

SPAGYRICS

(A PRACTICAL COURSE IN PLANT ALCHEMY)

VOLUME 1 OF 2
LESSONS 1 - 24



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Dear Friend:

You will receive two lessons on Spagyrics each month which contain:

- A section on alchemical philosophy or of esoteric philosophy which concentrates primarily on the questions of esoteric structure and esoteric symbolism.
- A section on alchemical theory;
- A section on alchemical practice;
- Possibly, something about the vegetable work, aspects of the Qabala, or various other subjects pertaining to Alchemy.

When you study the lessons, we highly recommend that you follow the logical order of Philosophy, Theory and Practice. Dom Pernety inspired this threefold division; he claims that should you wish success on the Alchemical Path, you shall need the three following qualities: sound judgment, good theoretical knowledge, and a skilled hand. In the section of "Alchemical Theory" we intend to provide you with the necessary knowledge to achieve a sound judgment; its most obvious consequence will be liberated thinking which doesn't at all imply the idea of a free thinker.

The section of "Alchemical Theory" proposes two important goals. First, to provide the theoretical knowledge without which alchemical experimentation is impossible. As a matter of fact, never attempt an alchemical experiment if you don't know the objective, the procedure and the desired result: in Alchemy, there is no random experiment, nor an experiment made out of curiosity. The second goal we are after is penetration of hermetic books; these books were not written for beginners or the ignorant. As one becomes imbued with alchemical theory, the unintelligible language becomes clearer, then luminous.

Under the heading of "Practical Alchemy," we describe the essential laboratory techniques in detail, along with the necessary accompanying precautions. The first experiments are simple and we shall gradually go on to more complex experiments so the students who do not have previous knowledge or experience in a chemical or alchemical laboratory will get a chance at developing a "skilled hand."

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Obviously, in using this method, the same subjects will appear in the three different sections of the course, but they will be viewed from different angles. An advantage of these repetitions will be to make us sense, under seemingly divergent aspects at first, the unity of Knowledge and its resulting convergence.

We should point out right away that some elements in the course will seem to contradict this introductory lesson. For example, the philosophical and theoretical sections may concentrate more on the alchemical rather than the spagyric aspect, while the practical section will be devoted to the spagyric — or the vegetable aspect — for the theory is similar in all three realms. We choose the example in the realm where we feel it is the best known and the most explicit, or sometimes in the various realms so as to stress the unitary character of Nature.

The brevity of our texts may surprise you; but we act according to the Alchemical Tradition.

The adage says: "Read and reread." Therefore, do not hesitate to read the texts again and again and become imbued with them, thereby following the example set by some *chemical* operations through which persevering repetition brings about an *alchemical* result.

Another adage says one must rid matter of its superfluous terrestrial principles; therefore, we avoid literary dilution of information.

Nonetheless, you should know that each of our texts contains one or two previously undisclosed or little known — if known at all — principles or rules which are worth the effort of thought and deep meditation.

If passages, affirmations, or parts of experiments described in our lessons seem obscure to you, you may write us (*please give us your address, phone number, etc.*) and we shall be glad to help you. (Please, no more than 20 lines.) However, the answer often lies in one of the next lessons that you will receive during the following month. If you can wait that long, our work load will be reduced.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

What is Alchemy?

It seems appropriate to ponder on what Alchemy might be and how this pondering can lead us to spiritual progress. At this point, it is perhaps easier to describe what Alchemy is not, rather than what it is. From a material point of view, Alchemy is neither chemistry nor hyperchemistry, but a biodynamic process more closely related to fermentation or putrefaction than to classical chemical reactions. Alchemy leads to a profound knowledge of the fundamental mechanisms of Nature, yet is contrary to profane science which only considers

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the material aspect of these mechanisms. Alchemy considers the spiritual aspect as well which is generally invisible to the sensory perception of the operator. This aspect of alchemical study brings the operator to spiritual progress, to a higher level of consciousness. The duality of this method of spiritual advancement has a great advantage over other methods. Spiritual advancement "makes one high" but, in order to accomplish the work, the Alchemist must remain grounded. He becomes aware of higher realities while he keeps in mind the significance of physical manifestations.

Necessity of personal spiritual progress

As we shall see in the theoretical part, an Alchemist cannot be an atheist; he must be a spiritual being.

Whatever the nature of his belief, religion, and esoteric method or personal doctrine, it is important for him to start each working cycle, whether meditative or experimental, with an invocation and to close it with a prayer of thanks to God, the Cosmos, Unity, the Great Architect, the Divine or Spiritual Conception which he chooses in his heart.

The second item which should be well understood and which shall be discussed is the goal the Alchemist sets for himself: it must concern his *personal* spiritual growth only.

Thinking of far away metallic transmutations in the aim to help others is not an excuse nor is it an apology to the Infinite. The faculty of transmutation is the reward for personal spiritual growth, but gold would not help anybody in this world if the Infinite did not allow it. It is better to understand what Unity has in mind for you before you get involved in what is good for others.

We wish to warn you that the law of our country forbids individuals who do not belong to the medical profession to prescribe any product with the aim to cure or heal another individual.

Thus, do not consider producing elixirs to cure others. To avoid temptations in this matter, we do not give the means that would permit production of the elixirs — at least in the beginning. Their very manufacture is part of a knowledge of Nature and a means to spiritual development.

At first, one should seek personal spiritual development: if one doesn't possess a certain mastery, how could one imagine helping others? There is a sacred selfish principle which requires one to personally advance first before one thinks of helping others advance. However good our intention may be, if we do not follow this principle, we risk helping others to move backwards rather than forwards.

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ALCHEMICAL THEORY

Let's start with the differences between chemistry and Alchemy.

In chemistry, if you have the right ingredients and if operations are correctly performed, success will be achieved — independently of the operator.

In Alchemy, even if you have the right ingredients and if operations are properly conducted, success is not necessarily achieved because it depends upon the personal state of the operator. In a very restrictive sense, Alchemy could be viewed as the parapsychology of chemistry, for the success of the operation depends upon the inner spiritual state of the operator.

This statement is even more accurate as we progress into the hierarchy of alchemical works and operations. Therefore, for a rational outset, start with the simplest operations: **ATTEMPT THE MINOR WORK** before you approach the major work.

The second difference between chemistry and Alchemy is also very important. Chemistry doesn't view the bodies it works with as alive. As a matter of fact, the processes are such that chemistry only deals with dead bodies which, of course, can't evolve. Conversely, Alchemy is a biodynamic system which uses the forces of life in its operations. A threefold work is accomplished on bodies: the effects are purification, regeneration and evolution. The most powerful principles are found in the forces of fecundation and reproduction and from these they will be extracted in order to be used. But if this operation seems possible in the vegetable realm, the extraction of the metallic semen or sperm, known only by a few adepts, is considered a Utopian venture by most. The Alchemist or the skilled Artist can and must accomplish, through physical material, the manipulation of the divine, spiritual and invisible components which are, in beings and things, the genuine elements of life.

Another difference between the chemist and the Alchemist lies in the desired goal of each operation. To succeed, one must obey the laws of Nature, but the Alchemist must also, in his work, align himself with the designs of Nature.

It is obvious, in view of the last statement, that the vegetable realm is more easily perceivable than the metallic realm or the mineral realm, and that, in the vegetable domain, an experience of appreciation of the level of psychic development and of the levels of attained consciousness doesn't incur risk and may be an experience that bring about growth.

As a conclusion to this section, here are three adages related to alchemical and spagyric work:

- I accelerate the process of Nature by never stepping out of its rules.
- I remove the obstacles which prevent Nature from acting spontaneously.
- I strive to help Nature in the work of universal reintegration.

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ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

The next lesson will describe a simple and interesting experiment which will enable you to approach and attempt to understand some basic principles.

In order to perform this operation, you will need a few utensils and ingredients which are list below:

- 200 to 300 grams (7 to 10.5 oz.) of *dry* lemon balm (*melissa officinalis*). You can buy this herb at a drug store or health food store.
- A mortar and a pestle or equivalent so that you can reduce the plant to powder. A manual tool is a preferable choice as electric grinders are not appropriate for this work.
- About 300 cc of wine alcohol like cognac, armagnac, brandy or any other wine alcohol.
- Any alcohol which does not come from the wine is absolutely excluded from this experiment.
 - A glass funnel.
 - Some absorbent cotton as used in surgery.
 - A ceramic dish which can resist very high temperatures. This dish is going to be used for calcinations. Borosilicate glass like Pyrex is not resistant enough to stand such heat. On the other hand, Coors porcelain may be used. The lid can be made of something like Pyrex because at its top the temperature is lower.
 - One liter of distilled water.
 - A dropper, a water-resistant felt-tip pen.
 - A source of heat: gas heat is preferred over an electric heat because it permits better control of heat intensity. If one does not have a Bunsen burner a camping gas stove is adequate. Also a lab hot plate may be used if no gas is available.

When you are though with this experiment in several weeks, we would like to hear about the result, but do not mail any product to the organization. We prefer to talk about it during the following lessons.

NOTE:

There is no contradiction between the fact that in the theoretical part we affirm that the product used in Alchemy must be alive and that in the practical part we recommend that you use dry lemon balm to conduct your experiment. We shall explain this later. But note that dry seeds keep their germinating power; they contain the spark of life. On the other hand, from a purely practical point of view, you will notice that using dry plants facilitates the operations when you do not have large equipment and a specialized menstruum.

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Dear Friend:

We hope that your search for ingredients and materials has been successful, and that you are ready for the operation we propose to undertake today.

Before we proceed, it might be a good idea to briefly outline the general course of the lessons. As we mentioned already theory must precede the experimental work; but, on the other hand, personal experience shows that practice, the skilled hand, cannot be secured overnight. For instance, as amateur, we can learn the craft of drawing but the training of the hand requires time and practice. This is why we shall move onto the lab practice as quickly as possible. Balance the progression of the experiments with the studies to fully take advantage of the plan we offer.

In the section "Alchemical Philosophy", lessons #2, #3, #4 form a three-part approach which focuses on:

- The desirable state of mind.
- The nature of meditation in Alchemy.
- The concept of the Alchemical Temple and its separation into oratory and laboratory.

From these three fundamental points follows a study of elements very different in nature which are considered both useful and important for a good understanding of the experimental methods and of the nature of Knowledge.

We shall then tackle a synthesis of a text which the alchemist Von Bernus considers to be the Rosicrucian testament prior to the Rosicrucians withdrawal from the public eye. This text is extremely interesting as it complements Qabalistic writings which offer a structure of creation (from a Qabalistic point of view), whereas this document expounds its mechanism and function according to Alchemical concepts. In addition, we shall study a little known text written by another Alchemist which will be a practical complement to the preceding text.

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The "Alchemical Theory" section of the first four lessons focuses on the three Alchemical principles which are Sulfur, Mercury, and Salt. In the fourth lesson we give an outline of the theory and the role of the menstrum in the series of experiments we offer. Then we study the vegetable kingdom and the link between the vegetable realm and the esoteric aspect of our work. After you acquire some operative skill, we shall resume the study of the four elements.

After the preliminaries of our first experiment, alchemical practice will become the most important part of our course. Personal experience has taught us that many errors which cause loss of time and material can be avoided for the most part through warnings and specific instructions. To record in writing the experience gained by personal work is impossible. At this level, our course will cover the detailed explanations of all basic experiments in Spagyrics and alchemy. We shall do our best to clarify the differences between the chemical aspect and the alchemical aspect of processes which are used during the operations. We also provide charts which can form a valuable vade mecum (reference manual) when put together. Finally, we shall tap information from the important collection of documents of the time period of the Alchemy—chemistry separation and there we will find some data to help uncover the meaning of ancient books through the understanding of the Chymistry of that time period.

In the "Miscellaneous" section, we shall examine the alchemical aspects of the Kabala and traditional texts, as well as the basic rules necessary for the reading of alchemical symbolism.

Whenever possible we shall examine two different equipment setups: an easy, relatively expensive one and a more demanding set-up, but very economical. This choice comes from the fact that spagyrics and, at a higher level, Alchemy are self-initiated paths; the advance on these paths depends for the most part upon each one's esoteric attainments. Two phases can be considered: preparation and realization.

Realization often requires a rather long period of time regardless of the significance of the material. On the other hand, preparation can be considerably shortened by using sophisticated equipment. Anyway, each one must maintain a certain balance between inner development and experimental achievements.

It is up to each one, according to his conscience and humility, to choose at every moment the path which he thinks best for him to follow.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

In these first lessons, we only present general principles for two reasons. We believe that for equilibrium in a personal path, theory and practice must confirm each other. The lessons present first a light theoretical aspect so that we can start practical work without delay. We shall deepen the theory as the practical work progresses. On the other hand, we are convinced that a preliminary, rapid but broad overview is the basis of an alchemical

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perspective and constitutes a good foundation for a detailed study which specializes and focuses on specific points. In this way, we more quickly obtain a coherent and unitary view of the alchemical process.

As this second lesson marks the beginning of practical work, each of us should realize the significance of an appropriate state of mind for successful work. In the beginning, we cannot pretend to be an alchemist or philosopher but we must strive to attain the corresponding state of mind. As Alchemy is both spiritual and material it requires that some caution be taken in both domains. The material aspect will be the object of a study in the practical part of this lesson and in the philosophical part we shall touch upon the spiritual aspect several times. The alchemical concept says that repetitive work on matter "opens its pores". It actually means that matter (Salt for example) becomes easily receptive to its Sulfur, but can be irrevocably contaminated by an impurity. And it also means that the psychic sensitivity of matter can be increased. If the operator has a positive radiation, matter can be improved: conversely if the radiation is negative, matter will be adversely affected, also likely if an uninitiated person comes close and sees the matter.

Two Principles can be stated:

— Prior to any alchemical work, we must energize ourselves, "positivize" ourselves, all the more because our work requires that we refine, "acuer" matter.

— Our laboratory must be closed to the uninitiated and the matter removed from his (her) view and presence. This is also why the alchemical path is a solitary one, at the most for a couple or a family.

Our work is sometimes active, sometimes passive and our laboratory is also an oratory where the old saying "Ora et Labora!" applies (pray and work!).

We shall often return to another primary alchemical idea. All creation happens through duality, that is to say that the undifferentiated, original elements separate in two: a positive, active part and a passive, negative part. The positive part is always present and constantly tries to act on its own initiative; the negative part, because of its passive character does not act, but can represent an obstacle or prison to the active part.

Generally, man cannot activate the positive part. His role solely consists in freeing these positive forces which will then act by themselves.

We Hope that your experimental work will soon demonstrate to you the truth of this important principle.

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ALCHEMICAL THEORY

In order to understand each other it is necessary that the meaning attributed to words be constant and identical, in all cases. Yet, it is not the case in Alchemy. In our science the meaning of words often has nothing to do with the meaning usually given to them. Thus, the three principles Sulfur, Mercury, and Salt have nothing in common with what is generally understood by those words.

According to the alchemical theory, all things and all beings possess a Sulfur, a Mercury and a Salt: these are principles which concentrate spiritual energies. The Sulfur concentrates the soul's energies, the Mercury the spirit's energies and the Salt, the body's energies.

One of the greatest spagyric and alchemical secrets is the method to separate these three principles. Note, however, that in vegetable spagyrics the separation of these three principles is not always necessary: the separation of Sulfur and Mercury on one side and Salt on the other may be enough.

Let's take a look at difference between an allopathic remedy and a spagyric elixir. In most cases, the making of allopathic remedies follows the classical chemical method and thus spagyric Sulfur and Mercury are eliminated. The remainder is what, in spagyrics, is called Salt. Therefore such remedies can act on the material aspect, the body, but in no way can they act on the person's psyche, that is the spiritual aspect. Alchemical or spagyric elixirs, on the other hand, retain the three principles and, through his own action, the Alchemist does his best to keep them. We have a "Soul Medicine" which contains both negative body elements and positive elements of life.

The spagyric method is separation, purification, and reunification. It is consistent with the etymology of the word spagyric which means to separate and to reunite.

In our first simplified experiments, the theory outlines the following approach: the Sulfur and the Mercury are extracted with an Alcohol. As we have not studied the art of the ACUER (how to effect changes or penetrate further), we choose an alcohol which is ready made and as strong (acue) as possible in the vegetable realm. An alcohol made from wine will do. Then, when the Salt is separated, we purify it through fire, or through water and fire. We use the purified Salt to purify in turn the Sulfur-Mercury mixture before moving on to the cohobation. This elixir has both physical and spiritual properties. The physical properties can be found in a botanical book under the heading of the particular plant we use in our experiment. The problem of determining the spiritual effect can be solved after we study the Signatures of Nature. In the case of balm (also called lemon balm), the psychic part is that of understanding and tolerance.

We are now sufficiently equipped to face the problems that may come up in this lesson's practical work.

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ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

We mentioned that it is important to respect the laws of Nature in Alchemy and to allow for free expression. Before starting work, we must have the safety of our laboratory in mind: set it up according to legal safety rules. Your physical presence is also desirable during your experiments. Finally, a fire extinguisher can be very useful in certain circumstances.

