

John Reid's Course on Practical Alchemy

Dedication and Acknowledgement

This book is dedicated to the one true love of my life, my darling Nicholeine. Her love and support have buoyed me through the darkest times of self-doubt and fear.

Thanks must first be given to Divine Providence for blessing me with success in my efforts. I never had the good fortune to attend classes at the Paracelsus Research Society or the Paracelsus College. The majority of my education in alchemy was transmitted to me through the good auspices of Divine revelation. Sometimes, Divine Providence will choose a different mode of assistance and elucidation. In this respect, I would like to thank all those who have helped me in writing this book. If it had not been for my father letting me use his computer or providing the lab space, the book would never have been written. My mother deserves special thanks: her freezer was always occupied with one gallon containers of vinegar. The house, too, was regularly incensed with the smell of burnt herbs when experiments went awry. Their love, patience and moral support over the last few years have been invaluable. Also thanks to all those customers of Magnum Opus, Inc. who urged me on to write what I had promised to.

Special mention must be made here of a few individuals. A deep heartfelt thanks goes out to Hans W. Nintzel, who put up with incessant phone calls from me when I first got started in alchemy; to Russell House, who helped me to keep an even head about the work that I was doing and for giving me some very valuable hints about mineral alchemy; to Henry Hintz who talked with me for hours about alchemy and its theory; J. D. Holmes and Glen Houghton who helped me procure many a valued book; to Canon M. Labrie for editing the second edition manuscript.

A great deal of craftsmanship went into preparing the photographic plates of this book. In this regard, let me thank all of the artisans of Everett Studios who worked so diligently on this project, especially Steve Sundlof and Mary Bedell.

Finally, thanks must be given to Frater Albertus and Manfred M. Junius for their books, As well as to A. Cockren, Basil Valentine, Eirenaeus Philalethes, Paracelsus, and all the other philosophers who have left to us the gifts of their works to study and learn from.

Foreword

In this age, we cannot help but be in awe of the exploding wave of discovery. Anyone who is old enough to read these words has seen the technologies and ideologies that were once in vogue replaced by successive generations of inventions, philosophies, and movements. One need only reflect on the magnificent developments in computers, global communication networks, and space travel to find out how voraciously we consume and then take for granted these new technologies.

At a social gathering, we might see an eyebrow raised and hear the delighted whispering when the most celebrated physicist of our age is introduced to the guest. Soon enough,

they would be held in as little awe by the partygoers as their discoveries will be in another decade. Each announcement of innovative technology has its moment in the sun and is greeted with momentous excitement, and in the blink of an eye, it is assimilated by a society with a boundless appetite for more and tastier treats.

Let us imagine, however, that you are the next guest, making the obligatory round, meeting the little groupings of guests at our party. You are introduced to the host and hostess as -- an alchemist. Surely, the reaction would be quite interesting to observe. Perhaps, your hostess will smile uneasily, and take your extended hand, asking softly, "Did I hear correctly? You are an alchemist?" With practiced tact the host quickly assesses you, looking for signs of intoxication or worse. "How very interesting! Have you made any gold yet? If you have, then I have some investment opportunities that..." It is likely that the room would become silent, waiting for you to answer.

I am acquainted with many students and practitioners of alchemy. They are not the sort of people who generally attract a great deal of attention. Among them are housewives, a psychologist, a retired test pilot, presidents of manufacturing firms, musicians, accountants, surgeons, nurses, computer programmers, steel workers, astrologers, and a chemist. They are from all walks of life, and yet in their basements, or the corner of a garage, they maintain a laboratory that seems quite out of place in this century. We are speaking of men and women of all ages who practice laboratory alchemy. We are not talking about a few lovable eccentrics who merit our tolerance, but rather, about serious students of an age-old tradition.

Our present-day technical wizardry has evolved to a state that is truly astounding. It is, mostly, an outgrowth of a generally materialistic science -- a science with no heart, seemingly obsessed with the kind of proficiency that is measured only in gigabyte-per-second transfer rates, and which seems unwilling to expend even a tithe of energy toward improving the spiritual well-being of humanity.

There have long been those traditions that embrace a more comprehensive or holistic approach to the development of technology. In such traditions, there is a basic recognition of man, and of all creation, as being at once material and immaterial. The scientist and religionist were reconciled and the adherents of such traditions recognized the need to deal with both the spiritual and mundane, for they viewed the endless variety of creation as expressions of the Absolute.

Perhaps, it appears natural for there to be a schism between the demanding disciplines of the hard sciences and the devotional path that is dedicated to the contemplation of the nature of being. There are many whose quest is to attain a unity of these two seemingly disparate paths. If either of these branches of human activity is to produce anything of long-lasting consequence, then they must do so in tandem -- the two must become as one. In this age of technical adeptship, in an age where we have become aware of the global community, we must seek a proportionate evolution of awareness, of consciousness. We must seek to become participants in the evolution of humanity. It is this that every sincere student of alchemy is seeking.

John Reid has permitted himself to be introduced as an alchemist, and has extended his

hand to you. You have the opportunity now to pass it off as a jest. Perhaps, you assume there is some surreptitious financial scheme, gold-making plan, or medical quackery that is to be revealed. Certainly, others have encountered just this sort of pseudo-chemist for centuries. This book has bloomed out of the compost of years of extreme trials and tests, sleepless nights, financial risk, failed attempts, and out of sincere prayer. The stamina and endurance required to see what others have not is monumental. John is self-taught mostly, and this makes his accomplishments more wonderful. It also has meant that his work has novel qualities, and originality will often draw criticism from those inclined to dogmatism.

I prefer to think of this book, and the author's gesture, in a different way, as though the book were a small window, just out of reach, that admits a few rays of the morning light into an otherwise unlighted room. Even if we sit and passively enjoy the light, it serves a purpose. Some, for whom the unknown is enticing, could not sit still, but would find a ladder upon which to climb so they might see the beauty that is out of doors. While a fair number will make such a personal effort, and will gaze upon a wondrous vista, only a few in each age will go in search for the door. It is those few, for whom the fragrance of Nature is an elixir beyond compare, those who will seek -The Portal, who will behold the treasure.

Russell House
at Winfield, IL
1 August 1992

Forward to the Second Edition

Gentle reader,

In your hands, you have a small treasure. For in this book many of the secrets of Nature are clearly laid out. You are indeed fortunate, for this one book reveals alchemical methods and ideas which would have taken you years of dedicated research to learn. The author has remained true to his vow of sharing that which has been freely bestowed on him through grace.

It is truly rare to find an alchemist who is willing to clearly instruct the neophyte in this divine science. And this author does not just blindly quote the words of those who have gone before him. He teaches from the heart that which he has learned by the path of faith, prayer, work, and hope. Lend him your ear and learn these mysteries from one who has done them.

Much of the material in this book is unique. You will not find it elsewhere. Does this mean that it is incorrect because other authors have not said it before? Or could it be that here is stated that which others feared to say so openly? You will have to be the judge of this. But remember, not only is the process of the plant stone here clearly described, pictures are also included to verify the work described. How many of those other treatises have done this?

It is not my purpose to turn the student away from the use of other authors. For man's life

is too short to learn all the secrets hidden in Nature. One must follow the path that is revealed to them by that small inner voice. And this book will help to enlighten you in that choice. The very fact that you hold this book in your hands is important, for nothing happens by accident. I encourage you to study it and see what may develop within you by its use. Just remember that the alchemical path is a solitary one. Your work will not necessarily be the same as another's.

Before closing, I would like to point out the master piece in this book, the process for the plant stone, or Opus Minor as it is known. Many believe that this work is identical to the Great Work except for the materials being used. Most assert that mastery of the plant stone is essential before the Philosopher's Stone can be accomplished. If this is true, you have your path clearly described here.

While the process for the plant stone is described by others, it is more a spagyric approach than an alchemical one in my opinion. But this book opens up the alchemical method for evolving the plant stone. Here you will see the transition of the matter through the colors that was so well described by the ancient alchemists. You will see the fermentation of the matter as it develops in the sealed vase of hermes.

I believe that if you study this book with an open mind you will be greatly rewarded. Listen to the words of this man who has actually done the work. Learn from his unique and unveiled labors. And thank him for being so open when you too have been blessed with the success of your labors.

May the one true star guide you!

Henry Hintz

October 18, 1993

Introduction

We meet outside Magickal Childe in New York City on a pleasant afternoon in May. There were three of us. One was a struggling actor, the other a mystic and student priest, the last, still searching for his place in life. We were all interested in alchemy. Each of us had studied either Albertus, Jung, or Junius. We agreed to undertake practical lab experiments in the quest to find out if what we had read in the old books were true or false. The searcher had compiled a library of works on alchemy comprised mostly of material written by Frater Albertus and the publications of the Paracelsus College and Research Society in Salt Lake City, Utah. We all believed in the validity of what we had read. In any event, we had convinced ourselves that what we had read was the gospel. Yet none of us really knew! Albertus was dead and as far as any of us knew there was no other teacher.

We had each other though, and our combined knowledge and zeal. We were fascinated by a strange coincidence. Our three birthdays were just three days apart. The actor on the 15th of May, the searcher on the 18th, and the mystic on the 21st. Our meeting was just three days after the mystic's birthday. Surely, we were meant to work together.

Within three weeks, the actor dropped out of the group. He was after all interested only in the spiritual aspects of alchemy. He was convinced that the terminology of alchemy dealt

only with the subconscious. This left the mystic and the searcher. They started a lab together; cleaning the basement of the searcher's house, waterproofing the walls and asking Divine Providence to bless the place and their efforts. Three months later, and close to a thousand dollars of expense, the mystic dropped out. He was tired of looking at glassware trying to imbue the life-force into objects. The work was too tedious, boring, and expensive. Perhaps, the actor had been right in his assessment of the situation, perhaps it was all just spiritual.

The searcher pleaded with the mystic, surely what they had read in the old books and recent publications by the college must be true. There was, after all, a dual aspect to alchemy, the spiritual and practical part. Let us keep on a bit longer the searcher pleaded. The mystic would not hear of it, he had become involved with another learning system.

That left only the searcher. The seeds of doubt and fear had been planted in his mind, threatening to grow unchecked like a field of dandelions. He was afraid of walking that long road to the alchemist's inner sanctum alone. Sure of the failures that would meet him along the way, would he ever meet with success? Or would it end dismally? If failure did come, would it be because of the inadequacies of his being? Was he pure enough? Would it be because, as the actor and mystic had stated, alchemy was just a spiritual science after all? The searcher had only himself, and that stubborn taurine personality of his. It will be my life's work he vowed!

Yes only himself or so it seemed at the beginning. Slowly, it became evident there were forces that came into play far beyond his control. When an old book was needed that was so hard for others to find, it was a matter of him just picking up the phone and asking for it. The work in the lab for the first three years went slowly, but not the work on the personality. He would be initiated into a healing system. A lovely priestess would help rid him of a haunting dark past that had followed him through many incarnations. Finally, he would meet his Soror Mystica and the work would unfold grandly before his eyes.

I suppose much of this sounds like fiction, but it is not. All that is written is true and not embellished in any way. An interesting book could be written about those experiences, but this book is not meant for that.

Many years after my first tentative experiments into making a simple spagyric herbal extract, I am still that searcher. It is not whether the tenets laid down in alchemical writings are true or false. They are true, as I have proven to myself. The search continues now for the new vistas that alchemy can take me to. I leave my record of accomplishments to you as the search continues. This I swore before Divine Providence to do, should success ever be met with upon this royal road to the palace of the King. Success has been achieved, but the credit for it belongs to Divine Providence and not myself.

It was through prayer and work that light was shed upon the operations described by the old masters. Admittedly, many times the anticipated outcome was not what came about. Always a key to one of the many locked doors was given and in time the language and meaning of the alchemist was understood.

Therefore, this book is not a rehashing of the books before it, or a going over of the history of alchemy. It is a book written from personal experience and the lessons received in those quiet and still moments during meditation in the lab. This book goes beyond those that I have learned from as it gives the entire herbal processes in a clear and precise way. True, there is some thinking that needs to be done on your part, but it is well worth the brain strain.

In closing let me say that it is true when Hermes Trismegistus wrote. "What is below is like that which is above and what is above is like that which is below for performing the miracle of one thing."

The processes in performing the herbal work coincides exactly with that of the mineral work as laid down in the old books. It produces phenomena as they described; that you can hold in your hand and see with your eyes. Substances like the Virgin's Milk or Glue of the Eagle, the Red Mercury, and the White Mercury. As Cockren points out, the philosophically prepared body will drink the two Mercuries and rise like dough. There are many surprises in store for you in this little book and the pictures it contains. So please, Ora, Lege, et Labora! (Pray, Read, and Work!)

Chapter 1.

The Philosophy of Alchemy

The first question one is faced with and surely must ask oneself as one starts on this path is, what is alchemy? To many people, alchemy is a pseudoscience practiced by old men in musty basements. They use ingredients like eye of newt, bats wing, cat's liver, and the like to try to produce a universal elixir that prolongs life indefinitely as well as transmutes base metals to gold.

Alchemy is much more than the pursuit of these frivolous dreams. Alchemy is the search for the QUINTESSENCE! It is all about isolating the vital force of life itself, isolating it so it can be condensed, purified, and manipulated to conform with the artist's will. Alchemy, in short, is the art of evolution! It is in a real sense concerned with the elevating of all organisms to the highest level of perfection they can attain -- as originally mandated by God -- while still on this earth in material form. When speaking of an organism reference is being made to all forms of matter found on this planet, irrespective of the fact of whether they are organic or inorganic, because for the alchemist all matter is alive, or else it could not continue in the form that it occupies and keeps. Of course there are different levels of the vital force in all organisms. Some have enough vital force to keep their form, or so it would seem because their decay is so prolonged, as in the case of a metal rusting. While others have such an abundance of life that they can reproduce or even help to vitalize and stabilize the vital force in other organisms that have become unbalanced.

In order to get a better understanding here of what is meant by alchemy being the art of evolution, we should take a look at the five basic tenets of alchemy, which are:

1) That the entire universe is divine in origin. Therefore Wisdom and Guidance must be sought from the source from which all creation flows.

- 2) That all organisms, no matter how subtle or gross they are, have within them the divine spark of life and are interrelated with each other. It is therefore our task to understand this kinship, so that we may utilize inspired knowledge to aid in our understanding of how to prepare the quintessence of our matter.
- 3) That all organisms are in a state of constant evolution as they continue their synthesis towards perfection. Upon reaching an understanding of tenet (2) the true work begins, i.e. , the aiding of nature by the art of alchemy to reach its highest point of perfection.
- 4) That humans are a part of the universe. Therefore, they are divine in origin and they can affect all organisms on all spheres of existence by their actions or inaction.
- 5) That humans, by understanding the basic laws that govern their beings and conversely the entire universe may learn to recognize the divine spark of vital energy in all organisms, isolate it, purify it, and manipulate it to speed up the processes of evolution.

