

WAITE, Arthur Edward (ed): *The Works of Thomas Vaughan (Eugenius Philalethes)* Kessinger Publishing Company (Originally published George Redway, London, 1888)

The European alchemical tradition has largely been associated with the activities and writings of continental alchemists. Yet the mining and smelting of metals has long been part of the English consciousness. This is graphically demonstrated in the elaborate suits of armour worn by the long lineages of knights who served their kings, queens and country over many centuries.

Metals have long been a source of fascination and engagement beyond the domains of the mine and the smith's forge. Subtle operations on metals and their salts have engaged the attention of such Englishmen as the Franciscan friar/chemist Roger Bacon during the 13th century, the preacher/chemist Thomas Vaughan during the 17th century and the osteopath/chemist Archibald Cockren during the early 20th century.

The writings of Thomas Vaughan show that he walked fully in the light from an early age. He was as illuminated a visionary as was his countryman the engraver/poet William Blake who also observed closely the changes wrought through the transformation of minerals and metals. In Blake's case, this was through the medium of copper plates bubbling and changing form under the influence of corrosive acids rather than through the circulation of alkahests in enclosed retorts. Yet each was similarly transported through the operations they performed.

Arthur Edward Waite has more an intellectual than an experiential interest in the matters that drove Vaughan's life and activities. Like Jung, he has not understood that the physical operations performed by alchemists were vehicles of actual transformation of consciousness rather than simply metaphors for essentially psychic processes. Nonetheless, Waite has performed a great service in making available the alchemical writings of Thomas Vaughan.

Thomas Vaughan is one of the few accessible English alchemists. His twin brother was the mystical poet, Henry Vaughan. They both graduated from Jesus College, Oxford around 1640 having received a strong education in the Western classical tradition. Thomas Vaughan went on to become a minister while yet a young man. Each was to make his mark on the contemporary scene.

Vaughan's classical education subtly infuses his alchemical writings. He has a deep understanding of Platonic philosophy and often brings his own immediate experience, mediated by insights derived from alchemical processes, to a critique of the Greek understanding. He seeks the mediating influence between the Ideal and the actual, and finds this in the luminous spirit that interpenetrates material reality and the phenomenal world. Though well-versed in Greek systems of logic, Vaughan had clearly transcended the rational and abided in what Jean Gebser has termed the arational, a realm of integral consciousness beyond rationality. In his writings, it is also clear that he was fully conversant with the major alchemical texts of his time.

Vaughan took on the pseudonym "Eugenius Philalethes" (lover of stones) in a number of his alchemical writings. He walked in the light from an early age, and gained much mystical insight from his alchemical work. "Aula Lucis" shows his perfect familiarity with the Work and the materials. His brief comment on "Saturnum vegetabile" shows that he knew intimately the nature of the Philosophical Mercury and its operations. Vaughan's writings reflect his profound immersion in luminous reality. He was skilled in the art of scrying the materials of the Work at every stage of their processing. His allusions to the empowerments experienced through the Work resonate strongly with the siddhi described in the third book of Patanjali's yoga aphorisms.

Thomas Vaughan tragically lost his wife in 1658 after only seven years of marriage. He persevered in his alchemical endeavors until he was accidentally killed by an explosion in his laboratory in 1665. He was 43 years old at the time of his death.

Among the remembered alchemists of his era, Thomas Vaughan possessed a deep knowledge of the transformative nature of alchemical operations. This transformation centered more on the activation and intensification of luminous energies than on the transmutation of base metals.

Vaughan courageously pursued experiences which brought him into direct contact with worlds that he could share with very few. He clearly identified with an historical quest and lived with an understanding that the meaning of his work would be more fully realized by those who, in future time, would continue within the tradition.

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Biographical Preface
by A. E Waite

Thomas and Henry Vaughan became famous respectively in the annals of two departments of literature, the first as a mystic and alchemist whose little books have long been sought eagerly and prized highly by students, the second as a beautiful, though very unequal, religious poet. With vocations sufficiently distinct, they yet belonged to one another in the spirit as well as in the blood, for after his own manner Thomas was also a poet, or at least a maker of pleasant verse, while Henry was drawn into occult paths as a translator and indeed otherwise, as a record of his repentance testifies.

p. viii

The date of his baccalaureat is February 18, 1640, and thereafter I find no particulars concerning him until he was ordained by Dr Mainwaring, Bishop of St Davids. He became in this manner the rector of his native parish [Llansaintffraid] and was at least in nominal possession till 1649, when he was ejected by a Parliamentary Commission, under an Act for the Propagation of the Gospel. The more immediate reason was unquestionably that, in common with his brother, he was an ardent Royalist. He had

also fought for the King, notwithstanding the fact of his ministry - where or under what circumstances we are never likely to know. p x

He was busy about many things. Chief among these were the publication of his first five tracts, in two small duodecimo volumes, in 1650, and his marriage to a lady named Rebecca - patronymic unknown - on September 28, 1651. In this year also he issued three further tracts and one other in 1652. His note-book tells us he lived with his wife "in those dear days" when "the gates opened" and he believed himself to have entered deeply into the realm of natural secrets. . . . On April 17, 1658, we learn by his own testimony that Rebecca Vaughan died, and was buried at Mappersall in Bedfordshire. It was the great grief of his life, as the private memorials show, and he was presumably henceforth alone, for there is no reason to think that a son was born to the marriage, as inferred by one writer.