We know that invisible and spiritual elements are important in Alchemy and Spagyrics, but as we do not possess the appropriate extraction liquid called the menstrum, and as its making requires the study of methods of classical and philosophic distillation, we are therefore both in an advantageous and disadvantageous position.

Our advantage is that if we were to possess a very refined menstrum, (very acues in the the alchemical sense, that is to say penetrating and strong) we would have to maintain, in our laboratory-oratory, a certain behavior and take several precautions which we shall study later on. On the other hand, the inconvenience is that our liquid has a weaker power of extraction. Consequently, the operations are longer.

It is best to learn good habits from the beginning: a separate and discreet work place is best. Avoid putting the product in contact or in the presence of people or things that could upset them. Limit the access of the laboratory to your spouse and immediate family. Once you secure the location, take the necessary safety precautions, and before starting the operations, you should psychically energize yourselves. For the time being, each one may choose the method they like best: breathing, praying, concentration, meditation, etc.. We do not advise occult methods for they require, among other things, knowledge of planetary attributions and elements of the Signature theory.

Once we have dealt with these considerations, we approach the practical aspect of our work:

1. Pulverize the balm into a very fine powder, starting with the leaves. Then, cut the twigs in small pieces, 2 to 3 mm long. During this operation, try concentrate on the fact that your hands radiate and positively charge the balm. Avoid breathing the dust from the plant and protect your respiratory tract with a surgical mask or by placing in a vertical position a glass sheet, 30 to 40 cm (12 to 16 inches) wide between the product and yourself. This glass sheet won't disturb your work and it is a sufficient protection. Put the balm into a wide-mouth jar. An instant coffee or mason jar is adequate.

2. Separate the plant powder into two parts, for example: keep 40 grams (1.4 oz.) and set the rest aside; the next operation only requires the 40 grams of the plant: the weight is not critical.

Wait for the first Thursday of the waxing moon and energize yourself before you start the second phase of this work. Pour the alcohol slowly on the plant, in small amounts so that the plant is thoroughly soaked. Stop pouring the alcohol as soon as the liquid is above the

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vegetable mass by 1/2 to 1 cm (1/4 to 3/8 inches). Hermetically close the flask.

In Spagyrics, the operation which consists of pouring alcohol on can be considered closest to the operation of fecundation. For the balm, therefore, the most favorable time for this operation is the first Thursday of the waxing moon.

3. Wrap the flask to protect it from light. It can simply be placed in a cardboard box. In winter, place it in a warm room, close to a source of heat. A temperature of 19 C (66.2F) is satisfactory. Let it macerate for two weeks (for the rest of the operation, you may want two flasks in maceration).

To be more exact, it is a maceration-circulation: therefore the flask should be more high than wide (about a 3/1 ratio) and only filled to one third of its height.

4. After the two weeks, place a glass funnel in an empty flask and block the open bottom of the funnel with some cotton. In this case, absorbant cotton is preferable to a filter.

5. Pour the maceration into the funnel. As soon as the liquid is through, carefully press the balm residue with a flat piece of wood to recover all possible liquid. The liquid should be green now. When the operation is complete, quickly close the receiving flask.

6. Before you go on, make sure that there is nothing combustible or volatile in the work space. Pour the solid residue into the dish and place the dish on the gas burner, which is off. Mix the plant which is alcohol-soaked with the part of plant which is not macerated. Set the mixture on fire and the residual alcohol starts the calcination. When the alcohol is burnt up, turn on the gas burner. Do not breathe the smoke which is released. The matter starts turning black; stir it with a glass or iron rod. When all is black turn off the gas burner and let cool. Grind the powder to eliminate all the big pieces. Continue the calcination until all the powder becomes grayish white.

7. We now have the choice between the way of fire or the way of fire and water. For the way of fire, calcine the grayish white residue until it turns reddish-orange after it has cooled down, That takes quite a while.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When the calcination is beyond the point of obtaining the grayish white color, continue but a lid or an upside down crucible over the ash.

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Lesson 3

Dear Friend,

MEDITATION AND ALCHEMY

Within the human body lies hidden a certain metaphysical substance known to only a few. This essence is in no need of a remedy for, in itself, it is a remedy second to none. It has a threefold nature: metaphysical, physical and moral. The careful reader can deduce that we must go from the metaphysical to physical only through a philosophic process.

Alchemists were deeply devoted to their work and did not suffer from the split present in the souls of their contemporaries.

Our contemporaries, for the most part, picture the BEING on one side, and matter on the other, as never meeting. Conversely, the Alchemists see the BEING in the world and the world in the BEING. They were not victims of the present-day blindness and this assured their successful work. It seems important today to describe their method.

There is in natural things a truth that cannot be seen with outer eyes (the five ordinary senses). Philosophers knew this and found that the power of this truth is such that it can perform miracles.

We state that such a miracle can be found while observing a rose in a garden, or in a friendship, and can be perceived with physical eyes and the heart's eyes as well. The mysterious meeting of the Alchemists, the mysterious marriage of the Sun and the Moon is the conjunction of physical fact with metaphysical reality.

This unique vision is not a result which is due only to material operations such as pouring acetic acid on stibnite, nor is it the result of a figurative allusion given to a substance, one of the Sun, the other of the Moon. With physical facts the quality of the ingredients is paramount because of the influence upon the results, so in the mental, the quality of thought will determine a final success or failure.

In this truth lies all the art of freeing the spirit from its bonds: through this same path, the spirit can be liberated from the body.

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This last sentence "the spirit can be liberated from the body" is directly related to the Alchemist's method of meditation. The word "method" is perhaps not adequate for it seems to imply a group of formulas, a range of preconceived ideas, when spontaneity is in fact the essence of the alchemical meditation. Meditation, after all, is a way to go fishing into the subconscious to bring the truth forth. The conscious mind selects the subject or the question, and, like the fisherman, throws it as bait in the water. But the bait does not look for the fish. The fish looks for the bait. This is the biggest and most common error of interpretation of all metaphysics. We are not meditating, we cannot: we are "meditated". In other words, we must be receptive.

By analogy, in the privacy of our laboratory, we must not be tempted to modify the position of our flasks, or the quantity of substances, or to think, in an alchemical jargon, about what we are really trying to achieve through our manipulations.

One must not fall into a trap and say: "I have read the texts for years. I have done experiments and I believe I am directing the course of this work". Only the BEING directs the work, and no one of us can tap a stream of Wisdom unless we remain receptive.

This why Alchemy is an art as well as a science. Not only is it the art of directing the work, according to our understanding from the teacher's or book's instructions, it is also the art of heart receptivity, the art of allowing ourselves to be cleansed by the work like matter is purified during an experiment. The genuine Alchemist's experiment occurs at the convergence of the two worlds. With years of intellectual, emotional and physical efforts, we can and we must reach the goal. Actually the goal will reach us. It is possible only through meditation, through the "let it be done".

You won't achieve the Unity you are seeking if you are not One, first of all.

This "One" is the unique point of all concentration and meditation of the sincere student. He understands and uses all the levels of his being. He adds to these levels a vigilance unknown to him before, and once this is accomplished, he withdraws. This technique will be familiar to readers and followers of Zen, Yoga, and Taoism and several other religious disciplines. But was not consciously identified with Alchemy because our Art is not well understood. Its terminology is ignored and its methods are considered obscure and complex.

The word meditation is used when a man has an inner dialogue with an invisible being. This might be with the BEING if it is invoked, with an angel or with himself.

The meditative aspect of the alchemical work is not simply that of cogitation or pondering about this work.

It is essential to be certain that a preliminary organization of the theory results in a method. One must master the theory before the practice.

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Meditation, however will go farther and will include a more complex procedure. We insist on the fact that meditation is an inner work. By choosing our words, we can state that the occultist receives a profound revelation from the Highest Self, the ceremonial Magician, the Knowledge and Conversation of the Guardian Angel.

It may seem somewhat surprising to state that the Alchemist starts his work from a confused mass both in his mind and in his physical work. From a primordial chaos, he must extract a beneficial order. If his thoughts are not well-ordered, then his substance cannot be properly manipulated. If both are in good order, he has to muster the courage to go deep within his inner resources in order to understand the relationship between his own soul and the soul of the matter he is working with. He must also fear attack from the skeptical occultist, on the one hand, who will doubt his laboratory methods, and, on the other hand, by his scientific friends who will think of him as a sentimental religious person among his flasks and retorts.

Thus, even today, the Alchemist has his own domain. The challenge of his work certainly goes beyond old critics. Only the man and the woman who enter with a praying and meditative heart can benefit from the pursuit of this work. Throughout the centuries, no writer has been able to say that this path was easy.

Michael Maier wrote:

"For those who start, affliction reigns with vinegar, but for those who finish, joy reigns with laughter".

As a conclusion:

"This thing we searched for such a long time cannot be acquired nor accomplished by force nor passion; it can only be acquired through humility, patience and a determined perfect love. May God grant this divine and immaculate science to his faithful servants, particularly to those who are, according to His desire, like the source of the essence of things. No one can save oneself without the force granted by God, and without it, no one could continue the salvation of his soul which is the goal God designed for them. Then God puts in charge those of his servants to whom He proposed to look for this divine science which is hidden to man and which he keeps for them. This science will give them birth beyond the suffering of this world and burden them with the knowledge of future good."

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

We mentioned that the Alchemist only deals with living bodies, that is to say, bodies in which the three principles Sulfur, Mercury and Salt are present and alive. In accordance with tradition, we shall call these bodies composites. For example, an Alchemist considers the metallic ore which comes out of the mine alive, but dead as soon as it is transformed into a metal through fusion because it has lost almost the totality of its Mercury during this operation.

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For the three realms, we can draw the following chart:

METALLIC REALM

Metallic Sulfur
Metallic Mercury
Metallic Salt

VEGETABLE REALM

Vegetable Sulfur
Vegetable Mercury
Vegetable Salt

ANIMAL REALM

Animal Sulfur
Animal Mercury
Animal Salt

In the three realms, the Sulfur is soul of the composite; it ensures its animation. But this animation is only possible if live Mercury is present because it ensures the Sulfur-Salt, soul-body link. If there is no Mercury, the Sulfur is constrained to remain inactive and undergo imprisonment.

In itself Sulfur is always pure; it is disturbed by terrestrial impurities which get caught in it.

The Mercury is in essence identical in the three realms, however, each Mercury is specific to its realm. In a sense, we can say that the Mercuries of the various realms differ by their vibratory rates. This is why experiments that attempt to have one Mercury act on one or several principles of another realm, cannot give satisfactory results. In addition, within each realm, the Mercury presents various degrees of maturity and perfection. In the metallic realm, the Mercury of gold is more mature, more evolved. In the vegetable realm, it is the Mercury of wheat or grape. In the animal realm, it is the Mercury of man. The role of the Mercury (of the spirit) consists in the reunion of body and soul. It ensures the alchemical marriage of these two extreme principles. An Alchemist can mature and perfect a Mercury inside its realm.

The two elements — Sulfur and Mercury — we just mentioned are, in their alchemical aspect, unknown to classical chemistry, but it is a different matter for the Salt which we are going to study now.

The Salt of the vegetable realm and the Salt of the animal realm are known to current classical chemistry, but the Salt of the metals is unknown. The metallic Salt we are indicating, is not composed of metal with another body, it is one of the constituting elements of metal.

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In the the three realms, the Salt is the composite's matrix. It determines what the composite will be, which is made up from the vivifying influence of the Sulfur through the Mercury. Thus, in each realm, there is one Salt for each composite; one Salt for each plant in the vegetable and one Salt for each type of animal in the animal realm. In addition, if the Salt is the body's matrix it has a cleansing role in alchemical or spagyric processes.

How do we recognize these principles in the alchemical work?

In the vegetable realm, the Sulfur is contained in the plant's essential oils, then the Mercury is revealed and can be extracted in the plant's alcohol; the Salt is obtained through calcination or by leaching it out of the ashes of the plant.

In the metallic realm, the alchemical dissociation separates the metals into their three principles: the Sulfur in an oily form, the Mercury in a very volatile and acid form to which the name vinegar was given and Salt in the form of a residual calx (ash).

Since we excluded animal Alchemy and spagyrics from our course, we shall not describe the principles of this realm.

In summary, the Sulfur is the soul which animates the body through the Mercury, which is the bond between the body and soul, whereas the Salt is the body. Our Christian members can ponder the alchemical reasons for the choice of bread, wine and salt in their religious rites.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

The second method to purify Salt uses water and fire, that is to say a leach and calcination. The ashes are introduced into a flask and we pour distilled water on them, in a quantity of at least twenty times their volume. (preferably rain water, otherwise use demineralized water). It takes a good hour and much shaking to obtain a good dissolution of the salts. The mixture is then filtered through a glass funnel and the residue (insoluble) ashes are collected. We perform this procedure at least three times so that all soluble salts are completely dissolved.

The entirety of the filtered water is recombined and evaporated through heating but the water is not brought to a boil. Try to remain just below the boiling point. When the Salt is quite dry we place it in a fire-proof dish and calcine it.

Place the salt again in a flask and dissolve it with distilled water, then repeat the process. When the distilled water leaves no visible deposit on the filter, purification is sufficient and we can proceed to the next phase.

If the Salt obtained by simple calcination reaches a yellowish, reddish or slightly orange color, it is not necessary to leach it. Place the Salt in a small flask, which is higher than it is wide (ratio 3 to 1 approximately), and pour the maceration liquor over the Salt, (twelve times

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the Salt's volume). If the flask is well chosen in terms in of capacity, it will be one third full. Close it hermetically and place it in a warm spot, for example on a heat-source in winter or in the sun in the summer. A circulation should then occur and you will notice alcohol drops collecting on the glass, first close to the top of the flask, then falling down into the liquid. The liquor should become discolored. When the discoloration ceases, filter, collect the salts and calcine them: and always place a lid on the calcination dish. Let it cool down and start the circulation again with the liquor. This cycle should be performed as long as the liquor gets discolored. At each cycle the Salt is getting charged with the impurities which are discharged by the calcination. but it is also charged with positive elements which are fixed by the circulation, and which consequently, resist fire. At each cycle the force of the elixir increases, until the Salt is saturated with positive elements. At this point the circulation does not present any further interest.

Since our extraction liquid, our menstruum, is not sharpened, the discoloration won't be complete. The coloration of cognac due to vegetable elements in the oak will resist the Salt. We advise in this case not continue each circulation beyond three days and not circulate more than seven times.

Note: Be careful not use all of your Salt during this experiment and to keep the amount of salt equal to about 1/4 of a thimble in a small waterproof flask. Also keep 2 to 3 cm of your menstruum set aside.

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Lesson 4

Dear Friend,

In this lesson, we will deal with two problems of terminology.

The first problem concerns the word "medicine". In Alchemy, this word may not necessarily be defined in terms of human medicine. For example, the term "vegetable medicine" can mean a preparation, extracted from plants, designed to cure man as a whole, but it can also mean a preparation designed to cure the vegetable itself. Similarly, a "metallic medicine" may refer to the cure of "metals" exclusively, or may simply be a remedy which acts on the level of the soul; the metal then is the symbol for a psychological or mental disorder or weakness. In Alchemy, context alone can determine the meaning or the scope of the word "medicine".

The second problem concerns the word "tincture". In Alchemy, a tincture is the extract of an alchemical principle; it may be of Sulfur alone, or a mixture of Sulfur and Mercury, with the understanding that the Sulfur is the "tinctant".

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The Alchemical Temple

The PRIMORDIAL DUALITY is present in the Alchemical Temple as well as in the human body.

The Temple is a place of invocation, prayer, meditation, and thanksgiving for Soul and Spirit. Like the body, it is a place of work and experimentation.

In the Temple, the laboratory and the oratory must be separate; it should be possible either by a curtain or any other way to separate or join the oratory and the laboratory at will. Together they form the Alchemical Temple.

Stinking matter can enter this space, so can man with dirty hands; it is a space where the impurities of the physical world are purified. Here, the student's first test may be to have his hands covered with blisters after grinding a plant or a mineral in a mortar, or to have red eyes because of studying a hermetic and difficult text of Basil Valentine or Paracelsus. In the

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the laboratory, the apprentice can see himself or see the Universe in a boiling retort and may feel the boundaries fade between the flask and the self.

As the laboratory work is proceeding — it is secondary work in the beginning — the student realizes that it becomes his primary reason for living and the Alchemist reaches the level of achievement where he is ONE with the laboratory which, itself, is ONE with the Universe.

In the laboratory which is a Temple, the Law is revealed in terms of books herbs and minerals but even more so of one's own Self. Knowledge of the Law gives the Adept the power of choice.

In the Alchemical Temple, the student learns to read the signatures of Nature and the laws which govern them. In following these laws and developing his own sense of the Art, the Alchemist will make the elixirs and the stones of the various realms, through the process of separation, purification and reunion.

