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A N
EXPOSITION

Upon

Sir George Ripley's

E P I S T L E

To King *Edward IV.*

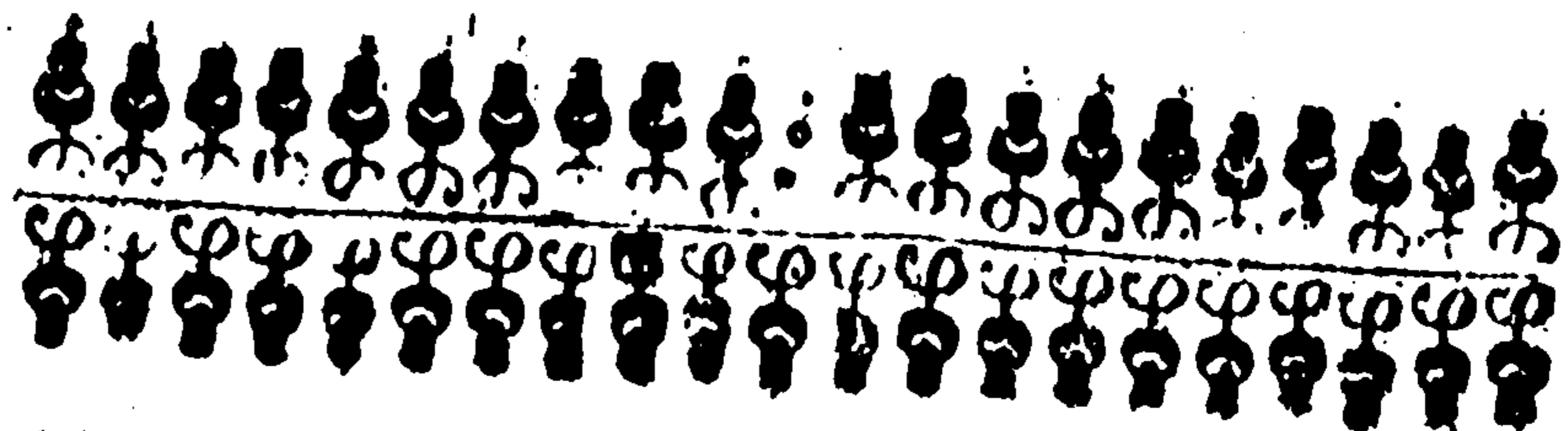
Written by

Eirenæus Philalethes Anglus,
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L O N D O N,

Printed for *William Cooper*, at the
Pellican in Little Britain, 1677.



Sir *G E O R G E R I P L E T S*

E P I S T L E

T O

King *Edward* the Fourth,

U N F O L D E D.



His Epistle as it was immediately written to a King, who was in his Generation, both wise and valiant; so it doth comprize the whole secret, both learnedly described, and yet artificially vailed. Yet as the Author testifieth, that in this Epistle he doth plainly untie the main knot; So I can, and do testifie with him, that there is nothing desirable for the
A 2
true

true attaining of this Mystery, both in the Theory and Practick of it, which is not in this short Epistle fully taught. This then I intend as a Key to all my former writings, and assure you on my faithful word, that I shall not speak one word doubtfully or Mystically, as I have in all my other writings, seeming to aver some things, which taken without a Figure, are utterly false, which we did only to conceal this Art. This Key therefore we intend not to make common; and shall intreat you to keep it secret to your self, and not to communicate it, except it be to a sure friend, who you are confident will not make it publick: And this request we make upon very good grounds, knowing that all our writings together, are nothing to this, by reason of the contradictions, which we have woven into them, which here is not done in the least measure. I shall therefore in this Epistle take up a new Method, and that different from the former, and shall first draw up the substance of the Philosophy couched in this Epistle, into several conclusions, and after elucidate the same.

The

The first Conclusion is drawn from the Ninth Stave of this Epistle, the eight first Staves being only complementall; and that is, That as all things are multiplied in their kind, so may be Metalls, which have in themselves a capacity of being transmuted, the imperfect into perfect.

The second Conclusion in the Tenth Stave is, That the main ground for the possibility of transmutation, is the possibility of reduction of all Metalls, and such Minerals as are of metallick principles, into their first Mercurial matter.

The third Conclusion is in the Eleventh Stave, that among so many Metaline and Mineral Sulphurs, and so many Mercuries there are but two Sulphurs that are related to our work, which Sulphurs have their Mercuries essentially united to them.

The fourth Conclusion from the same Stave is, That he who understands these two Sulphurs & Mercuries aright, shall find that the one is the most pure red Sulphur of Gold, which is Sulphur in manifesto, and Mercurius in occulto, and that other

A 3

is

4 *An Exposition upon*

is most pure white *Mercury*, which is indeed true *Quicksilver in manifesto*, and *Sulphur in occulto*, these are our two Principles.

The fifth Conclusion from the Twelfth Stave is, That if a mans Principles be true, and his Operations regular, his Event will be certain, which Event is no other then the true Mystery.

These Conclusions are but few in number, but of great weight or concernment; the Amplification, Illustration and Elucidation therefore of them, will make a son of Art truly glad.

STAVE IX.

Sir G. Ripley's Epistle. 3

STAVE IX. In the Edition 1591: but in Esq; *Ashmole's Theatrum* it is Stave 8.

*But notwithstanding for peril that may
befall,*

*If I dare not here plainly the knot unbind,
Yet in my writing I will not be so mysticall,
But that by study the true Knowledge you
may find*

*How that each thing is multiplied in its
kind,*

*And how the likeness of Bodies Metalline
be transmutable,*

*I will declare, that if you feel me in your
mind,*

*My writing you shall find true, and no fat-
ned Fable.*

FOR the First; Forasmuch as it is not for our purpose here to invite any to the Art, only intending to lead and guide the sons of Art; We shall not prove the possibility of *Alchymy*, by many Arguments, having done it abundantly in another Treatise. He then that will be incredulous, let him be incredulous;

lous; he that will cavil, let him cavil; But he whose mind is perswaded of the truth of this Art, and of its Dignity, let him attend to what is in the Illustration of these Five Conclusions discovered, and his heart shall certainly rejoyce. We shall therefore briefly Illustrate this 1st. Conclusion, and insist there more largely, where the secrets of the Art are most couched.