These five tenets propose there is a system whereby humans can learn about the universe from its subtlest intimations to its grossest manifestations. It says that by knowing the self, one can know the One the All (or as close as the human mind can come to recognizing it) and in fact bring about physical changes and manifestations by a lawful application of the system's rules. These statements are true, although the degree to which they become manifested in any one life depends entirely upon the individual applying them and the amount of diligence with which they approach their task. Yet one must get started somewhere on this road. So let us begin together.

Chapter 2.

The Three Essentials

All substances created and existent within the universe, regardless of their degree of mental subtlety or material density, are composed of the three essentials of the alchemist.

With a correct knowledge of the art, one can open the matter-up, so that the three essential are expressed in material form.

A lot has been written about the three essentials of the alchemist. Yet, it seems to me that the opaque mist that envelops these three essentials is just as thick today as it ever has been. Undoubtedly this is partly due to many alchemists (myself included as, you will see) describing the three by use of symbolism and allegory. It is a very difficult thing to try and explain that which transcends words and is known to one more by feeling than thought. Also one must not let oneself become seduced with the apparent ease of being told that the three are this or that one thing. This above all seems to me to lock or trap the mind into a certain mode of thinking, which is why I suppose the old ones wrote in such vague terms. By the former method the mind was forced to concentrate upon the symbols until the psychic seed sprouted and bore the fruit of realization.

It is without exaggeration extremely difficult for the beginning alchemist to form a concrete, plastic picture of these three forces in the mind. I can only hope that my presentation will aid the aspiring alchemist and not throw him or her into utter confusion. Therefore, let me state in the beginning that my presentation of the three essentials varies

markedly from other modern writers on plant alchemy. Many modern students will wonder what has happened to their familiar, if not beloved, ethyl alcohol, volatile essential oil, and water-soluble salts. Rest assured that they are most definitely used in plant alchemy. I merely have placed them into what I believe to be their true and proper role. The ethyl alcohol, volatile essential oils, and water-soluble salts obtained from plants are really just vehicles of the three essentials. In fact these substances belong more appropriately in the realm of the four elements rather than the three essentials.

In alchemy the names given to the three essentials are Body, Soul, and Spirit, or respectively, Salt, Sulfur, and Mercury. It probably goes without saying to most reasonably thinking people that quicksilver, table salt, and brimstone are not the basic building blocks of life or the precursors of gold. Instead one should look to the use of analogy to fathom the secrets one wishes to unlock. By examining the physical, mythological, and even the symbols used to represent the three, much insight into their meanings can be obtained.

MERCURY

The symbol of Mercury is the cosmic womb being incubated by the cross of the four elements of creation. Rising up out of the womb is a partial form whose features are not yet determined.

For alchemists the world over this substance is the liquid in the holy grail. It is said that without this substance no alchemical work can begin or be brought to its perfect end. Generally this statement is thought to concern only the works in the mineral world. Yet experience has taught that this statement holds true for the works on plants and animals. Anyone who has done some reading in alchemy will realize that exact instructions on how to acquire or prepare the Philosopher's Mercury is never given. The best one can hope for is to be able to string together the bits of clues left to us by erstwhile adepts. Adding to the puzzle is the fact that the alchemists have described their mercury using all manner of names and physical characteristics.

In the *Lexicon of Alchemy* by Martinus Rulandus one can find legions of names to describe the Philosopher's Mercury. Some of these are; Celestial Water, Aqua Vitae, Water of Chaos, Water of the Wise, Dew of May, Alkahest, Honey, Vinegar and Azoth.

In *Triumphal Chariot of Antimony* Basil Valentine says of the Mercury, "... This first principle is a mere vapor extracted from the elementary earth through the heavenly planets, and, as it were, divided by the sidereal distillation of the macrocosmos. This sidereal hot infusion, descends from on high into things which are below..."

In *Collectanea Chemica* Eirenaeus Philalethes says "The Philosophers frequently describe this matter. Sendivogius calls it heavenly water, not vulgar, but almost like rain water. When Hermes calls it a bird without wings, figuring thereby its vaporous nature, it is well described. When he calls the sun its father and the moon its mother, he signifies that it is produced by the action of heat upon moisture. When he says the wind carries it in its belly, he only means that the air is its receptacle. When he affirms that which is

inferior is like that which is superior, he teaches that the same vapor on the surface of the earth furnishes the matter of rain and dew, wherewith all things are nourished in the vegetable, animal and mineral kingdoms. This now is what the Philosophers call their Mercury and affirm it to be found in all things, as it is in fact."

Yet just where are we to begin our search for a tangible physical source of this special water. We will, as a good friend and alchemist once told me, have to start at the beginning. The thread that constantly runs through all of these descriptions is the fact that the Mercury is born of a heavenly source. In fact this source is aptly named chaos because everything has its creation, destruction, moves, breathes, and exists simultaneously in this chaos. The chaos of the alchemist is not the chaos of the uninitiated person. There is no mass confusion of thought and form in this dimension. Instead there is actually a stasis within it. We only call it chaos because all things are inherent, not manifested, within it. In this regards, the chaos of the alchemist is a definite physical substance. But its subtlety is so profound that the human mind can not perceive it in its true light. From its center radiates out rays of energy that carry within themselves the seeds of all creation. Thus the chaos of the alchemist is the power or more aptly put, the being of God.

In the beginning the universe was formed either by a great explosion, or a word which brought forth light. In my mind it makes no difference which scenario one accepts to be the truth. In the end energy is seen as the first form of all manifestation. Everything else that we perceive as tangible matter, be it rocks, trees, animals, fish man, planets, galaxies etc is nothing more than congealed star stuff or as the alchemist would say condensed spirit. For our immediate purposes then we will consider the energy of the sun and stars as the power outlets of God.

In its most universal form the Philosopher's Mercury is pure energy, it is cold omnipresent and still. Hence in this form it is also neutral. The fact that the Mercury is capable of and indeed does progress from a gender-neutral expression to a polar and gender specific relationship is not much talked about in alchemy. Yet if we are to take the former alchemist at their word and believe that all things proceed from the One, then this evolutionary migration of expression must be a fact.

We can no more see or perceive the Philosopher's Mercury when it is in its most elementary state than we can the mysterious substance called life, or the photon which produces light. Our Mercury is the numina behind the phenomena of all creation, from its subtlest intimation to its densest manifestation. This force is unitary in existence. It knows not duality, time or even space. It has no height, width, length, or weight in itself. It is incomprehensible and unknowable to the human mind in its normal mode of consciousness. Yet this thing is, just as the energy of the sun is. It is that force that has been present since the ancient of days, that which existed before the universe or even the word.

All things being equal, it seems that we are still in an inescapable quandary. We know that the light-energy of the sun is the source all life and thus the universal Mercury. But how is one supposed to be able to capture, store, and use the energy of the sun. Also, the Mercury is described as a water here on earth. How are we going to rejoin this dichotomy

of expression? Let us always remember that in nature, energy is transferable from one source to another.

SULPHUR

The symbol of Sulfur shows us the a triangle representing the flame or essence of the spirit connected to and inherent within the four states of matter.

The philosophers claim that Sulfur, though different from their Mercury, non the less is related to it and proceeds from the same place.

Fulcanelli says of the two: "In mythology it is called Libethra and is said to have been a fountain of Magnesia. Near it was another spring, called the Rock. Both of them issued from a large rock, shaped like a woman's bosom, the water seeming to flow like milk from her two breasts. Now, we know that the ancient authors called the matter of the work our Magnesia and that the liquid extracted from this magnesia is called our Virgin's Milk."

Basil Valentine writes: "This water has been extracted from the *elementary* earth by the stars and the fire which is contained in the air. Through coagulation it has then become a tangible essence. This tangible essence encloses a large quantity of predominating sulphur."

Sulfur represents the universal Mercury in its male aspect. It is expansive and penetrating. It is the seed that is implanted into the womb to fertilize the ovum. Sulfur is looked on as representing soul, consciousness, and illumination. It is through the action of Sulfur that all the terrestrial identifiers are given birth. Things like a substance's virtues, colors, smells, and taste are made by the action of Sulfur. But were are we to find this solar Sulfur?

Imagine if you will that you are standing on a bluff that stretches out over the water of a lake. You have been coming to this one spot everyday throughout the long cold winter. You have stood in the freezing rain and fog to watch the forces of nature. Cold winds have passed right through you as if they were malevolent spirits trying to discourage your return but every day you come back. You have been there on the days when snow fell lightly and there was a peculiar warmth in the air. You have stood on this stony bluff when the winds wailed and snow fell during blizzards that cut deep into your skin like fiery darts. Through it all you have maintained your conviction and visited this spot to see nature at work. The long cold winter is over now, but the area does not look all that different; the trees are still bare and only moss, dead leaves and brown grass are on the ground. Beneath you is the water of the lake, above the blue sky. But somehow there is a difference in this day. It is the first day of spring. There is a light coolness in the air. The sun's rays fall gently on your shoulders and massage out the stiffness of the winter. You look up into the cloudless sky again and realize just how invigorated you feel. It is now that you realize that you are immersed in the solar Sulfur. The very light that allows you to perceive the beautiful azure sky, and the empty landscape's shadows that seem to shimmer with the promise of life is Sulfur. On beautiful days like this one you can

actually feel this fire of life coursing through one's being.

The energy carried within the rays of sunlight that reaches our planet is loaded with universal Sulfur. The gases and subtle water vapors in our atmosphere interact with this energy and delicately condense it into a somewhat tangible form. This is the "sidereal distillation of the macrocosmos" that brother Basil speaks of. It is these vapors that are the "sidereal hot infusion descending from on high into things which are below, with the aero-sulphureous property, that engrafts on them in a spiritual and invisible manner a certain strength and virtue."

One might think that the best time for collecting this energy is in the middle of the day when the sun's rays are at their most intense. You would be right except for the fact that it is extremely hard to get the energy to concentrate at this time. There are methods of doing this collecting but they require a great deal of laboratory skill. In addition, the substances used in this method of the work are quite dangerous and can cause death if not handled properly. Therefore, most philosophers advise us to acquire our celestial water at night. The sky should be cloudless, allowing for the clear transmittal of the starlight. The matter used for attracting this water is of the greatest importance because it will determine the Sulfur to one of the three kingdoms of nature. Also one should be careful that the magnet and water do not come in contact with the ground lest it lose the very fiery charge you seek to acquire.

Of the search for this mystical water Fulcanelli says in *Le Mystere Des Cathedrales* "The artist has come a long way; he has taken false turnings and wandered on doubtful paths; but finally his joy burst forth! The stream of living water flows at his feet; it gushes out bubbling from the old hollow oak. In another section Fulcanelli tells us "... It is not like the water from the clouds although it has the same appearance." Still further on he tells us that the matter of the work "is a veritable magnet, which attracts to itself all the influences of the sky, the sun, the moon and the stars, in order to transmit them to the earth."

SALT

The symbol of Salt is the cosmic egg showing the completed act of creation. Here the spiritual is made manifest by being given a physical garment. Here, finally, we can see the outcome of the circulatory action of "as above, so below." In this substance we find a separation of the waters of the firmament and their fixation.

The Philosophers speak of two waters that are the primary cause of creation. Both of these waters are said to be produced or issue forth from the chaos of the sun. Or as Hermes has taught, the water is produced by the action of heat upon moisture. Both of these waters can be termed Mercury, though one of them is generally called Sulfur to denote its masculine qualities and the atmospheric conditions necessary for its proper collection. We have already seen that one of these waters is indeed the condensed starlight of the heavens that contains the sulfurous fire. The other water then must be the universal substance in its feminine aspect.

The symbol of salt is generally thought of as being neutral, neither positive nor negative.

Yet when dealing with universal qualities one will find that polarities and the meaning of substance's are changed around. It's sort of like the difference between quantum mechanics and mundane physics. The laws of what is termed the macrocosmic world do not apply to the particles of energy dealt with in quantum mechanics. Anyone who is familiar with the Qabalah will realize that this assignation of neutrality and polarity fits perfectly with the supernal triangle.

Again we will let nature be our guide in our quest for understanding the One that is many. We have continued with our visits to the lake unbroken for the last few days. Today when looking up into the sky we see a familiar appearance in a whole new light. The soft white clouds we see suspended in the air are indeed beautiful. Slowly we begin to realize that these clouds were born by the interaction of the solar Sulfur and the earth's atmosphere. Here for the first time the intangible, unseen energy of the sun is clothed in a material albeit diaphanous garment. As more and more clouds appear we realize that the nature of the fire has changed. It can no longer be considered an expansive radiant force caught up in those clouds. Instead we feel the confinement and constriction of the solar Sulfur as the clouds fill the sky.

We can well imagine that in the days preceding this one a very subtle type of alchemical circulation was going on. The sun's rays enter the earth's atmosphere and react with it. Heat begins to build up causing the condensed water on the planet's surface to be evaporated. More water vapor rises into the sky to intermingle with cosmic rays. As the cooling effect of night comes, the most subtle and ethereal parts of this vapor remain airborne and its denser parts are drawn into the earth to later be exhaled as dew. If the temperature conditions stay just right the firmament becomes saturated with this impregnated vapor and thick rain clouds fill the sky. It is at this point that we are reminded of the symbol of the universal Salt. Here we find the invisible fire of the sun clothed in ethereal garments. As we stand on the dry land at the foot of a terrestrial sea, we realize that there is another more subtle ocean above our heads.

The water that falls during a thunderstorm is much more feminine in quality than the fiery water collected by the condensation of starlight. This water also carries within it a flame or spark of life just as the ovum in a woman does. Because this water needs no magnet to draw it from the sky it is not determined to any of the kingdoms of nature. For this reason it is best looked at as a feminine entity. Its determination is dependent on which one of the three kingdoms it comes into contact with first. In practical laboratory plant alchemy we do not want this water to be determined by the whims of nature. Like its counterpart it must be collected without its coming into contact with the ground. In fact it is best collected in glass or plastic containers thereby insuring it retains its fertility. Also, this water must be collected so that it falls from the sky directly into the container. Run off from plants, rocks, etc. is undesirable. Our woman must stay fertile and a virgin.

In the case of Sulfur we were not concerned with the quantity of the water obtained as much as we were its quality. Our Sulfur is used for determining our universal body given in abundance by the rain.

When the alchemist knows how to collect, combine, and prepare these two waters he is in possession of the one substance from which all other forms arise by adaptation. It is from

this one water that we derive the four expressions of creation known as the alchemical elements of fire, water, air, and earth.

Let me state again that my presentation of the three essentials differs greatly from that of other modern writers on plant alchemy. In many writings the three essentials are listed as ethyl alcohol for the Mercury, volatile essential oils for Sulfur, and the mineral salts of a plant for the essential of Salt. Their representation of the three is indeed correct when dealing with the spagyric equivalents of the alchemical aspects of the essentials. Yet starting at this point when trying to achieve alchemical results caused me many years of unnecessary labor. My mind had become fixed on the separation of these three substances instead of their generation by art.