In the vegetable realm, one can practice with the keys and become familiar with the laws for in the lesser work, the powers which are used can be easily manipulated and generally do not have serious consequences. In this realm, which, however, should not be taken lightly by the beginner, the Temple-Laboratory can be more easily used, because, in this domain, the experiments or transmutations are less dependent upon the operator's psychological state. In the vegetable realm, freedom of Spirit and Soul is better protected from the world's violence than in the mineral realm because negative reactions are less destructive in their effect. In this realm, however, one can already begin the process of the Stone's formation in one's own heart.

Now, if this is applied to oneself, it becomes the Truth and the inner Stone will be the Philosopher Stone. The focal Point of the laboratory will transmute what is intangible.

We learn that Law is balance (justice) and that the laboratory leads us onto a higher path, the path of the true Love which gives more than it asks. Law gives you back according to what you gave, not as a reward but to maintain its own level of balance.

The Law is the structure of the work. In order to know the Law, one must have the tool, catch a glimpse of the Truth of the Goal and thus become a Philosopher.

However, more is needed. The Temple must be "activated"; it must be a living Temple, and when it starts moving and becomes an entity in this world, it becomes a life style, a power and an energy.

As it is said that the Christian sees the world through the eye of Christic consciousness, it is also said that the student of Alchemy sees the world as manifested. He is a reflection of the Self to the self, the Law and the Knowledge are added to Love.

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The Alchemist's life style is a quickly ascending path, unless he is slowed down by heavy baggage. The law states: "you shall be judged as you have judged". Love shows how judgments can be a heavy burden, and how much they can darken the true colors of spirit and soul in the laboratory. It becomes obvious that some desires can restrain; a new car, new clothes, a house, the pursuit of money, attachment to people all can be heavy burdens.

These things are neither good nor bad in themselves, but the life style they call for should not be an obstacle on the path; to use them is good, to seek them at the price of one's time and tranquility is a waste of time and energy.

It is not a matter of an arbitrary thing or a unique life style: it is better for one who follows the path to let the path lead him and let him know what the the day's necessities are. Life on the Path must be progressively regarded as a gift. Each day is filled with its reality and life itself takes on a theological dimension, we are told. The Temple thus becomes the focal point of our goals and aspirations in life. All action of life enlighten us. On this Path, with the conscious development of our inner ONE, Knowledge and Love unite and develop within us.

In a church or another place of worship if we use one of the several forms of meditation, we must remember that the goal is not the place of worship nor the meditation itself. A path is only a means to reach enlightenment, to find the ONE God and fulfillment of life. Thus, the path of Alchemy is not Alchemy itself, but a means by which those who are on their own Path learn the experience of the making of the Stone of the Self. Through this process, separation, purification and reunion of the soul and body is achieved. Through this work, the Law, the Truth and Love are united and when all the cycles are complete, they bring a new beginning and Alchemy becomes the stepping stone to a higher threshold.

General Principles of Alchemy

Alchemy is evolution; and evolution is the raising of vibrations, the refinement or transmutation of the coarse into the subtle, of low frequencies into higher ones, of the physical into the etheric. Alchemy states that this is the only design and goal of all existence, and then indicates a path or a technique which can help Nature to accelerate this process both within man and around him. This process might also be described as a search for perfection for a broader and better life.

It is commonly agreed that the alchemical dream has been longevity of life, perfect health and the capacity to transmute metals into gold, all this by means of the Philosopher's Stone. In reality, these attributes which satisfy materialists are accessory products to the deeper search for Union with the Higher Self. This is an application of the Bible's quote: "Seek the Kingdom of God and the rest shall be given to you in addition."

However, the Great Art of Alchemy or of Hermetic Wisdom, as opposed to some Oriental paths, does not try to deny the body or attempt to destroy the ego or the lower self. Alchemy doesn't attempt to elevate the self to higher realities by ascetic practices or purely meditative methods which lead the thought process to a resting point. On the contrary, spiritual energies

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are concentrated, focussed and manifested on the physical and material level by way of a more practical path. Body and Spirit become the Alchemical Laboratory in which transmutation and acceleration of evolution occur. The body is gradually transmuted under the combined influences of purification, detoxification and regeneration through the elixirs which were prepared in the outer laboratory according to alchemical principles. Under the influence of the Spirit and through Love and discipline, the fundamental Laws of the Universe are progressively applied to daily life.

These universal Laws, inseparable from alchemical principles, are revealed through the study of astrocyclic pulsations and of the Qabala.

All this does not mean that meditative practices have no place in Alchemy, on the contrary: the first requirement in order to advance on this path is to invoke God followed with the contemplation of Nature.

Quoting Israel Regardie, not only is the Alchemist concerned with the purification of metals and with the elimination of disease from the human race, but he states that Alchemy as a "science and art" as well provides a means to synthesize all sciences and to train intellectual and spiritual faculties. In addition, Alchemy differs from the other esoteric studies in that it emphasizes the practice of laboratory work strongly where esoteric theories can be demonstrated and applied. When this work is developed it will revolutionize orthodox medicine, natural therapeutics, agriculture and the use of energy. It will change our concept of Energy and Life. Alchemy is transmutation, revolution, renewal, and evolution both on the physical and spiritual levels. The only obstacle is the lack of a certain quality of consciousness.

As we previously mentioned, the alchemical process is a process occurring simultaneously with the inner and the outer, the physical purification of the body with preparations from the alchemical laboratory refine the energies and make them more receptive to the finer vibrations of the Cosmos. The spirit increases its awakening and consciousness expands. This increased consciousness enables us to further penetrate into the elixirs of the laboratory which reach then higher vibrations and raise our self to a higher level. And thus the process continues and accelerates into an inner and outer spiral, into an evolution of consciousness.

However, this process is rarely so easy; the causes of resistance are numerous until the inner consciousness enlightens the outer path. Then the advancing spiral can unfold without problem on the path.

This inner consciousness can also manifest in outer service because the goal of all genuine adepts is to help relieve the human race from its sufferings and its physical and spiritual misery. The acceptance of this goal is necessary and indispensable to advance on the path.

The Qabala and astrocyclic pulsations are concomitant with the practical work of Alchemy the Qabala and its glyph, the Tree of Life, serve as a tool to establish relationships among all

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things and between man as a microcosm with the outer macrocosm. This cosmic scheme serves many other goals. The astrocyclic (astrology) pulsations, when they are correctly understood and used in daily life, give us control over celestial influences which means that we no longer are at the mercy of chance, and that we can attract the best part of the good influences and avoid many negative influences.

One who pursues practical work in the lab in conjunction with different aspects of Alchemy will get in touch with various kinds of esoteric and exoteric subjects or techniques which harmonizes and eases the alchemical work. Thus, one who gains knowledge and understanding in alchemy also gains knowledge and understanding in all things, as Alchemy is a path where all knowledge is systematized and transmuted into a Unity where Art is Science and Science is Art.

When it is accomplished, this synthesis is larger than the sum of the parts; such a synthesis of art and sciences makes the Law and the Divine Order resound in glory; Art and Science unite to serve the Spirit which is Life or the vital force.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

We are going to repeat, in part, information from our previous lesson.

To understand alchemical literary allegories which are profoundly veiled and to separate the wheat from the chaff, which will aid your advance on the path, we must know, understand and practice the universal laws on which Alchemy and necessarily all true occult and spiritual sciences are based.

For simplification, here are the fundamental laws:

1. The origin of the Universe is divine; the Universe is a manifestation and an emanation of the absolute and ONE cosmic Being; thus all is One.
2. All manifestations, whether material or of mental conception, exist by virtue of a dual or opposite nature. It is the Law of polarity or duality. Each concept can thus be correctly defined by the relationship to its opposite.

The evolution of ideas proceeds from synthesis of theses and antitheses and the process is repeated again on a higher level.

A further elaboration of the different aspects of polarity can be found in the study of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life. In effect, the themes of polarity such as sun-moon, male-female, creation-destruction, positive-negative, spirit-body, etc... are an integral part of alchemical and other occult symbolism.

3. All physical manifestations, whether animal, vegetable or mineral (the three realms) are composed of spirit, soul and body (the three essential principles).

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They are respectively known in the alchemical terminology as Mercury ♀ sulfur ♂, and Salt ☉. In the vegetable realm, the Spirit is contained in the alcohol and is common to all plants, and it is released by all plants during the fermentation process (death) of the body. The Spirit/Mercury ♀ is the Life force of the Cosmos and its vital essence, and represents the major point of interest of Alchemy. The Soul ♂ of the vegetable world is the essential oil which all plants possess to various degrees. The Soul ♂ (Sulfur) is the consciousness of the three worlds (kingdoms). The body ☉ (Salt) of the vegetable world is what remains after the Spirit has left. It is also called Caput-Mortem (dead head). It is then burnt until it turns into ashes and finally to white salt.

In the mineral realm, the Spirit is common to all the metals; it is the precious Mercury of the Philosophers, and is the most volatile of the ALKAHESTS. It enables us to isolate the seed of the metal, which is a vital stage in the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone.

The practical work of the Alchemy lab — whether we mean the inner or outer lab — includes three basic processes which are:

Separation, Purification, Cohobation.

These three processes are the basis of the evolutionary process of all alchemical work. It is also the work of Nature, and Alchemy assists in accelerating the process.

If we look at the lesser work or the lesser circulation of the vegetable kingdom, we see that in Nature, when a plant dies, its body is biodegraded and its essential principles return to the earth to be used in the life cycle of other plants. The cycle continues unless an animal eats the plant, in which case the vibrations of the plant are transmuted to a higher level by the alchemical power of the living animal realm.

In the external alchemical lab, an herb is separated into its essential principles: the oil ♂, the alcohol ♀, and the Caput-Mortem ☉. Each principle is then purified by using heat (the fire) through distillations, extractions and calcinations. The final step is cohobation which represents a rebirth on a higher level. Thus the plant is taken out of the bio-degradation cycle and is reborn through the raising of its vibrations to a level where it can be used for a higher purpose — that is medicine in the animal realm.

The same process in the mineral world results in the preparation of the Philosopher's Stone, (Greater Circulation) and several other elixirs of lesser importance.

The medicines which are prepared through alchemical methods are more efficient than any other vegetable medicine because they contain the three essential principles in a purified and cohobated state.

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The elixirs of the mineral realm are generally of higher vibrations and deeper effects than those extracted from the vegetable realm.

4. All matters are composed of Fire (thermal energy), Water (liquid), Air (gas) and Earth (solid); a sensible and careful use of these four elements is an integral part of alchemical manifestations.

5. The quintessence or fifth essence is found within the four elements but is none of them; it is one of the three essential principles known as the Mercury of the Philosophers.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

Necessary Material

Since we cannot begin new experiments before we study distillation in the theoretical part of our lessons, we shall first pay attention to the elements that we must know before approaching the task of the practical installation of our laboratory.

In an ancient Rosicrucian document, it is said that the Brother Alchemists must be economical in their work and operate with a minimum of expenses. We shall apply this saying to the installation of our laboratory.

A lot of the material can be obtained either as second hand or quite cheaply. Here is a beginning list:

- 1) little glass flasks with ground glass stoppers
- 2) small glass yogurt containers
- 3) sealed jars with wide mouth such as coffee jars, juice jars, mason jars, etc..
- 4) glass containers from 4 to 25 liters
- 5) plastic dish used as drainer for fresh cheese
- 6) plastic containers for mineral water
- 7) some very clean cans
- 8) broken pieces of thick mirror (8 mm)
- 9) some fine white sand
- 10) an old 33 RPM record player

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Lesson 4

Safety in the Laboratory

We shall often stress this point in our lessons: it is essential that each one of us take all the precautions needed to protect himself and his personal environment.

Each of the following recommendations underline an important regulation but it is only a complement to official legal requirements or to manufacturers notices. It is essential that you read these texts beforehand.

Precautions...

1. Know the theory of the experiment you are considering. Do not attempt anything at random.
2. Study beforehand the physical and chemical properties of the products which you are going to use or which are going to be produced in the course of the experiment.
3. Operator's safety in the laboratory:
 - a. respect the safety regulations for gas, electricity, etc...
 - b. never eat, drink or smoke in the laboratory
 - c. always wear glasses
 - d. wear water-proof rubber gloves which will protect you when handling acid or alkali liquid.
 - e. wear asbestos gloves to handle molten liquids
 - f. wear asbestos gloves over the rubber gloves when handling acids or bases and hot liquids
 - g. wear leather or waterproof plastic shoes; no cloth or perforated shoes
 - h. have a working fire-extinguisher and a container filled with cold water close at hand. If you have an electrical heating system, make sure that the extinguisher is designed to extinguish electrical fires.
4. Mix unknown liquids in small quantities only. Always proceed as follows: pour a small amount of liquid in a test tube, and a little bit of the other liquid into another test tube, close and keep the tubes away from each other. Mix the content of the two tubes slowly. You must wear glasses when doing such an operation.
5. Never pour a cold liquid in a hot liquid and vice versa

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5. Never pour a cold liquid in a hot liquid and vice versa
6. Never pour water into an acid
7. Permanent ventilation of the laboratory:
 - in case of the use of a solvent
 - in case of gas heating
 - fume hood for dangerous gases
8. No flames during work with volatile liquids
9. The use of electrical heating is preferable during the handling of volatile liquids
10. Never smell directly from a flask, just wave a little bit of air towards your nose.
11. Do not breathe solvents such as acetone, trichlorethylene, etc... which have either an immediate or long-term toxic and dangerous effect.
12. Do not handle metallic salts or metals without glove for some of them have toxic effects (antimony, lead, mercury, etc.) on the skin.
13. Do not breathe the dust during the grinding of a product; operate in the open air, under a hood, or with a mask.
14. Place a wire gauze between the flask and the gas flame.
15. Never distil to dryness bodies giving peroxides: ether, acids, etc...; only water and alcohol can be distilled to dryness.
16. An efficient protective barrier that can be used between the operator and the object being handled is a thick sheet of plexiglass, a window or some plastic of the same kind, mounted in a heavy frame so that it stays perfectly vertical.

In the course of the lessons, we shall attempt to warn you of any risk which might be present in specific experiments.

ORA ET LABORA !

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Lesson 5

Dear Friend:

Today, we shall start with an overview of the books needed for our research and some data pertaining to human knowledge.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The nature of esoteric work

Most esoteric books can be classified in two categories:

The most common books cover subjects of curiosity, historical interest or scholarship; their practical usefulness is nil as far as we are concerned.

The other category contains a certain amount of knowledge but there is no warning whatsoever regarding the true nature of these studies or the risk involved and a number of students of esoterism attain an unbalanced state in their ordinary life instead of fulfillment.

Even though everything we shall state in these lessons is designed to help you in your alchemical path, these general rules remain valid for any esoteric discipline.

Reading ancient or modern alchemical books leads to a surprising insight: the hermetism is so great, the apparent contradictions so numerous among the various authors that one benefits little from reading them.

The question, then, is whether these books can be useful, can be understood and what justifies such secrecy.

All the ancient authors agree on the fact that only God can entrust the secret to someone. Then why deny the techniques or the knowledge of the path which enables one to present oneself alone to this last judgement?

Some Philosophers, whom we are entitled to believe were touched by Grace and Divine Love must have had serious reasons to conceal the Path of Personal Revelation in such a manner.

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The first reason for this silence is linked to the state of society at the time these books were written. Then, when the all-powerful Catholic Church barely tolerated chemistry and meditation books, it would definitely have destroyed books authorizing Personal Revelation or personal initiation.

The second reason pertained to the social and economic order. In a time of unenlightenment, when few could assess the difficulty and true nature of a problem, the revelation of the great mysteries of Alchemy would have induced many to quit their occupations and devote themselves to the Alchemical Art; but what is the use of gold if no one is baking bread? Thus, these books contained the risk of destroying the social and economic structures.

The third reason is that a certain state of consciousness, both an inner and intellectual maturity and "being an Old Soul" are required to take on the Initiatory Journey with a chance of success.

Nowadays a greater tolerance enables us to open the door to this first test more widely so that more human beings may present themselves alone and freely to ask for the Ultimate Secret, and obtain it if such should be His Will.

Conditions for Success

If the Being is hidden behind the veil of the Temple, if He only manifests in His Glory and His Power, if, according to His Omnipresence He created this void, this emptiness in which we are, it is probably for good reasons, two of which can be summarized here.

The first reason is that man, made in His Image and of His Essence, has temporarily been deprived of his powers and faculties to test his free will under such conditions of limitation that his errors could not in any event threaten the Cosmos.

The second reason is that man, through conscious separation from the Divine, finds thus his true free will, for man is only truly free in complete aloneness. This is a major reason for the secret which must be kept. He who hasn't shown a certain degree of maturity in the use of his free will cannot obtain tangible certainty of the existence of the Being and the supra-sensible worlds. To him (her), the nature of physical laws remains inflexible and transmutation is not accessible. When his (her) inner evolution progresses to a certain point, access to the laws of the higher worlds will be possible, and these laws which transcend physical laws will bring the possibility of transmutation.