For this first, which concludes in effect the truth of the Art, and its validity; he that would therein be more satisfied in it, let him read the *Testimony of the Philosophers*: And he that will not believe the Testimony of so many men, being most of them men of renown in their own times, he will cavil also against all other Arguments.

We shall only hold to *Ripley's* Testimony in this our Key, who in the Fourth Stave, assures the King that at *Lovain* he first saw the greatest and most perfect secrets, namely, the two *Elixirs*; and in his following Verses, craved his confident credit, that he himself hath truly found the way of secret *Alchymy*, and promi-

seth

seth the discovery of it to the King, only upon condition of secrecy.

And in the Eighth Stave, though he protests never to write it by Pen, yet proffers the King at his pleasure, to shew him occularly the Red and White *Elixir*, and the working of them, which he promiseth will be done for easie costs in time. So then, he that will doubt the truth of this Art, must account this Famous Author for a most simple mad Sophister, to write and offer such things to his Prince, unless he were able in effect to do what he promised; from which imputation, his Writings, and also the History of him, of his Fame, Gravity, and Worth, will sufficiently clear him.

STAVE X.

An Exposition upon

STAVE X.

As the Philosopher in the Book of Meteors
doth write,
The likeness of Bodies Metalline be not
transmutable,
But after he added these words of more de-
light,
Without they be reduced to their beginning
materiabile,
Wherefore such Bodies which in Nature be
liquiable,
Mineral & Metalline may be Mercurizate,
Conceive you may this Science is not opi-
nionable,
But very true, by Raymond and others
determinate.

WE come to the second Conclusion; the substance of which is, that all Metals, and Bodies of Metalline Principles, may be reduced to their first Mercurial Matter; And this is the main and chief ground for the possibility of Transmutation. On this we must insist largely and fully, for (trust me) this is the very hinge on which our secrets hang.

First,

Sir G. Ripley's Epistle.

First, Then know that all Metals, and several Minerals have Mercury for their next matter, to which (for the most part, nay indeed always) there adheres, and is Con-coagulated an external Sulphur, which is not Metalline, but distinguishable from the internal Kernel of the Mercury.

This Sulphur is not wanting even in common Argent Vive, by the Mediation of which, it may be precipitated into the form of a drie Powder: Yea, and by a Liquor well known to us, (though nothing helping the Art of Transmutation) it may be so fixed, that it may endure all Fires, the Test and Coppel, and this without the addition of any thing to it, but the Liquor (by virtue wherein it is fixed) coming away intire, both in its Pondus and Virtue. This Sulphur in Gold and Silver is pure, in the other Metals less pure; Therefore in Gold and Silver it is fixed, in others it is fugitive; in all the Metals it is coagulated, in Mercury or Argent Vive, it is coagulable, in Gold, Silver and Mercury; this Sulphur is so strongly united, that the Antients did ever

ever judge *Sulphur* and *Mercury*, to be all one; but we by the help of a Liquor, the Invention of which in these parts of the world we owe to *Paracelsus*, (though among the *Moors* and *Arabians*, it hath been, and is (at this day) commonly known to the acuter sort of *Chymists*.) By this I say, we know that the *Sulphur* which is in *Mercury* coagulable, and in the *Metals* coagulated, is external to the Internal nature of *Mercury*, and may be separated in the form of a tincted Metallick Oyl, the remaining *Mercury* being then void of all *Sulphur*, save that which may be called its Inward or Central *Sulphur*, and is now incoagulable of itself, (though by our *Elixir* it is to be coagulated) but of itself, it can neither be fixt nor precipitated, nor sublimed, but remains un-altered in all corrosive waters, and in all digestions of heat. One way then of *Mercury* Azating all *Metals* and *Minerals*, is by the Liquor *Alchabest*, which out of all such Bodies as have *Mercury* in their Constitution, can separate a running *Argent Vive*, from which *Argent vive* all its *Sulphur* is then separated, save that

Sir G. Ripley's Epistle. • f i
 that only which is Internal and Central to the *Mercury*, which Internal *Sulphur* of *Mercury* no corrosive can touch: Next to this way of universal Reduction, there are also some other particular ways by which *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Antimony*, yea even *Venus* and *Mars* may be reduced into a running *Quick-silver*, by the help of Salts, which because (being corporeal) they pierce not so radically as the fore-named Liquor doth; they therefore do not spoil the *Mercury* of its *Sulphur*, but that as much *Sulphur* as there in is Common *Mercury*; so much also there in is this *Mercury* of the Bodies, only this *Mercury* hath specificated qualities according to the nature of the *Metal* or *Mineral*, from which it was extracted; and for that reason, (as to our work which is to dissolve perfect Species of *Metals*;) it hath no more virtue then common *Argent Vive*. There is than but one only humidity, which is applicable unto our Work, which certainly is neither of *Saturn* nor *Venus*, nor is drawn from any thing, which nature hath formed, but from a substance compounded by the Art of the Philosopher.
 So

So then, if a *Mercury* drawn from the Bodies, have not only the same deficiency of heat and superfluity of *feces* as Common *Mercury* hath, but also a distinct specified form, it must (by reason of this its form) be so much the farther remote from our *Mercury*, then common *Argent Vive* is.

