ys your Menstrue visible to syght.

155-161 And Oyle is drawne owte in colour of Gold,
Or lyke thereto out of our fine Red Lead,
Whych Raymond sayd when he was old,
Much more then Gold wold stond hym in stede,
For whan he was for age nygh dede,
He made thereof Aurum Potabile,
Whych hym revyvyd as Men myght see.

162-168 For so together may they be Cyrculate,
That ys to say, Oyle and the vegetable Menstruall,
Ether so by labour exuberate,
And made by Crafte a Stone Celestyall:
Of Nature so fyrye that we yt call
Our Baselysk, otherwyse our Cokatryse,
Our great Elixir most of pryse.

169-175 Whych as the syght of a Basylysk hys object
Kylyth, so sleyth it crude Mercury,
When thereon itt ys project,
In twynke of an Eye most sodenly,
That Mercury teynyth permanently;
All bodyes to Son and Moone perfyt,
Thus gyde thy base both Red and Whyte.

176-182 Aurum potabile thus ys made,
Of Gold, not comyn calcynat;
But of our Tyncture whych wyll not vade,
Out of our Base drawen wyth the Menstrue circulate,
But naturall Calcynatyon must Algate
Be made, ere thy Gold dyssolved be,
That Pryncypall fyrst I wyll tell thee.

183-189 But into Chapters thys Treatis I shall devyde,
In number Twelve with dew Recapytulatyon;
Superfluous rehearsalls I ley asyde,
Intendyng only to geve trew Informatyon,
Both of the Theoryke and Practycall operatyon:
That by my wrytyng who so wyll guyded be,
Of hys intente perfytly speed shall he.

190-196 The Fyrst Chapter shalbe of naturall Calcination;
The Second of Dyssolution secret and Phylosophycall;
The Thyrd of our Elementall Separation;
The Fourth of Conjunction matrymonyall;

The Fyfthe of Putrefaction then followe shall;
Of Congelatyon, albyfycative shall be the Syxt,
Then of Cybatyon the Seaventh shall follow next.

197-203 The secret of our Sublymation the eyght shall shew;
The nynth shall be of Fermentation,
The Tenth of our Exaltation I trow;
The Eleventh of our mervelose Multyplycatyon;
The Twelfth of Projectyon; then Recapytulatyon;
And so thys Treatyse shall take an end,
By the help of God as I entend.

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THE FIRST GATE: OF CALCINATION

✦

1-7 CAlcinacion is the purgacyon of our Stone,
Restauryng also of hys naturall heate;
Of radycall moysture it lesyth none;
Inducyng Solucion into our Stone most mete,
After Philosophy I you behyte,
Do not after the comyn gyse,
Wyth Sulphure and Salts preparat in dyvers wyse.

8-14 Nether with Corrosyves nor with Fire alone,
Nor with Vyneger nor Water ardent,
Nether with the vapour of Lede our Stone
Is Calcyned to our intente:
All they to Calcyne whych so be bent
Fro thys hard Scyence withdraw theyre hond,
Till they our Calcyning better understonde.

15-21 For by such Calcynyng theyre bodyes be shent,
Whych mynysheth the moysture of our Stone;
Therefore when bodyes to powder be brent,
Dry as askys of Tre or Bone,
Of such Calx then wyll we none,
For moysture we multiply radycall,
In Calcynyng, mynyshyng none at all.

22-28 And for a sure ground of our trew Calcynacyon,
Woorch wyttyly kynde only wyth kynde;
For kynd to kynde hath appetyble inclynacyon;
Who knoweth not thys yn knowledge is but blynd:
He may forth wander as Myst doth wyth the Wynd;
Woting never wyth perfytnes whereto lyght,
Because he cannot conseve our words aryght.

29-35 Joyne kynd to kynd therefore as reason ys,
For every Burgeon answereth to his owne Seed;
Man begetteth Man, a Beast a Beast lykewyse;
Ferther of thys to trete it is no need,
But understond thys poynt yf thou wylt spede;
Every thyng ys fyrst Calcyned in hys owne kynd,
Thys well consevyng, frute thereyn shalt thou fynde.

36-42 And we make Calxes unctious both Whyte and Red,
Of three degrees or our Base be perfyt;
Fluxyble as Wex, ells stond they lyttle in sted;
By ryght long processe as Phylosophers wryte,
A yere we take or more for our respyte:
For in lesse space our Calxe wyll not be made,
Able to tayne with colour whych wyll not vade.

43-49 As for the Proporcyon thou must beware,
For therein many one ys beguylyd,
Therefore thy warke that thow not marre;
Lat the Body be sotelly fylyd

With Mercury, as much then so subtylyd:
One of the Sonn, two of the Moone,
Tyll altogether lyke pap be done.

50-56 Then make the Mercury foure to the Sonne,
Two to the Mone as hyt should be,
And thus thy worke must be begon,
In fygure of the Trynyte;
Three of the Body and of the Spryt three:
And for the unytye of the substance spirituall,
One more than of the substance corporall.

57-63 By Raymonds Reportory thys ys trew,
Proporcyon there who lyst to looke,
The same my Doctour to me did shew;
But three of the Spryt Bacon tooke,
To one of the Body for thys I wooke:
Many a nyght or I hyt wyst,
And both be trew take whych you lyst.

64-70 If the Water be equall in Proporcyon
To the Erthe whych hete in dew mesure,
Of hym shall spryng a new burgyon;
Both Whyte and Red in pure tyncture,
Whych in the Fyre shall ever endure:
Kyll than the quyck, the ded revyve,
Make Trynyte Unyte wythout any stryve.

71-77 Thys ys the best and the surest Proporcyon,
For here ys lest of the part spyrytuall,
The better therefore shall be Solucyon;
Then yf thou dyd it wyth Water small,
Thyne Erth over glutyn whych losyth all:
Take heede therefore to potters loome,
And make you never to nesh thy wome.

78-84 That loome behold how yt tempered ys,
The meane also how thou hyt Calcenate;
And ever in mynd loke thou bare thys,
That never thyne Erth wyth Water be suffocate,
Dry up thy moysture wyth heate most temperate:
Helpe Dyssolucyon wyth moysture of the Mone,
And Congellacyou wyth the Son, then hast thou done.

85-91 Foure Natures shall into the fyfth so turne,
Whych ys a Nature most perfect and temperate;
But hard hyt ys with thy bare foote to spurne,
Agaynst a brodyke of Iyron or Stele new acuate:
Soe many one doth whych bene infatuate,
When they such hygh thyngs don take in hond,
Whych they in noe wyse understonde.

92-98 In Eggs, in Vitryoll, or in Blod,
What ryches wene they there to fynde;
Yf they Phylosophy understode,
They wold not in worchyng be so blynd,

Gold to seke or Sylver out of kynd:
For lyke as Fyre of brennyng the pryncyple ys,
So ys the pryncyple of gildyng, Gold I wys.

99-105 Yf thou intend therefore to make
Gold and Sylver by craft of our Philosophy;
Therto nother Eggs nor Blood thou take,
But Gold and Sylver whych naturally,
Calcyned wysely, and not manually,
And new generacyon wyll forth bryng,
Incresyng theyr kynde as doth ech thyng.

106-112 And yf yt true were that perfyt myght be,
In thyngs which be not mettallyne:
In which be Colours plesaunt to see,
As in Blood, Eggs, Here, Uryn, and Wyne,
Or in meane Mettalls dyggyd out of the Myne:
Yet must theyr Elements be putrefyed and separate,
And wyth Elements of perfyt Bodys be dysponsate.

113-119 But fyrst of these Elements make thou Rotacyon,
And into Water thy Erth turne fyrst of all;
Then of thy Water make Ayre by Levygacyon;
And Ayre make Fyre; then MASTER I wyll thee call
Of all our secretts greate and small:
The Wheele of Elements thou canst turne about,
Trewly consevyng our Wrytyngs wythowt dowte.

120-126 Thys done, go backward, turnyng thy Wheele againe,
And into thy Water then turne thy Fyre anon;
And Ayre into Erth, ells laboryst thow but in vayne:
For soe to temperment ys brought our Stone,
And Natures contraryose, fower be made one,
After they have three times ben Cyrculat,
And alsoe thy Bace perfytly consummate.

127-133 Thus under the moysture of the Moone,
And under the temperate hete of the Sonne,
Thy Elements shalbe incynerate sone,
And then thow hast the Maistery wone;
Thanke God thy worke was then begon:
For there thow hast one token trew,
Whych fyrst in blacknes to thee wyll shew.

134-140 The hede of the Crow that tokyn call we,
And sum men call hyt the Crows byll;
Sum call hyt the Ashes of Hermes Tre,
And thus they name hyt after theyer wyll,
Our Tode of the Erth whych etyth hys fyll:
Sum name hyt by whych it ys mortyfycat
The spyryt of the Erth wyth venome intoxycate.

141-147 But hyt hath Names I say to the infynyte,
For after each thyng that Blacke ys to syght;
Namyd hyt ys tyll the tyme that hyt wex Whyte,
For after blacknesse when yt wexeth bryght,

Then hath hyt names of more delyght:
After Whyte thyngs, the Red after the same,
Rule of Red thyngs, doth take hys name.

148-154 At the fyrst Gate, now art thou in,
Of the Phylosophers Castle where they dwell;
Proceede wysely that thou may wyne
In at mo Gates of that Castell,
Whych Castle ys round as any Bell:
And Gates hath Eleven yet mo,
One ys conquered, now to the Second go.

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THE SECOND GATE: OF SOLUTION

✦

OF Solucion now wyll I speke a word or two,
Whych sheweth owt that err was hyd from syght,
And makyth intenuate thyngs that were thyk also;
By the vertue of our fyrst Menstrue clere and bryght,
In whych our Bodyes eclypsyd ben to syght:
And of ther hard and dry Compactyon subtylyat
Into ther owne fyrst nature kyndly retrogradate.

One in Gender they be and in Nomber not so,
Whose Father the Son, the Moone truly ys Mother,
The mean ys Mercury, these two and no mo
Be our Magnesia, our Adrop, and none other;
Thyngs there be, but only Syster and Brother:
That ys to wene Agent and Pacyent,
Sulphure and Mercury coessentyall to our entent.

Betwyxt these two in qualyte cotraryose,
Ingendred ys a Mene most mervyllosely
Whych ys our Mercury and Menstrue unctuose;
Our secrett Sulphur worchyng invysybly,
More fersely than Fyre brennyng the body,
Into Water dyssolvyng the Body mynerall,
Which Nyght fro darknes in the North parte we call.