Thomas Vaughan was now about thirty-six years of age and had not reached therefore the prime of life; but he disappears from the field of authorship, and all that we can glean concerning him is contained by a few lines in the biographical notice of Wood. He is said to have been under the protection and patronage of Sir Robert Murray, Secretary of State for Scotland in the days of the Commonwealth, but also a *persona grata* under the Restoration in those of Charles II. When the plague of 1665 drove the Court from London to Oxford Thomas Vaughan went thither with his patron, and a little later took up his residence with the Rector of Albury, the Rev. Sam. Kem, at whose house, on February 27 of that year, he was killed by an explosion in the course of chemical experiments. pp xi-xii

We know as much and as little about the passing of Thomas Vaughan as might be expected from his literary importance and repute at that period. His little books could have appealed to a few only, though it may be granted that occult philosophy was a minor fashion of the time. He was satirised by Samuel Butler in his *Character of an Hermetic Philosopher*, and - as some say - also in *Hudibras* itself. Among his contemporaries therefore he was not at least unknown. p xiii

It is certain that the books written under the name of Eugenius are not by the hand which wrote *The Open Entrance* and produced *Ripley Revived*. It is a question which lies wholly outside the issues of debate and it is for those who can see - meaning for those who possess the sense. It will be final for them, if they are at the pains to compare the texts, even as it is final for me. I conclude that Thomas Vaughan was not Eirenaeus Philalethes, whosoever the latter may have been, and that they have been merged one into another solely over a confusion of pseudonyms. p xxii

INTRODUCTION **by A.E. Waite**

We can remember only two intimations which occur in another place, amidst an almost inextricable confusion between cosmical speculations concerning the Soul of the world and those of the Soul in man. The first refers to "a certain Art by which a particular spirit may be united to the universal, and Nature by consequence may be strangely exalted and multiplied," . . . The second seems primarily an allusion to the

soul in man and its imprisonment in certain vehicles, through which streams "the light which is in her" under a visible form. In this state, says Vaughan, "it is first made subject to the artist." By analogy, however, such a soul is resident in all substances and can be educed from all. The way of eduction, as usual, is not indicated, so the process is again unintelligible. p xxxiii

Most alchemists were content with the thesis that human bodies could be kept in health by the medicine; they were not brought into an imperishable condition and they were not glorified. Vaughan, however, drew his notions more especially from the translations of Enoch and Elias; from the arch-natural condition which must be postulated concerning a body that could be taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire; from the body of Christ in its resurrection state and its ascent into the highest heaven; from the bodies of the redeemed, unto whom in their trans-corporeal state was reserved the glory of Paradise and all the consequence of the Blessed Vision of God, seen *ex hypothesi*, for theology, with eyes which are after all the transfigured eyes of flesh. p xxxiv

In spite of their claims respecting an universal medicine, we have no evidence before us that the technical adepts attained either the body of adeptship or any valid process for the prolongation of life. Paracelsus wrote much on this subject and died in his prime sadly. Vaughan was a physical sufferer, as his note-book shows, and moreover he desired to be dissolved that he might dwell with his wife in God. The inference is that the old masters of physical alchemy - and those who were like them in the long chain of Hermetic tradition - followed a Quixotic quest. p xxxv

Vaughan uses throughout the term Magic and its connections to signify the art and science which lay behind the Secret Tradition according to his hypothesis, and not in the vulgar sense which attaches thereto in these modern days - not in the sense of the Grimoires and debased Kabalism. In a word, his Magic is the old wisdom of adeptship and always connotes sanctity. p xli

Recipe Saturnum vegetabile ex Latio, vel ex Monticulis. Distille in cineribus, et separa aquam ab oleo. Oleum rectifica per se, et extrahe odores et quintessentias ex aromatibus et floribus quibuscunque. p xli

Those who have checked my citations by reference to the tracts themselves will see that his spiritual intimations are sometimes confused quite curiously - as I have said - with his cosmical reveries. An alleged process of separation performed upon natural bodies brings us to "the Secret Light of God," unveils "the Hidden Intelligence" and manifests "the Inexpressible Face." He pretends to pass from "the principles of our chaos," or First Matter, to the alleged use thereof, but begins immediately to speak of regeneration, the mystery of the Word made flesh and "the Rest of God into which the creature should enter." So also when he treats of the Medicine he says that it is Heaven itself and that it is the Divine Spirit which renders the body glorified. These are not physical operations. pp xliv-xlv

The preparation of this edition, which is to all intents and purposes that of his complete works, has meant a very close study of every sentence and a particular reconsideration of my earlier findings concerning him. I do not think that my position has altered in any important sense. I regarded him then as one for whom "the true

subject of philosophy is the man within," and as acquainted in one or another sense with "the mystery of a grace above all grace made known in the heart." But I may have thought in the first instance that he owed more to direct mystical experience than seems probable now in the general light of his record. Still, from time to time he must have stood upon the sacred threshold; and if readers with the right dedications, and with the help of such clues as I have given, will thread their way through his cryptic labyrinth, I believe that they will find him that which he desired to be - a finger-post indicating the true path to those undertaking the journey. p xlvi

ANTHROPOSOPHIA THEOMAGICA OR A DISCOURSE OF THE NATURE OF MAN AND HIS STATE AFTER DEATH

The Author to the Reader

It is an age of intellectual slaveries: if they meet anything extraordinary, they prune it commonly with distinctions or daub it with false glosses, till it looks like the traditions of Aristotle. His followers are so confident of his principles they seek not to understand what others speak but to make others speak what they understand. p 6

The Peripatetics look on God as they do on carpenters, who build with stone and timber, without any infusion of life. But the world - which is God's building - is full of spirit, quick and living. p 8

I intend not the conquest but the exercise of thy reason, not that thou shouldst swear allegiance to my dictates but compare my conclusions with Nature and examine their correspondence. . . It is an age wherein truth is near a miscarriage, and it is enough for me that I have appeared thus far for it in a day of necessity. p 9