Our Art therefore is to compound two Principles, (one in which the *Salt*, and another in which the *Sulphur* of Nature doth abound,) which are not yet perfect, nor yet totally imperfect, and (by consequence) may therefore (by our Art) be changed or exalted, which that (which is totally perfect) cannot be; and then by Common *Mercury* to extract not the *Pondus*, but the *Coelestial* virtue out of the compound; which virtue (being *Fermental*) begets in the common *Mercury* an Offspring more noble then it self, which is our true *Hermaphrodite*, which will congeal it self, and dissolve the Bodies: Observe but a grain of Corn, in which, scarce a discernable part is Sprout, and this Sprout, if it were out of the Grain, would die in a moment; the whole grain is sown, yet the
sprout

Sprout only produceth the Herb: So is it in our Body, the *Fermental Spirit* that is in it, is scarce a third part of the whole, the rest is of no value, yet all is joyned, (in the composition,) and the *feculent corporeous* parts of the Body comes away with the dregs of the *Mercury*. But beyond the example or similitude given of a grain of Corn, it may be observed that the hidden and spiritual virtue of this our Body, doth purge and purifie its Matrix of water, in which it is sown; that is, it makes it cast forth a great quantity of filthy earth, and a great deal of *Hydropical Saline* moisture. For instance, make thy washings (for a tryal) with pure and clean Fountain water; weigh first a Pint of the same water, and take the exact weight of it, then wash thy compound 8 or 10 Eagles (or times,) save all the *feces*, weigh thy Body and *Mercury* exactly, weigh thy *feces* being very dry, then Distil or Sublime all that will Sublime, a very little quick *Mercury* will ascend, then put the residue of the *feces* in a Crucible, set them on the Coals, and all the *feculency* of the *Mercury* will burn like a Coal, yet without

without fume; when that is all consumed, weigh the remaining *feces*, and thou shalt find them to be two thirds of thy Body, the other third being in the *Mercury*; weigh the *Mercury* which thou Sublimest, and the *Mercury* prepared by it self, and the weight of both will not recompence thy *Mercuries* weight by far: So then, boyl up thy water to a skin, in which thou madest thy Lotions, for that is a thick water; and in a cool place thou shalt have Crystals, which is the Salt of *Mercury* Crude, and no way fit for Medicines; Yet it is a content for the Artifts to see how the Heterogeneities of *Mercury* are discovered, which no Art save the Liquor of *Alchabest* can do, and that in a destructive, not a generative way as this is; for this operation of ours is made between Male and Female, within their own kind, between which there is a Ferment which effecteth that which no other thing in the world could do. In all truth I tell you, that if you should take our imperfect compound Body, *per se*, and *Mercury per se*, and Ferment them alone, though you might bring out of the one

a most pure *Sulphur*, and out of the other *Mercury of Mercury*, which is the Nut of *Mercury*; yet with these thou couldest effect nothing, for Fermental virtue is the wonder of the world, and it is by it, that water becomes Herbs, Trees, and Plants, Fruits, Flesh, Blood, Stones, Minerals, and every thing; seek then for it only, and rejoyce in it, as in a deservedly invaluable treasure: Now know, that Fermentation works or ferments not out of kind, neither do Salts Ferment Metals. Wilt thou then know whence it is that some fixt Alcalies do extract a *Mercury* out of *Minerals*, and out of the more imperfect Metals? Consider then, that in all these Bodies the *Sulphur* is not so radically mixt and united, as it is in Silver and Gold. Now *Sulphur* is of kin to divers *Alcalies*, that are extraordinarily dissolved or melted with it, and by this means the *Mercurial* parts are disjoyned, and the *Argent vive* is by fire separated. The *Mercury* thus separated, is spoiled of its *Sulphur*; when as indeed there needs, or is required only a depuration of the *Sulphur* by separating the impure from the pure; but

but these Salts having separated the *Sulphur*, do leave the *Mercury* worse; that is, more estranged from a Metallick nature than it was Before; for in its Composition that *Sulphur* of *Saturn* will not burn, for though it be Sublimed, Calcined, made Sugar or Vitrified, yet by Fire and Fluxes it still returns to the same it was in before; but its *Sulphur* being (as is aforesaid,) separated, will take fire if joyned with Salt-peter, even as common *Sulphur* doth, so that the Salts act on the *Sulphur* of which they rob the *Mercury*, but on the *Mercury* they act not for want of Ferment, which is not to be found, but only amongst Homogeneal things. Therefore the Ferment of Bread Leavens not a Stone, nor doth the Ferment of any Animal or Vegetable, Ferment a Metal or Mineral. So then, though out of Gold thou mightest obtain a *Mercury* by the help of the Liquor of the first *Ens* of Salt, yet that *Mercury* would never accomplish our work: whereas on the other side *Mercury* made out of Gold by our *Mercury*, though there be three parts of our *Mercury* to one of Gold:

This

This *Mercury* I say, will (by continual digestion) accomplish the whole work; marvel not then, that our *Mercury* is more powerful, which is prepared by *Mercury*: For certainly the Ferment, which cometh between the compound Body and the water, causeth a death and a regeneration; it doth that, which nothing in the world can do: Besides it severs from *Mercury* a terrestreity which burns like a coal, and an Hydropical humour melting in common water, but the residue is acuated by a Spirit of Life, which is our true embryonated *Sulphur* of our water, not visible, yet working visibly. We conclude then, that all operations for our *Mercury*, but by common *Mercury*, and our Body according to our Art, are erroneous, and will never produce our *Mysteric*, although they be otherwise, *Mercuries* never so wonderfully made. For as the Author of the *New light*, saith, *No Water in any Island of the Philosophers was wholsom, but that which was drawn out of the reigns of Sol and Luna.* Wilt thou know what that means, *Mercury* in its *pondus* and incombustibility is *Gold fugitive*,

B 2

tive, our Body in its purity is called the *Philosophers Luna*, being far more pure than the imperfect Metals, and its *Sulphur* also as pure as the *Sulphur of Sol*, not that it is indeed *Luna*, for it abides not in the fire. Now in the composition of these three; First, our common *Mercury*, and the two Principles of our compound there intercedes the Ferment of *Luna*, out of which though it be a Body, proceeds yet a specified odour: yea, and oft the *Pondus* of it is diminished: If the Compound be much washt; after it is sufficiently clean. So then, the Ferment of *Sol* and *Luna* intercedes in our composition, which Ferment begets an off-spring more noble than it self a thousand fold; whereas shouldst thou work on our compound body by a violent way of Salts, thou shouldst have the *Mercury*, by far less noble than the Body, the *Sulphur* of the Body being separated, and not exalted by such a progress.

STAVE XI.

STAVE XI.

In the said Book the Philosopher speaketh also,
Therein if it please Your Highness for to read,
Of divers Sulphurs, and especially of two,
And of two Mercuries joyned to them indeed,
Whereby he doth true understanders lead,
To the knowledge of the Principles which be only true,
Both Red, Moist, Pure, and White, as I have espied,
Which be nevertheless found but of very few.