22-28 But yet I trow thou understandyst not utterly
The very secrett of Phylosopers Dyssolucion;
Therefore conceve me I councell thee wyttyly:
For I wyll tell thee trewly wythout delusyon;
Our Solucyon ys cause of our Congelacyon;
For the Dyssolucyon on the one syde corporall
Causyth Congelacyon on the other syde Spyrytuall.

29-35 And we Dyssolve into Water whych weytyth no hond,
For when the Erth ys integrally yncynerat;
Then ys the Water congelyd, thys understond;
For the Elements be so concatenat,
That when the body fro hys fyrst forme ys alterate:
A new forme ys inducyd immediately,
For nothyng being wythout all forme ys utterly.

36-42 And here a secret to thee I wyll dysclose,
Whych ys the ground of our secrets all;
And yf thou hyt not know thou shalt but lose
Thy labour and costs both great and small,
Take hede therefore in Errour that thou not fall:
The more thyne Erth and the lesse thy Water be,
The rather and better Solucyon shall thou see.

43-49 Behold how Yse to Water doth relent,
And so hyt must, for Water hyt was before;
Ryght soe agayne to Water our Erth is bent,
And Water thereby congelyd for evermore,

For after all Phylosophers whych ever was bore:
Every Mettall was ons Water mynerall,
Therefore wyth Water they turne to Water all.

50-56 In whych Water of kynde occasyonate
Of qualytes bene repugnaunce and dyversyte,
Thyngs into thyngs must therfore be rotate,
Untyll dyversyte be brought to parfyt unyte,
For Scrypture recordyth when the Erth shall be
Trowbelyd, and into the depe Sea shall be cast
Mountaynes, our Bodyes lykewyse at the last.

57-63 Our Bodyes be lekenyd convenyently
To Mountaynes whych after hygh Planets we name;
Into the depenes therfore of Mercury.
Turne them and kepe the out of blame,
Then shall ye se a Nobyll game;
How all shall become powder soft as sylke,
So doth our Runnett by kynde curd our Mylke.

64-70 Then hath our Bodys ther fyrst forme loste,
And other be enducyd ymedyately;
Then hast thow well beset thy cost,
Wheras some other uncunning must goe by,
Not knowyng the secretts of our Phylosophy:
Yet one poynt I more must tell thee,
Every Body how hyt hath dymencyons three.

71-77 Altytude, Latytude, and Profundyte,
By whych algates turne we must our Whele;
Knowyng thy entraunce in the West shall be;
Thy passage forth into the North yf thou do well,
And there thy Lyghts lose theyre Lyght eche-dele:
For there thou must abyde by Ninety Nyght
In darknes of Purgatory wythowten Lyght.

78-84 Then take thy course up to the Este anon
By Colours passyng varyable in manyfold wyse,
And then be Wynter and Vere nygh over-gon
To the Est, therfore thyne assendyng devyse,
For there the Son wyth Day-lyght doth upryse
In Somer, and there dysporte the wyth delyght,
For there thy Warke shall becom parfyt Whyte.

85-91 Forth fro the Est ynto the South assend,
And sett thou up therein thy Chayre of Fyre,
For there ys Harvest, that ys to say an end
Of all thys Warke after thyne owne desyre:
Ther shynyth the Son up in hys owne sphyre,
And after the Eclyps ys in rednes wyth glory
As Kyng to rayne uppon all Mettalls and Mercury.

92-98 And in one Glasse must be done all thys thyng,
Lyke to an Egg in shape, and closyd well,
Then must you know the mesure of fyryng;
The whych unknowen thy Warke ys lost ech dele,

Lett never thy Glasse be hotter then thow may feele:
And suffer styll in thy bare hand to holde
For dread of losyng as Philosophers have the tolde.

99-105 Yett to my Doctryne furthermore intend,
Beware thy Glasse thou never opyn ne meve
Fro thy begynnyng, tyll thou have made an end;
If thou do contrary thy Warke may never cheve:
Thus in thys Chapter whych ys so breve,
I have the taught thy trew Solucion;
Now to the Thyrd Gate goe, for thys ys won.

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THE THIRD GATE: OF SEPARATION

✦

1-7 SEparacyon, doth ech parte from other devyde,
The subtill fro the groce, fro the thyck the thyn;
But Separacyon manuall look thou put asyde:
For that pertaynyth to folys whych lyttyll good don wyn,
But in our Separacyon nature doth not blyn:
Makyng dyvysyon of qualytes Elementall
Into the fyfth degree tyll they be turned all.

8-14 Erth ys turnyd into Water black and bloe,
And Water after into Ayre under very whyte:
Ayre ys turned into Fyre, Elements there be no mo;
Of thys ys made by crafte our Stone of grete delyte,
But of thys Separacyon much more must we wryte;
And Separacyon ys callyd by Phylosophers dyffynycyon
Of the sayd Elements tetraptatyve dyspersyon.

15-21 And of thys Separacyon I fynde a lyke fygure
Thus spoken by the Prophet yn the Psalmody,
God brought out of a Stone a flud of Water pure,
And out of the hardyst Stone Oyle abundantly:
Ryght so of our precyose Stone yf thou be wytty,
Oyle incombusteble and Water thou shalt draw,
And thereabout thou nedyst not at the Coles to blow.

22-28 Do thys wyth hete esy and mesuryng
Fyrst wyth moyst Fyre, and after wyth the dry;
The flewme by Pacyence owt drawyng;
And after that thy other natures wyttyly,
Dry up thyne Erth tyll hyt be thrysty:
By Calcenyng els thou laboryst all in vayne,
And then make hyt drynke up his moysture agayne.

29-35 Separacyon thus must thou ofte tymes make,
Thy Matter dyvydyng into parts two;
So that the Symple fro the groce thou take
Tyll Erth remayne benethe in color bloe,
That Erth ys fyx for to abyde all wo:
The other parte ys Spyrytuall and fleyng,
But thou must turne hem all into one thyng.

36-42 Than Oyle and Water wyth Water shall dystyll
And thorow her help receve menyng:
Kepe well thys two that thou not spyll,
Thy Wark for lack of dew closyng,
Make thy Stopell of glas meltyng
The top of thy Vessle together wyth yt,
Than Phylosopher-lyke usyd ys hyt.

43-49 The Water wherwyth thou must renew thy Stone
Looke thou dystyll afore thou warke wyth hyt
Oftentymes by it selfe alone:
And by thy syght thou shalt well wyt,

Fro feculent feces when hyt ys quytt:
For sum men can wyth Saturne it multeply,
And other Substance which we defye.

50-56 Dystyll hyt therfore tyll hyt be clene,
And thyn lyke Water as hyt shold be,
As Hevyn in Color bryght and shyne,
Kepyng both fygure and ponderosyte,
Therwith dyd Hermes moysture hys Tre:
Wythyn hys Glas he made to grow upryght,
Wyth Flowers dyscoloryd bewtyosely to syght.

57-63 Thys Water ys lyke to the venemous Tyre,
Wherewyth the myghty Tryacle ys wrought;
For yt ys Poyson most stronge of yre;
A stronger Poyson can none be thought:
Att the Potecarys therfore oftyn yt ys bought:
But no man shall be by hyt intoxycate,
After the tyme yt ys into Medycyne Elevate.

64-70 For then as ys the Tryacall trew,
Hyt ys of poysons most expulsyfe;
And in hys working doth mervells shewe,
Preservyng many from deth to lyfe,
Loke thou meng yt wyth no corrosyve:
But chese hyt pure and quick rennyng,
Yf thou thereby wylt have wynnyng.

71-77 It ys a mervelose thyng in kynde,
And Wythout hyt may nought be done;
Therefore Hermes calleth hyt hys Wynde,
For it ys up flying fro Sonn and Mone,
And makyth our Stone flye wyth hyt Sone:
Revyvyng the ded and gevyng lyfe
To Son and Mone, Husband and Wyfe.

78-84 Whych yf they were not by craft made quick,
And ther fatnes wyth Water drawn out;
And so the thyn dyssevered from the thyke,
Thou should never bryng thys worke about:
Yf thou wylt speed therefore wythout doubt,
Reyse up thy Byrds out of theyre nest,
And after agayne bryng them downe to rest.

85-91 Water wyth Water accord wyll and assend,
And Spryt wyth Spryt, for they be of kynde;
Whych after they be exalted make to dyssend,
And soe thou shalt devyde that nature before dyd bynde,
Mercury essencyall turnyng into wynde:
Wythout whych naturall and subtyll Seperacyon,
May never be compleat profytable Generacyon.

92-98 Now to help thee in at thys Gate,
The last Secret I wyll tell to thee;
Thy Water must be seven tymes Sublymate,
Ells shall no kyndly Dyssolucyon be,

Nor Putryfyyng shall thou none see,
Like lyquyd pytch nor colours apperyng,
For lack of fyre wythin thy Glasse workyng.

99-105 Fower Fyers there be whych you must understond,
Naturall, Innaturall, against Nature, alsoe
Elementall whych doth bren the brond;
These foure Fyres use we and no mo:
Fyre against Nature must doe thy bodyes wo;
That ys our Dragon as I thee tell,
Fersely brennyng as Fyre of Hell.

106-112 Fyre of Nature ys the thyrd Menstruall,
That fyre ys naturally in every thyng;
But fyre occasionat we call Innaturall,
And hete of Askys and balnys for putrefying:
Wythout these fyres thou may not bryng
To Putrefaccyon for to be seperat,
Thy matters togeather proportyonat.

113-119 Therefore make fyre thy Glasse wythin,
Whych brennyth the Bodyes more then fyre
Elementall; yf thou wylt wyn
Our Secret accordyng to thy desire,
Then shall thy seeds both roote and spyre,
By help of fyre Occasionate,
That kyndly after they may be seperat.

120-126 Of Seperacyon the Gate must thus be wone,
That furthermore yet thou may procede,
Toward the Gate of secret Conjunccion,
Into the Castle whych wyll the Inner leade,
Do after my Councell therefore yf thou wylt spede;
Wyth two strong locks thys Gate ys shyt,
As consequently now thou shalt wyt.

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THE FOURTH GATE: OF CONJUNCTION

✦

1-7 AFter the Chapter of naturall Separacion
By which the Elements of our Stone dysseveryd be
The Chapter here followyth of secret Conjunccion;
Whych natures repugnant joyneth to perfyt Unyte,
And so them knyttyth that none from other may fle;
Whan they by Fyre shall be examynate,
Soe be they together surely conjugate.

8-14 And therfore Phylosophers geveth thys deffynycyon,
Seyng thus Conjunccion ys nought ells
But of dysseveryd qualytes a Copulacyon;
Or of Pryncypylls a coequacyon as other tells,
But some wyth Mercury whych the Potecarys sells,
Medleth Bodyes whych cannot dyvyde
Ther matter, and therefore they step asyde.