There is a wide gulf between making a spagyric product and making an alchemical one. In the spagyric art one need not necessarily deal with acquiring the spark of life to accomplish the task. The separation, purification, and recombination of the vehicles of the three essentials that nature has outwardly manifested in the individual plant is more than enough. You will end up with an exalted medicine but not a living one. In alchemy the artist must at some point in his operation capture this spark or flame of life for use in his work. For this reason I have concentrated my description of the three essentials around this spark's first manifested form, the alchemist's celestial water. In this way the aspiring student can use the water to produce all other manifestations of the matter that are required. True, once one knows what one is doing this spark can be added to store-bought products. But before one begins to take such artistic license it is probably best to start at the beginning. In this way the alchemist learns to understand his art. He is then able to achieve in a short time a more philosophic manipulation of the elements. By doing this the alchemist is able to give birth to a more perfect expression of the three essentials than what nature could hope to outwardly manifest, even if she had worked on the matter for aeons.

In closing this chapter I wish to point out again that one is dealing with universal qualities and not mundane ones. Hence, the polarities and physical manifestations of the three are vastly different from what is normally pictured. We must remember that just as there are varying degrees of density in the material world. So, too are there varying degrees of subtlety in the spiritual. In the end all things are generated from spirit and return unto it. The aspiring alchemist should realize that nature is continually stepping down the energy of the spirit so that it can take on material attributes. Therefore at different phases of the evolution of matter the three will have markedly different polarities and forms.

Chapter 3

The Four Alchemical Elements

"... so also this One Thing is an indestructible essence..."

".... It is neither hot and dry like fire, nor cold and moist like water, nor warm and moist like air, nor dry and cold like earth. But it is a skillful perfect equation of all the elements."

From the book of "The Revelation of Hermes" Interpreted by Paracelsus.

Now let us get onto the business of the four alchemical elements of the philosophers. The alchemists say that the three essentials are manifested through the four elements. These four elements are symbolic representations of the four fundamental qualities of matter. These four states of matter acted upon by the three essentials are blended in various proportions to create all physical manifestations of substance.

Let me say here there is no set substance that is one or another of the elements. From day to day the work in the laboratory changes and so too does the relation of one element to another. In one instance, regular water could be considered the water element and in the next it may be the fire element. One must always look at what they are working with in relation to the other ingredients used. As the substance evolves in the laboratory so too do the elements transmute one into another.

In the last chapter, I described the Mercury of the Philosophers as being a universal substance with a dualistic nature, i.e., volatile and fixed.



Our first element to discuss is Fire. It is represented by the symbol of the triangle shown above. Let us for a moment look at this triangle. It tells us two facts immediately:- (1) its three points tell us that the substance represented by it is composed of the three essentials:- (2) its upward-pointing apex tells us that it is volatile and not fixed.

The Fire element is said to be the first element born during the creation of the universe. In the Bible we read "Let there be light," and the Big Bang theory tells us that an explosion followed by blinding light was the first physical manifestation in the universe. The Fire element is described as expansive, radiant, and electric. It is also said to be of a hot and dry nature. In its positive polarity, it is nurturing, warming, and life-giving. In its negative polarity, it is destructive, drying, and debilitating.

When we work in the laboratory there are three kingdoms we can work with, namely, the plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms. No matter what kingdom we are working in, there is one of two universal substances found throughout that kingdom that correlates to the Fire element. In the laboratory, the Fire element is the substance that is the most volatile. Thus, it boils with a heat less than that required to make any of the other three elements boil. Conversely, it also takes a much lower temperature to fix or freeze this substance than it would take any of the other alchemical elements.



The second element born from the act of creation is Water. The Water element is described as contracting, cold, dry, and magnetic. In the positive polarity of the Water element, it is said to influence the building-up activity of all organisms, i.e.,

metabolism. In its negative polarity it will produce a disintegrating, dissolving activity known as catabolism.

This element is represented by a downward-pointing triangle. The two facts we see right away about the symbolism of this triangle are: (1) it is composed of the three essentials; (2) because its apex is pointing down, it is considered less volatile and therefore fixed when compared to the Fire element. This element, though, does have a fluidity about its motion. The unobstructed triangle (when compared to that of Earth's) though pointing down does convey this message.

In the laboratory, the Water element is the second of the universal substances found throughout the three kingdoms. In fact, the Water element is hidden within the belly of the Fire element. By a process known as oxidation, our Water element can be formed from our Fire element. This new substance born of the death of its sibling is diametric in its qualities to the original substance.

I find it quite interesting that from the death of one element another is born. Yet alchemy has always taught this. We are told the elements are not stagnant but transmute constantly one into another, as the decay of winter transmutes itself into the life of spring and the withered vine that puts forth new leaves and produces fruit for the fall harvest.

Hence, we have the two energetic forms or principles of Our Mercury, the volatile and the fixed. We will see later on how these two substances help to form the two Mercuries known as the Red Mercury and the White Mercury.



Our next element is the Air element. Hermetic lore states the Air element is not a true element in and of itself. It is born, we are told, by the commingling of the Fire and Water elements. In this regard, the Air element is composed of a dominant quality taken from the Fire and Water elements, i.e., heat and moisture.

If we look at the symbol for the element Air four facts are shown to us by its symbolism: (1) the element of course is made up of the three essentials: (2) it is of a semi-volatile nature: (3) the horizontal line across the top third of the triangle tells us that this element comes in two forms, volatile and fixed, which it got from fire and water: (4) the placement of the horizontal line in the top third of the triangle instead of its midpoint, tells us that the volatile substance is of a much lesser quantity than that of the fixed.

In the laboratory, the Air element is also considered to be made up of the dominant qualities of the two primordial elements. In truth, the task of the Air element lies in controlling the electric fluid and the magnetic fluid of the Fire and Water elements. For this reason it is said to be the true essence or consciousness of the matter with which we are working. No matter which of the

three kingdoms one is working with, one can, by a correct understanding of the art, extract this double soul or consciousness from the matter being worked on.



We come now to our last element, that of the Earth. Hermetic lore also states this element, like the Air element, is not an element proper. It is in fact made up of the dominant qualities of dryness and coldness taken from the two primordial elements.

If one considers what has been said about the preceding three elements, as well as what was written about the three essentials, one will come to an inescapable conclusion: that the earth element is actually tetrapolar in nature. This is because it is made up of the action of the three preceding elements. Because of its specific quality of solidification, the other three elements have been given form. This emanation, though, is limited because with the birth of the earth element space, measure, weight, and time have been born.

Let us for a moment look at the symbol of the Earth element. This symbol also tells us four facts right away: (1) it is made up of the three essentials; (2) it is fixed because its apex points downward; (3) the horizontal line in its bottom third tell us that it comes in the two forms of volatile and fixed; (4) the placement of the horizontal line tells us that the quantity of the volatile substance is in a smaller proportion than that of the fixed.

In the laboratory this earthly substance can be obtained from any of the three kingdoms. The proper manipulations of this substance, after the other three have been placed into it, is the beginning of the Great and the Small works.

Chapter 4. The Firmament

"And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night: and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years." Genesis 1:14 I am not going to try to teach astro-cyclic pulsations here (a.k.a. astrology). What will be attempted in as short a form as possible is to give the salient points about this subject, so that one can use the information in the production of alchemical products.

Anyone not familiar with the production of a horoscope will have to teach themselves this subject. There are many fine books out from which to learn. Astro-cyclic pulsations is a term coined by the late Frater Albertus. He contended that the universe and all things within it moved, grew, and evolved in a cyclic fashion. The energies that helped to shape human history--be they material, immaterial, or a combination of the two--repeat or manifest themselves in regular cyclic fashion. I am not saying, nor do I think Albertus meant, that you can tell a person's exact future. There are too many variables that come into play for this to be done, the greatest of which is the free will of the individual(s) in question. What can be done, though, is a correlation of past events to the energies emitted by the star groups and planets at the time, while considering their positions and angles to one another. By comparing the energy patterns and events of the past to the energy patterns of present and future times, one can extrapolate that similar events in human history will manifest themselves. It is strongly suggested to the reader unfamiliar with Albertus's work to read the titles listed in the suggested readings section. Albertus used cyclic charts to show the energy patterns that ranged over thousands of years down to days, hours, and minutes. For our purposes, we will look at daily and hourly cycles. All astro-cyclic pulsation charts can be expressed in two manners. The seven or twelve phase cycles. The seven phase cycle deals with the spiritual/mental influences upon terrestrial organisms as revealed by the seven planetary intelligence's of the ancients. It of course is a well-known fact there are more than just seven planets in our solar system.

Astronomers say there are nine of them, while Albertus claims there are three more planets yet to be discovered. For the sake of simplicity, we will confine our presentation to the seven planets of the ancients. It takes very little math to establish which planetary intelligence(s) is operative in any given hour of any day of the week. This is because each day of our week is ruled by one of the seven planets of the ancients. Moreover, each day can be subdivided into seven separate periods. So that each period of the day is ruled by the planet ruling that day with a little tingeing influence placed upon it by its co-ruler for that period. The following sequence of planets, days and numbers is the one agreed upon and used by most of the alchemists that I know. Table 1 shows the planet, weekday, and quabbalistic number. Table 2 shows the seven time intervals, the seven period letters, and quabbalistic number. Table 3 shows the primary relationships of the planets.

Table 1

PLANET	WEEKDAY	Q.B.L No.
Sun	Sunday	6
Moon	Monday	9
Mars	Tuesday	5
Mercury	Wednesday	8
Jupiter	Thursday	4

Venus	Friday	7
Saturn	Saturday	3

Table 2

TIME INTERVAL	PERIOD	Q.B.L No.
Midnight-3:26 a.m.	F	-1
3:26 a.m.- 6:51 a.m.	G	0
6:51 a.m.- 10:17 a.m.	A	1
10:17 a.m. - 1:43 p.m.	B	2
1:43 p.m. - 5:09 p.m.	C	3
5:09 p.m. - 8:34 p.m.	D	4
8:34 p.m. - Midnight	E	5

Table 3

PLANET	METAL	CARDINAL SIN	CARDINAL VIRTUE	PART OF BODY
Sun	Gold	Pride	Humility	Heart
Moon	Silver	Lust	Substantiality	Brain
Mars	Iron	Anger	Meekness	Gall
Mercury	Mercury	Envy	Benevolence	Lungs
Jupiter	Tin	Cunning	Wisdom	Liver
Venus	Copper	Lewdness	Chastity	Generative organs
Saturn	Lead	Avarice	Charity	Spleen

Let us now look at a few examples of how to use these charts. Suppose it is Sunday at 8:00 a.m. and you want to know what planetary influence prevails. The answer is arrived at by adding the Q.B.L.number of Sunday (6) in table 1 to the Q.B.L. number of the time period we are concerned with found in table 2. Eight a.m. is in time period A, and its Q.B.L. number is 1, and $6 + 1 = 7$. This tells us that during this time on Sunday, the qualities of the Venetian intelligence is tingeing those of the solar intelligence. Suppose we were to look at our watch at 9:00 p.m. on a Tuesday and we wanted to know the planetary influence for that time. We would first go to table 1 and see that the Q.B.L number for Tuesday is 5. Table 2 would tell us that 9:00 p.m. is in period E and its Q.B.L. number is that of 5, and $5 + 5 = 10$. There is a problem here because to arrive at a planetary influence we have to end up with a number between 3 and 9. This problem is solved by subtracting 7 whenever the sum is higher than 9. Therefore, $5 + 5 = 10$ and $10 - 7 = 3$; so Tuesday at 9:00 p.m. is under the tingeing influence of Saturn. Now suppose that we wanted to make a solar tincture out of the herb rosemary. The effects that rosemary has on the physical body are: (1) rise in the blood pressure, with better circulation resulting: (2) a stimulation and promotion of liver functions. Table 3 tells us that these physical functions, with their corresponding spiritual ones, come under the domain of the Sun and Jupiter respectively. Therefore, we would want to start our tincture on a Sunday while the tingeing influence of Jupiter was present. More specifically on Sunday between 10:17 a.m. and 1:43 p.m. One also should keep in mind there are two poles to every cycle. Therefore, the first half of the time period in question would represent the negative pole or cardinal sins of pride and cunning. While the second half would represent the positive polarity or cardinal virtues of humility and wisdom.

One should be careful, though, of imposing labels onto things, as there is no good or evil in the universe only the lawful actions of creation. Some pride and cunning are as important in the human condition as are humility and wisdom. It is only going to the extreme of either pole that is unlawful and morbid. Balance in all things is the key. The key to being able to tell what is lacking or in excess of one or another's spiritual constitution is in astrology. Now let us move onto the twelve phase cycle. The twelve phase cycle has its manifestation in the material realm of all terrestrial organisms, as revealed by the influences of the twelve signs of the zodiac. For the purpose of this book we will confine ourselves to the investigation and use of the daily twelve phase cycle. Everyone who has studied a little astrology knows that every twenty seven to twenty eight days the moon passes through the twelve constellations. The moon acts as a reflector of the energy of the sun, planets, and constellations to our earth. By following certain laws as the moon passes through her phases and by taking into consideration the relation of those phases to the seven cycle, the alchemist can do some pretty amazing things in the manipulation of matter. The following is a review of some basic correspondences of astrological signs to alchemical elements, material manifestations, ruling planets, polarities etc. Table 4 Shows the correspondence to the seven ruling planets of the ancients to zodiacal signs and associated alchemical work when the moon is in that particular sign.

Table 4

PLANET MOON POLARITY PHASE	ZODIACAL SIGN	ALCHEMICAL ELEMENT	TYPE	ALCHEMICAL WORK
Mars + NM	Aries	Fire	Cardinal	Digestion
Venus - 1QTR	Taurus	Earth	Fixed	Fixation
Mercury + Distillation	Gemini FULL	Air	Mutable	
Moon +/- 3QTR	Cancer	Water	Cardinal	Separation
Sun +/- Calcination	Leo NM	Fire	Fixed	
Mercury - Congelation	Virgo 1QTR	Earth	Mutable	
Venus + Sublimation	Libra FULL	Air	Cardinal	
Mars - Dissolution	Scorpio 3QTR	Water	Fixed	
Jupiter + Incineration	Sagittarius NM	Fire	Mutable	
Saturn - Fermentation	Capricorn 1QTR	Earth	Cardinal	
Saturn + Multiplying	Aquarius FULL	Air	Fixed	
Jupiter - 3QTR	Pisces	Water	Mutable	Projection

Table 5 shows the correlation of one 30 degree sign to its 3 subdivisions of 10 degrees

each known as decans and the decans to their 4 subdivisions of 2.5 degrees each known as dwadashamsas.