WE now come to the Third Conclusion, which is, that among all Metal-line and Mineral *Sulphurs* there are only Two that belong to our Work; which Two have their *Mercuries* essentially united with them: This is the truth of our secrets, though we (to seduce the unwary) do seem to aver the contrary; for do not think that (because we do insinuate two ways, therefore) we really mean

B 3

as

as we say, for verily (as witnesseth Ripley,) There is no true Principle but one, nor have we but one matter, nor but one way of working upon that matter, nor but one regimen of heat, and one linear way of proceeding.

These two *Sulphurs* as they are Principles of our Work, they ought to be Homogeneal, for it is only Gold Spiritual that we seek; First White, then Red, which Gold is no other then that which the vulgar see, but they know not the hidden Spirit that is in it. This Principle wants nothing but composition, and this composition must be made with our other crude white *Sulphur*, which is nothing but *Mercury* vulgar, by frequent cohobation of it upon our Hermaphroditical body, so long till it become a fiery water.

Know therefore, that *Mercury* hath in it self a *Sulphur*, which being un-active, our Art is to multiply in it a living active *Sulphur*, which comes out of the loins of our Hermaphroditical body, whose Father is a Metal, and his Mother a Mineral; Take then the most beloved Daughter of *Saturn*, whose Arms are a Circle Au-

gent,

gent, and on it a *Sable Cross on a Black Field*, which is the signal note of the great world, espouse her to the most warlike God, who dwells in the house of *Aries*, and thou shalt find the Salt of Nature, with this Salt acuate thy water, as thou best knowest, and thou shalt have the Lunary bath in which the Sun will be amended.

And in all truth I assure thee, that although thou hadst our Body Mercurialized (without the addition of *Mercury*, or of the *Mercury* of any of the Metals) made *per se*, that is, without the addition of *Mercury*, it would not be in the least profitable unto thee, for it is our *Mercury* only, which hath a Celestial form and power, which it receives, not only, nor so much from the Compound Body or Principles, as from the Fermental virtue which proceeds from the composition of both the Body and the *Mercury*, by which is produced a wonderful Creature; So then let all thy care be to marry *Sulphur* with *Sulphur*, that is our *Mercury* which is impregnated, which *Sulphur* must be espoused with our *Sol*, then hast thou two

B 4

Sulphurs

Sulphurs married, and two *Mercuries* of one off-spring, whose Father is the Sun, and Moon the Mother.

The Fourth Conclusion makes all perfectly plain which hath been said before; namely, that these two *Sulphurs* are, the one most pure Red *Sulphur of Gold*, and the other of most pure clean White *Mercury*.

These are our two *Sulphurs*; the one appears a coagulated Body, & yet carries its *Mercury* in its belly: the other is in all its proportions true *Mercury*, yet very clean, and carries its *Sulphur* within its self, though hidden under the form and fluxibility of *Mercury*.

Sophisters are (here) in a Labyrinth, for because they are not acquainted with Metalline love, they work in things altogether heterogeneal; or if they work upon Metalline Bodies, they yet either joyn Males with Males, or else Females with Females, or else they work on each alone; or else they take Males which are charged with natural inabilities, and Females whose Matrix is vitiated. Thus by their own inconsideration they frustrate
their

their own hopes, and then cast the blame upon the Art, when as indeed it is only to be imputed to their own folly, in not understanding the Philosophers.

I know many pitiful Sophisters do dote on many Stones, Vegetable, Animal, and Mineral; and some to those add the fiery Angelical, Paradaical Stone, which they call a Wonder-working Essence; and because the mark they aim at is so great, the ways also by which they would attain their scope, they make also agreeable, that is a double way; One way they call *Via Humida*, the other they call *Via Sicca*, (to use their languages :) The latter way is the *Labyrinthian path*, which is fit only for the great ones of the earth to tread in; the other the *Dedalean Path*, an easie way of small cost for the poor of the world to enterprize.

But this I know, and can testifie, that there is but one way, and but only one *Regimen*, no more colours than ours; and what we say or write otherwise, is but to deceive the unwary: For if every thing in the world ought to have its proper causes, there cannot be any one end
which

which is produced from two wayes of working on distinct Principles.

Therefore we protest, and must again admonish the Reader, that (in our former writings) we have concealed much, by reason of the two ways we have insinuated, which we will briefly touch; There is one Work of ours, which is the *Play of Children, and the Work of Women*, and that is Decoction by the Fire; and we protest that the lowest degree of this our work, is, that the matter be stirred up, and may hourly circulate without fear of breaking of the Vessel, which for this reason ought to be very strong; but our lineal Decoction is an Internal Work, which advances every day & hour, and is distinct from that of outward heat, and therefore is both invisible and insensible. In this our work, our *Diana* is our body when it is mixed with the water, for then all is called the Moon; for *Laton* is whitened, and the Woman bears rule: our *Diana* hath a wood, for in the first days of the Stone, our Body after it is whitened grows vegetably. In this wood are at the last found two Doves; for about
the

the end of three weeks the Soul of the *Mercury* ascends with the Soul of the dissolved Gold; these are infolded in the everlasting Arms of *Venus*, for in this season the confections are all tinged with a pure green colour; These Doves are circulated seven times, for in seven is perfection, and they are left dead, for they then rise and move no more; our Body is then black like to a Crows Bill, for in this operation all is turned to Powder, blacker than the blackest. Such passages as these we do oftentimes use when we speak of the Preparation of our *Mercury*; and this we do to deceive the simple, and it is also for no other end that we confound our operations, speaking of one; when we ought to speak of another; For if this Art were but plainly set down, our operations would be contemptible even to the foolish. Therefore believe me in this, that because our works are truly natural, we therefore do take the liberty to confound the Philosophers work with that which is purely Natures work, that so we might keep the simple in ignorance concerning

cerning our true Vinegre, which being unknown, their labour is wholly lost.