The Text

No sooner had the Divine Light pierced the bosom of the matter but the idea or pattern of the whole material appeared in those primitive waters, like an image in a glass. By this pattern it was that the Holy Ghost framed and modelled the universal structure. This mystery or appearance of the idea is excellently manifested in the magical analysis of bodies. For he that knows how to imitate the proto-chemistry of the Spirit, by separation of the principles wherein the life is imprisoned, may see the impress of it experimentally in the outward natural vestments. But lest you should think this my invention and no practical truth I will give you another man's testimony. "I ask" - saith one - "what great philosophers would say if they saw the plant born as in a moment in the glass vial, with its colours as in life, if they saw it again die, again reborn, and this daily, whensoever they please? But the power to deceive human senses is included, I believe, in the magical art of demons." They are the words of Dr Marci in his *Defensio Idearum Operatricium* pp 16-17

We have astronomy here under our feet; the stars are resident with us and abundance of jewels and *pantauras*. She [the earth] is the nurse and receptacle of all things, for the superior natures engulf themselves into her; what she receives this age she

discovers to the next and like a faithful treasurer conceals no part of her account.

p 23

The thing to be spoken of now is air. This is no element but a certain miraculous hermaphrodite, the cement of two worlds and a medley of extremes. It is Nature's commonplace, her index, where you may find all that ever she did or intends to do. This is the world's panegyric; the excursions of both globes meet here; and I may call it the *rendezvous*. In this are innumerable magical forms of men and beasts, fish and fowl, trees, herbs and all creeping things. This is "the sea of invisible things"; for all the conceptions "in the bosom of the higher Nature" wrap themselves in this tiffany before they embark in the shell. It retains the species of all things whatsoever and is the immediate receptacle of spirits after dissolution, whence they pass to a superior limbus. I should amaze the reader if I did relate the several offices of this body, but it is the magician's back door and none but friends come in at it. pp 24-25

You see now - if you be not men of most dense head - how man fell, and by consequence you may guess by what means he is to rise. He must be united to the Divine Light, from whence by disobedience he was separated. A flash or tincture of this must come or he can no more discern things spiritually than he can distinguish colours naturally without the light of the sun. This light descends and is united to him by the same means as his soul was at first. I speak not here of the symbolical, exterior descent from the prototypical planets to the created spheres and thence into "the night of the body"; but I speak of that most secret and silent lapse of the spirit "through the degrees of natural forms"; and this is a mystery not easily apprehended. It is a Kabalistic maxim that "no spiritual being descending here below can operate without a garment." Consider well of it with yourselves, and take heed you wander not in the circumference. The soul of man, whiles she is in the body, is like a candle shut up in a dark lanthorn, or a fire that is almost stifled for want of air. Spirits - say the Platonics - when they are "in their own country" are like the inhabitants of green fields who live perpetually amongst flowers, in a spicy, odorous air; but here below, "in the circle of generation," they mourn because of darkness and solitude, like people locked up in a pest-house. "Here do they fear, desire and grieve," &c. This is to make the soul subject to so many passions, to such a Proteus of humours. Now she flourishes, now she withers - now a smile, now a tear; and when she hath played out her stock, then comes a repetition of the same fancies, till at last she cries out with Seneca: "How long this self-same round?" pp 46-47

She [the soul] hath then an absolute power in miraculous and more than natural transmutations. She can in an instant transfer her own vessel from one place to another. She can - by an union with universal force - infuse and communicate her thoughts to the absent, be the distance never so great. Neither is there anything under the sun but she may know it, and - remaining only in one place - she can acquaint herself with the actions of all places whatsoever. p 48

We should therefore pray continually that God would open our eyes, whereby we might see to employ that talent which He hath bestowed upon us but lies buried now in the ground and doth not fructify at all. He it is to Whom we must be united by "an essential contact," and then we shall know all things "shewn forth openly by clear vision in the Divine Light." This influx from Him is the true, proper efficient of our

regeneration, that *sperma* of St John, the seed of God which remains in us. If this be once obtained we need not serve under Aristotle or Galen, nor trouble ourselves with foolish *utrams* and *ergos*, for His unction will instruct us in all things. . .

The doctrine of the schoolmen, which in a manner makes God and Nature contraries, hath so weakened our confidence towards Heaven that we look upon all receptions from thence as impossibilities. But if things were well weighed and this cloud of tradition removed we should quickly find that God is more ready to give than we are to receive. p 49

Death is "a recession of life into the hiddenness" - not the annihilation of any one particle but a retreat of hidden natures to the same state they were in before they were manifested. In this recess the several ingredients of man return to those several elements from whence they came at first in their access to a compound. For to think that God creates anything *ex nihilo* in the work of generation is a pure metaphysical whimsey. Thus the earthly parts - as we see by experience - return to the earth, the celestial to a superior heavenly limbus and the spirit to God that gave it. p 52

ANIMA MAGICA ABSCONDITA OR A DISCOURSE OF THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF NATURE

It is the fortune of deep writers to miscarry because of obscurity. p 66

I pity our customary follies that we bind ourselves over to a prenticeship of expense and study, only to compass a few superficial truths which every ploughman knows without book. p 75

Away then with this Peripatetical Philosophy, this vain babbling, as St Paul justly styles it, for sure enough he had some experience of it at Athens in his dispute about the resurrection. p. 75

But to go further with these Peripatetics: their philosophy is a kind of physiognomy. They will judge of inward principles - forms, as they call them - which are shut up in the closet of the matter, and all this in perusing the outside or crust of Nature. 'Twere a foolish presumption if a lapidary should undertake to state the value or lustre of a jewel that is locked up before he opens the cabinet. I advise them therefore to use their hands, not their fancies, and to change their abstractions into extractions; for verily as long as they lick the shell in this fashion and pierce not experimentally into the centre of things they can do no otherwise than they have done. They cannot know things substantially but only describe them by their outward effects and motions, which are subject and obvious to every common eye. Let them consider therefore that there is in Nature a certain spirit which applies himself to the matter and actuates in every generation. That there is also a passive intrinsical principle where he is more immediately resident than in the rest, and by mediation of which he communicates with the more gross, material parts. For there is in Nature a certain chain or subordinate propinquity of complexions between visibles and invisibles; and this is it by which the superior, spiritual essences descend and converse here below with the matter. But have a care lest you misconceive me. I speak not in this place of the Divine Spirit, but I speak of a certain Art by which a

particular spirit may be united to the universal, and Nature by consequence may be strangely exalted and multiplied. pp 76-77