Table 5

		Sign	
		Aries	
		Decans	
1-10 degrees		11-20 degrees	21-30
degrees			degrees
Aries		Leo	
Sagittarius			
Dwadashamsas			
Aries	0.0 - 2.5dg	Leo	10.1 - 12.5
Sagittarius	20.1 - 22.5	Virgo	12.6 - 15.0
Taurus	2.6 - 5.0dg	Libra	15.1 - 17.5
Capricorn	22.6 - 25.0	Scorpio	17.6 - 20.0
Gemini	5.1 - 7.5dg		
Aquarius	25.1 - 27.5		
Cancer	7.6 - 10 dg		
Pisces	27.6 - 30.0		

This setup works for any of the signs of the zodiac. Table 4 gives us the key to work with. First each decan of ten degrees always belongs to the same elemental triplicity wherein it is found. The first decan of a sign always begins with the sign itself. Therefore, the first decan of the sign Aries is Aries. The first decan for Virgo would of course be Virgo. Second the order of placement for the decans always follows the natural progression of the same element in the zodiac starting from the sign ruling the 30 degrees in question. Therefore with Aries, Leo, the second fire sign follows it and Leo is in turn followed by Sagittarius. If we were dealing with the 30 degrees of the zodiac ruled by Leo the progression would be: Leo, Sagittarius, and Aries. If Virgo, an earth sign, were the ruler the progression would be Virgo, Capricorn, and Taurus. Finally, there are twelve dwadashamsas in each 30-degree sign of the zodiac. The first dwadashamsa always begins with the same sign found in its decan. Thus, the first dwadashamsa of the first decan of Aries is Aries. The first dwadashamsa of the second decan of Aries is Leo. The third dwadashamsa of the third decan of Aries is Sagittarius. The placement of the remaining three dwadashamsaa after the first dwadashamsa of each decan follows the natural progression of the zodiac as laid out in table 4.

When using these tables one need not necessarily correlate their actions with that of a traditional horoscope. For our purposes here we are concerned more with the

seven-phase cycle as it applies to the day and hours and the twelve-phase cycle as it applies to the moon. The basic guidelines I use for these tables are as follows.

1) The hour that an operation takes place has precedence over all things. This is because every action, deed, etc., carried out on the material plane must first be preceded by a

thought. To phrase it better an active engaging of willpower is necessary to mold and shape the subtle etheric energy of the universe. Hence, you should strive to start any of your operations on the day and hour when the planet ruling your matter has total supremacy.

1a) If this cannot be done because the moon has not entered her proper sign or phase at the hour you have chosen, or for some other astrological reason, then chose either another hour of the day in which your planet rules. An hour of another day in which your planet is a co-ruler. Keeping in mind the polarity of the planets to one another, as well as whether or not you are in a positive or negative phase of that time period.

2) The moon is the reflector of cosmic energies from our sun and the other planets to our earth. Hence, she must be in the proper phase so that her form corresponds to the type of energy she is transmitting.

3) The moon's position in the sky is important. Ideally, she should be in the sign that corresponds with the alchemical work you are trying to accomplish: for digestion the moon should be in Aries, for sublimation, in Libra, etc. One should also avoid elevation operations such as sublimation and distillation when the dragons tail is shown, i.e., when the moon is in the south node.

3a) If the moon is not be in the appropriate sign for the work, then she should be in one of its decans, i.e., in a zodiacal sign that has the same alchemical element as the work to be undertaken. You will then have to compute when the moon enters the ten degrees of the particular sign that corresponds to the decan ruled by the work. For example, you want to begin a digestion and the moon is in its first quarter but she resides in Leo. To begin a digestion you would have to wait until the moon traveled to the third decan of Leo, ruled by Aries. This would correspond to any degree between twentyone degrees and thirty degrees Leo.

4) If you wish to use an exact horoscope for the work, then the time used for the chart's construction should come from rule 1 or 1a. The following rules should be used in this order:

a) The sign ruled by the planet should be in the first house. The planet ruling the sign should be on the cusp of the ascendant.

b) If (4a) is not possible then the planet and sign ruling the matter should be in the tenth house and as close as possible to the midheaven.

c) If (4b) is not possible then the planet ruling the matter should be in the tenth house as close as possible to the midheaven, with the sign that it rules in the first house.

d) If (4c) is not possible then the planet ruling the matter should be placed in the sign of its exaltation. This sign should occupy the first house with the planet as close to the ascendant as possible. The planet ruling the sign of exaltation should occupy the tenth house. With the planet as close to the midheaven as possible, avoiding any bad aspects to the ascendant.

- e) If (4d) is not possible then the planet ruling the matter should be placed in a sign that has the same alchemical element as the sign ruled by the planet ruling the matter. The planet and sign should be placed in the first or tenth houses, with the planet as close to the ascendant or midheaven as possible. In the latter case always avoid bad aspects between the midheaven and ascendant.
- f) If (4e) is not possible then your planet should be located in a sign which occupies a house that is favorable to it. It should have no bad aspects to the ascending degree or the midheaven. It should also have no bad aspects to the planets ruling the ascendant and midheaven.
- g) Avoid any bad aspects especially those to Saturn.
- h) Favorable aspects to the sun and moon are to be cultivated.
- i) Worry only about those aspects that affect the work, i.e., between the planet ruling the matter; the sign ruled by the planet that rules the matter. Aspects between these two to the ascendant, midheaven, sun, and moon.

Chapter 5.

Concluding Remarks on Theory

Anyone with a little know-how on the subject of alchemy will realize that the information presented in the last four chapters is no one individual's exclusive domain. Yet a review of certain basic facts is indispensable when dealing with a subject such as this. Most of the information presented so far can be gleaned from many of the titles listed in the suggested reading section of this book.

For those persons who think that I am trying to revive pre-Newtonian physics with a liberal sprinkling of superstition because of the last chapter on astro-cyclic pulsations, it is suggested that they read the works by Lillian Kolisko and Agnes Fayfe. If still more proof is needed, then the experiments on capillary dynamolysis can be reproduced by the individual. It is a fascinating thing to see these experiments unfold before one's eye. After a while there can be no doubt about the connection between celestial bodies and terrestrial matter.

I would also like to mention the Qabalah here. When a light and sporadic study of this subject was started a few years ago, I did not think it could really help me in alchemy. After all, how could a funny looking glyph impart any useful information. As I have gotten deeper into the lab work, correlations between substances and the tree of life developed in my mind. The glyph of the qabbalist known as the tree of life will aid the aspiring alchemist in his/her quest to understand the universe and how the subtlest intimations and the grossest manifestations are interconnected. I will not try to write on this subject as I am still trying to master it.

Finally let me say that it is indeed a truth when they say that hermetic science is made up of three disciplines: alchemy, astro-cyclic pulsations (astrology) and Qabalah. The aspiring alchemist should at least have a working knowledge of the theory of all three of

the disciplines. After this, one's own natural predisposition will set one upon the appropriate path with which to start. For me, it was the laboratory work, because from childhood I have always been fascinated by the laboratory and its apparatus. After doing experiments in the lab for some time I realized that at times it seemed that certain procedures were expedited or impeded for some unknown reason. When checking back over my lab notes a pattern soon emerged that was inescapable and it dealt with the moon. Therefore, astrology had to be learned if the work was to run as smoothly as possible. This of course led to the question of why planetary positions would affect the outcome of a lab experiment. The only way to understand this would be the study of Qabalah.

One need not necessarily start in the lab, one could start with astro-cyclic pulsations or qabalah. In the end, however, if you are meant to be in this science and you have enough persistence, the three will join into one. Experience is the best teacher, because it brings the subject matter to life in a very personal way. Of course, it is nice to have a mentor who will give you a pointer or actually show you how to do a procedure every once in a while. The great thrill, though, comes from actually doing it yourself. Would you have been contented or even wanted someone to always experience or describe your "First's" to you? Would you have wanted them to see and experience for you your first snow, taste of sugar, feel of rain, sight of death, burn of a flame, your first kiss or congress? I would think not. Each of these things no matter how sweet or unpleasant has allowed us to grow by experiencing them. This, after all, is the crux of alchemy, to grow in knowledge and evolve through experience so that after some time, we can with wisdom imitate the cosmos at will.

Chapter 1 Lab Equipment Needed

Let us move now onto the Practical Applications of the information presented in part one. First, we will need to outfit our laboratory with the proper materials and equipment, The following are lists of supplies, materials, and equipment you will need to do all the experiments in this book.

Supplies	Quantity	Approximate Price	
Coffee Filter Paper	3 Pkgs	\$5.00	
Cotton Balls	1 Pkg	\$2.00	
Kimwipes	1 box	\$5.00	
Labels	100	\$10.00	
Notebook	1	\$2.00	
Parafilm	1	\$20.00	
Plastic Spoons	1 pkg	\$3.00	
Stop Cock Grease	1oz	\$20.00	
Total Supplies			\$67.00

Materials	Quantity	Approximate Price	
1 Quart Amber Bottle/Cap	12	\$40.00	
5 Quart Corning Glass Pot	1	\$20.00	
Clamps & Stands	4	\$150.00	

Coors Porcelain Crucibles 100ml	24	\$150.00	
Faucet Adapter	1	\$30.00	
Funnels Assorted Sizes	4	\$5.00	
Glass Stir Rods	3	\$20.00	
Graduated Glass beakers	4	\$50.00	
Mason Jars	24	\$20.00	
Plastic Tubing	30 feet	\$20.00	
Pyrometer (thermometer for kiln)	1	\$50.00	
Sand		free	
Stainless Steel Screwdriver	1	\$7.00	
Thermometer Distilling 150° C	2	\$30.00	
Universal Thermometer Adapter	1	\$30.00	
Materials Total			\$622.00

Equipment	Quantity	Approximate Price	
Adapter Bent Distillation 24/40	2	\$60.00	
Adapter Connecting 24/40	2	\$60.00	
Adapter Distillation 24/40	1	\$60.00	
Adapter 24/40 Top, 75/50 Bottom	2	\$60.00	
Condenser Lieber 24/40 Joints	2	\$120.00	
Condenser Reflux 24/40 Joints	2	\$120.00	
Double Joint Expansion Bulb 24/40 Bottom, 75/50 top	2	\$200.00	
Erlenmeyer Flask 2000ml 24/40 Top	4	\$80.00	
Food Processor	1	\$35.00	
Funnel Separatory	1	\$60.00	
Kiln	1	\$200.00	
Large Back Heating Pad with Thermostat	1	\$20.00	
Large Styrofoam Container	1	\$15.00	
Mortar & Pestle	2	\$30.00	
Round Bottom Flask 2000ml 24/40 Top	4	\$80.00	
Round Bottom Flask 5000ml 75/50 Top	1	\$70.00	
Portable Electric Stove	2	\$40.00	
Soxhlet Extractor Complete 300ml	1	\$200.00	
Triple Beam Balance	1	\$150.00	
Misc		\$1000.00	
Equipment Total			\$1760.00

Grand total \$2449.00

When you buy your items for the lab, things like the bottles, tongs, food processor, electric stovetop, filterpaper, kimwipes, etc., can be purchased from your local hardware store. The prices at the hardware store are a lot cheaper than those at the laboratory/chemical supply store. If you live near water you can generally get sand off the beach for free, or else you can buy it cheaply from a pool supply house. The crucibles need not be Coor's porcelain kind, which are very good but expensive. I have found that the Corning Pyrex muffin forms work very well in the kiln, as long as the temperature does not exceed 600°C. The plastic tubing can generally be bought at a pet store. For your glassware purchases, here are two scientific glassware manufacturers, who can customize your glassware to fit any specifications: Kontes Glassware, P.O. Box 729, Vineland N.J. 08360 (609) 692 - 8500; and Reliance Glass, P.O. Box 825, Bensenville IL 60106, (708) 766 - 1816

The list of materials and equipment on the preceding page is pretty comprehensive. I

have listed only those things that I have found to be utterly necessary in my day-to-day operations in the laboratory. Each individual will of course add to this list as they improvise and come up with their own procedures. Because many flasks have been broken, I also suggest that you have at least four extra of those that are used most often. The most aggravating thing that can happen is not to be able to continue with the experiment because you broke your one and only flask. One can also collect a nice assortment of pots and pans of all different sizes from the local Salvation Army thrift store; they make great water and sand baths.

You should, of course have a water supply in the laboratory where the work is taking place. You should also have access to electricity.

Let me warn you that this work is not without risk, though the dangers stem from ignorance on the operator's part rather than nature's. Therefore, go slowly; patience ought to be the motto of every aspiring alchemist. I can remember clearly how when starting in the lab, immediate results were desired. One night in particular I had been working very late, it must of been two or three in the morning. The spirits of wine had gone through five rectifications already. I had been filling the distillation flask two-thirds of the way all night. This was a big no-no, but I was so tired. To make a long story short, my fractionating column launched off the distillation flask as if it were a rocket. A beautiful blue arching flame etched out the fractionating column's trail through the air. The ceiling of my lab as well as my first six months worth of notes caught fire. I was able to save the lab but the notes are in the ether now. Patience, therefore, is the prime watchword. These few hints, if heeded, will help you.

- 1) Distill slowly and fill your distillation flask at least one-third but no more than one-half full.
- 2) Never distill to total dryness; your flask may break because of the heat.
- 3) When distilling alcohol from wine use a water bath. Never use an open flame or bare electric element to distill any flammable liquid.
- 4) Keep a fire extinguisher rated for putting out electrical, grease, and alcohol fires near by.
- 5) Always keep notes. Never trust anything to memory. I have lost much time and money trying to figure out what I was sure would never be forgotten.
- 6) ALWAYS! ALWAYS! WEAR PROTECTIVE EYEWARE. Also a lab coat and protective gloves are good.
- 7) When handling any caustic substance be sure you can get plenty of cool running water fast in case of a spill onto yourself.
- 8) While no formal schooling is necessary to do this work, it sure does not hurt to have it either. A first year college course in chemistry is excellent to familiarize one with the uses of glassware.

Chapter 2 Production of Spagyric Herbal Extracts

Though spagyric production methods seem simple on the outside they are indeed difficult and time consuming. We will therefore begin with the simplest of methods for the production of spagyric extracts.

Our first task is to make an incubator for our laboratory. This piece of equipment will be one of the essential things that we use in the lab. To make an inexpensive incubator proceed as follows. Take one large Styrofoam container and spread a 1/2- inch layer of sand evenly on the container's bottom. On top of the sand place a large back heating pad that has a thermostat control. Cut a notch in the top corner of the Styrofoam container for the cord. In this way the top of the container will be flush with the edges when you close it. On top of the heating pad place a 1-inch layer of sand. You now have a simple incubator to use in your lab. It will maintain temperatures from 16 degrees C to 44 degrees C, depending on where you have set the thermostat. We are ready to begin making a simple spagyric extraction of our chosen herb.