One must not forget the hierarchy of these laws and that the access to the absolute only occurs in successive steps.

Therefore the parapsychologists' pretensions to tangibly prove the higher powers of the mind are erroneous, because attempting to show one's powers in public cancels them since it is in contradiction to the cosmic intention: it disharmonizes the operator who then fails in

public when success in private is certain. These experiments are attempts to submit God to the scrutiny of materialist science and this is unthinkable. If science wants to know, it must change its methods and ask in all humility, in meditation and prayer for the revelation which only can occur for one being at a time, and which cannot be transmitted orally or in writing, because this knowledge is an acquired power which transmutes the level of consciousness.

We shall examine in a next lesson, the difference between faith, information, and knowledge. And consequently, some differences between mystical and scientific work; between intellectualism and spirituality.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

The first experiment we proposed is elementary, but interesting, because it shows the small quantity of harvested salt. To reach another level of experimentation, we must examine in detail three important alchemical processes: distillation, extraction and fermentation or putrefaction.

Only the knowledge of these three processes enables one to produce and use the alchemical keys called "Menstrua".

We shall give you as quickly as possible all the elements relative to distillation for practice is necessary to gain a perfect mastery both intellectually and manually and thus be capable of moving from classical distillation to philosophic distillation. Extraction, in itself is much more delicate than distillation, and will come next.

The third study relates to fermentation. This might seem surprising but fermentation is the key which opens all the locks of Nature. We are saying that metallic fermentation is the secret to "the Secret Fire of the Alchemists."

The Menstrua

In Alchemy, Menstrua are the liquids which have the power to dissolve or extract the elements of various materials. In general, the Mercury proper to a realm is an excellent menstruum for that realm. Very often, the word ALKAHEST designates a menstruum with limited power: sometimes it acts only on one of the principles of Sulfur or Mercury, or in other cases it acts on only one part of its realm. For example, there is an ALKAHEST which is semi-metallic and satisfactory in the mineral realm but not in the metallic realm.

The Menstruum is generally obtained or liberated through fermentation or putrefaction and it is separated by means of distillation. In the vegetable realm, the Mercury is vegetable alcohol. For your information we give the following sequence:

Grapes + fermentation = fermented juice + distillation = Alcohol or Mercury

This is valid for all the volatile substances of the vegetable realm.

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If we undertake a second fermentation we have:

Fermented juice or Alcohol + fermentation = vinegar or acetic acid.

Acetic acid is a "fixing menstruum according to the alchemical concept.

Fermentation, distillation, purification and sharpening of the menstruum are necessary operations which will be covered in further studies. However, it is also useful to know that:

— a menstruum is a living being, that is to say the more pure it is the more sensitive it is to psychic influences.

— a menstruum is contaminated by disharmonious sounds, negative words, selfish or malevolent thoughts. The closer the menstruum gets to perfection the more vigilant the operator must be with his (her) acts, words and thoughts.

Symbolically, one may say that the menstruum starts in the laboratory and ends in the Temple.

Labora	Orare
Work	Pray

A quick complementary note is now necessary. In Alchemy, we often speak of a universal solvent, that is to say a menstruum that can act in all realms and on all things. This prompted negative minds to comment that this is impossible because this solvent would then dissolve its own container. In fact, this menstruum separates living compounds but the glass is a dead body, it is not a living compound and so resists the menstruum.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

We are going to begin the study of distillation and strive to demonstrate step by step the difference between classical distillation and philosophic distillation.

In the first part, we shall take the example of wine distillation because it is a well known liquid and further information on the subject can easily be found in commercial books.

In Alchemy there are "six types of distillation:

1. ordinary distillation
2. rectification
3. fractional distillation
4. vacuum distillation
5. steam distillation
6. philosophic distillation

The goal of distillation is to separate two or several mixed liquids; this separation is based on the difference between the boiling temperatures of the liquids. The first liquid to boil is the first to evaporate. The still is comprised of a flask and its heating system, a cooling condenser

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and another flask which receives the distilled liquids. This is shown in the drawing and can be easily set up.

It operates in the following way: the flask heater progressively increases the temperature of the liquid and as soon as the boiling temperature of the most volatile liquid is reached vapors start forming. The thermometer indicates a sharp rise in temperature, the vapors go into the cooling tube of the condenser where they condense and the liquid falls a drop at a time into the receiving flask.

The thermometer is a very good guide in distillation operations. It should not be in contact with the liquids for only the vapor temperature is significant.

Let us suppose that our boiling flask is filled with wine. As soon as the wine starts boiling the temperature reading goes up and stops at around 70 to 72 C. The cooling water of the cooling system must then circulate, and drops of the liquid fall into the receiving flask. These drops will have to be discarded for the temperature stabilizes at around 78 C. At this point, the liquid must be preserved. (Between 70 and 78 C, the collected liquids are very volatile and are not alcohol). The temperature increases very slowly after that. As soon as it reaches 82 to 83 C, remove the receiving flask in which the wine alcohol has collected. If we continue to heat rapidly, the temperature would soon reach 100 C, which is the boiling point of water.

With the type of still shown in the drawing, the quality of distillation depends upon the slowness at which the distillation occurs. If we remove the residual wine from the boiling flask and replace it with distilled alcohol, we are then proceeding with a second distillation generally called rectification. Two facts should be known: the temperature is maintained at 78 C for a longer time than during the first distillation. When there is little liquid left to distil, it becomes suddenly troubled with the appearance of whitish clouds and the temperature increases rapidly. Distillation must be stopped and the whitish residue must be disposed of.

The alcohol can be rectified 5 to 6 times consecutively, until the temperature is maintained at 78 C during the whole operation without the appearance of whitish clouds. Our alcohol is then rectified, but it is not absolute alcohol, for this procedure does not allow for a complete purification. However, it is a good menstruum for vegetable extractions done with the Soxhlet apparatus.

Remarks:

In all cooling systems, the cold water inlet is always the lower one. The flask heater, if electrical, must have a heat regulator, (Variac - variable transformer). Gas heating is possible but not at all recommended because the alcohol is very flammable during the rectifications.

Do not forget to place boiling stones in the alcohol (small pieces of lava or pumice stone). The final distillations are done in a water-bath. On an electrical heating plate with a thermostat, a small amount of oil may be added to the water so that it does not evaporate.

The Still (Distillation Train)

The pieces constituting the still can be bought already made in chemical supply houses. Here is some advice on the glassware used in this apparatus:

Glass is a very important material in Alchemy, but its use is not as simple as we generally think. There are actually three kinds of glass available:

— chemistry glass: which can be used up to 350 C; it is fragile, sensitive to thermal shocks and must be cooled down slowly. We do not recommend its use for any heating work.

— borosilicate glass: more often known as "Pyrex", can be used up to 400 C and a borosilicate glass flask heated to 100 C may be plunged into cold water. This glass cannot be worked with a blow torch without oxygen, except for small sections.

— quartz or fused silica glassware: it can be used up to 1300 C and can be plunged into cold water after being heated to 1000 C. It is expensive and not too resistant to some molten vegetable salts.

There are two possibilities: mounting pieces which fit together with ground joints (normally 24/40 except for the thermometers which are 10/30). These pieces are made of pyrex glass. We advise the use of a two liter boiling flask. One can put together the apparatus shown on the drawing by oneself. It might be useful for later works to also buy a two-liter receiver with a 24/40 joint.

All connecting tubes are made of pyrex glass, the body of the condenser is a 28 mm tube, the smaller tube's outer diameter is 8 mm. A tube-cutter is necessary for the 28 mm one. All the extremities of the cut tubes must be heated with a flame to slightly melt the edges.

More details will be provided in the following lessons.

For your information:

Some among you have contacted us to ask us a number of questions on the material which we describe in each of our lessons.

These questions relate to possible suppliers and detailed description on how to use these materials.

Although we are trying to be as precise as possible in each of our lessons, little tricks of the art cannot be easily described in writing.

Details such as these are more easily communicated to you during the practical seminars which will be announced in the Association Newsletter.

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Note:

Acuation from the French verb acuer is an ancient term which can mean both to refine and make more penetrating, stronger.

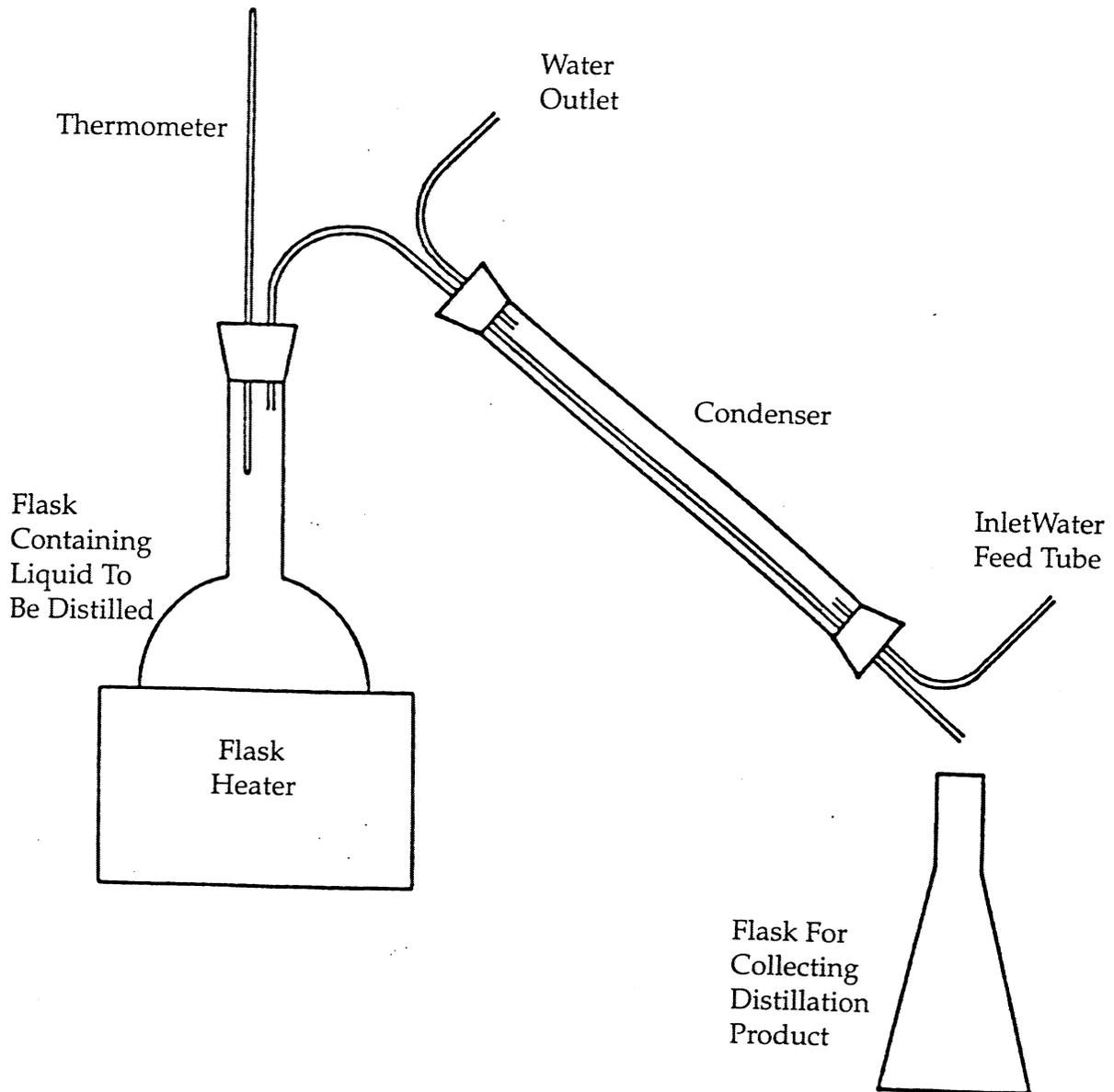
ORA ET LABORA !

ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Distillation Train

Figure #1

DISTILLATION TRAIN



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Lesson 6

Dear Friend,

Our success in this work depends upon our ability to correctly identify constituent parts. Therefore, we shall strive to define the terms faith, knowledge and understanding.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The human mind functions as a producer of various ideas which can be classified as opinions, notions, beliefs or scholarship. This intellectual and spiritual complex, so to speak, signifies each one's personality.

There is a hierarchy of ideas in the sense that they do not all have the same value, nor the same degree of certainty, and we should strive to put the highest and surest ideas apart from non-justified preferences. One should not be in love with one's ideas or concepts.

The ideas' origin and behavior allows their classification into three main categories: the ideas of faith, knowledge and understanding.

Faith is not exclusively religious but also belongs to the domain of science and is unfortunately the basis of most current ideas. It is a free idea which is impossible to prove and is founded on simple affirmations. Faith may belong to the scientific domain; the postulate of Euclid's geometry upon which all science is based is in the domain of faith. Any reading is in the domain of faith, for ideas become knowledge only through personal experience.

Knowledge lies on a higher level; there is a logical correspondence or convergence between the idea and the perception of the senses which itself may be illusion or reality and as long as we are within the domain of perception, knowledge gives satisfactory explanations and allows the prediction of facts.

Understanding lies on an even higher level and has an inner certainty which is independent of the experience of the senses. It is obtained through meditation and is achieved through intuition. It is the awareness of the unity in all things.

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In knowledge, ideas may be divided into two categories. One category corresponds to perceptions of nature and have a certain degree of harmony with nature, they are reflections of Nature's Laws and man cannot modify them. He can use them or dominate them by surrendering to them. The other category corresponds to human conventions; their value is practical but not real. Justice is a law of nature in all domains; law is an artificial convention of men.

Can science go beyond knowledge and reach the level of understanding or will it stay within the outer illusion of things and facts ? Let us try to answer this very important question.

The word science carries prestige for people nowadays. It is almost magical for those who do not understand it, and each of us interpret the word according to our favorite reflection of things.

Science does not produce anything practical. The achievements of electronics, mechanics, chemistry and medicine belong to the domain of technique. And technique is the utilization of knowledge to dominate matter. Science only makes theories. Pure, it is a work of curiosity.

As a matter of fact, it is preferable to be more discerning. Science's theories help technique and the achievements of technique help science. Intellectual methods are similar for the technician or for the scientist. The state of mind makes you one or the other. The scientific method is comprised of two parts: experimentation with inductive reasoning and mathematical deduction.

Experimentation is the study and observation of nature's phenomena whether spontaneous or provoked. Induction permits generalization, going from one to the many. Mathematics also has two parts: one purely deductive: the analysis of phenomena and the other, the calculus part, which evaluates their forces. Nowadays, these parts are viewed as complicated and mysterious, particularly when they are not clearly explained. They simply are a methodical application of deductive reasoning.

A formula or an equation gives the same result as a result obtained through a long succession of reasonings. They are used as a device to avoid repeating the whole demonstration performed at the problem's first study.

A technician experiments on a small or life-size scale and, for him, calculus is but a tool to determine the solidity of the steps or the values of the necessary measurements which are based on elements discovered during past experiments.

A scientist uses the experiment as a starting point and, with logic or mathematics, he attempts to build a theory according to which he designs new experiments that will either consolidate or destroy the theory.

The purpose of these theories is to explain the whole mechanism of nature or part of it, the how of things, since science has completely excluded the search for the original WHY from its domain. Science studies the functioning of the nature-tool without paying attention to its use.

Experience shows that these theories never explain the totality of a thing. Truth seems to escape right before them. As theories advance, the immensity of the abyss of ignorance which precedes them, grows. The resolution of a problem results in ten new ones. The history of science shows that these theories have a relatively short life. Sometimes, non-reconcilable theories remain, for scientists cannot settle them.

The scientist and the technician follow the same process: beginning experiment, deductive reasoning, controlled experiment. One has a speculative goal, the other a practical one. Deductive reasoning in harmony with the laws of nature is sure; the laws of nature are also deductive. But a beginning and an end based on our senses are no more trustworthy than the senses themselves. The use of microscope, telescope, X-rays improve the possibilities of the senses but do not go beyond the confines of the physical realm. Science only knows of things, the outer results of sensory expression and ignores everything of the non-physical inner causes.

Faith and knowledge are transmitted through words and particularly through names and, of course, names are current, arbitrary labels, because the ones mentioned in the first chapter of Genesis are the true names and bring with them Understanding.

According to some occultists, their pronunciation creates the thing. It is, in this case, the spiritual names of beings and things. The classification by type, group, and family brings out the unity and the common bond between things within the apparent diversity of nature. In our next lesson, we shall talk about three points which actually have a common cause: first of all, why can't science reach understanding; then, how can one objectively realize the difference between knowledge and understanding; finally, how does mysticism lead to understanding.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

The vegetable realm:

Since we are starting our work with the vegetable realm, a preliminary study of plants is necessary.

According to what you are undertaking, dry or fresh plants may be used for the extraction of ethereal oils. For other preparations, (vegetable stone or purifying menstruum) it is preferable to use fresh plants.