Let me then (for a close) say only thus much; Take our Body which is Gold, and our *Mercury* which is seven times acuated by the marriage of it with our Hermaphroditical body which is a *Chaos*, and it is the splendor of the Soul of the God *Mars*, in the Earth and water of *Saturn*; mix these two in such a *Pondus* as Nature doth require: in this mixture you have our invisible Fires, for in the Water, or in the *Mercury* is an active *Sulphur* or Mineral Fire, and in the Gold a dead, passive, but yet actual *Sulphur*; Now when that *Sulphur* of the Gold is stirred up and quickned, there is made between the Fire of Nature which is in the Gold and the Fire against Nature, which is in the *Mercury*, a Fire partly of the one, and partly of the other, for it partakes of both; and by these two Fires thus united into one, is caused both Corruption (which is Humiliation) and Generation, (which is Glorification and Perfection.) Now know that God only governs this way of the Internal
Fire,

Fire, Man being ignorant of the progress thereof, only by his Reason beholding its operations, he is able to discern that it is hot; that is, that it doth perform the actions of heat, which is Decoction. In this Fire there is no Sublimation, for Sublimation is an Exaltation; But this Fire is such an Exaltation, that it is Perfection it self, and that beyond it is no progress.

All our Work then is only to multiply this Fire, that is, to circulate the Body, so long until the Virtue of the *Sulphur* be augmented. Again, this Fire is an invisible Spirit, and therefore not having Dimensions as neither above nor below, but every where in the Sphere of the activity of our Matter in the Vessel; So that though the material visible substance do sublime and ascend by the action of the Elemental heat, yet this Spiritual Virtue is always as well in that which subsides in the bottom, as in that which is in the upper part of the Vessel. For it is as the Soul in the Body of Man, which is every where at the same time, and yet bounded or terminated in none.

This

This is the Ground of one Sophism of ours, (*viz.*) when we say, that in this true Philosophical Fire there is no Sublimation; for the Fire is the Life, and the Life is a Soul, which is not at all subject to the dimensions of Bodies: Hence also it is, that the opening of the Glass, or cooling of the same during the time of Working, kills the Life or Fire that is in this secret *Sulphur*, and yet not one Grain of the matter is lost. The Elemental Fire then is that which any Child knows how to kindle and govern, but it is the Philosopher only that is able to discern the true inward Fire, for it is a wonderful thing which acts in the Body, yet is no part of the Body. Therefore the Fire is a Coelestial Virtue; it is uniformed; that is, it is always the same until the period of its Operation is come; and then being come to perfection, it acts no more, for every Agent, when the end of its action is come, then rests.

Remember then, that when we speak of our Fire which sublimes not, that thou do not mistake, and think that the moisture of the Compound which is within
the

the Glass, ought not to sublime, for that it must do uncessantly; but the Fire that sublimes not is the Metalline love, which is above, and below, and in all places alike. Now then for a close to all that hath been said, learn, and be well advised what matter you take in hand, for an evil Crow lays an evil Egg, as the Proverb hath it; Let thy Seed be pure, and thy Matrix also pure, then shalt thou see a Noble Off-spring: Let the Fire without be such, as in which our Confections may play to and fro uncessantly, and this (in a few days) will produce that which thou most longest for, the *Crows Bill*. Continue then thy Decoction, and in an hundred and thirty days thou shalt see the *White Dove*, and in ninety days more the *Sparkling Cherubim*.

STAVE XII.

*And these Two things be best, he addeth anon,
 For him that worketh the Alchymy to take:
 Our Gold and our Silver therewith to make
 all one,
 Wherefore I say, who will our Pearl and
 Ruby make,
 The said Principles look that he not forsake:
 For at the beginning, if the Principles be
 true;
 And if so be by craft he can them also take,
 In th'end truly his work he shall not rue.*

THus come we to the last Conclusion,
 which is, that if a Mans Operations
 be Regular, and his Principles true, his
 end will be certain, (*viz.*) the Mastery.

O Fools and Blind that do not consider
 how each thing in the world hath his
 proper Cause and Progress in Operation;
 Think you, if a Seaman should with a
 gallant Coach, intend to Sail to any place
 beyond Sea, he would not find his at-
 tempt

tempt to be foolish; Or if with a Ship
 gallantly furnished, he should Row at
 Random, he may not sooner stumble on
 an infortunate Rock, then arrive at the
 golden Coast: Such fools are they who
 seek our secret in trivial matters, and
 yet hope to find the Gold of Ophir.

*For the more exact Guiding of your Pra-
 ctice, take notice of these Twenty Rules
 following.*

Rule I.

Whatever any Sophister may suggest
 unto you, or you may read in any So-
 phistical Author; yet let none take you
 from this ground, (*viz.*) That as the end
 you look for is Gold: so let Gold be
 the subject on which you work, and
 none other.

Rule II.

Let none deceive you with telling
 you, that our Gold is not common, but
 Philosophical; for *common Gold* is dead,
 which is true: But as we order it, there
 is made a quickening of it, as a grain of
 Corn in the Earth is quickened.

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So then in our work, after six Weeks, *Gold* that was dead, becomes quick, living, and spermatical; and in our composition, it may be called *Our Gold*, because it is joyn'd with an Agent that will certainly quicken it: So a Condemned Man, is called a Dead Man, though at present living.

Rule III.

Besides *Gold*, which is the Body or Male, you must have another Sperm, which is the Spirit and Soul; or Female, and this is *Mercury*, in Flux and Form like to common *Argent Vive*, yet more clean and pure.

There are many, who instead of *Mercury*, will have strange Waters or Liquors, which they stile by the name of *Philosophical Mercury*; Be not deceived by them, for what a Man sows, that he must look to reap: If thou shalt sow thy Body in any Earth, but that which is Metalline and Homogeneal to it; thou shalt instead of a *Metalline Elixir*, reap an unprofitable *Calx*, which will be of no value.

Rule IV.

Rule IV.

Our *Mercury* is in substance one with common *Argent Vive*, but far different in Form; For it hath a Form Cœlestial, Fiery, and of excellent Virtue: and this is the Nature which it receives by our Artificial Preparation.

Rule V.

The whole Secret of our Preparation, is, that thou take that Mineral which is next of kin to *Gold*, and to *Mercury*; Impregnate this with Volatile *Gold*, which is found in the reins of *Mars*, with this purifie your *Mercury* until seaven times are past, then it is fitted for the Kings Bath.