Take any herb that you like and place it into a mason jar. Cover the herb with five times its volume of a good white wine or brandy. Seal the mason jar and place it in the incubator of about 30 degrees C, to digest for twentyone to fortytwo days. At the end of this time you will have a very dark tincture. Decant the tincture from the herb and store it in another mason jar. Take the herb body out of the first mason jar and place it into a calcining dish or large pot. Take the pot with the herb body outside and incinerate it. After some time all of the moisture will be driven off from the herb. It will then start to roast and then incinerate.

Your task is accomplished when the herb body has turned to ash and obtained a light gray color. Take the ash out of the pot and weigh it. Grind the ash to be sure there are no solid parts in it. Place the ash onto a stove top and continue to heat until it is pure white. Turn off the stove and let cool. Take the ash out and weigh it, then grind it one more time.

Place the ash into the mason jar holding the herbal tincture. Seal the jar and place it back into the incubator of 30° C to digest for three more weeks, taking care to shake the jar three to five times a day. In this way the water-soluble salts are absorbed by the tincture. At the end of the three weeks decant the tincture from the herb and cast away the feces. Let the herb sit out for one week in a cool room so any impurities suspended in the tincture can settle at the bottom of the mason jar. If any sediment falls decant the liquid from it and cast away the feces. Repeat this work of sedimentation until no feces fall to the bottom of the container holding your tincture. When finished, you will have made a spagyric herbal extract.

A second method used for the production of spagyric extracts is as follows.

Take one pound of any herb that you like. Take a half pound of the herb and grind it very fine in your mortar (one also can use a food processor). Place the herb into the 5000 ml round-bottom flask. Pour enough distilled water over the herb so the entire volume of the contents of the flask reaches two-thirds of its capacity.

To speed up the fermentation process add a little sugar and brewer's yeast to the mixture. Use a wine fermentation air lock in a cork to seal the flask. Put the flask into an incubator at 27° C. In a few days the fermentation of the herb will begin. This process is announced by the formation of gas bubbles in the liquid. In time the bubbles will stop and the matter will fall to the bottom of the container. This is a sign that the fermentation has stopped. In all, it will take about two weeks for the entire process to be completed.

Take the air lock out of the flask. Place the flask with all of its contents still in it into a large pot. Secure the flask to a stand using a clamp and then place enough water into the pot holding the flask so the water line is about 1 1/2 to 2 inches below the lip of the pot. Assemble the rest of the distillation train. Use a little stopcock grease to insure easy assembly and proper seal. Hook up the water supply to the condenser and turn on the heating element. In a few minutes the water in the pot will begin to boil. About ten minutes after that you will see the impure alcohol condensing and dripping into the receiver. The impure alcohol will come over at 85 to 90° C. When no more liquid will come over turn off the heat and water and let the apparatus cool.

Empty the contents of the distillation flask into a large pot. Take the pot outside and begin roasting the residue. While the feces roast we can return to work in our laboratory.

Pour the distillate in the receiver into a 2000 ml round bottom flask. Distill off all the liquid that will come over at 85 degrees C. Place the liquid left in the distillation flask into a mason jar for later use. By this time, our feces should have become a gray ash. Weigh the ash and place it into a mason jar for later use.

Take the distillate that is in the receiver and distill it five more times using only a water bath. After each distillation take the residue left in the distillation flask and add it to the watery residue from the second distillation. This watery substance is known as phlegm. The distillate is poured back into the distillation flask anew each time (after the removal of the phlegm) and distilled again. When making our last distillation the alcohol should come over at 76 degrees C. In this way we are able to get an almost pure ethyl alcohol. Be sure to record the final volumes of your phlegm and alcohol.

Take the second half of your herb and grind it to a fine powder. Put it into the 5000 ml round-bottom flask, then pour the entire amount of the alcohol distillate over the herb. Add enough distilled water to the flask so the amount of alcohol in the mixture equals 10% to 20% by volume. Seal the jar adapter and allow its contents to digest in the incubator for fourteen to twentyone days at a temperature of 35 degree's C to 37 degree's C; in this way an extract of the plant is made. The presence of the purified alcohol keeps the new plant material from undergoing fermentation. Decant the darkly colored extract from the herb body and store it in another mason jar. Place the mason jar holding the extract back into the incubator to further amalgamate its separate principles. The herb body is taken outside, placed into a large pot and turned to ash. The ash of the maceration and ash of the fermentation are ground and mixed well. Place the combined ash into the thimble of the soxhlet extractor. The phlegm obtained from the purification of the alcohol is used to extract the alkaline water-soluble salts from the ash. Pour the phlegm containing the water-soluble salts into a crucible or pyrex dish and evaporate the water

off overnight. The next morning scrape the salts out, grind, and weigh them. The salts are then placed back into the crucible or pyrex dish and put into the kiln and calcined to whiteness. The temperature of the kiln should not be over 600 degrees C. This process of extraction, evaporation, grinding, weighing, calcining, and weighing is done up to two more times. In the end, our salts are a pure white (sometimes a bluish tint can be seen). These salts are very alkaline as well as hygroscopic. This latter fact makes them very useful as a vehicle for cosmic forces. Finally grind the salts in a warm mortar and add them to the extract. Let them digest for a week or so with your extract, shaking the jar at least five times a day. Decant the extract off of any sediment that may have settled on the bottom of the mason jar. In this way, we now have a spagyric extract.

Chapter 3

Production of Spagyric Herbal Tinctures

Many people feel that an herbal extract as described in the last chapter can be made healthier and stronger by concentrating it. While the final concentration of the extract can be brought to a 1:1 ratio, the road to this concentration is very detrimental to the cosmic energy that was harvested with the plant at its time of extraction from the ground.

Every good herbalist knows that the time of planting as well as harvesting is extremely important. For many persons the thought that celestial bodies millions of miles from earth can have any effect on terrestrial matter is absurd. Yet the forces or energies emitted by our distant neighbors does indeed affect all earth matter.

What this has to do with tinctures and extracts is this. The forces of nature are very sensitive to heat. They quickly break down in harvested plants at temperatures above 40 degrees C. Thus, by many products being concentrated (even under ultra-high vacuum) the most nutritious kernel or spark is destroyed. To preserve this spark the spagyricist and alchemist use only mild temperatures in their operations, that is, if one is out to create a superior product. A good analogy is to compare making an herbal extract in the orthodox with the act of boiling an egg. You can indeed eat and receive nutrition from a boiled egg. Though you will never be able to hatch a chicken from it.

In this respect the common alcohol one buys at a store, no matter how high its proof, is dead. This alcohol could be compared with the dark sterile mother of the qabbalist. It reminds me of the dirt my mother would dig up out of the ground and bake in the oven before placing it into her plant pots. She told me this was done to sterilize the earth of any unwanted bacterial or insect life. Once done, the earth could be refertilized (reanimated) with the proper organic substances so the seed planted in it would grow properly. To the modern scientist this talk of life in alcohol would seem to be nonsense. They point to the molecular configuration of ethyl alcohol, C_2H_5OH , and scream Ah ha! Your arguments of vitality in substance are ridiculous. This very same molecular configuration shows itself whether the substance is from a natural or synthetic source. To them, we must say that they are dealing with only an empty vehicle. A car cannot operate itself without the conscious direction of human will. Nor can a synthetic product engender its own kind.

Alcohol prepared by distilling wine lacks the celestial Fire contained in air. With the acquisition of this Fire, or more aptly put, individual consciousness, the alchemist animates the Mercury. The dead body is now enlivened and shaped by the intervention of a soul and spirit. This acquiring of cosmic spirit is not very hard to do but it does require precision. It all deals with the proper regulation of the heat. Alcohol's grip on the spirit is tenuous at best so great diligence is needed in the special operation of animating mercury.

Thus, an herbal extract that has been concentrated by distillation, and boast an increased efficacy because of a low alcohol content in direct response to this distillation, is in fact losing on two fronts, because its seed has been destroyed and its spirit driven off. Therefore, in the alchemic view tinctures prepared according to art are always much more stronger than any extract, because the tincture retains much more life-force. It must be stressed here that this life-force has nothing to do with the concentration of a substance or what many herbal companies call active ingredients in their extracts, as revealed by high pressure and gas chromatography. It is as far as I know only possible to show the presence of these forces by capillary dynamic studies. The patterns made by living substances and dead ones as a result of capillary studies leave no question of debate.

Press the liquid out of enough grapes to make a half gallon of juice. Pour the juice into the 5000 ml round-bottom flask, then add the skins. To determine the alcohol we are making to a specific herb add 1 or 2 ounces of dried herb (It is really best to use an herb picked by your own hand; in this way, you know what formative forces are locked up in the herb.) The entire volume of the contents should not exceed two-thirds of the flask's capacity. Our aim is now to cause a fermentation of the mixture. Add a little brewer's yeast and sugar and use a fermentation lock to close the flask. Put the flask into an incubator at 27 degree's C. In two to four days the formation of gas bubbles will announce the start of fermentation. In time the bubbles will stop and the matter will fall to the bottom of the container. This is a sign the fermentation has stopped. In all, it will take about two weeks for the entire process to be completed. Hook up the distillation train to the flask using a 2000 ml round bottom flask as the receiver. A water bath will be the best method for this distillation. Hook up the water supply to the condenser and then turn on the heating element. The impure alcohol will distill over at 80 degree C. to 90 degree C (you can add a few handfuls of sea salt and sand into the water bath to increase it's temperature). Distill the soup until no more will rise. Turn the heat off and let it cool. Put a cork into the flask and store it in a cool place until needed later.

Pour the distillate in the receiver into another 2000 ml round bottom flask. Distill off all liquid that will come over at 85 degrees C. Place the liquid left in the distillation flask into a mason jar and save it for later use.

Take the distillate that is in the receiver and distill it five more times using only a water bath. After each distillation take the residue left in the distillation flask and add it to the watery substance in the mason jar known as phlegm. The distillate is poured back into the distillation flask a-new each time (after removal of the phlegm) and distilled again. When making our last distillation the alcohol should come over at 76 degrees C. In this way we

can get an almost pure ethyl alcohol. Be sure to record the final volumes of your phlegm and alcohol.

Pour this alcohol over the same type of herb used to determine the alcohol and let it digest for twenty-one to forty-two days. In the end, you will have a very dark tincture that smells strongly of the herb. Be careful as this tincture will stain your clothing as well as your hands. At this point the production of a normal tincture would end, but this is not so for the spagyric one. Decant and filter the tincture from the herb and store it in a mason jar, allowing it to digest in the incubator as you continue your work.

Place the sterile soup left in the 5000 ml flask and the herb body left in the mason jar into a large pot. Take the pot outdoors and boil off the liquid. When all the liquid is gone the herb body will begin to roast and then incinerate. When the herb body has obtained an ash gray color the incineration is done.

Grind and weigh this ash. Use a soxhlet extractor to extract its water-soluble salts from it, using the phlegm of wine as the extracting medium. Pour the phlegm containing the salts into a crucible or pyrex dish and evaporate the water off the salts in an oven overnight. Scrape the salts out of the dish using a stainless steel knife or screwdriver. Grind the salts and weigh them. Place them back into the crucible or pyrex dish and calcine them in the kiln for one week at 600 degrees C. Turn the kiln off and let it cool. Take the salts out of the crucible and grind and weigh them. This process of extracting, evaporating, grinding, weighing, calcining, grinding, and weighing must be done at least two more times. To insure the proper pureness of our matter.

Once we have gotten our pure water-soluble salts grind them to an extremely fine powder in a warm mortar. Then add them to your tincture. Be sure to let the tincture cool down when you remove it from your incubator. To open it immediately would allow a lot of its volatile goodies to escape. Add the salts to the tincture, there will be a slight fizz upon their addition. Allow the mixture to digest for two weeks, taking care to shake the jar three to five times a day. At the end of two weeks allow the solution to rest in a cool room. Decant the tincture off of any sediment that falls to the bottom. Dry and save the sediment. Continue this work of clarification until no more sediment appears on the bottom of the mason jar. Place the tincture into an amber-colored bottle and store in a cool place. This is the simplest way that I know of making a really potent spagyric tincture.

Note well: The sediment of clarifications should all be mixed and thoroughly dried. This should then be calcined to a pure whiteness at 600 degrees C. Store these salts in a tightly sealed container. They can be redetermined at a later date and used in another tincture.

Chapter 4

Production of Spagyric Herbal Essences

Spagyric essences are much subtler than extracts or even tinctures. They contain only the most volatile constituents of the herb used. There are many ways of making such essences, I will give you two methods that are familiar to me.

Method One This method is very complicated because it involves the separation of all three of the spagyric essentials.

We will need to put our herb through a steam distillation first so we can obtain its volatile oils. Place a 5000 ml round-bottom flask into a sand bath. Pour 3000 ml of distilled water into the flask. Take a widemouthed double-jointed flask and place a small piece of filter paper inside the flask over the bottom joint. Add enough ground herb to the flask so it is half full. Next hook up the reduction head and the distillation adapter. Finally, use a 2000 ml flask as a receiver at the end of the apparatus.

Turn the heat on low. After some time you will see the steam clouding up the double-jointed flask as it passes through it. Our distillation adapter also will become fogged. At the end of the drip tip you will see water droplets forming. The drops will fall into the receiver. After a few milliliters have collected in the receiver you will notice that a colored oil is collecting on top of the water. When approximately 1500 ml of the water has been distilled over, turn off the heat. Let the apparatus cool and transfer the water and oil in the receiver into the oil separator.

Take the double jointed flask off the distillation flask. Pour 1000 ml of fresh distilled water into the distillation flask and hook back up the entire apparatus. This entire process should be done at least three times to insure that the majority of the volatile oils come out of the plant body. While our second separation of the volatile oils is under way we will gather the oils obtained from the first. To do this, simply open the stopcock at the end of the drain tube. Slowly drain off the water. When only a little water is left in the separator close the stopcock. After each subsequent extraction of the volatile oils from the plant body, take what is in the receiver and place it in the oil separator. Drain the water out of the separator leaving the oil behind. Reuse this water for all of your subsequent separations of oil from the body. By the time you have extracted oil from 5 pounds of plant material you will have a few milliliters of pure volatile oil.

Take the essence-depleted body of the herb and place it into the widemouthed 5000 ml round-bottom flask. The water that was left from the separations of the volatile oils is now poured over the herb. Seal up the round-bottom flask with a fermentation lock and place it into an incubator at 27 degrees C. In about two weeks our plant body will have fermented and yielded up its spirit. Distill off the spirit as you have done before and rectify it seven times. Save the phlegm from the spirit for later use.