15-21 For unto tyme the Sowle be Separate
And clensyd from hys orygynall Syn
Wyth the Water and purely spyrytuallyzate:
Thy trew Conjunccion may thou never begyn,
Therfore the Soule fyrst fro the Body twyn:
Then of the corporall parte and of the spyrytuall,
The Soule Conjunccion shall cause perpetuall.

22-28 Of two Conjunccions Phylosophers don mentyon make,
Groce when the Body with Mercury ys reincendat,
But let hyt passe, and to the second tent thou take,
Which as I sayd ys after Separacion celebrat:
In whych the partys be lest whych lest so collygate;
And so promotyd unto most perfyt temperance,
Then never after may be among them Repugnance.

29-35 Thus causyth Separacion trew Conjunccion to be had
Of Water, Ayre, Earth and Fyre,
But that every Element may into other be lad,
And so abyde for ever to thy desyre;
Do as done Laborous with Clay and Myer,
Temper them thyke, and make them not to thyn,
For so to up drying thou shalt the rather wyn.

36-42 But manners there be of thys Conjunccion three,
The fyrst ys callyd by Phylosophers Dyptative,
Betwyxt the Agent and the Patyent which must be
Male and Female, Mercury and Sulphure vive;
Matter and forme, thyn and thyke to thryve.
Thys lesson wyll helpe thee wythout any dowte,
Our Conjunccion trewly to bryng about.

43-49 The second manner ys called Tryptative,
Whych ys Conjunccion made of thyngs three,
Of Body, Sowle, and Spyrit tyll they not stryve,
Whych Trynite must be brought to perfyt unyte,

For as the Sowle to the Spyrit the bond must be;
Ryght to the Body the Sowle to hym must knyt,
Out of thy mynde let not thys lesson flyt.

50-56 The thyrd manner and also the last of all,
Fowre Elements together whych joynyth to abyde,
Tetraptative contently Phylosophers doth hyt call,
And specyally Guydo de Montayno whose fame goyth wyde;
And therfore the most laudable manner thys tyde,
In our Conjunccion four Elements must be aggregat,
In dew proportion fyrst whych asonder were separat.

57-63 Therefore lyke as the Woman hath Vaynes fyfteene,
The Man but five to the act of her fecundyte,
Requyryth in our Conjunccion fyrst I mene,
So must the Man our Sun have of hys water three;
And (nine) hys Wyfe, whych three to hym must be:
Then lyke whych lyke wyll joy have for to dwell,
More of Conjunccion me nedyth not to tell.

64-70 Thys Chapter I will conclude right sone therefore,
Groce Conjunccion chargyng the to make but one,
For seldome have Strumpetts Chyldren of them I bore,
And so thou shalt never cum by our Stone,
Wythout you suffer the Woman to lygg alone;
That after she hath conceyved of the Man,
The Matryce of her be shyt from all other than.

71-77 For such as addyth evermore crude to crude,
Openyng theyr vessells, and lettyng ther matter kele:
The sperme concevyd they norysh not, but delude
Themselfes, and spyllyth ther work every dele;
If thou therefore lyst for to do well,
Close up the Matryce and norysh the seed,
Wyth heat contynuall and temperate if thou wilt spede.

78-84 And whan thy Vessle hath stond by Monyths five,
And Clowds and Clypsys be passed ech one;
That lyght apperen increase thy hete then blyve,
Tyll bryght and shyneing in Whytnesse be thy Stone,
Then may thou opyn thy Glasse anone,
And fede thy Chyld whych ys then ybore
Wyth mylke and mete ay more and more.

85-91 For now both moyst and dry be so contemperate,
That of the Water erth hath recevyd impressyon;
Whych never assunder after that may be seperate,
And ryght soe Water to Erth hath given ingressyon,
That both together to dwell hath made professyon:
And Water of Erth hath purchasyd retentive,
They fower be made one never more to strive.

92-98 And in two thyngs all our entent doth hing,
In dry and moyst whych be contraryous two;
In dry that hyt the moyst to fyxing bryng,
In moyst that hyt geve lyquyfaccion the Erth unto,

That of them thus contemperate may forth go
A temperament not so thyk as the Body ys,
Nother so thyn as Water wythout mys.

99-105 Losyng and knyttyng therefore be Princypalls two
Of thys hard Scyence, and Poles most pryncypall;
How be hyt that other pryncyples be many mo,
As shyneyng fanells whych shew I shall:
Proceed therefore unto another wall
Of thys strong Castle of our wysdome,
That Inner at the Fyft Gate thou may come.

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THE FIFTH GATE: OF PUTREFACTION

✦

1-7 NOw begynnyth the Chapter of Putrefaccion,
Wythout whych Pole no sede may multyply,
Whych must be done only by contynuall accyon
Of hete in the body, moyst, not manually,
For Bodies ells may not be alterat naturally:
Syth Chryst do it wytnes, wythowt the grayne of Whete
Dye in the ground, encrese may thou not gete.

8-14 And in lykewyse wythout thy Matter do Putrefye,
It may in no wyse trewly be alterate,
Nor thyne Elements may be devyded kyndly;
Nor thy Conjunccion of them perfytly celebrat:
That thy labor therfore be not frustrate,
The prevyte of Putrefying well understond,
Or ever thou take thys Warke in hond.

15-21 And Putrefaccyon may thus defyned be,
After Phylosophers sayings it ys of Bodyes the fleyng,
And in our Compound a dyvysyon of thyngs thre,
The kyllyng Bodyes into corrupcyon forth ledyng,
And after unto Regeneratyon them ablyng:
For thyngs beyng in Erth wythowt dowte
Be engendryd of rotacyon of the Hevyns aboute.

22-28 And therfore as I have seyd afore
Theyn Elements comyxt and wysely coequat,
Thou keepe intemperat heate, eschuyng evermore,
That they by violent hete be never incynerat;
To powder dry unprofytably Rubyfycate,
But into powder blacke as a Crowes byll
Wyth hete of Balne, or ells of our Dounghyll.

29-35 To tyme that Nyghts be past nynty,
In moyst hete kepe them fro eny thyng;
Sone after by blacknes thow shalt espy
That they draw fast to putrefying,
Whych thow shalt after many colers bryng
To perfyt Whytenes wyth Pacyence esyly,
And so thy sede in hys nature shall multeply.

36-42 Make ech on other to hawse and kysse,
And lyke as Chyldren to play them up and downe,
And when ther sherts be fylyd wyth pysse,
Then lat the Woman to wash be bound,
Whych oftyn for fayntnes wyll fall in a sound:
And dye at the last wyth her Chyldren all,
And go to Purgatory to purg ther fylth orygynall.

43-49 When they be there, by lyttyll and lyttyll encrese
Ther paynys by hete ay more and more,
The Fyre from them lat never cese:
And se thy Fornace be apt therfore,

Whych wyse men do call Athenor:
Conservyng hete requyryd most temperately,
By whych the Water doth kyndly putrefy.

50-56 Of thys Pryncypull spekyth Sapyent Guydo,
And seyth by rottyng dyeth the Compound corporall,
And then after Moryen and other mo,
Uprysyth agayne Regenerat, Sympill, and Spyrytuall,
And were not hete and moysture contynuall,
Sperme in the wombe myght have now abydyng,
And so ther shold therof no frute upspryng.

57-63 Therfore at the begynnyng our Stonys thou take,
And bery ech on wyth other wythin ther Grave;
Then equally a Marryage betwyxt them make
To ly together six wekys; then lat them have
Ther sede consevyd kyndly to norysh and save;
From the ground of ther grave not rysyng that while,
Whych secret poynt doth many on begyle.

64-70 Thys tyme of Conceptyon wyth esye hete abyde,
The Blacknes showing shall tell the when they dye;
For they together lyke lyquyd Pyche that tyde,
Shall swell and burbyll, setyll, and Putrefye,
Shyning Golors therin thou shalt espye:
Lyke to the Raynbow mervelose unto syght,
The Water then begynnyth to dry upryght.

71-77 For in moyst Bodys hete noryshyng temperate,
Ingendryth Blacknes fyrst of all which ys
Of kyndly Commyxyon to the tokyn assygnate;
And of trew Putrefying, remember thys,
For then to alter perfytly thou may not mysse;
And thus by the Gate of Blacknes thou must cum in
To lyght of Paradyce in Whytenes yf thou wylt wyn.

78-84 For fyrst the Son in hys uprysyng obscurate
Shalbe, and passe the Waters of Noyes flud
On Erth, whych were a hundred dayes contynuate
And fyfty, away or all thys Waters yode,
Ryght so our Waters as wyse men understode
Shall passe, that thou wyth Davyd may say
Abierunt in sicco fluminae: bare thys away.

85-91 Sone after that Noe plantyd hys Vyneyard,
Whych really floryshed and brought forth Graps anon:
After whych space thou shalt not be aserd;
For in lykewyse shall follow the floryshyng of our Stone:
And sone uppon that thyrty dayes overgone,
Thou shalt have Graps ryght as the Ruby red,
Whych ys our Adrop, our Ulyfer red and our Lede.

92-98 For lyke as Sowles after paynys transytory
Be brought into paradyce where ever ys yoyfull lyfe;
So shall our Stone after hys darknes in Purgatory
Be purged and joynyd in Elements wythoute stryfe,

Rejoyse the whytenes and bewty of hys wyfe:
And passe fro the darknes of Purgatory to lyght
Of paradyce, in Whytnes Elyxer of gret myght.

99-105 And that thou may the rather to Putrefaccyon wyn
Thys Exampull thou take to the for a trew conclusyon,
For all the secrett of Putrefaccyon restyth therein;
The heart of Oke that hath of Water contynuall infusyon
Wyll not sone putrefy, I tell the wythout delusyon:
For though yt in Water ly a hundred yeres and more,
Yet shold thou fynd it sound as ever it was afore.

106-112 But and thou kepe hyt somtyme wete, & sometyme dry,
As thow many se in Tymber by usuall experyment,
By prosses of tyme that Oke shall utterly Putrefy:
And soe in lykewyse accordyng to our entent,
Sometyme our Tre must wyth the Son be brent:
And then wyth Water sone after we must hyt kele,
That by thys menes thou shalt to rottyng bryng hyt wele

113-119 For nowe in wete and nowe agayne in dry,
Now in grete hot and now agayne in cold
To be, shall cause yt sone for to putrefy:
And so shalt thow bryng to rottyng thy Gold,
Entrete thy Bodys therfore as I have thee told:
And in thy Putrefying wyth hete be not so swyft,
Lest in the Askys thou seke after thy thryft.