Note, however, that, from the alchemical point of view, drying plants generally doesn't

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result in the loss of their properties. One may use all of the plant, or only a part: roots, bark, leaves, flowers, fruit, depending on the medicinal properties of the plant.

Preparation of the plant:

bark: collect it on the trunk or branches of young trees in the fall or the beginning of the spring. Clean it and cut it in thin strips and dry them in the shade.

roots: collect them just after the leaves have fallen off or before the spring when the sap is still in them.

seeds and flowers: should be gathered only when they are perfectly ripe; dry them quickly in the shade.

fruit and berries: gather when ripe and dry them quickly in the shade.

One of the best ways to dry plants is to spread them on a clean sheet of paper in a dark, well ventilated room. Then, keep in dark, tight boxes, after you have ground them to a powder.

Alchemists attribute a certain number of plants to each of the seven planets; this will be passed on to you in lesson #8.

The plants of the Sun heal the heart and the blood.

The plants of the Moon heal the brain.

The plants of Venus heal warts.

The plants of Saturn heal the spleen.

The plants of Jupiter heal the lungs.

The plants of Mars heal the pancreas.

The plants of Mercury heal the liver.

Different planetary attributions exist according to the organ or the function. The sun heals the heart, but blood healing may be attributed to Mars.

The plants of Venus heal the genital organs and excretion organs. Saturn heals the spleen as well as the skeleton and the bones.

Some authors attribute the lungs to Mercury, an air sign, and to Jupiter, kidney and liver functions.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

Fractional distillation:

As opposed to the simple distillation we studied beforehand, this distillation permits the purification of a product within a few operations (3 or 4).

Various kinds of columns for fractional distillation exist:

- with shelves
- with Vigreux points
- with rings

We are going to study the last kind, using the mixture water/alcohol as an example. Refer to figure #2 to assemble this apparatus.

The vapors arriving in the column heat up the rings and condense; the rings become covered with a mixture of water/alcohol which is richer than the mixture contained in the flask. The less volatile water condenses before the alcohol. Consequently, the rising vapors become poor in water and rich in alcohol. They wash a mixture which is progressively richer in alcohol as they rise up the column. The liquid which is deposited on the rings, is poorer in alcohol and falls down again into the heating flask. Thus, the bottom of the column must be equipped with two tubes: one for the vapors and the other for the returning liquid. The vapor which reaches the top of the column is sent into the condenser and the distilled alcohol is collected in a flask.

The quality of the alcohol increases if the column is heat-insulated. Two or three distillations with this system give the same result obtained with 6 or 7 simple distillations.

The volume of rings varies with the volume of the product to be treated.

Like the preceding system, you can assemble this material with ground glass sections, or with an apparatus you assemble yourself.

The distilling column containing the rings is sold as a Hempel Column, and the rings under the name of Rashig Rings. There are also small rings called "spiral rings". The Rashig Rings may be replaced with cut glass tubes or pieces of glass since the Rashig Rings are very expensive.

Additional Comments

During this lesson and the following notices, we are going to describe a certain number of necessary materials for the various alchemical works. We shall attempt to dissect the operation processes so as to make them very clear even for an inexperienced operator.

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However, we would like to insist on the fact that it is not mandatory nor desirable to acquire the material at this time: the equipment is expensive and the expense is justified only if one is sure of the chosen path.

During our next lesson, we shall discuss with you the path best suited for you and we shall then indicate the material you should have at hand.

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ENCLOSED FIGURES:

- Figure #1 - Table of Densities of Ethanol at Different Temperatures
- Figure #2 - Fractional Distillation Apparatus

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Lesson 6

Figure #1

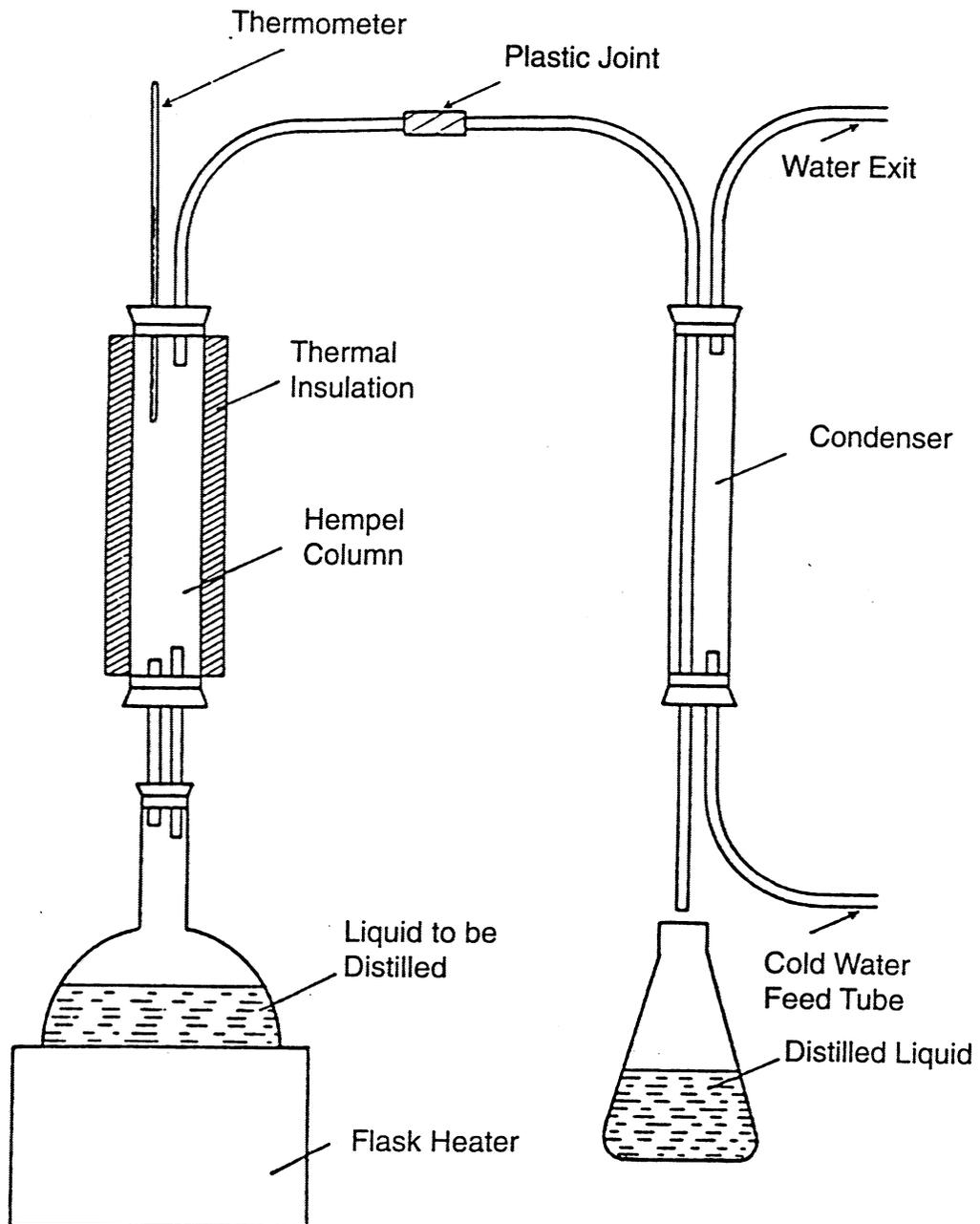
TABLE OF DENSITIES OF ETHANOL AT DIFFERENT TEMPERATURES

%	LIQUID TEMPERATURE									
ALCOHOL	15°	17°	18°	19°	20°	21°	22°	23°	25°	
90°	822	821	820	819	818	817	816	815	814	
91°	819	818	817	816	815	814	813	812	811	
92°	816	815	814	813	812	811	810	809	808	
93°	813	812	811	810	809	808	807	806	805	
94°	810	809	808	807	806	805	804	803	802	
95°	807	806	805	804	803	802	801	800	799	
96°	804	803	802	801	800	799	798	797	796	
97°	801	800	799	798	797	796	795	794	793	
98°	798	797	796	795	794	793	792	791	790	
99°	795	794	793	792	791	790	789	788	787	
100°	792	791	790	789	788	787	786	785	784	

TABLE OF APPROXIMATE DENSITIES OF THE LIQUID RELATIVE TO THE LIQUID TEMPERATURE AND THE PERCENTAGE OF ALCOHOL

Figure #2

FRACTIONAL DISTILLATION APPARATUS



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 7

Dear Friend,

We shall resume the theme we developed in the preceding lesson and attempt to answer the three following questions:

- Why science can't accede to real knowledge?
- How can one objectively realize the difference between knowledge and understanding?
- How does mysticism lead to real knowledge?

There won't be a theoretical part on the subject of planetary correspondences of plants in this lesson because next lesson will be entirely devoted to the subject.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

Science cannot accede to real knowledge because the experiments it performs are conducted in laboratories, under artificial conditions which distort natural mechanisms. Nature alone, under its original conditions, can lead one to real knowledge. Furthermore, science cannot know what it doesn't seek and what it ignores. Since it doesn't acknowledge the difference between intellectual knowledge and spiritual understanding, it has deleted the latter from its field of investigation, and views it as totally non-existent. Religion, on the other hand, doesn't deny its existence, but nevertheless considers it unworthy of research. Mysticism alone attempts to establish the subtle link which unites knowledge with understanding.

This simple example, taken from Nature, shows us the difference between intellectual and real knowledge, and the nature of the link uniting them. Nobody has ever seen a rabbit eating poisonous grass in the fields. On its own, it chooses the right herbs for food or even for healing. The same rabbit, locked in a cage, will be poisoned as soon as it is given an unfortunate choice of cut herbs.

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A naturalist examines the leaves to see if they are opposed or staggered, and counts the number of petals in flowers, or other similar details. He can say if it is *agropyron repens*, that is couch grass or euphorbium, but he cannot tell whether it is a toxic plant without performing experiments at life's expense. He is working in the domain of intellectual knowledge.

In Nature, the rabbit recognizes the signature of the herb which informs it about the toxic or non-toxic state of the herb or more precisely which indicates the degree of reciprocal harmony. If the rabbit is sick, its harmonic complement is no longer the same, and it chooses an herb that won't interfere with its condition but will cure it. It is fundamentally guided to choose what pleases it, what is in harmony with it. For this to work, the individual's fundamental harmony must be in agreement with the Cosmic harmony, either because the fall from Grace did not occur or because re-harmonization happened.

Spiritual Knowledge is identical to a feeling of inner love. Since the rabbit is no longer informed of the harmonic degree of the grass when it is cut, we assume that the fatal wound directed to the grass has caused the departure of its psychic body and with it the departure of Nature's signatures which reside in Nature's soul — the principle of life.

As the rabbit hasn't fallen from Grace, it can read the signatures of Nature thanks to its spiritual perception and thus possesses innate knowledge. Science studies dead beings and therefore ignores their vanished signatures which are the true causes of things. Science looks for the causes in the facts which have already become consequences.

To be more specific, let us try to show Nature's arcana. Just like the physical is divided into three realms: mineral, vegetable and animal, so the principles of life, the psyche, the fourth dimension, and all the same things called by a different name, form three levels of hierarchy, which correspond to the three realms.

When the plant is cut, its principles of life disappear, and only the mineral life principle remains. The physical constitution of the plant remains, because the physical elements' return to the dust of earth (mineral realm) is slow unless it is quickened through fire. The animal then, only detects the mineral signature, that of the simple elements, while the physical structure still comprises the complex molecules of the vegetable realm. Poisoning comes from imposing a mode of artificial feeding. The fall from Grace which deprives man of the spiritual perception of harmony's Inner Love places him under the same conditions as the rabbit which has been given dead food.

The search for real knowledge starts with respect for life and its observation within the framework of Nature only. Yet the primary causes would still escape scientists and technicians because the psychic domain does not yield to physical investigation.

Real knowledge of things is attained through spiritual and psychic perceptions. Inner spiritual perception enables one to read Nature's signatures ; this constitutes absolute knowledge protected from error.

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Lesson 7

Intellectual knowledge is often confused with spiritual knowledge. The first originates in the brain while the other is transmitted through the heart. In effect, to transmit it, we have to intellectualize it, that is, we subject it to the narrow symbolism of words, which limits it and gives but a distorted aspect of it. Real knowledge cannot be transmitted; each one acquires it only on his own, through his own inner development. The point is not acquiring it through systems, or more or less complex symbols, but rather seeking a direct perception of knowledge. One of the keys of this perception is the reharmonization, the re-integration of man in Nature.

Let us re-examine the difference between faith, intellectual knowledge and real knowledge. Faith is not satisfactory; it is at best an anxious hypothesis as opposed to knowledge which is a serene certitude. This statement explains the intolerance of faith because it is fearful and the benevolence of knowledge because it is strong and unswerving in its certitude.

Faith is not an exclusively religious way of thinking. Science also has its "faiths". The Euclidian postulate which we mentioned in the previous lesson is faith and is presently being contested in the atomic and astronomical realms of science.

Faith is a necessary step to knowledge, it gives the courage to begin. Enthusiasm must accompany it if the chosen path is to awaken higher inner lights. But it must be seen as a first stage which has to be left behind. The next step is knowing, then one no longer says "I believe" but "I know". Thus, in the scientific domain, experience transforms faith into knowing, for one realizes a similarity between the uncertain hypothesis and the mechanism of nature. Knowing is nothing but a physical and sensory certitude, demonstrating an identity between thought and the sensory mechanism.

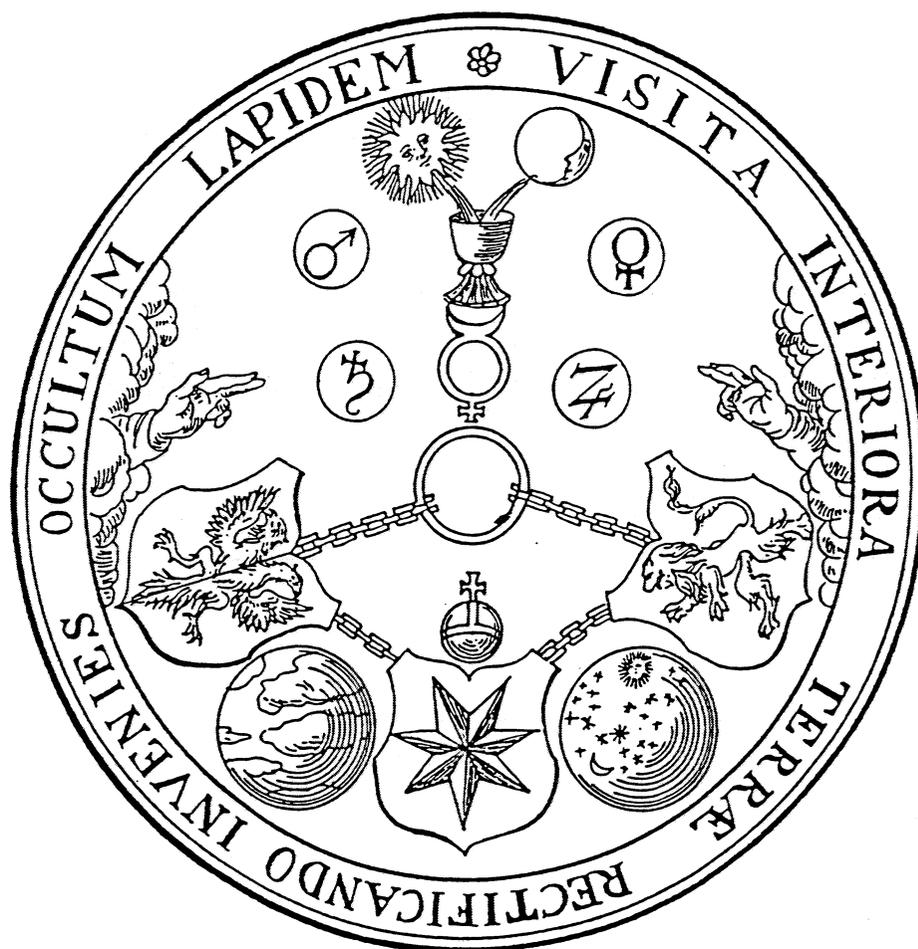
Materialistic scientific research has a positive side, for it shows a convergence towards unity, at least in some fields. Even though unity remains inaccessible to it, scientific research detects its own limits and encourages one to turn to other directions.

The first stages of psychic development demonstrate to the adept on the path, the reality and duality of being; he reaches a higher level of knowing. In the domain of ontology, he replaces "I believe" with "I know." The result is a greater relativity of things, better than that given by science. Thus, the tolerance of the mystic who is willing to examine, without prejudice, the opinions of others. He understands that to each evolutionary step corresponds a level of faith, of knowing or knowledge, and that error is nothing but lower knowledge which will disappear with the progress of its seeker

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 7

This symbol will be explained in the course on the mineral work.



ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

Fractional Distillation (cont'd)

The use of plastics:

The tubes used for water flow in the condensers may be made of polyvinyl chloride. Those used as coupling between glass tubes should be made of "teflon" (see Figure #1) or silicon elastomer.

A few rules to follow in the laboratory:

As much as possible, avoid any contact between rubber or cork stoppers and the extraction liquids. Never use force to join ground glass tubes. Do not exert mechanical force on glass welds. Wet the flexible tubes (rubber or plastic) to be slipped on the glass.

Use cork or waxed-cork stoppers for distilled water or sulfur-free rubber stoppers.

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Grease the ground joints with silicon grease before joining. If a ground glass joint should stick, try to pull the two parts apart, by hammering lightly on the ground joint with a plastic tool; if this doesn't work, lightly heat the ground joint or use hot water.

To clean the glassware, rinse the flasks with ethyl alcohol, then with liquid detergent, followed with regular wash powder and then with clear water. Finish with a light rinse with distilled water or demineralized water or dry the inside of the flask.

Bleach is excellent in all cases, particularly to clean up calcination residues. It must be less than three months old. Never place bleach in contact with acid because chlorine, a very toxic gas is given off.

Additional Comments:

We say on page 1 "when the plant is cut, its life principle disappears."

This affirmation does not exactly correspond to the reality of things, for life cannot be defined in the same way for the vegetable and the animal domains. In the vegetable, there is no life center. Each cell, each tissue possesses a relative autonomy. A small piece of it can be detached and placed somewhere else where it can start another stem.

When one pulls out a plant, it seems that it loses the terrestrial influx which it both carries and distributes, but each cell does not lose its vitality as long as it is not completely dehydrated. It is possible that part of the medicinal properties of plants come from the terrestrial influx that they circulate, or from a certain form of ether more than from their specific chemical components.

This could explain why animals do not make mistakes when, in nature, they are in the presence of a toxic plant. The terrestrial vibration emitted by this plant warns them that it is bad for them, while they eat the same plant when it is pulled out, even though still fresh, because the terrestrial vibration is no longer there and warning signal exists no longer.

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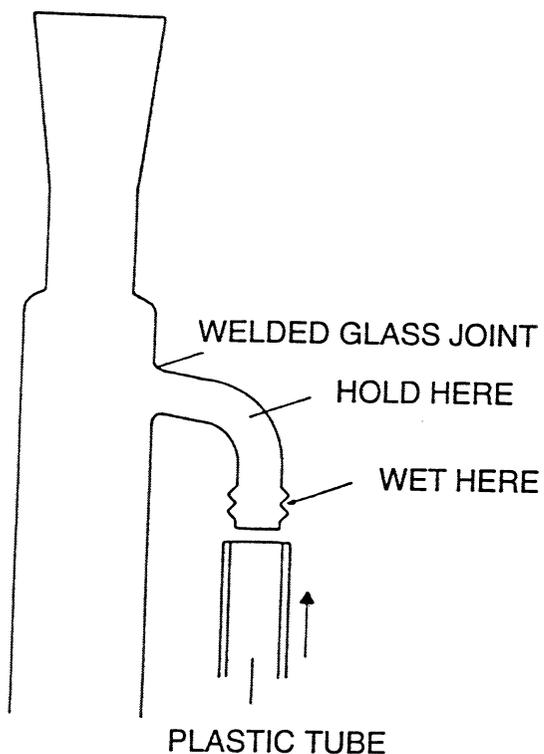
ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Assembly of Glass Tube Couplings

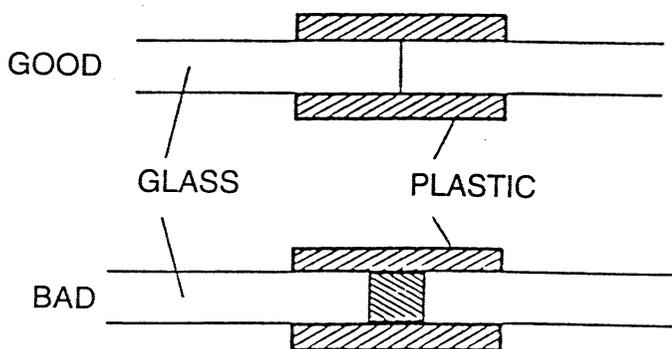
Figure #1

ASSEMBLY OF GLASS TUBE COUPLINGS

- A. ALWAYS WET THE GLASS IN ORDER TO SLIP THE TUBES (RUBBER AND/OR PLASTIC) OVER THE GLASS JOINTS.



- B. DO NOT USE MECHANICAL FORCE ON GLASS WELDS.



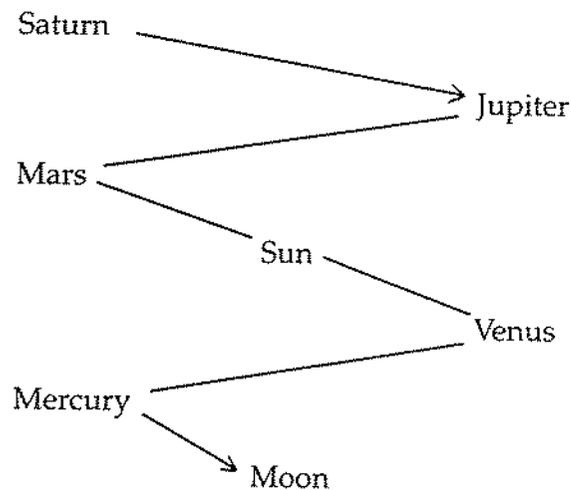
SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

Dear Friend,

This lesson is entirely devoted Alchemical Theory and focusses on the planetary attributions of the plants.

Following are seven lists of plants, one for each planet, the chosen order is as below:



The order has some significance as we shall see.

We present both Latin and the scientific names of the plants. The number 1, 2, or 3 preceding each name have the following meaning:

1. Plant's which may be used without special precautions.
2. Plants which should not be used without extensive documentation.
3. Dangerous or toxic plants, which should be used with much caution.

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Lesson 8

SATURN

1 ? Hypericum androsaeum	tutsan
1 Centaurea cyanus	cornflower
1 Capsella bursa pastoris	shepherd's purse
1 ? Bupleurum rotundifolius	umbelliferaea
1 ? Asplenium trichomanes	
1 Cuscuta	dodder
1 ? Aegopodium podogaria	goutweed
1 Epilobium	willow herb
2 Fumaria officinalis	fumitory
1 Symphytum officinalis	comfrey
1 Plantago psyllium	psyllium
2 Fagus silvatica	beech
3 Taxus baccata	yew
1 Centaurea jacea	knapweed
2 Lotus corniculatus	bird's foot trefoil
1 Mespilus germanica	medlar tree
1 Hordeum sativum	barley
1 Ulmus	elm
2 Osmonda regalis	mucilaginous extracted from royal fern
1 Viola tricolor	pansy
2 Verbascum thapses	mullein

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

1 Populus	poplar
1 Polypodium vulgare	female fern
1 Equisetum arvense	horsetail, shave grass
2 ? Pirula rotundifolia	
1 Polygonum aviculare	knotgrass
3 Polygonatum	Solomon's Seal
1 Tamarix	tamarisk

JUPITER

1 Agrimonia	
1 Vaccinum myrtillus	bilberry
1 Asparagus	asparagus
1 Chrysanthemum balsamita	costmary
1 Borago officinalis	borage
1 Anthriscus	chervil
1 ? Sibylum marianum	milk or holy thistle
1 Castanea sativa	chestnut
2 Quercus	oak
1 Cynodon dactylon	bermuda grass
1 Colchlearia	scurvy grass
1 Chicorium endiva	endive
1 Ficus carica	fig tree
3 Anemone hepatica	iverwort

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

2 Hysopus officinale	hyssop
1 Sempervivum	houseleek
1 ? Smyrniium olusatrum	maceron
3 Melilotus officinalis	melilot
1 Melissa officinalis	balm
2 Rumex	dock
1 Taraxacum officinalis	dandelion
1 Pulmonaria	lungwort
Potentilla reptans	European five-finger grass
1 Rosa	rose
2 Salvia	sage
1 Scolopendrium	hart's tongue

MARS

3 Artemisia absinthium	wormwood
2 Allium sativum	garlic
1 Crataegus	hawthorn
1 Ocimum basilicum	basil
3 Ranonculus bulbosus	bulbous buttercup
3 Bryonia dioica	red bryony
1 Centaurea calcitrapa	star thistle
2 Berberis vulgaris	barberry
1 Rubia tinctorum	madder

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

2 Gentiana	gentian
2 Urtica dioica	nettle
1 Armoracia impathifolia	horseradish
2 Gratolia officinalis	hedge hyssop
2 Humulus lupus	hops
1 ? Peuledanum ostruthium	
1 ? Ajuga chameapitys	ground pine
1 Linum usitatissimum	flax
3 Lobelia urens	lobelia
1 Allium cepa	onion
2 ? Lepidium	mithridate or pepperwort
2 Rheum	rhubarb
3 Juniperus sabina	creeping juniper
3 Nicotiana	tobacco
VENUS	
1 Alchimilla vulgaris	lady's mantle
1 Cynara scolymus	artichoke
1 Arctium	burdock
1 ? Meum athamanticum	spignel
2 Anchusa officinalis	bugloss
1 ? Brunella vulgaris	
2 Nepeta cataria	catnip

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

1 ? Gallium cruciata	crosswort
2 Spiracia oleracea	spinach
1 Filipendula hexapetala	dropwort
1 Fragaria vesca	wild strawberry
3 Rumex acetosa	sorrel
1 Ribes uva crisper	gooseberry
1 Althea officinalis	marsh mallow
2 Chrysanthemum leucanthemum	white weed
2 Mentha	mint
3 Mercurialis annua	mercury herb
1 Achillea millefolium	yarrow
1 Vinca minor	early-flowering periwinkle
1 Pyrus communis	pear tree
1 Cicer arietinum	garbanzo bean
1 Primula officinalis	primrose
1 Filipendula ulmaria	meadowsweet
1 Rubus fruticosus	bramble
1 Sanicula	sanicle
1 ? Succisa praemorsa	devil's bit
2 Ligustrum	common privet
1 Tussilago farfara	coltsfoot
1 Verbena officinalis	European vervain

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

MERCURY

1 Apium graveolens	celery
1 ? Alliaria officinalis	garlic mustard
1 Anethum graveolens	dill
3 Artemisia abrotanum	lad's love
1 Avena sativa	oat
2 ? Calamintha officinalis	calamint
1 ? Asplenium ruta muraria	polypodaceae"
1 Daucus carota	carrot
1 Carum carvi	caraway
2 Lonicera periclymenum	honeysuckle
3 Solanum dulcamara	bittersweet nightshade
2 Foeniculum vulgare	fennel
1 Inula helenium	elecampane
1 Lavendula officinalis	lavender
2 Majorana hortensis	sweet marjoram
1 Marrubium vulgare	horehound
3 Convallaria majalis	lily of the valley
1 Morus	mulberry
1 ? Corylus avellana	
1 Parietaria officinalis	pellitory
1 Glycyrrhiza glabra	licorice

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

1 *Satureia hortensis* savory

1 *Saxifraga tridactyles* saxifrage

SUN

2 *Angelica archangelica* European angelica

1 *Anthemis nobilis* Roman chamomile

2 *Chelidonium majus* celandine

1 *Crithmum maritimum* samphire

1 *Euphrasia* eyebright

1 *Fraxinus excelsior* ash

2 *Juniperus communis* juniper

2 *Heliotropium europaenum* heliotrope

3 *Laurus nobilis* laurel

1 *Levisticum officinalis* lovage

2 *Hypericum perforatum* St. Johnswort

1 *Juglans* walnut

2 *Centaureum vulgare* centaury

1 *Sanguisorba* great burnet

2 *Rosmarinus officinalis* rosemary

2 *Ruta graveolens* rue

2 *Crocus sativus* saffron

1 *Calendula officinalis* calendula

1 *Potentilla (+)* tormentil

(+) contact with iron or steel, causes the plant to become toxic.

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

1 Trifolia	clover
1 Echium	blue-weed or viper's bugloss

MOON

1 ? Acanthus mollis	bear's breech
1 ? Cardamina	milkmaid
1 Trapa natans	water chestnut
1 Brassica	cabbage
1 Cucumis sativus	cucumber
2 Nasturtium officinalis	watercress
1 Dentaria	toothwort
1 Lythrum salicaria	loosestrife
1 Galium aparine	cleavers
1 Iris versicolor	blue flag
2 Lactuca sativa	common lettuce
2 Lilium candidum	white lily
1 Stellaria media	chickweed
1 Hieracium pilosella	mouse ear
3 ? Anacyclus	compositae
1 Salix	willow
1 Saxifraga	pimpernel saxifrage
1 Salvia sclarea	clary sage
1 Veronica (beccabunga)	brooklime

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

Notice that, in this lesson, some of the planetary attributions given plants evolve with the plants themselves. We shall develop this feature later on in the course. We advise you to keep this lesson handy, for it quickly becomes a much-needed tool.

ORA ET LABORA !

Note from the Translator.

I checked each plant in the following books

- * Websters dictionary
- * The Herb Book by John Lust
- * Natural Healing with Herbs by Humbart Santillo

I left question marks by the plant I could not find.

Saturn:

- Hypericum androsaeum : Tutsan ?
(We have Hypericum perforatum which is St Johnswort)
- Bupleurum rotundifolius : Umbelliferacea?
- Asplenium trichomanes?
- Aegopodium podogaria: Goutweed?
- Osmunda regalis : mucilaginous extract of royal fern?
(Osmunda cinnamomea is cinnamon fern)
- Pirula Rotundifolia?
- (Shave grass is Equisetum arvense)

Jupiter:

- Sybilum marianum ?
(Milk thistle is Carduus marianus)
- Smyrnum olutrasum: Maceron?

Mars:

- Peuledanum ostruthium ?
(Masterwort is Heracleum lanatum)
- Ajuga chameopitys : Ground pine ?
- Lepidium : mithridate or pepperwort ?

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 8

Venus:

- *Meum athamanticum*: spignel ?
- *Brunella vulgaris*?
- *Gallium cruciata*: crosswort?
- *Succisa praemorsa*: Devil's bit ?

Mercury:

- *Alliaria officinalis*: garlic mustard?
 - *Asplenium ruta muraria*: polypodacea ?
 - *Calamintha officinalis* : calamint?
 - *Corylus avelana* ?
- (It is not witchhazel. But *Corylus americana* is Hazelnut)

Moon:

- *Acanthus mollis*: bear's breech?
- *Cardamina* : Milkmaid ?
- *Anacyclus*: compositae?
- *Veronica beccabunga* is brooklime
and *Veronica officinalis* is speedwell.

Notes:

From studying herbs and their names in the past, I found out two things that seem to happen.

- * The same plant or plant family may have a different latin name in Europe and America.
- * Some plants found in Europe do not have a corresponding plant in America. But you may find that with the American variety of the plant often the first latin name is the same and the latin qualifier is different.

When lesson 8 of the Spagyrics Course was being translated from French into English, the translator, Brigitte Donvez, encountered a difficulty. The lesson was primarily a chart of plants and their planetary rulers. Some of the scientific names used in the French lesson did not correspond to those used in the reference books available to the translator.

At present, we are looking over the lessons, and making improvements that make them more legible, complete and correct. Since some of the references were in question, the lesson was published with the unresolved entries identified. In the effort to resolve these issues, the entire section was proofread and several texts were used to resolve the problems.

Culpepper's Complete Herbal, by Nicholas Culpepper, W. Foulsham & Co. Ltd., England. This was the primary text, since it was apparently the source for the creation of the table in the original lessons. Even this classic text is not without error. For example, All-Heal, is identified as *Prunella vulgaris*. It is a plant 5 to 6 feet tall according to the description of Culpepper, and is under the dominion of Mars. In the same text, Self-Heal, a low-creeping herb, typically not more than a foot high is under the rulership of Venus. It is also identified as *Prunella vulgaris*. This error leads me to believe that the Latin names for the plants are a later addition to the text. Such errors are not numerous but must be considered.

Culpepper's Color Herbal, edited by David Potterton, Sterling Publishing, NY, 1983. This book draws heavily on The Complete Herbal, with the addition of modern medical references and color illustrations of the plants. It proved helpful since the Latin names of plants are indexed, whereas they are not in The Complete Herbal. Devil's Bit, described as 'venereal' by Culpepper under "Government and Virtues" was listed as 'not ascribed to a planet or astrological sign'. Venereal herbs are under Venus, just as jovial herbs are under Jupiter, and martial herbs under Mars.