To be plain then, this principle is the Soul of the World, or the Universal Spirit of Nature. This Soul is retained in the matter by certain other proportionate natures and missing a vent doth organise the mass. She labours what she can to resume her former liberty, frames for herself a habitation here in the centre, puts her prison into some good order and brancheth into the several members, that she may have more room to act and employ her faculties. But you are to observe that in every frame there are three leading principles. The first is this Soul, whereof we have spoken something already. The second is that which we have called the Spirit of the World, and this Spirit is "the medium whereby the Soul is diffused through and moves its body." The third is a certain oleous, ethereal water. This is the Menstruum or Matrix of the world, for in it all things are framed and preserved. The Soul is a compound "of a most subtle ether and most simple light." Hence that admirable Platonical poet styled it "fire of pure ether." pp 78-79

The Soul being thus confined and imprisoned by lawful magic in this liquid crystal, the light which is in her streams through the water, and then it is "light made openly visible to the eye," in which state it is first made subject to the artist. pp 79-80

Trust not those impostors then who tell you of tingeing Sulphur and I know not what fables, who pin also that new and narrow name of *Chemia* on a science both ancient and infinite. It is the light only that can be truly multiplied, for this ascends to and descends from the first fountain of multiplication and generation. This light applied to any body whatsoever exalts and perfects it after its own kind: if to animals, it exalts animals; if to vegetables, vegetables; if to minerals, it refines minerals and translates them from the worst to the best condition. p 95

Two things there are which every good Christian may and ought to look after - the true and the necessary. Truth is the arcanum, the mystery and essence of all things; for every secret is truth and every substantial truth is a secret. I speak not here of outward, historical truths - which are but relatives to actions - but I speak of an inward, essential truth, which is light: for light is the truth, and it discovers falsehood, which is darkness. By this truth all that which is necessary may be compassed, but never without it. p 96

To instruct thee then: this mystery is perfected when the light, in a sudden coruscation, strikes from the centre to the circumference and the Divine Spirit hath so swallowed up the body that it is "a glorified body, splendid as the sun and moon." In this rotation it doth pass - and no sooner - from the natural to the supernatural state, for it is no more fed with visibles but with invisibles, and the eye of the Creator is perpetually upon it. After this the material parts are never more to be seen, "and this is that stainless and oft-celebrated Invisibility of the Magi." Verily this is the way that the prophets and apostles went; this is the true, primitive Divinity, not that clamorous sophistry of the schools. I know the world will be ready to boy me out of countenance for this, because my years are few and green. I want their two crutches, the pretended modern sanctity and that solemnity of the beard which makes up a doctor. But, Reader, let me advise thee: if by what is here written thou attainest to any knowledge

in this point - which I hold impossible without a divine assistance - let me advise thee, I say, not to attempt anything rashly; for Agrippa tells me: "Whosoever doth approach unpurified calls down judgment on himself and is given over to the devouring of the evil spirit" . . . I will give thee the best counsel that can be given, and that out of a poet: *Demand a healthy mind in healthful frame.*

Thou must prepare thyself till thou art conformable to Him Whom thou wouldst entertain, and that in every respect. Thou hast three that are to receive and there are three accordingly that give. Fit thy roof to thy God in what thou canst, and in what thou canst not He will help thee. When thou hast thus set thy house in order, do not think thy Guest will come without invitation. Thou must tire Him out with pious importunities:

*Perpetual knockings at His door,
Tears sullyng His transparent rooms,
Sighs upon sighs: weep more and more -
He comes.*

This is the way thou must walk in, which if thou dost thou shalt perceive a sudden illustration, "and there shall then abide in thee fire with light, wind with fire, power with wind, knowledge with power, and with knowledge an integrity of sober mind." This is the chain that qualifies a magician. For saith Agrippa: "To make search into things future and things at hand, or into other hidden things, and those which are foreshewn to men divinely, and into true significations, as also to perform works exceeding the common course of the powers of Nature, is not possible apart from a profound and perfect doctrine, an uncorrupted life and faith, and is not to be performed by light-minded or uninstructed men." And in another place: "No man can give that which he himself hath not. But no man hath save he who having suspended the elementary forces, having overcome Nature, having compelled heaven, having reached the angels, hath ascended to the Archetype itself, as coadjutor whereof he can accomplish all things." This is the place where if thou canst but once ascend and then descend,

*Then oft the archetypal world attain
And oft recur thereto and, face to face,
Unhinder'd gaze upon the Father's grace*

then, I say, thou hast got that spirit "which without offence to God, apart from any crime and without injury to religion, can discern and perform whatsoever portentous astrologers, monstrous magicians, invidious alchemistical torturers of Nature and venomous necromancers - more evil than demons - dare to promise."

Such is the power he shall receive who from the clamorous tumults of this world ascends to the Supernatural Still Voice. pp 110-112

Thou must - as Agrippa saith - "live to God and the angels," reject all things which are "contrary to Heaven"; otherwise thou canst have no communion with superiors. Lastly, "be single, not solitary." Avoid the multitude - as well of passions as persons. Now for authors: I wish thee to trust no moderns but Michael Sendivogius and that

author of *Physica Restituta*, especially his first aphoristical part. The rest whom I have seen suggest inventions of their own, such as may pass with the whimsies of Descartes or Bovillus his Mathematical Roses.