120-126 Therfore thy Water out of the Erth thow draw,
And make the soule therwyth for to assend;
Then downe agayne into the Erth hyt throw,
That they oft tymes so assend and dessend,
From vyolent hete and sodayne cold defend
Thy Glasse, and make thy fyre so temperat,
That by the sydys thy Water be never vytryfycate.

127-133 And be thou wyse in chesing of thy Water,
Medyll with no Salt, Sulphure, nor mene Minerall,
For whatsoever any Water to the do clatter;
Our Sulphure and Mercury be only in Mettall,
Which Oylys and Waters som men call:
Fowlys, and Byrds wyth other namys many one,
Because that folys shold never know our Stone.

134-140 For of thys World our Stone ys callyd the sement,
Whych mevyd by craft as Nature doth requyre;
In hys encrese shall be full opulent,
And multeply hys kynd of thyne owne desyre:
Therfore yf God vouchsafe thee to enspyre
To know the trewth, and fancies to eschew,
Lyke unto the shalbe in ryches but few.

141-147 But many be mevyd to worke after ther fantasy
In many subjects in whych be Tynctors gay,
Both Whyte and Red, devydyd manually
To syght, but in the Fyre they fle away,

Such brekyth Potts and Glassys day by day:
Enpoysonyng themfelfs, and losyng of theyr syghts
Wyth Odors and smoks and wakeyng up by nyghts.

148-154 Their Clothes be bawdy and woryn threde-bare,
Men may them smell for Multyplyers where they go;
To fyle theyr fyngers wyth Corrosyves they do not spare
Theyr Eyes be bleryd, & theyr Chekys both lene & bloe:
And thus for (had I wyst) they suffer losse and wo;
Such when they have lost that was in theyr purse,
Then do they chyd and Phylosophers sore accurse.

155-161 For all the whyle that they have Phylosophers ben,
Yet cowde they never know our Stone.
Som sought in Soote, Dung, Uryne, som in Wyne:
Som in Sterr slyme, for thyng yt ys but one;
In Blood, Eggs; Som tyll theyr thryst was gone:
Devydyng Elements, and brekyng many a pott,
Multyplying the sherds, but yet they hyt yt not.

162-168 To se theyr Howsys it ys a noble sport,
What Fornaces, what Glassys there be of divers shape;
What Salts, what Powders, what Oyles, and waters fort,
How eloquently, de materia prima they clape,
And yet to fynde the trewth they have no hap:
Of our Mercury they medle and of our Sulphur vyve,
Wherein they dote, and more and more unthryve.

169-175 They take of the Red Man and hys whyte Wyfe,
That ys a speciall thyng and of Elixers two,
Of the Quintessence and of the Elixers of lyfe,
Of Hony, Celydony, and of Secundyns also,
These they devyde into Elements wyth other mo;
No Multeplyers but Phylosophers callyd wyll they be,
Whych naturall Phylosophye dyd never rede nor see.

176-182 Thys felyshyp knowyth our Stone ryght wele,
They thynke them rycher then ys the Kyng;
They wyll hym helpe, he shall not fayle
Fraunce for to wyn, a wonders thyng;
The holy Crosse home wyll they bryng:
And yf the King were prysoner I take,
Anon hys Raunsome would they make.

183-189 A mervell yt ys that Westminster Church,
To whych these Phylosophers do haunte;
Syth they so much ryches can woorche,
As they make boste of and avaunte,
Drynkyng dayly the wyne a due taunte,
Ys not made up perfytly at ons,
For truly hyt lackyth yet many Stonys.

190-196 Folys doe folow them at the tayle,
Promotyd to ryches wenyng to be;
But wyll ye here what worshyp and avayle,
They wyn in London that nobyll cyte,

Wyth Sylver Macys as ye may se:
Sarjaunts awayting on them every owre,
So be they men of great honour.

197-203 Sarjaunts sekyth them fro Strete to Strete,
Marchaunts and Goldsmyths leyeth after them watch;
That well ys he that wyth them do mete,
For the great advantage that they doe cache,
They hunt about as doth a Rache:
Wenyng to wyn so grete tresure,
That ever in ryches they shall endure.

204-210 Som wold cache theyr goods agayne,
And some more good would aventure;
Som for to have wold be full fayne,
Of Ten pound one I you ensuer:
Som whych hath lent wythout mesure
Theyr goods, and be with powerte bestad,
To cache a Nobyll wold be full glad.

211-217 But when the Sarjaunts do them arest,
Ther Paukeners be stuffed wyth Parrys balls;
Or wyth Sygnetts of Seynt Martynes at the lest,
But as for Mony yt ys pyssyd on the walls:
Then be they led as well for them befalls
To Newgate or Ludgate as I you tell,
Because they shall in safegard dwell.

218-224 Where ys my Mony becom seyth one,
And where ys myne seyth he and he?
But wyll ye here how suttell they be anon,
In answeryng, that they excused may be,
Saying, Of our Elyxers robbyd we be:
Ells myght we have payd you all your Gold,
Yf yt had been more by ten folde.

225-231 And then theyer Creditors they begyn to flatter,
Promysyng to worke for them agayne;
The Elyxers two in short space after,
Dotyng the Merchaunts that they be fayne
To let them go, but ever in vayne:
They worke so long, tyll at the last
They be agayne in Pryson cast.

232-238 Yf any then aske them why they be not ryche,
They sey they make fyne Gold of Tynn;
But he they sey may surely swym in dyche,
Whych ys upholden by the chyn,
We have no stock, therefore may we nought wyn:
Whych yf we had we wold some worche,
I now to fynysh up Westmynster Churche.

239-245 And some of them be so Devowte,
They wyll not dwell out of that place;
For there they may wythowten dowte,
Do what them lyft to their Solace,

The Archedeacon ys so full of grace:
Yf that they please hym wyth the Crosse,
He forsyth lyttyll of other menys losse.

246-252 And when they there syt at the wyne,
These Monkys they sey have many a pound,
Wolde God (seyth one) that som were myne;
Hay hoe, careaway, lat the cup go rounde:
Drynk on, seyth another, the mene ys founde:
I am a Master of that Arte,
I warrant us we shall have parte.

253-259 Such causyth the Monkys then evyll to don,
To wast ther Wagys thorow theyr dotage;
Som bryngeth a Mazer and som a Spone;
There Phylosophers gevyth them such corage,
Behotyng them wynnyng wythout damage:
A pound for a peny at the lest agayne,
And so fayre promys makyth folys fayne.

260-266 A ryall Medycyne one upon twelve
They promys them thereof to have,
Whych they could never for themselfe
Yet bryng abowte, so God me save:
Beware such Phylosophers, no man deprave:
Whych helpyth these Monkys to ryches so,
Wyth thread bare Cowlys that they do go.

267-273 The Abbot well ought to cherysh thys Company,
For they can tech hys Monkys to leve in poverte,
And to go clothyd and monyed relygyously,
As dyd Seynt Benet, eschuyng superfluyte,
Esyng them also of the ponderosyte
Of theyr pursys, wyth pounds so aggravate,
Whych by Phylosophy be now allevyat.

274-280 Lo who so medlyth wyth thys rych Company,
Gret bost of ther wynnyng may they make,
For they shall have as much by ther Phylosophy,
As they of the tayle of an Ape can take;
Beware therfore for Jesus sake:
And medyll wyth nothyng of gret cost,
For and thou do, yt ys but lost.

281-287 These Phylosophers (of whych I spake afore)
Medlyth and blondryth wyth many a thyng,
Renuyng in errors more and more,
For lac of trew understandyng,
But lyke must lyke alway ferth bryng:
So God hath ordeyned in every kynde,
Wold Jesus they wold thys bere in mynde.

288-294 Wene they of a Nettyll to have a Rose
Or of an Elder an Apple swete,
Alas that wyse men ther goods shold lose:
Trustyng such Losells when they them mete,

Whych seyth our Stone ys trodyn under fete:
And makyth them therfore vyle thyngs for to styll
Tyll at theyr howsys wyth stench they fyll.

295-301 Som of them never lernyd a word in Scolys,
Such thynk by reason to understond Phylosophy:
Be they Phylosophers? nay, they be folys:
Therfore ther Warkes provyth unwytty;
Medyll not wyth them yf thou be happy:
Lest wyth theyr flatteryng they so the tyll
That thou agre unto ther wyll.

302-308 Spend not thy Mony away in waste,
Geve not to every speche credence;
But fyrst examyn, grope and taste;
And as thou provyst, so put thy confydence,
And ever beware of grete expence:
But yf thy Phylosopher lyve vertuosely,
Trust the better to hys Phylosophy.

309-315 Prove hym fyrst and hym oppose
Of all the Secretts of our Stone,
Whych yf he know not thou nedyth not to lose;
Medyll thou not ferther, but let hym gone,
Make he never so pytyose a mone:
For than the Fox can fagg and fayne
When he wold faynyst hys prey attayne.

316-322 Yf he can answer as ought a Clarke,
How be hyt he hath not provyd indede;
And yf thou wylt helpe hym to hys Warke,
Yf he be vertuose I hold hyt mede,
For he wyll the quyte yf ever he spede:
And thou shalt weete by a lytyll anon
Yf he have knowledge of our Stone.

323-329 One thyng, one Glasse, one Furnace and no mo,
Behold thys pryncypyll yf he take,
And yf he do not, then lat hym go;
For he shall never thee rych man make:
Trewly yt ys better thou hym forsake,
Then after wyth losse and varyaunce,
And other manner of dysplesaunce.

330-336 But and God fortune the for to have
Thys Scyence by doctrine whych I have told;
Dyscover yt not whoever thee crave,
For Favor, Fere, Sylver, nor Gold:
Be none Oppressor, Lecher, nor boster bold;
Serve thy God, and helpe the powre among,
Yf thou thys lyfe lyst to continew long.

337-343 Unto thy selfe thy secretts kepe
From synners whych hath not God in dred;
But wyll the cast in Pryson depe,
Tyll thou them tech to do hyt in dede,

Then slander on the sholde spryng and sprede,
That thou dyd coyne then wold they sey,
And so undo the for ever and aye.

344-350 And yf thou teche them thys conyng,
Their synfull levyng for to mayntayne;
In Hell therfore myght be thy wonnyng,
For God of the then would disdayne,
As thow nought cowd for thy selfe sayne:
That Body and Soule you may bothe save,
And here in pece thy levyng have.