Also of value was The Alchemist's Handbook by Frater Albertus, Samuel Weiser, 1981. This text gives charts which are intended as a list of attributions assigned by Culpepper in his Complete Herbal. It is a good check list, and yet it has a few flaws. In several

instances, two plants are printed on the same line, such as "vine viper's bugloss" and "sage samphire". In other cases, a two-part name is printed on two lines, such as "benedictus cardines". Further, Albertus lists Buck's Horn Plantain under Saturn. While Culpepper was not explicit about this species of plantain being under Venus along with the common plantain, it would be uncharacteristic for him to neglect mentioning a ruler changing within a plant species. There is no indication, at any rate, that it should be under Saturn.

J. M. Nickell's Botanical Ready Reference, Trinity Center Press, CA, 1976, is an extensive cross reference by scientific name and common name. This proved very useful, as did A Modern Herbal by Mrs. M. Grieve, Dorset Press, NY, 1992. In addition to having indices by scientific and common names, it offers complete descriptions of the plants, and cites Culpepper. This combination of features proved helpful in making some decisions.

The original French Spagyrics lesson was also an important resource. This edition has a French to English table of plant names which sorted out some problems. It is not included in the English-language lessons, since it is not common for English readers to use French-language references for identifying plant names. There were a few instances when plants were assigned to planets in error. These were generally because of naming problems: the Latin names of plants have changed from time to time with reclassifications by botanists, and often the species name used by the editor of Culpepper's Complete Herbal, is not a common species in France. I think that there were less than 5 or six such instances.

The list of plants in the lesson was corrected to agree with Culpepper, and to use the most widely accepted Latin name according to the references I have cited. That Culpepper was the original source is apparent because there were not more than two plants in the original lesson that were not classified by Culpepper. Further, the choice of plants is unusually like those catalogued by Culpepper, including many plants rarely available and therefore not in common use today.

It is worth noting that the Spagyrics lesson does not include all of the plants catalogued by Culpepper. The

omissions are most notable under Saturn, the ruler of many highly toxic plants. For example, hemlock, henbane, black hellebore, and nightshade are not listed. NOTE: These plants are dangerous. This was done, presumably, for reasons of safety, since the lessons are received by people beginning practical work in spagyrics, and there is no reason for them to consider choosing any of these plants for their work. I mention this here, only to be somewhat complete in discussing how this lesson was re-edited.

Note about the charts:

The number in the first column is meant as an indicator of the relative safety of the plant:

1. Plants which may be used with without special precautions
2. Plants which should not be used without an extensive study of documentation about the plant
3. Plants which are dangerous or toxic and should be used only with great caution.

SATURN

1	Hordeum sativum	Barley
2	Fagus silvatica	Beech
2	Lotus corniculata	Bird's Foot Trefoil
1	Symphytum officinalis	Comfrey
1	Centaurea cyanus	Cornflower
1	Cuscuta epithymum	Dodder of Thyme
1	Ulmus	Elm
1	Polypodium vulgare	Female Fern
2	Fumaria officinalis	Fumitory
1	Aegopodium podogaria	Goutweed, Goat-Herb
2	Trientalis Europaeae	Green (Winter), Chickweed Wintergreen
1	Equisetum arvense	Horsetail, Shave Grass
1	Centaurea jacea	Knapweed
1	Polygonum aviculare	Knotgrass
1	Mespilus germanica	Medlar Tree
2	Verbascum thapsus	Mullein
1	Viola tricolor	Pansy
1	Populus nigra, P. alba	Poplar, Black And White
1	Plantage psyllium	Psyllium
1	Capsella bursa pastoris	Shepherd's Purse
3	Polygonatum multiflorum	Solomon's Seal
1	Asplenium ceterach*	Spleenwort, Common
1	Tamarix Gallica	Tamarisk
1	Bupleurum campestre	Thorough-Leaf, Hare's Ear
1	Androsaemum officinale	Tutsan

SATURN - Continued

2	Osmonda regalis	Water Fern or Osmond Royal Fern
1	Epilobium	Willow Herb
3	Taxus baccata	Yew

JUPITER

1	Agrimonia eupatoria	Agrimony
1	Smymium olusatrum	Alexanders
1	Asparagus officinalis	Asparagus
1	Melissa officinalis	Balm
1	Vaccinum myrtillus	Bilberry
2	Borago officinalis	Borage
1	Myrrhis odorata	Chervil
1	Castanea vesca	Chestnut
1	Potentilla reptans	Cinque-Foil, Five-Finger Grass
1	Tanacetum balsamita	Costmary
1	Triticum repens	Couch Grass, Dog Grass
1	Taraxacum officinalis	Dandelion
2	Rumex, spp.	Dock
1	Chicorium endiva	Endive
1	Figus carica	Fig Tree
1	Asplenium scolopendrium	Hart's Tongue Fern
1	Sempervivum	Houseleek
2	Hysopus officinale	Hyssop
1	Carduus marianus	Lady's Thistle
3	Anemone hepatica	Liverwort
1	Pulmonaria officinalis	Lungwort

JUPITER - Continued

1	<i>Spiraea ulmaria</i>	Meadowsweet
3	<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Melilot
2	<i>Quercus robur.</i>	Oak
1	<i>Rosa canina</i>	Rose: Wild Briar Rose, Dog Rose
2	<i>Salvia officinalis</i>	Sage
1	<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Samphire (Small)
1	<i>Colchlearia officinalis</i>	Scurvy Grass

MARS

2	<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>	Barberry
1	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Basil
3	<i>Juniperus sabina</i>	Creeping Juniper, Savine
3	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	Crowfoot, Buttercup
1	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	Flax, Flax Seed, Linseed
2	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Garlic
2	<i>Gentiana, spp.</i>	Gentian
1	<i>Crataegus oxyacanthus</i>	Hawthorn
2	<i>Gratolia officinalis</i>	Hedge Hyssop
2	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>	Hops
1	<i>Cochlearia armoracea</i>	Horseradish
1	<i>Rubia tinctorum</i>	Madder
1	<i>Imperatoria ostruthium</i>	Masterwort
2	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Nettle
1	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Onion
3	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>	Red Bryony
2	<i>Rheum hybridum</i>	Rhubarb
1	<i>Centaurea calcitrapa</i>	Star Thistle
3	<i>Nicotiana tabacum</i>	Tobacco
1	<i>Dentaria bulbifera</i>	Toothcress, Toothwort
3	<i>Artemisia absinthium</i>	Wormwood

SUN

2	<i>Angelica archangelica</i>	Angelica
1	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ash
3	<i>Laurus nobilis</i>	Bay Laurel
1	<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Blue-Weed Or Viper's B
1	<i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>	Burnet
2	<i>Chelidonium majus</i>	Celandine (Greater)
2	<i>Centaureum cyanus</i>	Centaury (Small)
1	<i>Anthemis nobilis</i>	Chamomile (Roman)
1	<i>Trifolium cordatis</i>	Clover (Heart Shaped)
1	<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i>	Eyebright

SUN - Continued

2	<i>Heliotropium grandiflorum</i>	Heliotrope
2	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Juniper
1	<i>Levisticum officinalis</i>	Lovage
1	<i>Calendula officinalis</i>	Marigold
2	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i>	Rosemary
2	<i>Ruta graveolens</i>	Rue
2	<i>Crocus sativus</i>	Saffron
2	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	St. Johnswort
1	<i>Potentilla tormentilla</i>	Tormentil (See warning) (+)
1	<i>Juglans, spp.</i>	Walnut
(+)	Contact with iron or steel causes tormentil to become toxic.	

VENUS

1	<i>Cynara scolymus</i>	Artichoke
1	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Bramble
2	<i>Anchusa officinalis</i>	Bugloss
1	<i>Arctium lappa</i>	Burdock
2	<i>Nepeta cataria</i>	Catnip
1	<i>Cicer arietinum</i>	Chick Pea, Garbanzo Bean
1	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	Coltsfoot
2	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Common Privet
1	<i>Galium cruciata</i>	Crosswort
1	<i>Scabiosa succisa</i>	Devil's Bit
2	<i>Lepidium sativum</i>	Dittander, Pepperwort
1	<i>Spiraea filipendula</i>	Dropwort
1	<i>Ribes glossularia</i>	Gooseberry
1	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Ground Pine, Bugle
1	<i>Alchimilla vulgaris</i>	Lady's Mantle
1	<i>Althea officinalis</i>	Marsh Mallow
2	<i>Mentha spp.</i>	Mint
2	<i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i>	Ox-Eye Daisy
1	<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Pear Tree
1	<i>Vinca major & V. minor</i>	Periwinkle
1	<i>Primula officinalis</i>	Primrose
1	<i>Sanicula, spp.</i>	Sanicle
1	<i>Brunella vulgaris</i>	Self Heal, Heal All
3	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Sorrel
1	<i>Verbena officinalis</i>	Vervain
1	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild Strawberry
1	<i>Alchillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow

MERCURY

3	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Bittersweet Nightshade
2	<i>Calamintha officinalis</i>	Calamint
1	<i>Carum carvi</i>	Caraway
1	<i>Daucus carota</i>	Carrot
1	<i>Apium graveolens</i>	Celery
1	<i>Anethum graveolens</i>	Dill
1	<i>Inula hellenium</i>	Elecampane
2	<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i>	Fennel
3	<i>Mercurialis annua</i>	Good Henry, English Mercury
1	<i>Corylus, spp.</i>	Hazel Nut
2	<i>Lonicera caprifolium</i>	Honeysuckle
1	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i>	Horehound
1	<i>Lavandula officinalis</i>	Lavender
1	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Licorice
3	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Lily Of The Valley
1	<i>Adiantum capillus</i>	Maidenhair (Common), Also Asplenium (White Maidenhair)
1	<i>Morus, spp.</i>	Mulberry
1	<i>Avena sativa</i>	Oats
1	<i>Parietaria officinalis</i>	Pellitory
3	<i>Anthemis pyrethrum</i>	Pellitory of Spain
1	<i>Alliaria officinalis</i>	Sauce-Along, Garlic Cress

MERCURY - Continued

1	<i>Satureia hortensis</i>	Savory
3	<i>Artemisia abrotanum</i>	Southernwood, Lad's Love
1	<i>Meum athamanticum</i>	Spignel, broad-leaved
2	<i>Majorana hortensis</i>	Sweet Marjoram

MOON

1	<i>Brassica oleracea</i>	Cabbage
1	<i>Stellaria media</i>	Chickweed
1	<i>Salvia sclarea</i>	Clary Sage
1	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Cleavers
2	<i>Lactuca sativa</i>	Common Lettuce
1	<i>Cardamina pratensis</i>	Cuckoo Flower, Lady's Smock
1	<i>Cucumis sativus</i>	Cucumber
1	<i>Iris versicolor</i>	Iris, Blue Flag
1	<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	Loosestrife
1	<i>Hieracium pilosella</i>	Mouse Ear
1	<i>Saxifraga tridactyles</i>	Saxifrage
1	<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Saxifrage
1	<i>Veronica officinalis</i>	Veronica, Speedwell
1	<i>Trapa nutans</i>	Water Chestnut
2	<i>Nasturtium officinalis</i>	Watercress
2	<i>Lilium candidum</i>	White Lily
1	<i>Salix</i>	Willow

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 9

Dear Friend,

Our work today starts with a text about the Lost Word.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

One day, the Buddha met the Gods and they told him:

“Say your wish and it will be granted”.

Buddha said:

“Oh, Gods! Grant me the meaning of words and I shall have nothing else to learn.”

We shall attempt to define the Verb, language and knowledge. Our study can only be partial because if we fully knew the Verb, we would have returned to the eternal empire.

According to mystics, a long time ago, on earth, there used to be a unique language called the original language which is sought today as the “Lost Word.”

The true Verb, the Verb of the Bible’s “Fiat Lux” is the energy which is ceaselessly radiated by the formless being. The “Fiat Lux” is simply the vibrations of this energy as they are subjected to the law which is dictated by The Being, the Harmony where Beings, the Elohim came from, and all those who use this energy to create the worlds, the body of men and the light of the sun which is but a pale reflection of this energy. Putting order into this energy results in Time, form, space; without these operations there it can only be the Void, the Non-Manifest. Our body, our flesh, our blood are but vibrations which are subjected to the ultimate law of vibrations: harmony. Harmony exists in all realms, but we can get a clear idea of it in the realm of music. If we play a sequence of notes on the piano, we notice that some notes, even though they are different seem to have analogies between them.

If we start with a G, each time we strike the higher note of G, we notice that each note is recognizable as such; but the G evolves. The number of vibrations per second (384 for the G) is characteristic of each note. If we double the number of vibrations, we obtain a new G.

Let us imagine a keyboard that is long, so long it extends infinitely. With each new octave, the number of vibrations doubles: after five successive Gs we no longer hear anything (certain

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 9

individuals can perceive as far as the sixth or seventh G). If we could build a piano fitting this description, the vibrations would eventually disturb the radio, then television, then radar. The next note would produce heat and after the forty second G there would be a red light. Then, there would be no sound, nor light. A C would create hydrogen, an A would create oxygen. If we make a chord with these two notes we would obtain water.

All created things are but a chord of notes on the cosmic keyboard. If we made the same chord in the audible realm, we could have an idea of the vibrations and this would be the true name of its manifestation into the language of the Lost Word. G is the note which corresponds to the red light. A sound containing the same numbers as C and A would be the true name of water.

The non-initiate vibrates the air of the physical world and his word has little resonance with the higher frequencies. The initiate is an energy-transformer: he re-establishes within himself the links between the various levels of consciousness and the various vibratory levels of the Universe. The more he advances on the path, the higher the frequencies he reaches and the better the links between his different inner levels. Thus we can understand in the Bible the part of Genesis where it is said that men created animals by naming them by their true names. Moses pronounced the authentic name of water which sprang forth from the sands of the desert.

The original language is only useful to man when he has re-established his inner harmony. In this case, the Lost Word is at once Harmony, Power and Knowledge, and as Harmony it includes Love.

Nowadays, the closest language to the original language is Hebrew, as long as we use the letters in accordance with their hieroglyphic meaning, linkages and pronunciation.

In the Bible, the story of the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues is an allegory. The esoteric meaning is the following:

Adam is the androgynous man-God, He is then differentiated into male and female, that is to say, that within himself the passive energies become opposed to the active energies He voluntarily breaks away from the harmony of Unity in order to be able to work his evolution in the world of matter. The Tower of Babel is his desire to return to Unity too fast. The sky is the symbol of unity and the tower, the means to reach it. The confusion of tongues is the loss of the original language which takes away from man the means to a premature return. It forces him to a complete experience in the level of matter since the loss of the Word isolates him temporarily from higher levels.

The Original Language is a vibratory image of reality. If man reintegrates with unity, it becomes reality for him. This is why this language says: "All words are truth, for the Verb is".

We should point out that the current language is just a set of conventions. If we wish to

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know what a word represents, what it symbolizes, we open a dictionary where this word is explained by other terms. Thus, each word has a value only in virtue of its relationship with other words. All the words known to an individual are like a gigantic spider web where each word is a knot joined to other word-knot by the threads. The surface of the web indicates our degree of understanding of Earth languages. All these terms are mere conventions without any absolute value.

Thus, we can't acquire real knowledge through language or through reading. Only through our personal experience can we slowly change conventional language into a knowledge of Nature's laws.

But few individuals are aware of these phenomena and most people, because of their misunderstanding of the mechanism, are handicapped in their mental development.

Thus, what one believes or thinks he knows is divided into two parts:

- conventional knowledge which for most represents 98% of knowledge and
- the knowledge of Nature's laws, that is "our reality at our present level of consciousness.

It is the only tangible, eternal notion within us, but it is unfortunately very weak in most of humanity.

Let us give two examples to clarify the difference between these two forms of knowledge.

Imagine an electrician who, in principle, knows about the laws of nature in the domain of electricity. He makes a plan conforming to these laws, because one does not dominate Nature but respects her in her laws. If his plans and his realization conform, he obtains the desired result and his machine works.

Imagine now legal experts establishing a new civil code. What lawyers and law makers presently know would become obsolete as soon as the government ratifies this new code.

Yet these laws won't have any effect on the functioning of the electrician's machine because the conventions of men have no effect on the laws of Nature.

Actually, as a result of confusion, few people separate the real from the conventional, but if we were to meditate to find out what is real, we would realize that many failures come from the fact that we give priority to convention over the real, whereas the reverse is a necessity and a condition for success.

The Nature of Knowledge:

How can we find knowledge again, through our language?

Our language is conventional in its intellectual interpretation but the sounds have a certain value. Music has an effect on the inner because it is the reflection of the Lost Word. The same

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applies to the sounds AUM, RA, MA. Even in our conversations, sounds preserve their quality; our primary essence vibrates with A, R is active, M is passive. If we use the proper vibrations, even if they do not have an equivalent in our intellectual language, they resonate in our psychic centers, the progressive awakening of which corresponds to an increase of our consciousness level.

Let us examine, by means of a symbol, the upward path of man through his different knowledge and consciousness levels.

Imagine a pyramid with a missing apex like that of Cheops for example and let us visualize it and the successive regular layers of stones which constitute it.