To conclude, I would have thee know that every day is a year contracted, that every year is a day extended. Anticipate the year in the day and lose not the day in the year. Make use of indeterminate agents till thou canst find a determinate one. The many may wish well but one only loves. Circumferences spread out but centres contract: so superiors dissolve and inferiors coagulate. Stand not long in the sun nor long in the shade. Where extremes meet, there look for complexions.

Learn from thy errors to be infallible, from thy misfortunes to be constant. There is nothing stronger than perseverance, for it ends in miracles. I could tell thee more, but that were to puzzle thee. Learn this first, and thou mayst teach me last. pp 117-118

MAGIA ADAMICA OR THE ANTIQUITY OF MAGIC

If once we be admitted to this Communion of Light we shall be able, with the apostle, to give a reason for our faith, but never without it. Now you are to understand that God unfolds not Himself "unless the heaven of man be first unfolded." "Cast off the veil that is before your faces," and you shall be no more blind. God is not God afar off but God at hand. "Behold" - saith He - "I stand at the door and knock." Open yourselves then, for it is written: "If any man opens, I will come in and sup with him." This is the inward mystical, not the outward, typical supper; and this is the spiritual baptism with fire, not that elemental one with water. pp 134-135

If thou wilt question me who these magicians were, I must tell thee they were kings, they were priests, they were prophets, men that were acquainted with the substantial, spiritual mysteries of religion and did deal or dispense the outward, typical part of it to the people. Here then we may see how magic came to be out of request: for the lawyers and common divines who knew not these secrets, perusing the ceremonial, superstitious trash of some scribblers who pretended to magic, prescribed against the art itself as impious and antichristian, so that it was a capital sin to profess it and the punishment no less than death. In the interim those few who were masters of the science - observing the first monitories of it - buried all in a deep silence. But God, having suffered His truth to be obscured for a great time, did at last stir up some resolute and active spirits who - putting pen to paper - expelled this cloud and in some measure discovered the light. The leaders of this brave body were Cornelius Agrippa, Libanius Gallus, the philosopher Johannes Trithemius, Georgius Venetus, Johannes Reuchlin - called in the Greek Capnion - with several others in their several days. And after all these, as an usher to the train, Eugenius Philalethes. pp 136-137

The Kabbalists do not only attribute a guardian to Adam but to every one of the patriarchs, allowing them their presidents and tutors, both to assist and instruct them in their wearisome and worldly peregrinations - a doctrine in my opinion not more religious than necessary, how prodigious soever it may seem to some fantastic, insipid theologians. For certainly it is impossible for us to find out mysteries of ourselves:

we must either have the Spirit of God or the instruction of His ministers, whether they be men or angels. And thus we see out of the traditions and doctrines of the Jews how their Kabbalah and our magic came first into the world. p 147

Give me an art then that is a perfect, entire map of the creation, that can lead me directly to the knowledge of the true God, by which I can discover those universal, invisible essences which are subordinate to Him - an Art that is no way subject to evil and by which I can attain to all the secrets and mysteries in Nature. This is the Art wherein the physics of Adam and the patriarchs consisted, and that this Art was revealed to him I will undertake to demonstrate by Scriptures and the practice of his posterity. p 152

We have in these days many magical books extant, wherein the Art is discovered - both truly and plainly. We have also an infinite number of men who study those books, but after the endeavours of a long life not one in ten thousand understands them. Now, if we - with all these advantages - cannot attain to the secrets of Nature, shall we think those first fathers did, who had none of our libraries to assist them, nor any learned man upon earth to instruct them? Could they do that without means which we cannot do with means, and those too very considerable? The Peripatetics perhaps will tell me their syllogism is the engine that can perform all this. Let them then in *barbaro* or *baroco* demonstrate the First Matter of the Philosopher's Stone. But they will tell me there is no such thing. Behold, I tell them again - and assure them too on my salvation - there is; but in truth their logic will never find it out. p 158-159

I must now refer myself to Moses, who at his first acquaintance with God saw many transmutations - one in his own flesh, another of the rod in his hand, with a third promised and afterwards performed upon water. It is written of him that he was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians; but for my part I do much question what kind of learning that was, the Scripture assuring me - and that by the pen of Moses - their wonders were effected by enchantments. This is certain: their learning was ancient, for I find magicians in Egypt four hundred and thirty years and upwards before Jamnes and Jambres. This is confirmed by Pharaoh's dream, which his own sorcerers and wizards could not interpret, but Joseph alone expounded it. Verily it cannot be denied but some branches of this art, though extremely corrupted, were dispersed among all nations by tradition from the first man, and this appears by more testimonies than one. For in the land of Canaan, before ever Israel possessed it, Debir - which Athniel the son of Kenaz conquered - was an university, at least had in it a famous library, wherefore the Jews called it *Kiriath-Sepharim*. I might speak in this place of the universality of religion, for never yet was there a people but had some confused notion of a Deity, though accompanied with lamentable ceremonies and superstitions. Besides, the religions of all nations have always pretended to powers extraordinary, even to the performance of miracles and the healing of all diseases, and this by some secret means, not known to the common man. And verily if we examine all religions, whether false or true, we shall not find one but it pretends to something that is mystical. pp 160-161

I shall now speak of his practice, and truly this is it which no distinction, nor any other logical quibble can waive. Nothing but experience can repel this argument; and thus it runs. And Moses "took the calf which they made, and burnt it in the fire, and

ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it." Certainly here was a strange kind of spice and an art as strange as the spice. This calf was pure gold, the Israelites having contributed their earrings to the fabric. Now would I gladly know by what means so solid and heavy a body as gold may be brought to such a light powder that it may be sprinkled on the face of the water and afterwards drunk up. I am sure here was *aurum potabile*, and Moses could never have brought the calf to this pass had he not ploughed with our heifer. But of this enough: if any man think he did it by common fire let him also do the like, and when he hath performed he may sell his powder to the apothecaries. pp 164-165