Rule VI.

Yet know, that from seaven times to ten, the *Mercury* is made better and better, and is more active, being by each Preparation acuated by our true *Sulphur*; which if it exceed in number of Preparations, becomes too fiery; which instead of dissolving the Body, will Coagulate it self.

Rule VII.

This *Mercury* thus acuated, is after to be distilled in a Glass retort twice or thrice; and that for this reason, because some Atoms of the Body may be in it, which were insensibly left in the Preparation of the *Mercury*, afterwards it is to be cleansed well with Vinegar and *Sal-armo-niack*, then is it fit for the work.

Rule VIII.

Chuse your Gold for this work pure and clean from any mixture: if it be not so when you buy it, make it so by Purgation; then let it be made fine, either by Filing, Malleating, Calcining with Corrosives, or any other way, by which it may be made most subtile.

Rule IX.

Now come to your mixture, in which take of the aforesaid Body so chosen and prepared, one Ounce of *Mercury*, as is above taught animated, two Ounces or three at the most, mix them in a Marble which may be warmed so hot as water will heat it; grind both together till they be well incorporated, then wash the mixture

ture with Vinegar and Salt till it be very pure; And lastly, Dulcifie it with warm water, and dry it carefully.

Rule X.

Know now, that whatever we say out of Envy, our way is none other, and we protest, and will protest, that neither We, nor any of the Antients knew any other way; for it is impossible that our secret can be wrought by any other Principles, or any other disposition then this. Our Sophism lies only in the two kinds of Fire in our work: the Internal secret Fire, which is Gods Instrument, hath no qualities perceptible to man, of that Fire we speak often; and seem yet to speak of the External heat; and hence arise among the unwary many Errours. This is our Fire which is graduated, for the External heat, is almost linear all the work, to the white work, it is one without alteration, save that in the seven first days we keep the heat a little slack for certainty and security sake, which an experienced Philosopher need not do. But the Internal governing heat is insensibly.

sensibly graduated hourly, and by how much that is daily vigorated by the continuance of Decoction, the Colours are altered, and the Compound maturated: I have unfolded a main knot unto you, take heed of being insnared here again.

Rule XI.

Then you must provide a Glass Tun, in which you may perfect your work, without which you could never do any thing; Let it be either Oval or Spherical, so big in reference to your Compound, that it may hold about twelve times the quantity of it within its Sphere, let your Glass be thick and strong, clear, and free of flaws, with a neck about a Span or Foot long; In this Egg put your matter, sealing the neck carefully, without flaw, or crack, or hole, for the least vent will let out the subtile Spirit, and destroy the work.

You may know the exact Sealing of your Glass thus, when it is cold, put the neck where it is sealed, into your mouth, and suck strongly; if there be the least vent, you will draw out the Air, that is
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in the Vial, into your mouth, which when you take the Glass from your mouth, is again suckt into the Glass with a hissing, so that your ear may perceive the noise; this is an undoubted tryal.

Rule XII.

You must then provide your self with a Furnace, by wise men called an *Athamor*, in which you may accomplish your work; nor will any one serve in your first work; But such a one in which you may give a heat obscurely red at your pleasure, or lesser, and that in its highest degree of heat, it may endure twelve hours at the least.

This if you would obtain; Observe, First, that your nest be no bigger then to contain your dish with about an Inch vacancy at the side where the Vent-hole of your *Athamor*, is for the Fire to play.

Secondly, Let your Dish be no bigger then to hold one Glass with about an inch thickness of Ashes between the Glass and side, remembering the word of the Philosopher, One Glass, One Thing, One Furnace; for such a Dish standing with

the bottom level to the vent-hole, which in such a Furnace ought to be but one, about three Inches Diameter, sloping upwards, will with the stream of Flame, which is always playing to the top of the Vessel, and round about the bottom, be kept always in a glowing heat.

Thirdly, If your Dish be bigger, your Furnace vent must be within a third part, or a fourth as big as your Platter is Diameter, else it cannot be exactly, nor continually heated.

Fourthly, If your Tower be above six Inches square at the Fire-place, you are out of proportion, and can never do rightly as to the point of heat; For if you cause it (if above that proportion) to stream with flame, the heat will be too big: And if it stream not, it will not be big enough, or very hardly.

Fifthly, Let the top of your Furnace be closed to an hole which may but just serve for casting in of Coals about three Inches Diameter or Square, which will keep down the heat powerfully.

Rule XIII.

Rule XIII.

These things thus ordered, set in your Glass with your matter, and give Fire as Nature requires, easie, not too violent; beginning there where Nature left. Now know, that Nature hath left your Materials in the Mineral Kingdom; therefore though we take comparison from Vegetables and Animals; Yet you must understand a Parallel in the Kingdom, in which the Subject you would handle is placed: As for Instance, if I should Analogize, between the Generation of a Man, and the Vegetation of a Vegetable, you must not understand, as though the heat for one, were to be measured by the other; for we know, that in the ground Vegetables will grow, which is not without heat, which they in the Earth feel, even in the beginning of the Spring; yet would not an Egg be hatched in that heat, nor could a man feel any warmth, but rather to him a numbing cold.

Since then you know that your work appertains all to the Mineral Kingdom; you must know what heat is fit for Mineral Bodies, and may be called a gentle heat,

heat, and what violent; First, now consider, where Nature leaves you, not only in the Mineral Kingdom, but in it to work on Gold and *Mercury*, which are both incombustible: Yet *Mercury* being tender, will break all Vessels, if the Fire be over extreme; Therefore though it be incombustible, and so no Fire can hurt it, yet also it must be kept with the Male Sperm in one Glass, which if the Fire be too big, cannot be, and by consequence the work cannot be accomplished. So then from the degree of heat that will keep Lead or Tin constantly molten, and higher, so high as the Glass will endure without danger of breaking, is a temperate heat; and so you begin your degrees of heat according to the Kingdom in which Nature hath left you.

As then the highest degree of heat which the root of a Tree feels in the bowels of the Earth; is not by far comparable to the lowest degree of heat an Animal hath; So the highest degree of heat a Vegetable will endure without burning, is too low for the first degree of Mineral heat as to our Work.