351-357 Now in thys Chapter I have the tought,
How thou the bodys must Putrefy:
And so to guide the thou be not cawght,
And put in duraunce, losse, and vylanye:
My doctryne therefore remember wyttyly,
And passe forth toward the Syxth Gate,
For thys the Fyfthe ys tryumphate,

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THE SIXTH GATE: OF CONGELATION

✦

1-7 OF Congelacyon I nede not much to wryte,
But what yt ys now I wyll fyrst declare:
It ys of soft thyngs Induracyon of Colour Whyte,
And confyxacyon of Spyrits whych fleyng are:
How to congele thee nedyth not much to care.
For Elements wyll knyt together sone,
So that Putrefaccyon be kyndly done.

8-14 But Congelacyons be made in dyvers wyse,
And Spyryts and Bodys dyssolvyd to water clere,
Of Salts also dyssolvyd ons or twyse,
And then to congele in a fluxyble Mater;
Of such Congelyng folys do clatter:
And some dyssolvyth devydyng manually
Elements, them after congelyng to powder dry.

15-21 But such Congelyng ys not to our desyre:
For unto owers yt ys contraryose.
Our Congelacion dredyth not the fire:
For yt must ever stond in yt unctuos,
And also in hys Tincture be full bounteous,
Whych in the Ayre congelyd wyll not relent
To Water, for then our Worke were shent.

22-28 Moreover Congele not into so hard a Stone
As Glasse or Crystall whych meltyth by fusyon;
But so that hyt lyke wax wyll melt anon
Wythouten blast: and beware of Delusyon;
For such Congelyng longyth not to our Conclusyon
As wyll not flow and ren to water agen,
Lyke Salts congelyd, then laboryst thou in vayne.

29-35 Whych Congelacyon avaylyth us never a dell,
Hyt longyth to Multyplyers whych Congele vulgarly;
Yf thow therefore lyst to do well,
(Syth thy Medcyne shall never flow kyndly,
Nether Congele, wythout thow fyrst yt Putrefye)
Fyrst Purge and Fyx the Elements of our Stone,
Tyll they together Congele and flow anone.

36-42 For when the Matter ys made parfyt Whyte,
Then wyll thy Spryte wyth the Body Congelyd be;
But of that tyme thou must have long respyte,
Yer yt appere Congelyd lyke Pearles unto the,
Such Congelacyon be glad for to see;
And after lyke graynys red as blod,
Rychyr then any worldly good.

43-49 The erthly Grosnes therefore fyrst mortyfyed
In Moystnes, Blacknes ingend[r]yd ys;
Thys pryncypell may not be denyed,
For naturall Phylosophers so seyth I wys,

Whych had, of Whytenes thou may not mys:
And into Whytenes yf thou Congele hyt ons,
Thou hast a Stone most presyose of all Stonys.

50-56 And by the Dry lyke as the Moyst dyd putrefy,
Whych causyd in colors Blacknes to appere;
Ryght so the Moyst Congelyd by the Dry,
Ingendryth Whytenes shyneyng with myght sull clere,
And Drynes procedyth as Whytyth the matter:
Lyke as in Blackyng Moysture doth hym show,
By colors varyante aye new and new.

57-63 The cause of all thys ys Hett most temperate,
Workyng and mevyng the Mater contynually;
And thereby also the Mater ys alterate,
Both inward and outward substancyally,
And not to as doth folys to syght sophystycally:
But every parte all fyre for to endure,
Fluxybly fyxe and stabull in tyncture.

64-70 And Physycke determyneth of eche Dygestyon,
Fyrst don in the Stomack in whych ys Drynes,
Causyng Whytnes wythout questyon,
Lyke as the second Dygestyon causyth Rednes,
Complet in the Lyver by Hete and temperatnes;
And so our Stone by Drynes and by Hete,
Dygestyd ys to Whyte and Red complete.

71-77 But here thou must another secret knowe,
How the Phylosophers Chyld in the Ayre ys borne:
Besy thee not to fast at the Cole to blowe,
And take that nether for mock nor skorne,
But trust me truly else thy work ys all forlorne:
Wythout thyne Erth wyth Water revyvyd be,
Our trew Congelyng shalt thou never see.

78-84 A sowle betwyxt Hevyn and Erth beyng,
Arysyng fro the Erth as Ayre wyth Water pure,
And causyng lyfe in every lyvely thyng,
Incessably runnyng uppon our foresayd Nature,
Enforsyng to better them wyth all hys cure;
Whych Ayre ys the Fyre of our Phylosophy,
Namyd now Oyle, now Water mystyly.

85-91 And thus mene Ayre, whych Oyle, or Water we call,
Our Fyre, our Oyntment, our Spryte, and our Stone,
In whych one thyng we grownd our wysdomes all,
Goyth nether out nor yn alone,
Nether the Fyer but the Water anone;
Fyrst yt outeledyth, and after bryngyth yt yn,
As Water with Water whych wyll not lyghtly twyn.

92-98 And so may Water only our Water meve,
Whych mevyng causyth both Deth and Lyfe,
And Water doth kyndly to Water cleve
Wythout repugnance, or any stryfe,

Whych Water to Folys ys nothyng ryfe;
Beyng of the kynd wythowten dowte
Of the Spryte, callyd Water and leder owte.

99-105 And Water ys the secret and lyfe of every thyng
That ys of substance in thys world y found;
For of the Water eche thyng hath begynnyng,
As showyth in Woman when she shallbe unbound
By water whych passyth afore, if all be sound,
Callyd Albyen, fyrst from them rennyng,
Wyth grevose throwys afore ther chyldyng.

106-112 And truly that ys the cause pryncypall,
Why Phylosophers chargyd us to be pacyent
Tyll tyme the Water were dryed to powder all,
Wyth nurryshyng hete contynuall but not vyolent,
For qualytes be contrarious of every element,
Tyll after Black in Whyte be made a unyon,
And then forever congelyd wythout dyvysyon.

113-119 And furthermore the preparacion of thys conversyon
Fro thyng to thyng, fro one state to another,
Ys done only by kyndly and descrete operacion
Of Nature, as ys of Sperme wythin the Mother:
For Sperme and Hete as Syster be and Brother,
Whych be converted wythin themself as Nature can
By accion, and passyon, and at the last to parfyt Man.

120-126 For as the bodely part by Nature whych ys consumate
Into Man, ys such as the begynner was,
Whych though yt thus fro thyng to thyng was alterat,
Not owt of kynd to menge with other kynds dyd yt pas;
And so our Mater spermatycall wythin one Glas,
Wythin hyt selfe must turne fro thyng to thyng,
By hete most temperate only hyt noryshyng.

127-133 Another example naturall I may thee tell,
How the substance of an Egg by nature ys wrought
Into a Chyk, not pasyng out of the shell,
A playner example cowd I not have thought,
And there conversions be made tyll forth be brought
Fro state to state the lyke by lyke yn kynd,
Wyth nurryshyng hete: only bere thys yn mynd.

134-140 Another example here may you also rede,
Of Vegetable thyngs takyng consyderacyon;
How every Plant growyth of hys owne sede,
Thorow Here and Moysture by naturall operacyon,
And therefore Mineralls be nurryshyd by mynystracyon;
Of Moysture radycall, whych theyr begynnyng was,
Not passiyng theyer kynd wythin one Glas.

141-147 There we them turne fro thyng to thyng agayne,
Into ther Moder the Water when they go;
Whych pryncyple unknowen thou labourest in vayne:
Then ys all Sperme, and thyngs ther be no mo,

But kynd wyth kynd in number two;
Male and Female, Agent and Pacyent,
Wythin the matryce of the Erth most oryent.

148-154 And these be turnyd by Hete fro thyng to thyng
Wythin one Glas, and so fro state to state,
Tyll tyme that Nature do them bryng
Into one substance of the Water regenerate,
And so the Sperme wythin hys kynde ys alterate,
Abyll in lykenes hys kynde for to Multeplye,
As doth in kynde all other thyngs naturally.

155-161 In the tyme of thys seyde processe naturall,
Whyle that the Sperme consevyd ys growyng,
The substance ys nurryshed wyth hys owne Menstruall,
Whych Water only out of the Erth dyd bryng,
Whose colour ys Greene in the fyrst showing,
And for that tyme the Son hydyth hys lyght,
Taking hys course thorow owte the North by nyght.

162-168 The seyd Menstrue ys, (I say to the in councell)
The blod of our Grene Lyon, and not of Vytrioll,
Dame Venus can the trewth of thys the tell,
At thy begynnyng to councell and yf thou her call:
Thys secret ys hyd by Phylosophers grete and small;
Whych blode drawen owte of the seyd Lyon,
For lac of Hete had not perfyt Dygestyon.

169-175 But thys blode our secret Menstruall,
Wherewyth our Sperme ys nurryshed temperatly,
When it ys turnyd into the fecys Corporall,
And becom Whyte perfytly and very Dry,
Congelyd and Fyxyd into hys owne body;
Then brustyn blod to syght yt may well seme,
Of thys warke namyd the mylke whyte Dyademe.

176-182 Understonde now that our fyery Water thus acuate,
Is called our Menstruall water, wherein
Our Erth ys losyd and naturally Calcenat
By Congelacyon that they may never twyne:
Yet to Congele more water thou may not blyn
Into thre parts of the acuate water seyd afore,
Wyth the 4th part of the Erth congelyd & no more.

183-189 Unto that substance therefore so congelat,
The fowerth part put of water Crystallyn
And make them then together to be Dysponsat
By Congelacyon into a myner metallyne,
Whych lyke a sworde new slypyd then wyll shyne,
After the Blacknes whych fyrst wyll showe,
The fowerth parte geve yt them of water new.

190-196 Mo Inbybycyons many must we have yett;
Geve yt the second, and after the thyrd also,
The seyd proportyon kepe well in thy wyt;
Then to another the fowerth tyme loke thou go,

The fyfth tyme and the syxth, passe not there fro:
But put two parts at eche tyme of them three,
And at the seventh tyme fyve parts let there bee.

197-203 When thou hast made thus seven tymes Inbybycion,
Ageyne then must thow turne thy Whele,
And Putrefy all that Matter wythowte addycyon:
Fyrst Blacknesse abydyng yf thow wylt do well,
Then into Whytenes congele yt up eche dele,
And by Rednes into the Sowth assend,
Then hast thou brought thy Base unto an end.

204-210 Thus ys thy Water then devydyd in partyes two,
Wyth the fyrst party the Bodys be Putryfycat,
And to thyne Inbybycions the second part must go,
Wyth whych the Matter ys afterwards Denygrat,
And sone uppon by esy Decoccyon Albyfycate:
Then yt ys namyd by Phylosophers our Sterry Stone,
Bryng that to Rednes, then ys the syxth Gate woon.

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THE SEVENTH GATE: OF CIBATION

✦

1-7 NOw of Cibacion I turne my pen to wryte,
Syth yt must here the seventh place occupye;
But in few words yt wylbe expedyte,
Take tent therto, and understond me wyttyly;
Cibacion ys callyd a fedyng of our Matter dry
Wyth Mylke, and Mete, whych moderatly they do,
Tyll yt be brought the thyrd order unto.