We know by experience that too much of anything weakens and destroys our nature; but if we live temperately and according to law we are well, because our course of life accords with Nature. Hence diet is a prime rule in physic, far better indeed than the pharmacopoeia; for those sluttish receipts do but oppress the stomach, being no fit fuel for a celestial fire. p 175

COELUM TERRAE OR THE MAGICIAN'S HEAVENLY CHAOS

He that would foil me must use such weapons as I do, for I have not fed my readers with straw, neither will I be confuted with stubble. p 191

Now then, you that would be what the ancient physicians were, "the health-giving hands of the gods," not quacks and salvos of the pipkin; you that would perform what you publicly profess and make your callings honest and conscionable: attend to the truth without spleen. Remember that prejudice is no religion and by consequence hath no reward. If this Art were damnable you might safely study it notwithstanding, for you have a precept to "prove all things" but to "hold fast that which is good." It is your duty not to be wanting to yourselves; and for my part - that I may be wanting to none - thus I begin. p 192

Think - if other vanities will give thee leave - on all those generations that went before thee and anticipate all those that shall come after thee. Where are those beauties the times past have produced and what will become of those that shall appear in future ages? They will all to the same dust; they have one common house; and there is no family so numerous as that of the grave. Do but look on the daily sports of Nature, her clouds and mists, the scene and pageantry of the air. Even these momentary things retreat to the closet of the earth. If the sun makes her dry she can drink as fast; what gets up in clouds comes down in water; the earth swallows up all and like that philosophical dragon eats her own tail. The wise poets saw this and in their mystical language called the earth Saturn, telling us withal she did feed on her own children. Verily, there is more truth in their stately verse than in Aristotle's dull prose, for he was a blind beast and malice made him so. p 198

Raymund Lully in his *Compendium of Alchemy* calls the principles of art magic "certain fugitive spirits condensed in the air, in the shape of divers monsters, beasts and men, which move like clouds hither and thither." p 199

This is true: as the air and all the volatile substances in it are restless, even so is it with the First Matter. The eye of man never saw her twice under one and the same shape; but as clouds driven by the wind are forced to this and that figure - but cannot possibly retain one constant form - so is she persecuted by the fire of Nature. For this fire and this water are like two lovers: they no sooner meet but presently they play and toy, and this game will not over till some new baby is generated. I have oftentimes admired their subtle perpetual motion, for at all times and in all places these two are busy, which occasioned that notable sentence of Trismegistus - that action was the life of God. p 200

This fine Virgin Water or chaos was the Second Nature from God Himself and - if I may say so - the child of the Blessed Trinity. What doctor then is he whose hands are fit to touch that subject upon which God Himself, when He works, lays His own Spirit? For verily so we read: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water." And can it be expected then that I should prostitute this mystery to all hands whatsoever, that I should proclaim it and cry it as they cry oysters? Verily these considerations, with some other which I will not for all the world put to paper, have made me almost displeas my dearest friends, to whom notwithstanding I owe a better satisfaction. Had it been my fortune barely to know this Matter, as most men do, I had perhaps been less careful of it; but I have been instructed in all the secret circumstances thereof, which few upon earth understand. I speak not for any ostentation, but I speak a truth which my conscience knows very well. Let me then, Reader, request thy patience, for I shall leave this discovery to God, Who - if it be His blessed will - can call unto thee and say: Here it is, and thus I work it. pp 214-215

Well fare the magicians, then, whose Art can demonstrate these things and put the very influences in our hands. Let it be thy study to know their Region of Light and to enter into the treasures thereof, for then thou mayst converse with spirits and understand the nature of invisible things. p 225

I advise my doctors therefore, both divines and physicians, not to be too rash in their censures, nor so magisterial in their discourse as I have known some professors of physic to be - who would correct and undervalue the rest of their brethren when in truth they themselves were most shamefully ignorant. It is not ten or twelve years' experience in drugs and sops can acquaint a man with the mysteries of God's creation. "Take this and make a world" - "Take I know not what and make a pill or clyster" - are different receipts. We should therefore consult without judgments before we venture our tongues and never speak but when we are sure we understand. p 231

If thou dost know the First Matter, know also for certain thou hast discovered the Sanctuary of Nature. There is nothing between thee and her treasures but the door. That indeed must be opened. Now if thy desire leads thee on to the practice, consider well with thyself what manner of man thou art and what it is that thou wouldst do: for it is no small matter. Thou hast resolved with thyself to be a co-operator with the Spirit of the living God and to minister to Him in His work of generation. Have a care therefore that thou dost not hinder His work. pp 232-233

**LUMEN DE LUMINE
OR A NEW MAGICAL LIGHT**

I have written nothing but what God hath verified before my eyes in particular and is able to justify before the world in general. I have known His secret light: His candle is my schoolmaster. I testify those things which I have seen under His very beams, in the bright circumference of His glory. p 241

Whiles we follow our own fancies and build on bottomless, unsettled imaginations we must needs wander and grope in the dark, like those that are blindfolded. On the contrary, if we lay the line to our thoughts and examine them by experience, we are in the way to be infallible, for we take hold of that rule which God hath proposed for our direction. In vain hath He made Nature if we dwell on our own conceptions and make no use of her principles. It were a happy necessity if our thoughts could not vary from her ways. But certainly for us to think that we can find truth by mere contemplation without experience is as great a madness as if a man should shut his eyes from the sun and then believe he can travel directly from London to grand Cairo by fancying himself in the right way, without the assistance of light. It is true that no man enters the Magical School but he wanders first in this region of chimaeras, for the inquiries which we make before we attain to experimental truths are most of them erroneous. Howsoever, we should be so rational and patient in our disquisitions as not imperiously to obtrude and force them upon the world before we are able to verify them. pp 265-266