*Rule**Rule XIV.*

Know, that all your progress in this Work is to ascend in *Bus & Nubi*, from the Moon up to the Sun; that is in *Nubibus*, or in *Clouds*: Therefore I charge thee to sublime in a continual vapour, that the Stone may take Air, and live.

Rule XV.

Nor is this enough, but for to attain our permanent Tincture, the water of our Lake must be boyled with the Ashes of *Hermes Tree*; I charge thee then to boyl night and day without ceasing, that in the troubles of the stormy Sea, the Heavenly Nature may ascend, and the Earthly descend.

For verily, if we did not Boyl, we would never name our work Decoction, but Digestion; For where the Spirits only Circulate silently, and the Compound below moves not by an Ebullition, that is only properly to be named Digestion.

Rule XVI.

Rule XVI.

Be not over haſty, expecting Harvest too ſoon, or the end ſoon after the beginning: For if thou be patiently ſupported, in the ſpace of fifty days at the fartheſt, thou ſhalt ſee the Crows Bill.

Many (ſaith the Philoſophers) do imagine our Solution to be an eaſie work; But how hard it is, they can only tell, who have tryed and made Experience: Seeſt thou not a Grain of Corn, ſow it, and after three days thou ſhalt only ſee it ſwell'd; which being dry'd, is the Corn it was before: Yet thou canſt not ſay it was not caſt into its due Matrix; for the Earth is its true place, but only it wanted its due time to Vegetate.

But things of an harder Kernel lie in the ground a far longer time, as Nuts and Plumb-ſtones, for each thing hath its ſeaſon; And this is a true ſign of a natural Operation, that it ſtays its ſeaſon, and is not Precipitate: Doſt think then, that Gold the moſt ſolid Body in the world? will change its Form in a ſhort time; Nay, thou muſt wait and wait un-

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til about the 40th. day utter blackneſs begins to appear; when thou ſeeſt that, then conclude thy Body is deſtroy'd, that is, made a living Soul, and thy Spirit is dead, that is Coagulated with the Body; But till this ſign of Blackneſs, both the Gold and the *Mercury* retain their Forms and Natures.

Rule XVII.

Beware that thy Fire go not out, no not for a moment, ſo as to let thy Matter be cold, for ſo Ruine of the Work will certainly follow.

By what has been ſaid, thou mayſt gather, that all our work is nothing elſe but an unceſſant boyling of thy Compound in the firſt degree of liquifying heat, which is found in the Metalline Kingdom, in which the Internal Vapours ſhall go round about thy matter, in which fume it ſhall both die, and be revived.

Rule XVIII.

Know, that when the White appears, which will be about the end of Five Months, that then the accompliſhment
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of the White Stone approacheth; Rejoyce then, for now the King hath overcome Death, and is rising in the East with great Glory.

Rule XIX.

Then continue your Fire until the Colours appear again, then at last you shall see the fair Vermillion, the Red Poppy; Glorifie God then, and be thankful.

Rule XX.

Lastly, you must boyl this Stone in the same water, in the same proportion, with the same Regimen, (only your Fire shall then be a little slacker) and so you shall increase Quantity and Goodness at your pleasure.

Now the only God the Father of light, bring you to see this Regeneration of the light, and make us to rejoyce with him for ever hereafter in light; Amen.

AN ADVERTISEMENT.

THis Author having wrote many Excellent Pieces on this Subject, not so much to manifest himself an Adept. (as many have done) as to benefit the World by his Writings, himself professing, that
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although the rest of his Adept Brethren had (as we may say enviously) *sworn secrecy* (contrary to their received Maxim of doing all the good they may with this large Talent so long as they live, and longer if it might be,) yet had not he so sworn, though they supposed it; for he had as himself confesseth, an extraordinary impulse of mind, *to be helpful to all sincere searchers of this secret Art*, (to use his own words) *and to stretch out his hand to such as are behind.* Seeing therefore, that it was the Authors own desire to benefit the World by his Labours, and that he gave his consent to Mr. *Starkey* for Printing his Pieces, as appears in his *Preface to the Marrow of Alchimy*; I know no reason wherefore his Writings should lie conceal'd any longer: And great pity it was that Mr. *Starkey* did separate this Author's *Commentarie upon Sir George Ripley's 12 Gates*, which he did as I was informed by one unto whom he gave the very Book from which he confessed he had cut the last Six Gates; the Person demanding the reason wherefore he cut them in sunder: he answered, that the
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World was unworthy of them; which nevertheless he promis'd to give that Person a Transcript of, but did not, which is the reason that they cannot yet be found; the loss of which is very much lamented. Wherefore if any Gentleman hath them by him, or any other piece of this Author, It is humbly desired that they will send them to the *Pelican in Little Britain, London*, that they may be Printed with the first *Six Gates*, which are now in the Press: And that I may not be wanting to contribute what I can for the discovery of this Author's Works, I here make bold to present the Reader with a Catalogue of such Pieces as are noted to be writ by this Author under the disguised name of *Eyreneus Philalethes*, part whereof are set down by Mr. *Starkey* in his Preface aforesaid, and part are mentioned by the Author himself, with several others, which he wrote (as he saith) for his own recreation, and afterwards burn'd; which Author is acknowledged by all hands to be an English-man, and an Adept & supposed to be yet living, and travelling, and about the age of 55 years, but his Name is not certainly known. *These*

These Books in this Catalogue were written by *Eyreneus Philalethes*, whereof these 15. following are Printed:

1. **I** *Ntroitus apertus ad oclusum Regis Palatium*, Amst. 1667. This is Re-printed in Germany, with the Collection of Books called *Museum Hermeticum* of the Edition 1677. in 4^o
2. — *Idem* in English, called *Secrets Reveald*, Printed at London 1669. in 8^o. being much more perfect than the Latine Editions.
3. *The Marrow of Alchymy*, in two Poems or Parts, in English Verse, Lond. 1654. & 1655.
4. *Ars Metallorum Metamorphoseos*, Amst. 1668.
5. *Brevis manuductio ad Rubinum Caelestem*, in 8^o. These are likewise
6. *Fons Chymicae Philosophiae*, in the aforesaid Edition of the *Museum Hermeticum*.
7. *Methodica Enarratio trium Gebri Medicinarum*,
8. *Vade-Mecum Philosophicum, sive breve manuductorium ad Campum Sophiae*, Lond. 1678. in 8^o.
9. *Experimenta de preparatione Mercurii Sophici*,
10. A Commentary or Exposition upon Sir G. Ripley's Epistle to Edw. IV. King of England, Lond. 1678. in 8^o.
11. — *Idem* upon Sir G. Ripley's Preface to his Compound of Alchymy,