Empty the remaining liquid and plant body left in the 5000 ml flask into a large glass pot. Take the pot outdoors and boil off all the moisture. When the moisture is gone the herb body will begin to roast and then incinerate. When the body has obtained an ash gray color turn off the heat and let the pot cool. Grind and weigh the ash. Set up the soxhlet extraction apparatus and extract the water soluble salts from the ash. Evaporate the water off the salts in the oven overnight. Grind and weigh the salts then place them into the kiln to calcine at 600 degrees C for one week. At the end of the week turn the kiln off and let it cool. Grind and weigh the salts. Repeat the extraction, drying, grinding, weighing, calcining, grinding, and weighing two more times.

Once you have gotten your pure hygroscopic salt, pour your rectified spirit over the salts,

then add your volatile oil. Allow the mixture to digest in an incubator at 30 degrees C for a week. Be sure to slightly shake the container three to five times a day. Decant the essence off the undissolved salts. It will be seen that the essence is now colored yellow and smells strongly of the herb you used. One drop in wine or distilled water will yield the full effects of the plant's medicinal nature. Save the remaining salts as you did with those left over from the manufacture of the tincture.

A word of caution here is in order. Because of the high concentration of essential plant oils in this product care must be taken when it is being used. One should in my opinion use this product as if they were using a pure essential oil. Literally, one drop will do you, and that drop should be properly diluted.

Method Two Our second way of making an essence is similar to the first method, except that it is not as potent. Thus, it can readily be used without fear of accidental misuse.

Place enough finely ground herb (approximately 1oz) into a 2000 ml round-bottom flask so only 1/8 to 1/4 of the flask capacity is taken up. Add enough distilled water to the flask so that 2/3 of the flask capacity is occupied. Place the flask into a 21 degree C incubator for three - five days. It is important to regulate the temperature of the flask perfectly or else our herb will begin to ferment. After three to five days take the flask out of the incubator. Place the flask into a water bath and hook up the distillation train. Create a vacuum and distill off most of the liquid.

Take the distillate and pour it back over the herb and repeat the process ten to twelve times. The water will now smell mildly of the herb. The essential oils contained in the plant are now in the water. After the last distillation let the apparatus cool.

Disassemble the distillation train. Add enough rectified spirits of wine to the receiver so its volume equals 7% to 12% of the total volume of liquid in the flask. Place a condenser onto the flask, cork the condenser and hook up the water supply. Using a sand bath and gentle heat (30 degrees C - 37 degrees C) begin a rhythmic circulation of the matter. Heat the matter from 6 am in the morning until 6 pm in the evening. Then allow it to cool overnight and in the next morning begin the circulation again. This circulation should be done for fourteen days.

Take the plant residue left in the distillation flask and transfer it to a large glass pot. Incinerate the contents in the pot. Take the ash out of the pot and extract the water soluble salts from it. Evaporate the water from the salts overnight in the drying oven. Place the dried salts in the kiln and calcine for two weeks at 600 degrees C. At the end of two weeks turn the kiln off and let it cool. Take the salts out of the kiln and weigh them then grind the salts fine and place them into a glass petri dish (you can add a few grams of salt saved from the production of another tincture or essence). Take the dish outside at night, and leave it out all night. Be sure to elevate the petri dish at least six inches above ground on a piece of wood. At dawn take the petri dish inside.

Put the glass cover over the petri dish. Take off the condenser and pour the salt solution in the petri dish into the flask. Reattach the condenser and rhythmically circulate for another seven days. Let the apparatus cool and then pour it into a mason jar and seal it

tightly. Allow the jar to stand in a dark cool place undisturbed for two weeks. At the end of this time decant the essence off of any sediment that may have fallen to the bottom of the mason jar. Let your essence sit another two weeks and if no more sediment shows itself, it is ready. If sediment appears on the bottom, continue the work of clarification.

Thus, you have completed the second way of making a spagyric herbal essence. A 1/4 teaspoon in a glass of wine or distilled water will lightly scent your beverage and give you a gentle herbal tonic.

Chapter 5

Alkahest of the Vegetable Kingdom.

In spagyrics there is a special menstruum called an alkahest. This product is able to extract the spagyric sulfur from plants and minerals in a very short time, thereby saving the alchemist much time and labor. This menstruum is really very easy to prepare. It requires only patience and diligence in the work.

Take one gallon of red wine and rectify it seven times as was described earlier. When completed save the alcohol in a mason jar labeled as such. Be sure to also save the phlegm left from the rectifications. The dark-colored tincture that remains after the rectification is to be boiled off gently. In the bottom of the container, you will see a honey-like pitch. Dry this by evaporation until it forms a gum or hardened tar-like substance.

Take three one gallon plastic containers of red wine vinegar and place them into the freezer without their caps. Allow the vinegar to freeze overnight. Take the containers from the freezer and invert them allow the vinegar to drip out of the containers into another one. After a few hours you will find a strong-smelling colored water has filled the second container. In the first is left a plug of frozen water. Repeat this procedure at least seven times and your water will be sharp and very penetrating. Be sure to save the water from the ice plugs. Take the sharp concentrated vinegar after its seven rectifications and place it into a distillation flask. Assemble a distillation train and apply heat. Distill slowly and you will get a fraction that comes over at 100 degrees C (water) and another that comes over at 103 degrees C and peaks at 105 degrees C (concentrated vinegar). You must switch receivers between the time when all of the water has distilled over and the corrosive spirit starts to come over. Be sure though not to burn the colored tincture by urging the fire to rashly. Pour the tincture in the receiver into a mason jar marked "tincture of vinegar." This procedure should be repeated three more times. But only distill off the water and do not make the spirit fly.

Pour the water that was left from the ice plugs into the colored tincture left after the distillation. Dry this liquid into a gum or hardened tar as you did the body of its sibling.

Grind both gums to a powder. Place them spoonful by spoonful into a crucible and calcine them to whiteness. In the beginning you will see the impurities burn away from their bodies and rise as a smoke (use a hood or do it outside). When they have become purified to a snowy whiteness they are ready. Use the clear phlegm saved from the rectification of the alcohol to extract the true body of our spirits from the calcined matter.

The body of the spirits is the base of our operation. They must be exceedingly pure. To test their spirituality take them outside on a clear spring day. If truly pure they will turn to liquid and leave no trace of solid behind. When gently heated to remove the moisture of the atmosphere they will turn solid again.

Take the rectified alcohol and cohobate it with its dual body. Exhale it off gently (i.e., vapor distillation). Let the apparatus cool and then cohobate the spirit onto the body once more. Distill again and cohobate seven or more times, the more often the better.

Add just enough of the phlegm from the alcohol rectification to dissolve the bodies. Add just enough of the vinegar so nature will find her balance. Evaporate off all liquids. Assemble the distillation train. In the receiver have some of the rectified alcohol. The end of the take-off tube must be under the level of the alcohol or else you will lose your spirit when it comes over. Into the retort place the body. Heat the distillation flask in a hot sand bath and you will see in the space of an hour or so the body rise and come to unite with the spirit of wine. Let the apparatus cool. Remove the spirits in the receiver and place them into a well-closed flask. Be sure to put back in enough alcohol to submerge the end of the take-off tube.

Calcine the matter left in the retort. Add enough phlegm or distilled water to dissolve what is in the retort. Add the rectified vinegar as you did before and distill as you did before. Keep this operation up until all or most of the body has united with spirit of wine.

Take the flask containing the spirit and the body and circulate in rhythm with the sun and moon for fourteen days. After the circulation is completed, let the flask cool. The body now spiritualized will always come over with the united spirit. Keep this menstruum, this magistery, in a bottle closed very tightly. It will separate the spagyric sulfur from an herb in very little time. It will also work on crystals, when they are prepared according to our art.

Chapter 6

Oil of Rose Quartz extracted via the Alkahest of the Vegetable Kingdom

A word about the use of crystals. People have used crystals and gems for centuries as a means to improve their health and promote the development of psychic powers. Many people even go as far as to place crystals into distilled or spring water with the hopes of promoting a transference of the crystals energy into the water. It is then believed that by drinking the water the individual will ingest the energy of the crystal. I suppose the above method does possess a somewhat limited benefit to the user. But it will be seen from the upcoming formula how far superior the spagyric method is.

It might seem impossible that such a menstruum could have any effect on quartz. Quartz is composed of silicon and it is one of the least reactive elements on the periodic chart. In fact, acids such as nitric, sulfuric, and hydrochloric have little to no effect on silicon. This element is attacked only by fluorine and chlorine gas and partially by aqua regia. Silicon is naturally broken down by oxygen and water, but during the process the secondary harder substance of silicon dioxide is made.

Yet the alchemist who follows nature knows how to get to the oil hidden within this protective armor. This oil is the soul of quartz and it is a wonderful medicine. One can also indeed extract the soul from all sorts of gemstones using alchemical methods. It is also a fact that the oils produced are completely harmless and not toxic. I and many friends have used tincture of rose quartz with great satisfaction. The increase in physical and mental energy was unmistakable. The men who used it also found that it increased their virility.

In order to perform an extraction of the soul on rose quartz, proceed as follows. Take one pound of rose quartz and break it up into pieces the size of quarters. Place the pieces in a crucible and heat them at 600 to 800 degrees centigrade for one hour. Using a pair of tongs take the crucible out while still red hot. Dump the contents of the crucible into a steel pitcher containing distilled water. After twenty minutes drain the water and put the pieces into a warm crucible. Place the crucible back into the kiln. Heat the quartz pieces as you did before and then dump them into water. After numerous times you will see that the quartz has begun to turn white. When it is completely white you will be able to actually break the quartz apart easily with you bare hands. Be careful of the sharp slivers of quartz because they can cut your hand badly. Grind this quartz to a fine white sand. Place the ground quartz into an Erlenmeyer flask and pour over it your alkalest. Place a cork in the flask and seal it with wax. Digest the flask in a 40 degrees centigrade incubator for four to six weeks. At the end of this time your menstruum will be a light yellow to dark orange in color. Allow the flask to cool but keep it sealed. Set the flask in a cool dark place for two weeks. Break the seal and decant the liquid off of the crystals. Filter the resultant liquid twice and then pour it into a distillation flask. Place the flask into a water bath and gently distill off your menstruum. Please note that you should have the receiver in an ice bath to insure that you lose none of your spirit. The thick oil left in the distillation flask is the concentrated oil or soul of rose quartz. Place it into an amber-colored glass and stopper it well. Use one to two drops in a glass of wine to receive the full effects of the crystal's power.

Note: You can use a soxhlet apparatus under vacuum to perform the extraction of the soul as well. This will cut the extraction time down to one week.

Chapter 7

Production of a Spagyric Plant Stone

There are spagyric plant stones and there are alchemical plant stones. While not as intricate to make as its alchemical cousin, spagyric plant stone are still prized by many alchemists. Plant stones made spagyrally are very highly exalted substances. They contain an amazing amount of the curative virtues of the plant. But make no mistake about it these are not alchemical products. All alchemical products if they are worthy of the name need to go through the stages of generation set down by the old authors.

The proof of spagyric products not being alchemical is the fact that they can be concocted solely from the manufactured ingredients bought in stores. All we need are salts, 190-proof ethyl alcohol, and steam-distilled volatile oils. Be that as it may, these stones and their production do teach us some rather valuable lessons.

I will not bore the reader with the already familiar instructions of how to separate an oil from an herb, how to cause the herb's fermentation and rectify the resultant alcohol, or how to go about incinerating, collecting, and purifying the water-soluble salts of the plant. By now all of these procedures should have become second nature to the student. In fact by now you should be developing some tricks of your own and preferences for modes of operation.

Therefore collect your spagyric essentials from any plant you choose or buy them from a store. The best salt that I have found to use is solar-dried sea salt. This salt already contains a considerable amount of solar sulfur because of the manner of its being dried. This aspect of the solar sulfur can be increased in these salts by setting them outside at two to three in the morning to deliquesce. The salts should be placed on a plate or Pyrex pie dish. This procedure should be done on the day of the planet that rules the plant from which the essential oil was obtained. The best conditions for this work are warm, humid clear nights. Slightly overcast nights can also yield satisfactory results. In the morning around six go out and check the salts; if all or most have turned to liquid all is fine. Leave the salts to dry in the sun until midday. In this way as they crystallize they suck in and trap more of the sun's energy.

Take the salts inside and grind them fine, weigh them, and then place them into a crucible. Place the crucible into the kiln and set the controls to maintain a temperature of 200 to 300 degree centigrade. This roasting of the salts causes their pores to open even wider.

The salts should be left in the kiln until the appropriate day of the following week. When it is time to take the salts outside again turn the kiln off. Using a pair of tongs immediately take the salts out of the hot kiln. Pour the salts into a warm mortar and regrind them. Take the salts from the mortar and place them into a warm Pyrex dish and spread them thin. Immediately take the salts outside and place them in a clear undisturbed spot. The salts will absorb the atmospheric moisture much more quickly this time. Repeat the entire above procedure of roasting and grinding two more times. The only variance is that in the final operation, turn the kiln off at 12 midnight. Allow the salts to cool in the kiln until 6 a.m. Take the still-warm salts out of the kiln and place them in a warm mortar. Grind the salts fine and weigh them. Pour the salts into a mason jar in as even a layer as possible. Pour enough of the essential oil over the salts so that there is a slight excess of the oil floating above the salts. Seal the mason jar and place it in an incubator at 40 degree Celsius. There the salts should remain undisturbed for a week. At 6 a.m. on the appropriate day of the following week check the salts. If they have drunk up all of the oil, add some more. When the same amount of oil floats on the top of your salts as you put in a week before, the salts have taken up all they can hold. Begin adding your ethyl alcohol in the same manner as you did the oil. Keep the process up until no more alcohol will go into the salts. When this is done your stone is finished. You can increase the virtue of your stone by grinding it and subjecting it to a gentle calcination. Put the stone back through the whole procedure and you will have a wonderful medicine. You can cure your stone by allowing it to digest in the heat of the incubator for six months to a year. If done properly, the stone at this time will work to separate the spagyric sulfur from a macerating herb.

Chapter 8. Preparing Archaeus of Water

Properly collected water contains within it the universal flame of life. We have already seen the reasons for this in the chapter concerning the three essentials. By correctly applying the laws of the art one can rectify water so highly that it will act as a menstruum in all three kingdoms. The process is a simple one, but it requires much time and patience.

We begin by collecting what I call the condensed star light. But what is the manner of this collection? All of the philosophers have been reticent on this point. Let us visit once more the cathedrals of Fulcanelli. Two things struck me about the subject of the Mercury when reading his book. One was the fact that Mercury seemed to be intimately connected with the wood of the oak tree. Secondly, the description of the material used for gathering the water was that of a magnet. Anyone who has bothered to work through the experiments in this book will realize that the water-soluble salts obtained from plant ash are very hygroscopic. They in fact do draw the moisture of the atmosphere to themselves like a magnet. A little bit of research into the constituents of oak, tells us that when oak is incinerated its ash contains copious amounts of potassium salts in the form of potassium carbonate. Potassium salts are one of the most hygroscopic salts available. Therefore it seems only natural that we would use the magnet that is the most efficacious in the vegetable kingdom to attract this sulfurous fire from the sky. In using these salts we are indeed determining the universal Sulfur collected to the plant kingdom. When this sulfur or seed is added to the ovum it will immediately determine it and start the process of fermentation.