This is the sense of our learned *Adeptus*, and for his analogy of the Philosophic Salt and a pumice-stone it cannot be well conceived without the light of experience. It is then a porous, hollow, froth-like, spongy salt. The consistency of it is pumice-like, and neither hard nor opaque. it is a thin, slippery, oily substance, in appearance like a mouth-glue but much more clear. Sometimes it looks like rosals and rubies. Sometimes it is violet blue, sometimes white as lilies and again more green than grass, but with a smaragdine transparency; and sometimes it looks like burnished gold and silver. The River of Pearl hath her name from it, for there it stands like the sperm of frogs in common water. Sometimes it will move, and swim to the face of his bath in thin leaves like wafers, but with a thousand miraculous colours. This is enough and too much, for I hold it not my duty to insist upon secrets which are so far from the reader's inquiry that I dare say they are beyond his expectation. p 288

Of all substances that come to our hands, the ether is the first that brings us news of another world and tells us we live in a corrupt place. Sendivogius calls it the urine of Saturn, and with this did he water his lunar and solar plants. "Out of my sea" - said the Jew - "do the clouds rise up which bear the blessed waters, and these irrigate the lands and bring forth herbs and flowers." In a word, this moisture is animated with a vegetable, blessed, divine fire, which made one describe the mystery thus: "Out of Nature is it made, and out of the Divine in like manner: it is truly Divine, because - conjoined with Divinity - it produces Divine substances." To conclude: the ether is to be found in the lower spring or fountain, namely, in that substance which the Arabians call "the flower of white salt." pp 292-293

This and many more miraculous sympathies proceed from the attractive nature of the Prester. It is a spirit that can do wonders; and now let us see if there be any possibility to come at him. Suppose then we should dilapidate or dis-compose some artificial building, stone by stone, there is no question but we should come at last to the earth whereupon it is founded. It is just so in magic: if we open any natural body and separate all the natural parts one from another we shall come at last to the Prester, which is the Candle and Secret Light of God. We shall know the Hidden Intelligence and see that Inexpressible Face which gives the outward figure to the body. This is the syllogism we should look after, for he that has once passed the Aquaster enters the fire-world and sees what is both invisible and incredible to the common man. p 299

He is "not far" - saith he - "from every one of us: for in Him we live, and move, and have our being." For the better understanding of this place I wish you to read Paracelsus his *Philosophia ad Athenienses*, a glorious, incomparable discourse: but you will shortly find it in English. Again, he that enters the centre shall know why all influx of fire descends - against the nature of fire - and comes from heaven downwards. He shall know also why the same fire, having found a body, ascends again toward heaven and grows upwards. p 300

The work is performed by an invisible artist, for there is a secret incubation of the Spirit of God upon Nature. You must only see that the outward heat fails not, but with the subject itself you have no more to do than the mother hath with the child that is in her womb. The two former principles perform all; the Spirit makes use of the water to purge and wash his body; and he will bring it at last to a celestial, immortal constitution. p 302

AULA LUCIS OR THE HOUSE OF LIGHT

To My Best and Noblest Friend,
Seleucus Abantiades

I can partly refer my inclinations to yourself; for the rest are beside your influence. I here present you with the fruits of them, that you may see my light hath water to play withal. Hence it is that I move in the sphere of generation and fall short of that test of Heraclitus: "Dry light is best soul." I need not expound this to you, for you are in the centre and see it. . . I dare not say here is revelation, nor can I boast with the prodigious artist you read of that I have lived three years "in the realm of light." It is enough that I have light, as the King of Persia had his Bride of the Sun; p 311

It is I, Sir, that read the tactics here to Hannibal and teach him to break rocks with *vinacre*. p 312

To the Present Readers

Understand me if you can, for I have told you an honest truth. I write books, as the old Roman planted trees, for the glory of God and the benefit of posterity. It is my design to make over my reputation to a better age, for in this I would not enjoy it,

because I know not any from whom I would receive it. And here you see how ambitious I am grown; but if you judge the humour amiss tell me not of it, lest I should laugh at you. I look indeed a step further than your lives, and if you think I may die before you I would have you know it is the way to go beyond you. p 313

The Text

I have resolved with myself to discourse of Light and to deliver it over to the hands of posterity, a practice certainly very ancient and first used by those who were first wise. It was used then for charity, not for pomp, the designs of those authors having nothing in them of glory but much of benefit. It was not their intention to brag that they themselves did see but to lead those who in some sense were blind and did not see. To effect this they proceeded not as some modern barbarians do - by clamorous, malicious disputes. A calm instruction was proposed and, that being once rejected was never afterwards urged, so different and remote a path from the schoolroom did they walk in; and verily they might well do it, for their principles being once resisted they could not inflict a greater punishment on their adversaries than to conceal them.

p 315

Whosoever thou art that in times to come shall cast thine eyes on this book, if thou art corrupted with the common philosophy, do not presently rage and take up the pen in defiance of what is here written. It may be thou hast studied thy three questions *pro forma* and a quick disputant thou art. But hast thou concocted the whole body of philosophy? Hast thou made Nature the only business of thy life? And hast thou arrived at last to an infallible experimental knowledge? If none of these things, upon what foundation dost thou build? It is mere quacking to oppose the dead and such perhaps as thy betters durst not attempt in time of life.

p 316

It is a better and more serious generation I would be serviceable unto, a generation that seeks Nature in the simplicity thereof and follows her not only with the tongue but with the hand. If thou art such then as this character speaks, let me advise thee not to despair. Give me leave also to affirm unto thee, and that on my soul, that the consequences and treasures of this art are such and so great that thy best and highest wishes are far short of them. Read then with diligence what I shall write, and to thy diligence add patience, to thy patience hope; for I tell thee neither fables nor follies.