12. — *Idem* upon the first six Gates
of his Compound of Alchymy,
13. — *Idem* upon the Recapitulation
of his Compound of Alchymy,
14. — *Idem* upon his Vision,
15. Experiments for the Preparation
of the *Sophick Mercury*,

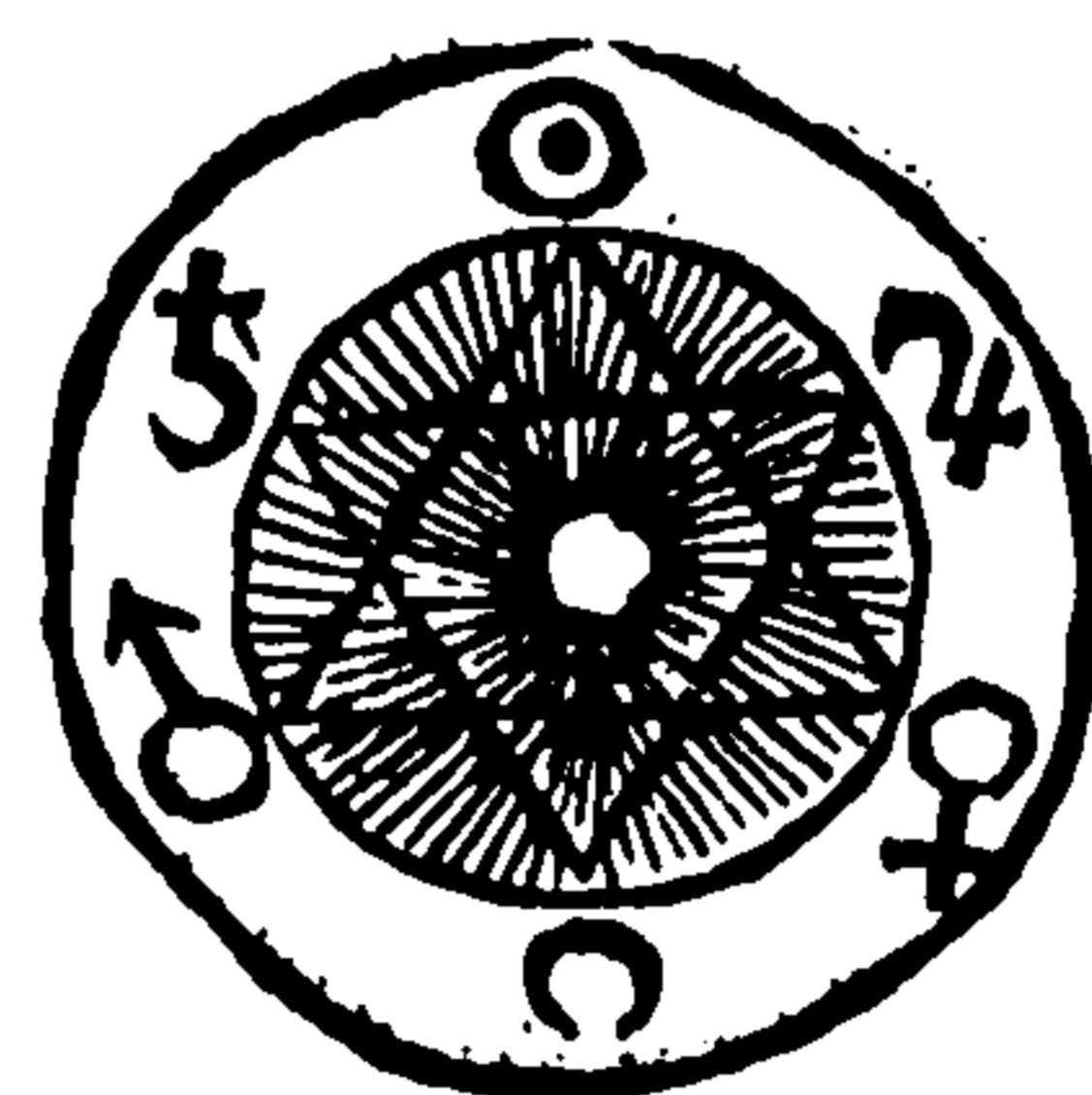
London
1678.
in 8^o

These 13. following he wrote, but we cannot
as yet find where the Copies are.

1. A Comment. or Exposition upon the last six
Gates of Sir G. Ripley's Compound of Al-
chymy.
2. — *Idem* upon Sir G. Ripley's Erroneous Ex-
periments.
3. — *Idem* upon Sir G. Ripley's Wheel.
4. — *Idem* upon Arnold's *Ultimum Testamentum*.
5. *Opus Elixeris Aurifici & Argentifici*.
6. *Brevis via ad vitam longam*, or Alchymy Tri-
umphing.
7. *Cabala Sapientum*, or an Exposition upon the
Hieroglyphicks of the *Magi*.
8. *Elenchus Errorum in Arte Chymica deviantium*.
9. *Elenchus Authorum potissimorum in Arte Chymica*.
10. An *Enchiridion* of Experiments, together
with a Diurnal of Meditations, in which were
many Philosophical Receipts, declaring the
whole Secret, with an *Ænigma* at the end.
11. *Analysis Operis*.
12. A *Clavis* to his Works.
13. Comments or Expositions upon *Flammus*,
Artephius, and *Sendivogius*. But these three
are rather Quæried, then affirmed to be wrote
by this Author.

AN
EXPOSITION
UPON
Sir GEORGE RIPLEY'S
PREFACE.

Written by
Æyrenæus Philalethes, ANGLUS,
COSMOPOLITA:



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