8-14 But geve yt not so much that thou hyt glut,
Beware of the Dropsy, and also of Noyes Flood;
By lyttyll and lyttyll therfore thou to hyt put
Of Mete and Drynke as semyth to do hyt good,
That watry humors not overgrow the blood:
The Drynke therfore let hyt be mesuryd so,
That kyndly appetyte thou never quench therfro.

15-21 For yf yt drynke to much, then must yt have
A Vomyte, ells wyll yt be syk to long;
Fro the Dropsy therfore thy Wombe thou save,
And fro the Flux, ells wyll hyt be wrong,
Whych rather lat yt thyrst for drynke amonge:
Then thou shold geve yt overmuch at ons
Whych must in youth be dyattyd for the nons.

22-28 And yf thou dyatt hyt (as Nature doth requyre)
Moderatly tyll hyt be growen to age,
Fro Cold hyt kepyng and nurryshyng wyth moyst Fyre;
Than shall yt grow and wax full of corrage,
And do to thee both plesure and advauntage:
For he shall make darke Bodys hole and bryght,
Clensyng theyer Leprosenes thorow hys myght.

29-35 Thre tymes thus must thou turne about thy Whele
Abowte kepyng the rewle of the seyd Cibacyon,
And then as sone as yt the Fyre doth fele,
Lyke Wax yt wylbe redy unto Lyquacyon;
Thys Chapter nedyth not longer protestacion:
For I have told thee the dyatory most convenyent
After thyne Elements be made equypolent.

36-42 And also how thou to Whytnes shalt bryng thy Gold,
Most lyke in fygure to the lenys of an hawthorn tre,
Callyd Magnesya afore as I have told;
And our Whyte Sulfur wythowte conbustebyllyte,
Whych fro the fyer away wyll never fle:
And thus the seventh Gate as thow desyred.
In the upspryng of the Son ys conqueryd.

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THE EIGHTH GATE: OF SUBLIMATION

✦

1-7 HEre of our Sublimacion a word or two,
I have to speke, whych the eyghth Gate ys
Folys do Sublyme, but Sublyme thou not so,
For we Sublyme not lyke as they do I wys;
To Sublyme trewly therfore thou shall not mys:
If thou can make thy Bodys first spirituall,
And then thy Spyryts as I have tought the corporall.

8-14 Som do Mercury from Vitriall and Salt sublyme,
And other spryts fro Scales of Yern or Steele,
Fro Eggshells calcynyd and quyk lyme,
And on theyer manner hyt they Sublyme ryght well,
But such Sublymyng accordyth never adele
To our entent, for we Sublyme not so,
To trewe Sublymyng therfore now wyll I go.

15-21 In Sublymacyon fyrst beware of one thyng,
That thou Sublyme not to the top of thy Vessell,
For without vyolence thou shalt yt not downe bryng
Ageyne, but there yt wyll abyde and dwell;
So hyt rejoysyth wyth refrygeracion I the tell:
Kepe hyt therfore wyth temperat hete adowne
Full forty dayes, tyll hyt wex black abowen.

22-28 For then the Sowle begynnyth for to com owte,
Fro hys owne vaynys; for all that subtyll ys,
Wyll wyth the Spryts assend withouten dowte:
Bere in thy mynde therfore and thynke on thys,
How here eclypsyd byn thy Bodys:
As they do Putrify Sublymyng more and more,
Into the Water tyll they be all up bore.

29-35 And thus ther venom when they have spowtyd out
Into the water, than Black yt doth appeare,
And become spirituall every dele withoute dowte,
Sublymyng esyly on our manner
Into the water which doth hym bere:
For in the Ayre one Chyld thus must be bore
Of the Water ageyne as I have seyd before.

36-42 But when these to Sublymacyon continuall
Be laboryd so, wyth hete both moyst and temperate,
That all ys Whyte and purely made spirituall;
Than Hevyn uppon Erth must be reitterate,
Unto the Sowle wyth the Body be reincorporate:
That Erth becom all that afore was Hevyn,
Whych wyll be done in Sublymacyons sevyn.

43-49 And Sublymacyon we make for causys thre,
The fyrst cause ys to make the Body Spirituall;
The second that the Spryt may Corporall be,
And becom fyx wyth hyt and substancyall:

The Thyrd cause ys that fro hys fylth orygynall
He may be clensyd, and hys fatnys sulphuryose
Be mynyshyd in hym whych ys infectuose.

50-56 Then when they thus togeder depuryd be,
They wyll Sublyme up whyter then Snow;
That syght wyll gretly comfort the;
For than anon parfytly shalt thou know
Thy Sprytts shall so be a downe I throw:
That thys Gate to the shalbe unlockyd,
Out of thys Gate many one be shyt and mockyd.

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THE NINTH GATE: OF FERMENTATION

✦

1-7 TRew Fermentacyon few Workers do understond,
That secrett therfore I wyll expounde to the,
I travelyd trewly thorow many a Lond:
Or ever I myght fynde any that cold tell hyt me;
Yet as God wolde, (evermore blessed he be,)
At the last I cum to knowledge therof parfyt,
Take heede therfore, therof what I do wryte.

8-14 Fermentyng in dyvers maners ys don,
By whych our Medcyns must be perpetuate,
Into a clere Water, som lesyth Son and Mone;
And wyth ther Medcyns makyth them to be Congelate;
Whych in the Fyer what tyme they be examynate,
May not abyde nor alter wyth Complement,
For such Ferments ys not to our intent.

15-21 But yet more kyndly som other men don
Fermentyng theyer Medcynes in thys wyse,
In Mercury dyssolvyng both Son and Mone,
Up wyth the Spryts tyll tyme wyll aryse,
Sublymyng them together twyse or thryse:
Then Fermentacyon therof they make,
That ys a way, but yet we hyt forsake.

22-28 Som other ther be whych hath more hap
To touch the trothe in parte of Fermentyng;
They Amalgam ther Bodys wyth Mercury lyke papp;
Then theruppon ther Medcyns relentyng,
These of our Secretts have som hentyng:
But not the trewth wyth parfyt Complement,
Because they nether Putrefy nor alter ther Ferment.

29-35 That poynt therfore I wyll dysclose to thee,
Looke how thou dydyst wyth thy unparfyt Body,
And do so wyth thy parfyt Bodys in every degre;
That ys to sey fyrst thou them Putrefye
Her prymary qualytes destroying utterly:
For thys ys wholey to our entent,
That fyrst thou alter before thou Ferment.

36-42 To thy Compound make Ferment the fowerth parte,
Whych Ferments be only of Son and Mone;
If thou therfore be Master of thys Arte,
Thy Fermentacion lat thys be done,
Fyx Water and Erth together sone:
And when the Medcyn as wax doth flowe,
Than uppon Malgams loke thou hyt throw.

43-49 And when all that together ys myxyd
Above thy Glasse well closyd make thy fyre,
And so contenew hyt tyll all be fyxid,
And well Fermented to desyre;

Than make Projeccyon after thy pleasure:
For that ys Medcyn than ech dele parfyt,
Thus must you Ferment both Red and Whyte.

50-56 For lyke as flower of Whete made into Past,
Requyreth Ferment whych Leven we call
Of Bred that yt may have the kyndly tast,
And becom Fode to Man and Woman most cordyall;
Ryght so thy Medcyn Ferment thou shall,
That yt may tast wyth the Ferment pure,
And all assays evermore endure.

57-63 And understond that ther be Ferments three,
Two be of Bodys in nature clene,
Whych must be altryd as I have told thee;
The thyrd most secret of whych I mene,
Ys the fyrst Erth to hys owne Water grene:
And therfore when the Lyon doth thurst,
Make hym drynke tyll hys Belly burst.

64-70 Of thys a Questyon yf I shold meve,
And aske of Workers what ys thys thyng,
Anon therby I sholde them preve;
Yf they had knowledge of our Fermentyng,
For many man spekyth wyth wondreng:
Of Robyn Hode, and of his Bow,
Whych never shot therin I trow.

71-77 But Fermentacion trew as I the tell
Ys of the Sowle wyth the Bodys incorporacyon,
Restoryng to hyt the kyndly smell;
Wyth tast and color by naturall conspysacyon
Of thyngs dysseveryd, a dew redyntegracyon:
Wherby the Body of the Spryte takyth impression,
That eyther other may helpe to have ingression.

78-84 For lyke as the Bodys in ther compaccyon corporall
May not show out ther qualytes effectually
Untyll the tyme that they becom spyrituall:
No more may Spryts abyde wyth the Bodys stedfastly,
But they wyth them be fyrst confyxat proportionably:
For then the Body techyth the Spryt to suffer Fyer,
And the Spryt the Body to endure to thy desyre.

85-91 Therfore thy Gold wyth Gold thou must Ferment,
Wyth hys owne Water thyne Erth clensyd I mene
Not ells to say but Element wyth Element;
The Spryts of Lyfe only goyng betweene,
For lyke as an Adamand as thow hast sene:
Yern to hym draw, so doth our Erth by kynde
Draw downe to hym hys Sowle borne up wyth Wynd.

92-98 Wyth mynd therfore thy Sowle lede out and in,
Meng Gold wyth Gold, that is to say
Make Elements wyth Elements together ryn;
To tyme all Fyre they suffer may,

For Erth ys Ferment wythouten nay
To Water, and Water the Erth unto;
Our Fermentacion in thys wyse must be do.

99-105 Erth ys Gold, so ys the Sowle also,
Not Comyn but Owers thus Elementate,
And yet the Son therto must go,
That by our Whele yt may be alterate,
For so to Ferment yt must be preparat:
That hyt profoundly may joynyd be
Wyth other natures as I seyd to thee.

106-112 And whatsoever I have here seyd of Gold,
The same of Sylver I wyll thou understond,
That thou them Putrefye and alter as I have told;
Ere thou thy Medcyn to Ferment take in hond,
Forsowth I cowde never fynde hym wythin Englond:
whych on thys wyse to Ferment cowde me teche
Wythout errour, by practyse or by speche.

113-119 Now of thys Chapter me nedyth to trete no more,
Syth I intend prolixite to eschew;
Remember well my words therfore,
Whych thou shalt preve by practys trew,
And Son and Mone loke thou renew:
That they may hold of the fyfth nature,
Then shall theyr Tynctures ever endure.

120-126 And yet a way there ys most excellent,
Belongyng unto another workyng,
A Water we make most redolent:
All Bodys to Oyle wherwyth we bryng,
Wyth whych our Medcyn we make floyng:
A Quyntessens thys Water we call
In man, whych helyth Dysesys all.