pp 316-317

I must tell you it is not rain-water nor dew, but it is a subtle mineral moisture, a water so extremely thin and spiritual, with such a transcendent, incredible brightness, there is not in all Nature any liquor like it but itself. In plain terms, it is the middle substance of the wise men's Mercury, a water that is coaguable and may be hardened by a proper heat into stones and metals.

p 318

First of all then, you are to consider that Nature distills not beyond the body, as the chemist doth in the recipient. She draws the water up from the earth, and to the same earth doth she return it; and hence it is that she generates by circular and reasonable imbibitions. Secondly, you must observe that she prepares her moisture before she imbibes the body therewith, and that by a most admirable preparation.

p 319

Thy best course is to consider the way of Nature, for there it may be found, but not without reiterated, deep and searching meditations. If this attempt fails thee, thou must pray for it, not that I hold it an easy or a common thing to attain to revelations, for we have none in England; but God may discover it to thee by some ordinary and mere natural means. . . .

I tell thee that our preparation is a purgation. Yet do not we purge by common, ridiculous sublimations or the more foolish filtrations, but by a secret, tangible, natural fire; and he that knows this fire, and how to wash with it, knows the key of our Art, even our hidden Saturn, and the stupendous, infernal laboratory of Nature. Much more could I say concerning this fire and the properties thereof, it being one of the highest mysteries of the creation, a subject questionless wherein I might be voluminous, and all the way mysterious, for it relates to the greatest effects of magic, being the first male of Mercury and almost his mother. Consider then the generation of our Mercury and how he is made, for here lies the ground of all our secrets.

p 320

Beware of quicksilver, antimony and all the metals; and have nothing to do with aught that is extracted from metals. Beware of salts, vitriols and every minor mineral. Beware of animals and vegetables, and of everything that is particular, or takes place in the *classis* of any known species. The first matter is a miraculous substance, one of which you may affirm contraries without inconvenience. It is very weak and yet most strong; it is excessively soft and yet there is nothing so hard; it is one and all, spirit and body, fixed and volatile, male and female, visible and invisible. It is fire and burns not; it is water and wets not; it is earth that runs and air that stands still. In a word, it is Mercury, the laughter of fools and the wonder of the wise, nor hath God made anything that is like him.

pp 321-322

When he is purged from his accidents, he is water coloured with fire, deep to the sight and - as it were - swollen; and he hath something in him that resembles a commotion. In a vaporous heat he opens his belly and discovers an azure heaven tinged with a milky light. Within this heaven he hides a little sun, a most powerful red fire, sparkling like a carbuncle, which is the red gold of the wise men. These are the treasures of our sealed fountain, and though many desire them yet none enters here but he that knows the key, and withal how to use it. In the bottom of this well lies an old dragon, stretched along and fast asleep. Awake her if you can, and make her drink; for by this means she will recover her youth and be serviceable to you forever. In a word, separate the eagle from the green lion; then clip his wings, and you have performed a miracle.

pp 322-323

Our fire then is a natural fire; it is vapourous, subtle and piercing; it is that which works all in all, if we look on physical digestions; nor is there anything in the world that answers to the stomach and performs the effects thereof but this one thing. It is a substance of propriety solar and therefore sulphureous. It is prepared, as the philosophers tell us, from the old dragon, and in plain terms it is the fume of Mercury - not crude but cocted. This fume utterly destroys the first form of gold, introducing a second and more noble one. By Mercury I understand not quicksilver but Saturn philosophical, which devours the Moon and keeps her always in his belly. By gold I

mean our spermatic, green gold - not the adored lump, which is dead and ineffectual. It were well certainly for the students of this noble Art if they resolved on some general positions before they attempted the books of the philosophers. p 324

For my own part I advise no man to attempt this Art without a master, for though you know the Matter yet are you far short of the Medicine. This is a truth you may be confident of, and if you will not believe my text, take it upon Raymond Lully's experience. He knew the Matter, it being the first thing his master taught him. Then he practised upon it, in his own phrase, after many and multifarious modes, but all to no purpose. He had the Cabinet but not the Key. pp 326-327

Matter - as I have formerly intimated - is the house of light. Here he dwells and builds for himself, and, to speak truth, he takes up his lodging in sight of all the world. When he first enters it, it is a glorious, transparent room, a crystal castle, and he lives like a familiar in diamonds. He hath then the liberty to look out at the windows; his love is all in his sight: I mean that liquid Venus which lures him in; but this continues not very long. He is busy - as all lovers are - labours for a more close union, insinuates and conveys himself into the very substance of his love, so that his heat and action stir up her moist essences, by whose means he becomes an absolute prisoner. For at last the earth grows over him, out of the water, so that he is quite shut up in darkness; and this is the secret of the eternal God, which He hath been pleased to reveal to some of His servants, though mortal man was never worthy of it. . . .

This leprous earth - for such it is, if it be not purged - is the toad that eats up the eagle, or spirit, of which there is frequent mention in the philosopher's books. In this earth also have many of the wise men seated that tincture which we commonly call darkness. . . .

Now, the water hath no blackness at all but a majestic, large clarity. The earth likewise, in her own nature, is a glorious crystallised body, bright as the heavens. The air also excels both these in complexion, for he hath in him a most strange, inexpressible whiteness and serenity. As for the fire it is outwardly red and shining - like a jacinth - but inwardly in the spirit white as milk. pp 329-330

Let it be your study then - who would know all things - to seek out this secret water, which hath in itself all things. p 331

They that desire experimental knowledge may study it as a sure guide; but he that rests at his lips and puts not his philosophy into his hands needs not these instructions. p 335