In order to collect this water place 100 to 500 grams of plant salts that have gone through at least three purifications. Place the salts in a very thin layer inside a glass dish, take the salts outside on a clear spring night around 10 pm. Be sure to elevate it off the ground by about six inches. The dish should be in a cleared spot with no trees or other obstructions over it. This is of necessity to allow for the clear transmittal and absorption of the stars radiant energy. It would also be wise to cut away or trim back any tall grass that is in the area where you intend to leave the dish. In the morning immediately after the first rays of the sun show, go out and collect your dish. In it you will see that the salts have all tuned or begun to turn into a viscous oily liquid. **DO NOT** touch this liquid with your hands or any metal object. If you do so you will loose that which you seek to gain. Pour the oily liquid immediately into a distillation flask and assemble the distillation train. Using a vacuum and gentle heat, exhale off the liquid. Let the apparatus cool and immediately pour the water in the receiver into an amber-colored jar and tightly seal it. Place the jar in a cool dark spot, or a refrigerator, until later.

Our next task requires us to collect rain, snow, hail, or dew before it hits the ground. We will need at least two to five gallons of this precipitation to complete our work. Of all the above forms of precipitation the best is rainwater that fell during a thunderstorm. One should do the collecting in a glass bowl or a plastic one. Once collected take the water inside and filter (thaw first if necessary). In this day and age it is a good idea to distill this water at least one time; in this way we remove the pollutants and acids that fell from the

atmosphere with the water. As with the first water you collected be sure also not to touch this water with a hand or steel. Divide the water evenly among separate large containers of glass or plastic, leaving at least half their volume empty. Pour into each the same amount of your Universal Sulfur. Cover the containers with cheesecloth or filter paper. Our aim is to create a barrier to dust and other contaminants while maintaining a passageway for the free flow of air. The containers should then be placed in a dark, isolated place that will maintain the heat at around 38 degrees C. Here the water should remain until putrefied. You will be able to tell that this is accomplished when a tan-to brown-colored, spongy, slimy matter appears in your water. It will fall to the bottom of the container when the fermentation is complete.

If gallon containers were used for the fermentation we will have approximately 1500 ml of water to work with from each container. Pour all of this putrefied water into a 2000 ml exhalation setup. Our aim is to sweat the elements of the water over one at a time. The first 375 ml of water that comes over is called Fire of water. It is stored in a tightly sealed mason jar marked as such. The second 375 ml of water that comes over is called Air of water. It is stored too as the first and marked appropriately. The third 375 ml is called Water of water and it too is stored in a tightly sealed jar. The last water to come over is the Earth of water. It is somewhat less in quantity than the previous fractions, partly because it contains the undistillable sediment. Distill over all of the water you can without burning the sediment. That which remains will be of a honey-like consistency. Decant this and dry gently under a sun lamp. This substance is called the Universal Gur. It is used in many advanced works in alchemy. This substance in fact is said to contain the seeds of life for all three of the kingdoms of nature. Store this substance in a tightly sealed jar for later use.

We now must separate each of the four elements into their three essentials. Each of the 375 ml will be separated into three divisions of 125 ml of liquid. For the Fire element, we would call the first 125 ml of liquid the Sulfur of Fire of water. The second 125 ml would be called the Mercury of Fire of water. The last 125 ml of water would be called the Salt of Fire of water. This three fold separation is also performed on the remaining three elements of the water namely the Air, Water, and Earth. In the end, we will have twelve different divisions of our water each with its own nature and efficacy for different works.

The joining of these waters together can be done in one of two ways. We can either pour all of the Mercuries from the different elements together, then all of the Sulfurs, and finally the Salts. We would then pour the combined Mercuries into the combined Salts and then add the combined Sulfurs. Or we can unite the three essentials of one element together, i.e., pour the Mercury of Fire of water onto the Salt of Fire of water and then add the Sulfur of Fire of water. We would do this for the remaining three elements. Once all four of the elements were reconstituted we would then pour the Fire into the Air. These two would then be added to the Water and the three added to the Earth.

This separation, purification, and cohobation should be carried out on our remaining quantities of water. When all is completed store these waters in amber-colored bottles. Screw the tops on tightly and then seal them with wax.

It is interesting to note that each of these waters can be used separately for different tasks

in the laboratory. I am sure their manifold uses could fill a volume in itself. For example, one can, through repeated distillations, rectify one of these waters so much that it will begin to act on metals. One of the twelve waters seems to retard the spoilage of herbal tinctures, while another speeds it up. Another of the twelve waters extracts more soluble salts from plant ash than does the others and so on. Also each of these waters has a specific effect on the human organism. The key to their uses are to be found in the varying PH of the water. (Those who desire to know the PH readings as well as which water will perform a certain task will have to do the work themselves or wait for my next book.)

We now have our properly collected and prepared celestial water. Who can deny that it is from this water that we shall derive all the different manifestations of our matter. Or as the ancients have said: " And as all things were produced from One by the mediation of One, so all things are produced from this one thing by adaptation."

Chapter 9

The Minor Opus in Words and Pictures

Our first concern is to separate the elements from our plant matter. You should know that the work of separating the elements from nature's subjects does not follow the same progression of the elements' generation from the supreme source. In the lab the separation of the Air element generally proceeds but sometimes follows the extraction of the Fire element. Again let us return to the words of Eirenaeus Philalethes in *Collectanea Chemica*: "All true philosophers agree that the First Matter is a moist vapor, raised by the action of the central fire in the bowels of the earth, which, circulating through its pores, meets with the crude air, and is coagulated by it into an unctuous water, adhering to the earth, which serves it for a receptacle, where it is joined to a sulfur more or less pure..."

Anyone who has taken the time to work through the experiments of this book will realize at once that the description given in the quote above exactly mimics the steam extraction of the volatile essential oils from a plant. Therefore, set up the oil extraction apparatus you used in the previous experiments and extract the oils from two pounds of plant material. Throughout all of this work of the steam distillation it is very important that you use only the original 2000 ml of water you started with. The high heat used to make the steam causes a breakdown of the alchemical qualities of the water. When you have finished your extractions place all of your collected oils into an amber-colored vial and store it for later use. This oil represents the volatile fraction of our Air element.

Take the two pounds of oil-depleted herb and place them into two separate containers. Pour into each container half of the water used for the extraction of the volatile essential oils. Add enough of the universal Mercury to each container so that the water's volume exceeds four times the volume of the plant material. A large plastic five-gallon wine-making cask will serve nicely. Place a fermentation lock into the cask and leave the cask in a 27-degree centigrade incubator until fermentation is complete. Take the fermentation locks off of both casks but decant and filter the liquid from only one of them. Place cheesecloth loosely over the second cask and place it in a cool room with good air circulation.

Place all of the solid plant material along with the substance caught in the filter paper into a large steel pot. Cover the pot and place it in a refrigerator until needed latter. The liquid that has been filtered contains immature alcohol, which is our Fire element. Perform a seven fold rectification via exhalation on this alcohol and your Fire element will be quite pure. Store it in a tightly sealed bottle for later use. Save the phlegm and colored tinctures in separate sealed containers also.

Our second cask should now have started to undergo or even have completed its second fermentation. As was said earlier in the chapter about the elements "the Water element is hidden within the belly of the Fire element". This secondary fermentation of alcohol produces vinegar, which is our Water element. The sign of its manifestation is a skin of bacteria that forms on the surface of the matter. One can hasten the development of this product by inserting the hose of a small air pump underneath the surface of the liquid and by adding some "Mother of Vinager". In this way the acid forming bacteria are nourished constantly. Once your vinegar is formed, rectify it by freezing as you did when making your alkahest. After the three distillations of your final product are complete place your sharp spirit into an amber glass container and seal it tightly. Combine all residual liquids left from the purification of the Water element into one large glass pot. Add to this the tincture left from the rectification of alcohol. Reduce the liquids by boiling until a thick honey like syrup is formed. Place this substance under a heat lamp and dry to a hard gum. Grind this to a fine powder and store it in a mason jar until latter.

Having done this we must use the Fire element to extract the fixed Air from approximately two ounces of unused herb. This fixed tincture is nothing more than the second fraction of our Air element. The first, of course, were the volatile oils extracted from the plant. The second is its tincture, which also contains the smells, color, and medicinal qualities of the herb. This extraction should be done by a very gentle digestion., that is if one is planing on using the alchemical elixir of the first degree. If you do not plan on using this intermediary medicine then you can use a soxhlet extractor to obtain the fixed Air. In the latter case, we are not concerned with damage done to heat-sensitive alkaloids because all of the combined substances will go into the kiln for purification. In any event once, you have the fixed Air element, you must separate its volatile portion from the fixed part. During the digestion the Fire element also extracted some of the volatile Air. The separation of the volatile from the fixed may be done either by exhalation of the vapors (sweating) which allows the Fire and volatile Air element to come over together, or we can use a standard distillation setup. In this way though we are destroying a large part of the seminal virtues of our plant before they are amalgamated to its Earth element. In either method, place the clear liquid that you have collected in a tightly sealed mason jar and label it as the Fire and volatile Air element combined. Take the dark fixed Air left in the distillation flask and label it fixed Air of the herb in question.



Take all of the solid plant residue left from making the elements and combine them with any sediment caught in the filter papers. Place all of them into a large steel pot and take it outdoors and incinerate it. Once the plant has turned to ash, stop the incineration. Grind the ash fine and place it into a soxhlet extractor. Perform an extraction on the ash using the phlegm left from the purification of your Fire element. Continue this extraction until the phlegm coming out of the drainage tube no longer registers alkaline by litmus test. Note: If you must change water in the flask because it has become too saline you can use regular distilled water.

Once the extraction is complete pour the saline solution into a Pyrex dish and place it into an oven overnight at 100 degree F so the water will evaporate off. When dried, scrape these salts out of the dish and weigh them.



The salts after their initial extraction and evaporation. Anyone who has done some reading of Junius or Albertus will wonder why these salts are not white at this point. I do not incinerate my plant body to a gray ash or even a white one. I prefer to incinerate the matter until it no longer emits smoke when stirred. At this point the color of the matter is still black with a lot of the carbon on it. In this way, after the calcination of the matter, I get a few more grams of salt.



The salts are now placed back into the Pyrex dish and the calcination of the Earth element begins. This process of extraction, evaporation, grinding, weighing, calcining, grinding, and weighing must be done at least two more times. In the picture the final outcome of the labors engaged in is seen. The Earth element is now a pure white and is ready to be made into the alchemical elixir of the first degree.

Note: during your final solve and coagula of the salts (dissolution and evaporation) you should use just enough of your universal Mercury to impart back to the salts the flame of life. This flame was lost during the successive solve and coagulas in the sterile water of the plegm or the ordinary distilled water.



It is really simple to make the elixir of the first degree. One need only add drop by drop the fixed Air of the plant in question onto the purified Earth element. The picture shows this elixir after the first conjunction of the fixed Air with the Earth element. When the Earth will hold no more fixed Air it is dried in the oven overnight.



We now see the elixir dried into a dark brown powder. If this powder is left out in the air it will soon begin to run and smell strongly of the herb. The elixir is usable in this stage, a few grains on the tongue yield the full taste of the herb as well as its medicinal benefits. By continually imbibing the Earth with its fixed Air, we can get the elixir to an exalted state. The whole mass in the oven will resemble tar or pitch (looking more or less like the middle right picture). When the substance is cooled it will harden considerably. When it is even slightly heated it will flow like wax and fill the room with the smell of the herb intensely.



The next course of action is to refine the Earth element one more time. If I were you, I would save one-quarter of my elixir of the first degree for use as you move on to making a Plant Stone. Take the portion of your elixir you wish to turn into a stone and place it spoonful by spoonful into a crucible that is in a hot kiln. The elixir will smoke and bubble up considerably, so go slow in this operation. Once all of the elixir of the first degree is in the crucible add the fixed Air of the Fire and Water elements that you dried and ground fine. These two also will act as the elixir did when placed into the hot crucible, so you must add them spoonful by spoonful. Incinerate the Earth element and all of the fixed Air's until no more smoke is seen. At this point the entire mass will rest in the crucible like cooled igneous rock. Turn the kiln off and let it cool. Take the crucible out and empty it of its contents. Grind the matter to a fine powder. During the grinding, you will see shiny slivers of material like bits of crystal. Note: Be sure to wear a lab mask when grinding these salts. They are very caustic and will burn your nose severely if breathed in. Place the powder back into the crucible and calcine in the kiln for about three weeks. At the end of this time your Earth will be a beautiful pure white as shown. Only that which is essential remains of your plant. All other impurities have been burned away. As the husk is removed from the grain so have we removed the impure from the pure in our subject.

At this point we must suffer our body to die and go through a rebirth. The flame of the universal Sulfur will be lost but not the Sulfur of the body. This last Sulfur is always connected to the body of terrestrial matter. It is this Sulfur which causes matter to continually go through changes. This is the Sulfur that breaks down a corpse into its constituent parts. When nature in her wisdom makes grass from a dead body it is this sulfur that is responsible for the tearing down and building up activity. But it is the universal Sulfur that animates life's vehicles at varied stages of manifestation. Therefore place your salts back into the crucible and increase the kiln's heat to cause your matter to go into flux. Beware not to have it too high or your matter will fly away from you. Let it remain in flux until a steel wire dipped in it shows a coating of the salts as clear glass when cooled. This is a sign that the body and Sulfur are completely pure. Take the crucible out of the kiln and immediately pour the fused salts into a slightly heated iron pan or a warm slab of marble. The salt will congeal and form a clear to somewhat opaque glass. Grind these salts and put them through seven solve and coagulas using your universal Mercury. If you do this carefully you will grow crystals with some of the most beautiful formations you have seen. When this operation is complete we have our last alchemical element, that of the Earth. All of our attentions now are to be turned to the proper manipulation of the elements.

In this way by art we are able to cause a more perfect manifestation of the essentials than what nature could have done.