127-133 But wyth thy Bace after my Doctryne preperat,
Whych ys our Calx, thys must be don;
For when our Bodys be so Calcenat,
That Water wyll to Oyle dyssolve them sone;
Make therfore Oyle of Son and Mone
Which ys Ferment most fragrant for to smell,
And so the 9th Gate ys Conquered of thys Castell.

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THE TENTH GATE: OF EXALTATION

✦

1-7 PRocede we now to the Chapter of Exaltacion,
Of whych truly thou must have knowledge pure,
Full lyttyll yt ys dyfferent from Sublymacyon,
Yf thou conceve hym ryght I thee ensure:
Herto accordyth the holy Scrypture:
Chryste seyng thus, Yf I exalted be,
Then shall I draw all thyngs unto me.

8-14 Ower Medycyn yf we Exalt ryght so,
Hyt shall therby be Nobylyzate,
That must be done in manners two;
Fro tyme the parts be dysponsate,
Whych must be Crusyfyed and examynat:
And then contumulate both Man and Wyfe,
And after revyvyd by the Spyryts of Lyfe.

15-21 Than up to Hevyn they must Exaltyd be,
Ther to be in Body and Sowle gloryfycate;
For thou must bryng them to such subtylyte,
That they assend together to be intronyzate,
In Clowds of clerenesse, to Angells consociate:
Then shall they draw as thou shalt se
All other Bodys to ther owne dygnyte.

22-28 Yf thou therfore thy Bodys wyll Exaltat,
Fyrst wyth the Spryts of Lyfe thou them augment,
Tyll tyme thy Erth be well subtylyate,
By naturall rectyfyyng of eche Element;
Hym up exaltyng into the Fyrmament:
Than much more presyose shall they be than Gold,
Because they of the Quyntessence do hold.

29-35 For when the Cold hath overcum the Hete,
Then into Water the Ayre shall turnyd be;
And so two contrarys together shall mete,
Tyll ether wyth other ryght well agre,
So into Ayre thy Water as I tell the;
When Hete of Cold hath gott domynacyon,
Shalbe convertyd by craft of Cyrculacyon.

36-42 And of the Fyer then Ayer have thou shall,
By losyng Putrefyyng and Sublymyng;
And Fyer thou hast of the Erth materyall:
Thyne Elements by craft thus dysseveryng,
Most specyally the Erth well Calcenyng:
And when they be eche on made pure,
Then do they hold all of the fyfth nature.

43-49 On thys wyse therfore make them to be Cyrcular,
Ech unto other exaltyng by and by,
And in one Glas do all thys surely sygylate,
Not wyth thy honds, but as I teche the naturally,

Fyer into Water then turne fyrst hardely;
For Fyer ys in Ayer wych ys in Water exystent,
And thys Conversyon accordyth to our entent.

50-56 Than ferthermore turne on thy Whele,
That into Erth thy Ayre convertyd be,
Whych wylbe don also ryght well:
For Ayre ys in Water beyng in the Erth trust me,
Then Water into Fyre contraryose in ther qualyte:
Sone turne thou may, for Water in Erth ys,
Whych ys in Fyer conversyon, true ys thys.

57-63 Thy Whele ys now nygh turnyd abowte,
Into Ayre turne Erth, whych ys the proper nest
Of other Elements ther ys no dowte,
For Erth in Fyre ys, whych in Ayre takyth rest,
Thys Cyrculacyon thou begyn must in the West:
Then forth into the Sowth tyll they exaltyd be,
Procede dewly as in the Fygure I have towght the.

64-70 In whych proces thou may clerly se,
From an extreame how to another thou may not go.
But by a mene, syth they in qualyte contraryose be;
And reson wyll forsoth that hyt be so,
As hete into cold wyth other contraryose mo:
Wythout theyr menys as moyst to hete and cold,
Examples suffycyent afore thys have I told.

71-77 Thus have I tawght the how for to make,
Of all thy Elements a parfyt Cyrculacyon,
And at thy Fygure example for to take,
How thou shalt make thys foresayd Exaltacyon,
And of thy Medcyn in the Elements trew graduacyon:
Tyll hyt be brought to a quynaryte temperat,
And then thou hast conqueryd the Tenth Gate.

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THE ELEVENTH GATE: OF MULTIPLICATION

✦

1-7 MUltyplycacyon now to declare I procede,
Whych ys by Phylosophers in thys wyse dyfynyd,
Augmentacyon yt ys of that Elixer indede,
In goodnes, in quantyte, both for Whyt and Rede,
Multyplycacyon ys therfore as they have seyd:
That thyng that doth Augment the Medcyns in ech degre,
In Color, in Odor, in Vertue, and also in Quantyte.

8-14 And why thou may thy Medcyn multeply,
Infynytly the cause forsoth ys thys.
For yt ys Fyer whych tyned wyll never dye:
Dwellyng wyth the as Fyer doth in housys,
Of whych one sparke may make more Fyers I wys;
As musk in Pygments, and other spycys mo,
In vertue multyplyeth and our Medcyn ryght so.

15-21 So he ys ryche the whych Fyer hath les or more,
Because he may so gretly Multeply;
And ryght so ryche ys he whych any parte hath in store
Of our Elixers whych be augmentable infynytly:
One way yf thou dyssolve our Powders dry,
And oft tymes of them make Congelacyon,
Of hyt in goodnes thou makyst then Augmentacyon.

22-28 The second way both in goodnes and in quantyte,
Hyt Multyplyeth by Iterat Fermentacion,
As in that Chapter I showyd playnly unto the,
By dyvers manners of naturall Operacyon,
And also in the Chapter of our Cybacyon:
Where thou may know how thou shalt Multeply
Thy Medycyn wyth Mercury Infynytly.

29-35 But and thou bothe wyll Loose and also Ferment,
Both more in quantyte and better wyll hyt be;
And in such wyse thou may that so augment,
That in thy Glas yt wyll grow lyke a Tre,
The Tre of Hermes namyd, seemly to se:
Of whych one Pepyn a thowsand wyll Multyply,
Yf thou can make thy Projeccyon wyttyly.

36-42 And lyke as Saffron when yt ys pulveryzate,
By lyttyll and lyttyll yf hyt in Lycour be
Temperyd, and then wyth mykyll more Lycour dylate;
Tyngyth much more of Lycour in quantyte,
Than beyng hole in hys owne grose nature: so shall thou se
That our Elixers the more they be made thyn,
The farther in Tyncture sothfastly wyll renne.

43-49 Kepe in thy Fyer therfore both evyn and morow,
Fro house to house that thou nede not to renne
Amonge thy Neyghbors, thy Fyer to sech or borow,
The more thou kepyst the more good shall thou wyn,

Multyplyyng ey more and more thy Glas wythin:
By fedyng wyth Mercury to thy lyvys end,
So shall thou have more than thou nedyst to spend.

50-56 Thys mater ys playne, I wyll no more
Wryte now therof, lat Reson the guyde;
Be never the bolder to Syn therfore,
But serve thy God the better at ech tyde;
And whylls that thou shall in thys lyfe abyde,
Bere thys in mynde, forget not I the pray,
As thou shalt apere before thy God at domys day.

57-63 Hys owne gret Gyfts thefore and hys Tresure,
Dyspose thou vertuosely, helpyng the poore at nede,
That in thys World to the thou may procure
Mercy and Grace with Hevenly blys to mede,
And pray devoutly to God that he the lede
In at thys eleventh Gate as he can best,
Sone after then thou shalt end thy conquest.

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THE TWELFTH GATE: OF PROJECTION

✦

1-7 IN Projeccyon hyt shalbe provyd yf our practise be profytable
Of wch yt behovyth me the secrets here to meve;
Therfore yf thy Tyncture be sure and not vaiyable,
By a lyttyll of thy Medcyn thus shall thou preve
Wyth Mettall or wyth Mercury as Pyche yt wyll cleve:
And Tynct in Projeccyon all Fyers to abyde,
And sone yt wyll enter and spred hym full wyde.

8-14 But many for Ignorans doth mar that they made,
When on Mettalls unclensyd Projeccyon they make,
For be cause of corrupcyon theyr Tynctures must vade;
Whych they wold not awey fyrst fro the Bodys take,
Whych after Projeccyon be bryttyl, bloe, and blacke:
That thy Tyncture therfore may evermore last,
Uppon Ferment thy Medcyn loke fyrst that thou cast.

15-21 Then brottyl wyll thy Ferment as any glas be,
Uppon Bodys clensyd and made very pure,
Cast thy brottyll substance and sone shall thou se,
That they shalbe curyosely coleryd wyth Tyncture,
Whych at all assays for ever shall endure:
But at the Psalmys of the Sawter example thou take
Profytable Projeccyon parfytly to make.

22-28 On Fundamenta cast fyrst thys Psalme Nunc Dimittis,
Uppon Verba mea then cast Fundamenta blyve;
Than Verba mea uppon Diligam, conseve me wyth thy wytts;
And Diligam on Attende yf thou lyst to thryve:
Thus make thou Projeccyons thre fowre or fyve,
Tyll the Tyncture of thy Medcyn begyn to decrese,
And then yt ys tyme of Projeccyon to cese.

29-35 By thys mysty talkyng I mene nothyng ells,
But that thou must cast fyrst the lesse on the more,
Incresyng ever the Number as wyse men the tells,
And kepe thou thys Secrett to thy selfe in store,
Be covetuose of connyng yt ys no burden sore:
For who that joyneth not the Elixers wyth Bodys made clene,
He wot not what sykerly Projeccyon doth mene.

36-42 Ten yf thou Multyply fyrst into ten,
One hundreth, that number wyll make sykerly;
Yf one hundreth into an hundreth be Multyplyed then,
Ten thousand ys that number counte hyt wyttyly,
Then into as much more ten thousand multyply:
That ys a thousand thousand, whych multyplyeth I wys,
Into as much more as a hundred myllyons ys.

43-49 That hundred myllyons beyng multyplyed lykewys,
Into ten thousand myllyons, that ys for to sey,
Makyth so grete a number I wote not what yt ys,
Thy number in Projeccyon thus Multyply alwey:

Now Chyld of thy curtesy for me thou pray;
Syth that I have told the our secretts all and some,
To whych I beseche God by Grace thou may com.

50-56 Now thow hast conqueryd the twelve Gates,
And all the Castell thou holdyst at wyll,
Kepe thy Secretts in store unto thy selve;
And the comaundements of God looke thou fulfull:
In fyer conteinue thy glas styll,
And Multeply thy Medcyns ay more and more,
For wyse men done sey store ys no sore.

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THE RECAPITULATION

✦

1-7 FOr to bryng thys Tretys to a fynall end,
And brevely here for to conclude these Secretts all,
Dylygently loke thou, and to thy Fygure attend:
Whych doth in hyt conteyne these secrets grete & small,
And yf thou conceve both Theorycall and Practycall:
By Fygures, and by Colors, and by Scrypture playne,
Whych wyttely consevyd thou mayst not work in vayn.

8-14 Consyder fyrst the Latytude of thy Precyous Stone,
Begynnyng in the fyrst syde notyd in the West,
Where the Red Man and the Whyte Woman be made one,
Spowsyd wyth the Spryts of lyfe to lyve in love and rest,
Erth and Water equaly proportyond that ys best;
And one of the Erth ys good and of the Spryts thre,
Whych twelve to fowre also of the Erth may be.

15-21 Thre of the Wyfe and one of the Man then must thou take,
And the lesse of the Spryts there be in thys dysponsation,
The rather thy Calcynatyon for certeyne shall thou make,
Then forth into the North procede by obscuratyon;
Of the Red Man and hys Whyte Wyfe callyd Eclypsation:
Losyng them and alteryng betyxt Wynter and Vere,
Into Water turnyng Erth darke and nothyng clere.

22-28 Fro thens by colors many one into the Est assends,
There shall the Mone be full apperyng by day lyght;
Then ys she passyd her Purgatory and course at an end;
There ys the upry syng of the Son apperyng whyt and bryght,
There ys Somer after Vere, and day after nyght:
Than Erth and Water whych were so black be turnyd into Ayre;
Than clouds of darknes be overblowyn & all aperyth faire.

29-35 And lyke as the West begynnyng was of the Practyse,
And the North the parfyt mene of profound Alteratyon,
So the Est after them the begynnyng of Speculacyon ys;
But of thys course up in the Sowth the Son makyth Consumation
Ther be thy Elements into Fyre turnyd by Cyrculacyon:
Then to wyn to thy desyre thou needst not be in dowte,
For the Whele of our Phylosophy thou hast turnyd abowte.

36-42 But yet ageyne turne abowte two tymys thy Whele,
In whych be comprehendyd all the Secretts of our Phylosophy,
In Chapters 12 made playne to the if thou conseve them well;
And all the Secretts by and by of our lower Astonomye,
How thou Calcin thy Bodys, parfit, dissolve, devide & putrefie:
Wyth parfyt knowledge of all the polys whych in our Hevyn ben
Shynyng with colors inexplycable never were gayer sene.

43-49 And thys one Secrett conclusyonal know thou wythouten fayle,
Our Red Man teyneth not tyll he teynyd be;
Therfore yf thou lyst thy selfe by thy craft to avayle,
The Altytude of thy Bodys hyde & show out theyr profundyte,

In every of thy Materyalls dystroyyng the fyrst qualyte:
And secundary qualytes more gloryose repare in them anon
And in one Glas wyth one governaunce 4 Naturs turne into one.

50-56 Pale, and Black, wyth falce Citryne, unparfyt Whyte & Red,
Pekoks fethers in color gay, the Raynbow whych shall overgoe
The Spottyd Panther wyth the Lyon greene, the Crowys byll bloe as lede;
These shall appere before the parfyt Whyte, & many other moe
Colors, and after the parfyt Whyt, Grey, and falce Citrine also:
And after all thys shall appere the blod Red invaryable,
Then hast thou a Medcyn of the thyrd order of hys owne kynde Multyplycable.

57-63 Thow must devyde thy Elixer whyte into partyes two,
After thou rubify and into Glassys let hym be don,
If thou wylt have the Elixers both for Son and Mone do so;
Wyth Mercury then hem Multeply unto gret quantyte sone:
Yf thow at the begynnyng had not as much as wold into aspone:
Yet moght thou them so Multeply both the Whyte & Red,
That yf thou levyd a thousand yere they shold the stond in stede.

64-70 Have thou recourse to thy Whele I councell the unto,
And stody tyll thou understond eche Chapter by and by,
Medyll with no falce Fantesys, Mul[ti]plyers, let them go,
Which wyll the flatter & falcely sey they are connyng in Phylosophye,
Do as I byd the and then dyssolve these foreseyd Baces wyttely;
And turne hym into parfyt Oylys with our trew water ardent,
By Cyrculacion that must be don accordyng to our entent.

71-77 These Oylys wyll fyx crude Mercury and convert Bodys all,
Into parfyt Sol and Lune when thou shalt make Projeecyon,
That Oylysh substance pure and fyx Raymond Lully dyd call
Hys Basylyske, of whych he made never so playne deteccyon,
Pray for me to God that I may be of hys eleccyon:
And that he wyll for one of hys on Domys Day me kene,
And graunt me in hys blys to reygne for ever wyth hym, Amen.

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AN ADMONITION, WHEREIN THE AUTHOR DECLARETH HIS ERRONIOUS EXPERIMENTS

✦

AFter all thys I wyll thou understonde,
For thy savegarde what I have done,
Many Experyments I have had in hond;
As I found wryten for Son and Mone,
Whych I wyll tell the rehersyng sone:
Begynnyng wyth Vermylion whych provyd nought,
And Mercury sublymyd whych I dere bought.

I made Solucyons full many a one,
Of Spyrytts, Ferments, Salts, Yerne and Steele;
Wenyng so to make the Phylosophers Stone:
But fynally I lost eche dele,
After my Boks yet wrought I well;
Whych evermore untrew I provyd,
That made me oft full sore agrevyd.

Waters corrosyve and waters Ardent,
With which I wrought in divers wyse,
Many one I made but all was shent;
Eggs shells I calcenyd twise or thryse,

Oylys fro Calcys I made up-ryse;
And every Element fro other I did twyne,
But profyt found I ryght none therein.

22-28 Also I wrought in Sulphur and in Vitriall,
Whych folys doe call the Grene Lyon,
In Arsenike, in Orpement, fowle mot them fall;
In debili principio was myne Incepcyon:
Therefore was frawde in fyne the Conclusyon;
And I blew my thryft at the Cole,
My Clothys were bawdy, my Stomache was never hole.

29-35 Sal Armonyake and Sandever,
Sal Alkaly, sal Alembroke, sal Attinckarr,
Sal Tarter, sal Comyn, sal Geme most clere;
Sal Peter, sal Sode, of these beware;
Fro the odor of Quycksylver kepe the fare:
Medyll not wyth Mercury precipitate,
Nether wyth imparfyt Bodys rubyfycate.

36-42 I provyd Uryns, Eggs, Here, and Blod,
The Scalys of Yern whych Smethys do of smyte,
Aes Ust, and Crokefer whych dyd me never good:
The sowle of Saturne and also Marchasyte,
Lythage and Antemony not worth a myte:
Of whych gey Tyntures I made to shew,
Both Red and Whyte whych were untrew.

43-49 Oyle of Lune and water wyth labour grett,
I made Calcynyng yt with salt precipytate,
And by hyt selfe with vyolent hett
Gryndyng with Vynegar tyll I was fatygate:
And also with a quantyte of Spyces acuate;
Uppon a Marble whych stode me oft in cost,
And Oyles with Corrosyves I made; but all was lost.

50-56 Many Amalgame dyd I make,
Wenyng to fix these to grett avayle,
And thereto Sulphur dyd I take;
Tarter Egges whyts, and the Oyle of the Snayle,
But ever of my purpose dyd I fayle:
For what for the more and what for the lesse,
Evermore somethyng wantyng there was.

57-63 Wyne, Mylke, Oyles, and Runnett,
The Slyme of Sterrs that falleth to the grownde,
Celydony and Secundynes wyth many moe yett,
In these I practysyd as in my books I found,
I wan ryght nought, but lost many a pownde;
Of Mercury and Mettalls I made Chrystall stones,
Wenyng that hyt had ben a worke for the nonys.

64-70 Thus I rostyd and boylyd as one of Gebers Cooks,
And oft tymes my wynnyng in the Asks I sought;
For I was dyscevyd wyth many falce Books
Wherby untrue thus truly I wrought:

But all such Experyments avaylyd me nought;
But brought me in danger and in combraunce,
By losse of my goods and other gravaunce.

71-77 For the love of our Lady such lewdnes eschue,
Medyll wyth no falshood whych never prevyd well;
Assay when thow wylt and thow shalt fynde me treue;
Wynn shalt thou nought but lose every dele,
Pence in thy Pauwkner fewe shalt thou feele:
In smokes and smells thow shalt have myckle wo,
That unnethe for syknes on Erth shalt thow go.

78-84 I never saw true worke treuly but one,
Of whych in thys tretys the trewth I have told.
Stody only therfore to make our Stone:
For therby may thow wyn both Sylver and Gold,
Uppon my wrytynge therfore to ground the be bold:
So shalt thow lose nought yf God be thy gyde,
Trust to my Doctryne and therby abyde.

85-91 Remember how Man ys most noble Creature,
In erths Composycyon that ever God wrought,
In whom are the fowre Elements proportyonyd by nature:
A naturall Mercuryalyte whych cost ryght nought,
Out of hys myner by Arte yt must be brought;
For our Mettalls be nought ells but myners too,
Of our Soon and our Moone, wyse Reymond seyd so.

92-98 The clerenes of the Moone and of the Soone, bryght,
Into these two Myners desendyth secretly,
Howbeyt the cleernes be hyd fro thy syght:
By craft thou shalt make ytt to appere openly,
Thys hyd Stone, thys one thyng therfore putrefye:
Wash hym wyth hys owne broth tyll whyte he becoom,
Then Ferment hym wyttely, nowe here ys all and soom.

99-105 Now to God Almyghty I thee Recommend,
Whych graunte the by Grace to knowe thys one thing,
For now ys thys Treatys brought to an end:
And God of hys Mercy to hys blysse us bryng,
Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus, where Angells do syng:
Praysyng without ceasynge hys gloriose Magestye,
Whych he in hys Kyngdome graunte us for to see.

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EXPLICIT (AN. DOM. 1471)

✦

1-6 Explicit Alchimiae Tractatus Philosophiae,
Cujus Rypla George, Canonicus, Auctor erat;
Mille, quadringentis septuaginta unoque
Annis qui scriptus compositusque fuit.
Auctori lector praebe praece, quaeso Iuvamen,
Illi purgamen leve post vitam ut sit Amen.

7-13 Thus heere the Tract of Alchimy doth end,
Whych (Tract) was by George Ripley Chanon pen'd;
It was Composed, Writt, and Sign'd his owne,
In Anno twice Seav'n hundred seav'nty one:
Reader! Assist him, make it thy desire,
That after Lyfe he may have gentle Fire.
Amen.

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