For a long time after having reached this point in the operation I was stymied. At that time I was following the directions of Albertus literally. i.e. I was adding the alcohol and the essential oils of the herb onto the salts and digesting them. If one did this for a period of time they would indeed come up with a crystalline-like substance. As was said earlier it became apparent to me after some time that I would need to follow the directions given by the old masters for completing the Magnum Opus, the first item of which was the

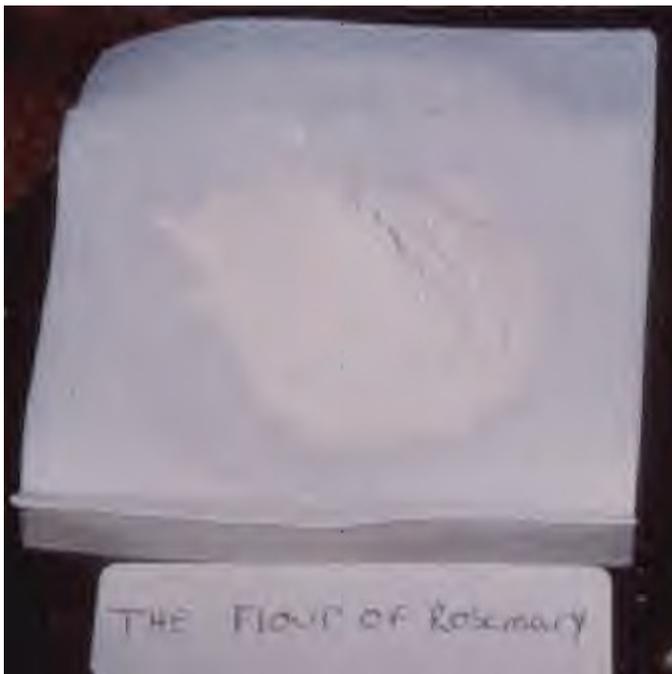
separation of the True Soul from the Body. Yet hard as I would try, I could not elicit this oil from the Earth element.



Then one day a break came and my heart was filled with joy. I knew not whether I was being led by Divine revelation or had just accidentally found the secret. Yet before me was a red oil, also known as the Red Mercury that had come from the Earth. The process for obtaining this oil was so simple that I wanted to smack myself for being so stupid. The first order of business was to capture a celestial signature onto the matter. Then followed digestion of the Earth in the two active elements (fire and air). Over time the liquid became darker and darker, moving to a burnt orange color. Concentration of this liquid was done by exhaling two-thirds of its volume. The color was now definitely a burnt orange color or that of a dark pumpkin. A small shadow of dissatisfaction hung over me, because the color of the soul should have been red like the old masters said it would be. A surprise hit me when I took the flask containing the soul outside to photograph it. When held up to the rays of sunlight the liquid took on a blood red color like that of a liquid ruby. Without a doubt I knew that I was in possession of the first essential. The red oil of the soul, which contains the celestial Fire of life within it. After the extraction of the Soul from the Earth, I noticed that the Earth was no longer solid, but moved in the flask like wax.



My next operation was to acquire the White Mercury. This was done by combining the Water and Earth elements. Then by using a water bath and a distillation train, I was able to prepare the Virgin's Milk. This substance indeed looks like milk when warm. When cool it acts like a glue and can be made volatile, hence its second name Glue of the Eagle.



Upon volatilizing the White Mercury, I thought it was time to combine the two

mercuries with the residuum of the volatilization.

Much to my surprise, these three would not combine. They just formed two separate layers no matter how much I tried to unite them they would not combine. Many months of experimentation with different procedures followed but I found myself again at a roadblock.

I pondered the problem and one day while reading *Collectanea Chemica* an answer that seemed impossible came to me, because the substance to be used was in direct contradiction to all the writings of the old masters. Yet in its obscure wording the text seemed to be saying to use it, while also intimating at a special process. I must say here that I had done this procedure literally hundreds of times. But it was not until the illumination of wisdom from God that I was able to do the operation with understanding and achieve the aspired-for result. There is much more to this operation than the regulation of the heat. One is indeed trying to reach a certain state of friability in the matter but the problem goes further than this (technically speaking all one is doing is roasting the dried, unseparated herb at 500° - 600° C). I had done the experiment at the same temperature and from the same batch of herbs but with no success. My lab assistant tried the same experiment with no success. It is only after the soul of the alchemist matures that this reaction between himself and his matter is achieved. Until this is done no amount of heat, pounding, or washing will suffice. It is only through the grace of Divine Providence that the intricacies of this procedure can be understood.

To help you in your quest of one day gaining this understanding I quote here the key part of the text in its entirety. "... for the seed of metals is sown in corruption, and raised in incorruption; it is sown a natural body, and raised a spiritual body; it is known to partake of the curse which came upon the earth for man's sake, having in its composition a deadly poison, which can only be separated by a regeneration in Water and Fire..."

I next had to see if the product would work. Upon conjunction of the Water and Fire elements onto the specially prepared Body, I felt an increase of heat in the test tube. For some reason I decided to seal the tube and place it into a 37 degrees C incubator overnight. The next morning upon opening the incubator and examining the test tube, tears came to my eyes. I fell to my knees and thanked Divine Providence for the blessing it had bestowed upon me. The body had drunk the liquids completely and had been colored white and pink like a marble. When I felt the contents of the tube in my hand it had a creamy texture. I immediately tried the experiment over again this time using the Red and White Mercuries. The next morning the anticipated outcome had been achieved. The path before me had opened up and was cleared of all doubt.

[second part](#)

One would tend to think that the conjunction of the three into one would be simple. This

is far from the truth. One must first determine exactly how much a specific portion of the body will hold of the two liquid Mercuries. The body will hold more of the two Mercuries than you would think possible. Yet you do not want to put all that it can hold into the body, or you will be awakened one night by a very loud explosion. In this respect, I advise you to invest in a lot of test tubes and to use the fire and water elements for your experiments. All things being equal, you will find the proper proportions with diligence and patience.

When you have found the proper proportions for your matter simply pour the Red Mercury onto the Philosophical Body followed by the White Mercury. Almost immediately you will feel an increase of heat on the bottom of the flask. Seal the flask hermetically and place it in a sand bath around body temperature. In a few hours you will see that the matter has swollen up considerably. Note: It is best to do this incubation in the dark; when carried out properly the matter can become somewhat luminous.



Here we see the matter about two hours after the conjunction. If you look closely you will see there is still liquid in the flask.



This shows the matter after one night of digestion. Notice how much the matter has swollen up. The sides of the matter have begun jutting up into mountains, and they are snow white. In the level middle of the matter, we see that a grayish shadow has formed. Around the side of the flask, we see a yellow colored liquid. The matter has a creamy appearance.



Two days into the process and there is still some yellow- colored liquid around the sides of the matter. The sides of the matter have risen even more. The entire mass has contracted. On the side of one of the edges, we see the appearance of

two small holes. The edges of the holes are darkened.



After about three days all the liquid had been drunk by the matter, though there was no color change in the matter. It would be almost two weeks before the appearance of color in the center and along the inside edges of the matter would appear. What also should be noticed about the difference of this picture is the topography of the matter. In this picture the creamy look of the edges is gone. It is replaced by what looks like miniature mountains and chimneys in the matter. All of this topographical action suggests movement underneath the surface of the matter, or a hidden life about to burst forth.

The old masters say that this period of the construction of the stone is one of rest for the alchemist. That, my friends, is far from the truth. While there is indeed no more physical labor, the mental labor one goes through is tortuous. One acts as if one is a new mother, constantly checking on there newborn child throughout the night. You must constantly watch the temperature if you do not want to kill the newborn babe. Also one constantly thinks that one should raise the temperature by just one degree or so. Surely, your mind tells you, if the absorption of the matter happened so quickly there should be some change in the appearance of the matter by now. You are constantly engaged in a mental war with yourself not to urge the fire to rashly. I tell you the first two weeks of conception are truly agonizing.



Three weeks into the process and the matter has not changed perceptibly, though the angle of the shot is different. With close observation, one can see that the chimneys on the surface have moved. The original chimneys have closed up, the new ones are almost closed.



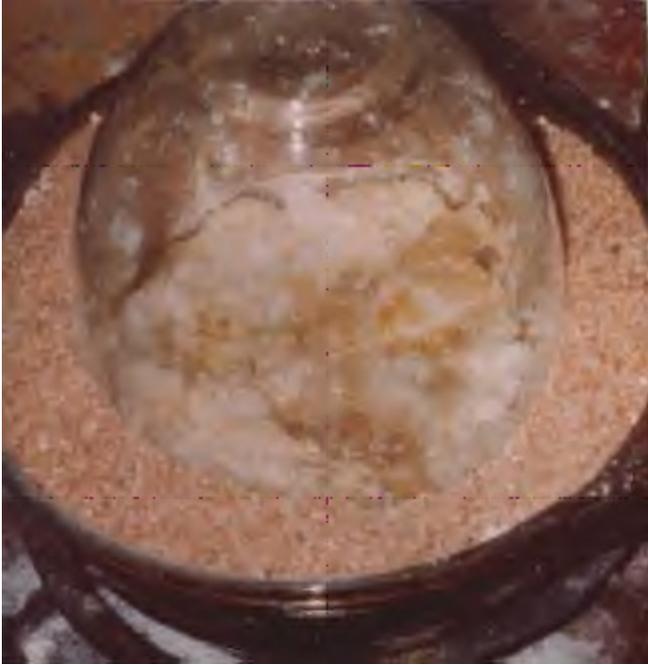
Four weeks have now passed since we first conjoined our essentials. The color change was moving so slowly that I began to doubt if I was really on the right track. The topography of the matter has really changed drastically. The chimneys have closed up and the matter has swelled even more. The entire concave

center of the matter has a tan to brown color about it. The front edges of the matter also look more crystalline. We are now slightly halfway into our putrefaction processes. Still the temperature must remain constant at where we have first set it.



At approximately four and a half to five weeks the matter begins to fall in on itself. Some matter was left on the sides of the flask when it pulled away from it. The color in the center of the matter has also gotten a shade or two darker.

[third part](#)



The darkness in the center of the matter seems to have compressed itself into bands. The top of the matter has a slimy, festering look about it.



Shows our matter about five and a half weeks into the process of putrefaction. Our matter has undergone a drastic change in its appearance. Notice now how the matter has sunken into itself. From the center radiating out to the edges is the appearance of a darker substance. It seems to be seeping up from the bottom of

the matter and oozing through the surface. There is no doubt now that our matter is putrefying, it looks definitely like a rotting substance.



Shows the matter three days after the top center had been taken. From now on the matter would make drastic changes in its appearance every two to three days until the end of the putrefaction cycle.



Shows the matter at six weeks and one day. There is a dark liquid beginning to well up from within the matter and submerge it. The matter is at this point drowning or bathing in its own blood. That part of the matter that can be seen through the subject's blood looks to be rough and stony.



At six weeks and three days we see a close-up of the matter. The picture needs no further explanation. The substance is definitely rotting.



At six weeks and six days the entire surface of the matter is covered with its blood. You can still see some detail of the matter in spots that have not gone completely black.



This is the final picture in the putrefaction series. Our matter has gone completely black and has sunken in on itself. The surface of the matter has a shiny tar-like appearance, from the congealing blood of the matter. Approximately seven weeks has now elapsed. By continuing to heat the matter a state of dry

blackness is achieved. It is only now that we can at last begin to raise the heat gingerly.

I would like to make a comment here about the next three pictures. The stones shown on this plate are not the same as the one shown in the putrefaction series. The stone forming in the putrefaction series was my sixth and last attempt at this process. I had then finally figured out how to use the sealed vase of Hermes. Unfortunately, the last half of the photos showing the color changes of the stone was lost by the photography developing lab. I was unable to redo the experiment because the space that I had been using for a laboratory was no longer available to me. To make matters worse, during an experiment with my last stone the crucible holding it broke and it flowed all over the floor of the kiln. Be that as it may, these next three photos, though crude, do show the color changes one can expect to see.



Shows the stone in the green stage. It takes about two to three weeks for this color to show itself.



Shows the stone in the white stage. At this time the stone been taken out of the kiln and ground fine. This was done to help the color changes take place more evenly. The color of the stone really at this point is slightly yellow. This is because it was taken out of the kiln too late to catch the pure white color.



Shows a completed stone. The old masters would call this a non-multiplied stone. Its color is a medium beige to light russet. The matter shown in this plate would have to go through at least two more revolutions of the processes to be

called a true stone and reach a true red color. By doing this the matter is changed drastically, it really does have a wax-like consistency. The amazing thing about this substance is that it will tinge plant salts in flux, immediately elevating them to perfection.

Conclusion

In writing this book I have fulfilled a promise made it seems an eternity ago. Divine Providence has seen fit to bless me with some measure of success in this art, though there is still though a long way to go. I am surely no adept at this science. All of it, of course, is not known to me; that small portion that is known is shared lovingly with you. For freely it was given and freely I shall give.

This subject has been presented as I understand it. If my explanation of the three essentials and the four elements seems amateurish then I must confess, an amateur has written it. If you feel the wording of the last two processes are a transparent attempt at coyness, then my plea is guilty. It was never my intention to be, or portray myself as a master in this art. I have only hoped to inspire others to take up the study of this subject.

The first time the process for the plant stone unfolded before my eyes to completion, I knew the stories of the alchemist were true. In truth if one thinks about this process they will see that nature is completely imitated, nothing at all is wasted. All things are simply broken down to their first matter and then reassembled by art to a higher form. Elevation or evolution of matter is the final aim of alchemy. It matters not a bit if one is working with plants, animals or minerals. Nature in her wisdom is simple and acts always the same.

We see in the small work an exact mirror of the great work. While this stone will not make gold it is a treasure nonetheless. One can see that it is indeed imperative to master the Minor Opus before you do the Magnum Opus.

When I wrote earlier in the book that gradually I was able to understand what the alchemists said, this was slightly misstated. I should have said, I felt what the alchemists meant. So much of this art is delivered to the alchemist through his soul. He feels intuitively what to do. Even if he has not gotten the nuts and bolts down of certain things, he KNOWS how to proceed. This is a hard thing to explain but it is true.

The author is very interested in corresponding with persons who are actively engaged in the study of the Hermetic art or are earnestly striving to learn it. He has designed a graduated course of study composed of the teachings of the Western Inner tradition, to aid the student in recognizing and then walking the Path of Return. Mr. Reid also prepares customized alchemic herbal extracts for individuals. He may be reached by writing to: P.O. Box 223, Pelham N.Y. 10803, USA

That which you have experienced,
And known within yourself,
Remains a belief, to everyone else.

THE SMARAGDINE TABLE OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS.

I speak not fiction, but what is certain and most true.

What is below is like that which is above, and what is above is like that which is below
for performing the miracle of one thing.

And as all things were produced from One by the Mediation of One, so all things are
produced from this One thing by adaptation.

Its father is the Sun, its mother was the Moon, the wind carried it in its belly, its nurse is
the Earth.

It is the cause of all perfection throughout the whole world.

Its power is perfect if it be changed into the earth.

Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross, gently, and with judgment.

It ascends from earth to heaven, and descends again to earth, thus you will possess the
glory of the whole World and all obscurity will fly away.

This thing is the fortitude of all fortitude, because it overcomes all subtle things, and
penetrates every solid thing. Thus were all things created.

Thence proceed wonderful adaptations which are produced in this way.

Therefore am I called Hermes Trismegistus, possessing the three parts of the philosophy
of the whole World.

What I had to say concerning the operation of the Sun is complete.

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