The bottom layer is that of conventions which fixes the meaning of words: one stone will represent history, another music, another chemistry, another physics. At that level, knowledge is multiple and there does not seem to be any link between the various disciplines of the mind. Thus, they appear separated from each other.

If we move to a higher layer, we shall then be in the realm of the physical laws of Nature, and there will be, for example, a relationship between physics and chemistry, but not between science and music. The various branches of knowledge are getting closer but unity is not yet apparent.

Let us move up a little further; music, chemistry and physics have here several common points, because we are at the beginning of harmony and these sciences are a reflection of universal harmony.

If we reach the top platform, harmony appears there at its highest level and the unity of knowledge can be perceived. What we call feelings are part of it and knowledge, understanding and love are but a single thing.

At the bottom of the pyramid, different disciplines are represented:

- love, kindness, intellectual charity on one face
- literature and history on the second face
- arts and music on the third face
- natural sciences on the fourth face

therefore, to man, they seem opposed and different.

Imagine a line starting from each face of the pyramid and converging toward the top; all the rays get closer and fuse as they ascend, in the elevation of man's consciousness.

However, the unity is not complete. That is the meaning of the mutilated apex of the pyramid. Complete unity - the Apex of the pyramid - is not materialized because it is not accessible to man before he has returned to the invisible empire.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY**- LINK BETWEEN THE QABALA AND ALCHEMY**

It is necessary to touch upon the subject of the Qabala before we can understand and use the planetary attributions of plants in Alchemy.

The Qabala is an attempt to explain the macrocosm of which man, the microcosm, is the image.

On figure #1, the circles represent the successive emanations of creation which correspond to the different levels of consciousness in man. These emanations are called Sephiroth and are numbered from 1 to 10. This numbering represents the different stages through which higher energies pass on their path downward.

The Sephiroth 1 and 2, Kether and Chockmah, are outside the world of form and cannot be reached by alchemical spagyrics.

The third one, Binah, whose Planetary Chakra is the planet Saturn, is the first obstacle to the descent of energies; thus, the first we should cleanse ; this is accomplished with an elixir made with a Saturn plant. Then, we move onto Chesed with a Jupiter plant, and Geburah with a Mars plant, Tiphereth with a Sun plant and so on until Yesod where the path to Malkuth is open.

This work enables the operator to perform a psychic detoxification.

If we examine figure #2, the Chymical Sky, where the attributions of metals and plants are represented, we should notice that the sequence is the same as the one of the Tree of Life of the Kabala except for the Moon and the Sun. The difference comes from the fact that, in this case, the emphasis is on the ascent more than the descent.

This figure does not show the planetary attributions of Malkuth for the metal which is affected is antimony, and it has different properties from all other metals.

In the vegetable realm, there is only one plant whose alchemical behavior is analogous to that of antimony, and we shall study it in the near future.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE - DISTILLATION:**Azeotrope:**

By azeotrope, we mean the impossibility to completely separate two liquids through distillation. In the case of water-alcohol, the azeotrope is stabilized when there is about 3 to 4% of water left in the alcohol.

Vacuum Distillation

Vacuum distillation can be single or fractional as previously stated. It requires the use of a vacuum tight apparatus and a vacuum pump (See figures # 3, 4, and 5).

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Vacuum distillation can have two advantages:

- boiling occurs at lower temperatures. With a vacuum of 9/10 atmospheres, that is 95 mm of mercury of residual pressure, a temperature of 51C is needed to reach water boiling point and a temperature of 33.5C to reach alcohol boiling point. This prevents, to a certain extent, the destruction by heat of the fragile essence of certain plants.

- another advantage is explained in Figure #6, (Page 14).

We do not use the 3 kg pressure in the distillation we perform, but it is given as an example of the law which governs these phenomena.

At 3 kg pressure, water boils at 134C (273.2F) and alcohol at 109C (228.2F), instead of respectively 100C (212F) and 78,5C (173.3F) at normal pressure. In a vacuum, that is 95 mm of mercury, the boiling point of water is 51C (123.8F) and that of alcohol 33.5C (92.3 F).

The mixture of the two liquids has a boiling temperature less than that of each of the liquids separately.

"The azeotrope is modified. At normal pressure, one can reach a percentage of alcohol of 95.6% and in a vacuum of 95 mm, 99.5%, which is very close to absolute alcohol.

The vacuum pump must be equipped with a vacuum stop—cock to avoid excessive consumption of water. One establishes a vacuum and then closes the stop-cock in order to stop the flow of water through the vacuum pump.

If the apparatus is vacuum-tight, the vacuum is maintained, and it can be controlled with a thermometer which indicates the temperature of the vapors or with a vacuum gauge; it is a good idea to have them both.

During vacuum distillation, it is important to place distillation (boiling) stones in the liquid. They are small chunks of pumice stone or teflon which have been carefully cleaned; they are neutral from a chemical point of view. 3 or 4 of these stones are placed in the boiling flask. They are cleaned after each use and can be used indefinitely. Their use is recommended for any distillation for they smoothe the boiling action.

"Never place the stones into a hot liquid."

There is no need to have a vacuum that is too low; it is at about 95 or 75 mm of mercury of residual vacuum that the strength of the alcohol is the highest. If the vacuum is too low, the liquid will evaporate at the ambient temperature and thus water can go through.

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As in figure #5, a ballast-flask which serves as a vacuum reservoir is useful to prevent the water from returning to the distillation products. The tube which joins the vacuum pump to the vacuum intake must be specially made for vacuum because tubes that are too thin collapse and it is then impossible to establish a vacuum.

We shall talk about the principles of vacuum distillation in the course of various experiments.

LEXICON

Ancient Names	Modern Names
ammoniac salt	ammonium chloride
blue vitriol	copper sulfate
Chilian saltpeper	sodium nitrate
cream of tartar	acid potassium tartrate (purified)
deer horns salt	ammonium chloride
English Salt-	Magnesium sulfate
Epsom Salt	Magnesium sulfate
Flame salt	melted rock salt
Glauber salt	Sodium sulfate
green vitriol	iron sulfate
grey salt	impure marine salt
lemon salt	potassium oxalate
liberating salt	potash (potassium) nitrate
Magnesia Salt	Magnesium sulfate
niter salt	potassium nitrate
red vitriol	cobalt sulfate
rock salt	Sodium chloride
roman vitriol	copper sulfate
Salt of the Wise	ALEMBROTH, double chloride of ammonium and mercury
saltpeter	potassium nitrate
saturn salt	lead acetate
Sedlitz salt	Magnesium sulfate
soda salt	sodium carbonate
tartar salt	potassium carbonate
tartaric acid	comes from wine lees
Venice salt	borax
vitriol oil	sulfuric acid
vitriol salt	zinc sulfate
vitriol	salt
vitriol stone	compound of ferric sulfate and aluminum sulfate
vitriol tartar	potassium sulfate
watercress salt	potassium oxalate

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white vitriol
wormwood

zinc sulfate
salt potassium carbonate

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ENCLOSED FIGURES:

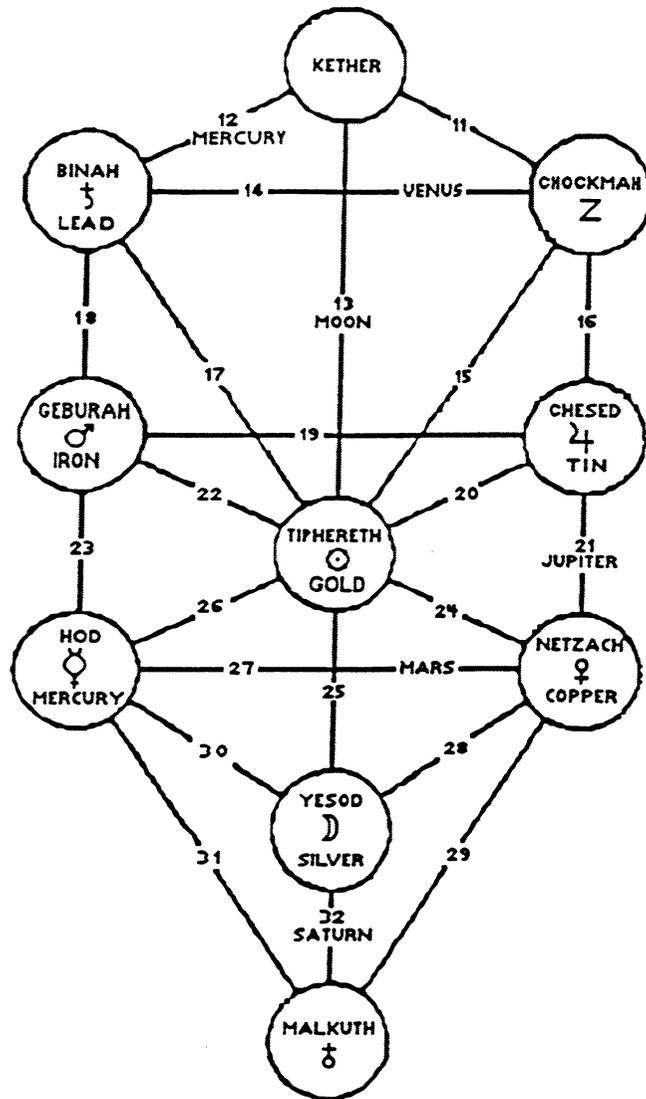
- Figure #1 - Metallic Correspondences of the Tree of Life
- Figure #2 - The Chymical Sky
- Figure #3 - Vacuum Distillation Apparatus(simplified version), Low Placement
- Figure #4 - Vacuum Distillation Aparatus(simplified system), High Placement
- Figure #5 - Vacuum Distillation Apparatus (complete system)
- Figure #6 - Chart of the Boiling Points of Water and Ethanol at Various Pressures.

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Figure #1

METALLIC CORRESPONDENCES OF THE TREE OF LIFE



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Figure #2

THE CHYMICAL SKY

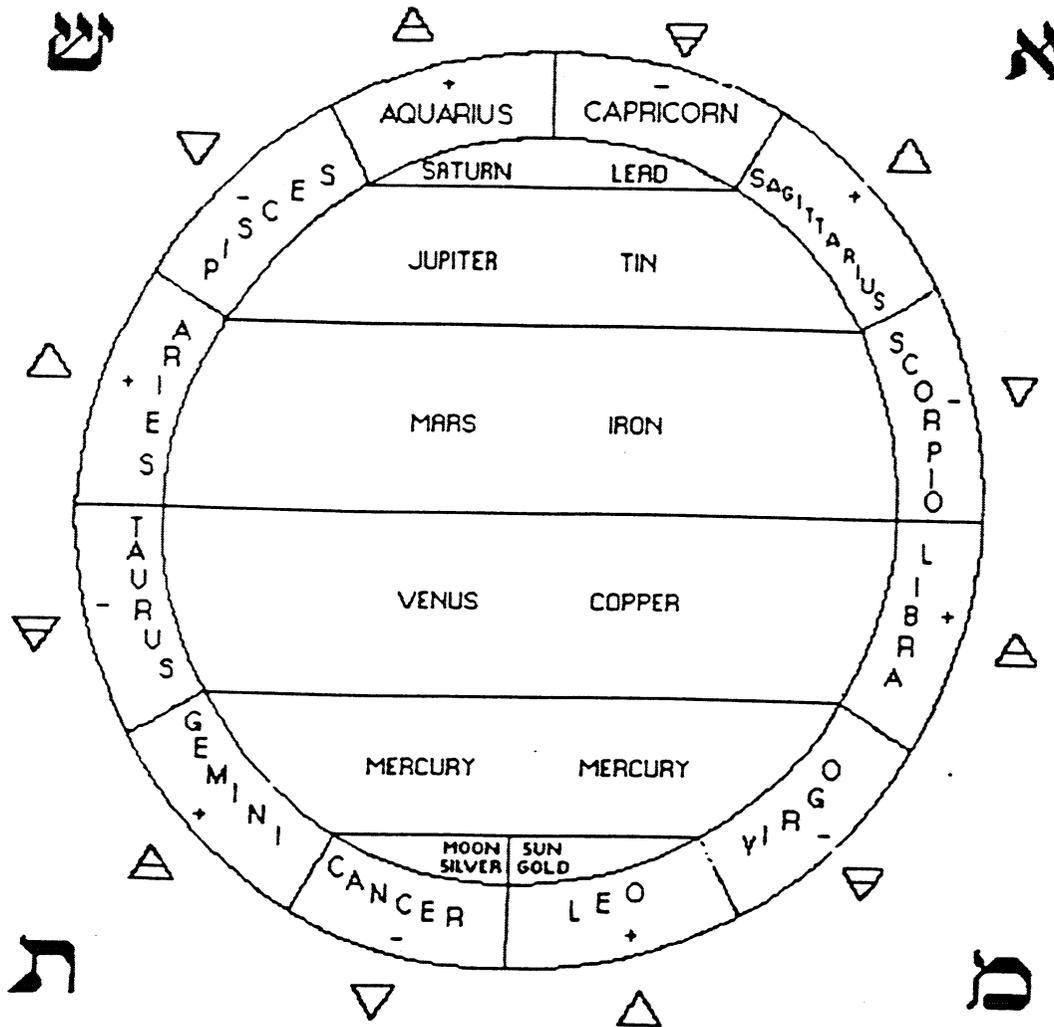


Figure #3

VACUUM DISTILLATION APPARATUS (Simplified System) LOW PLACEMENT

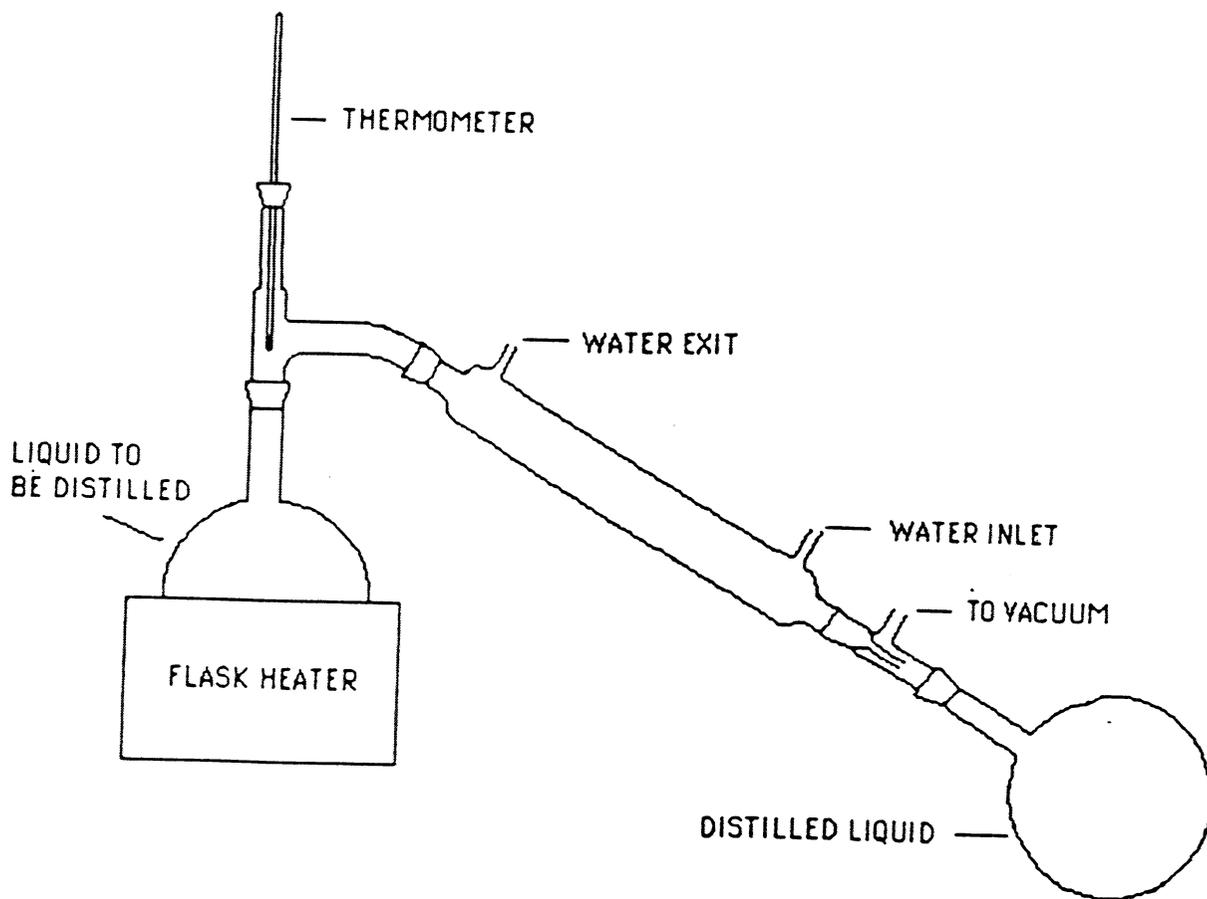


Figure #4

VACUUM DISTILLATION APPARATUS (Simplified System) HIGH PLACEMENT

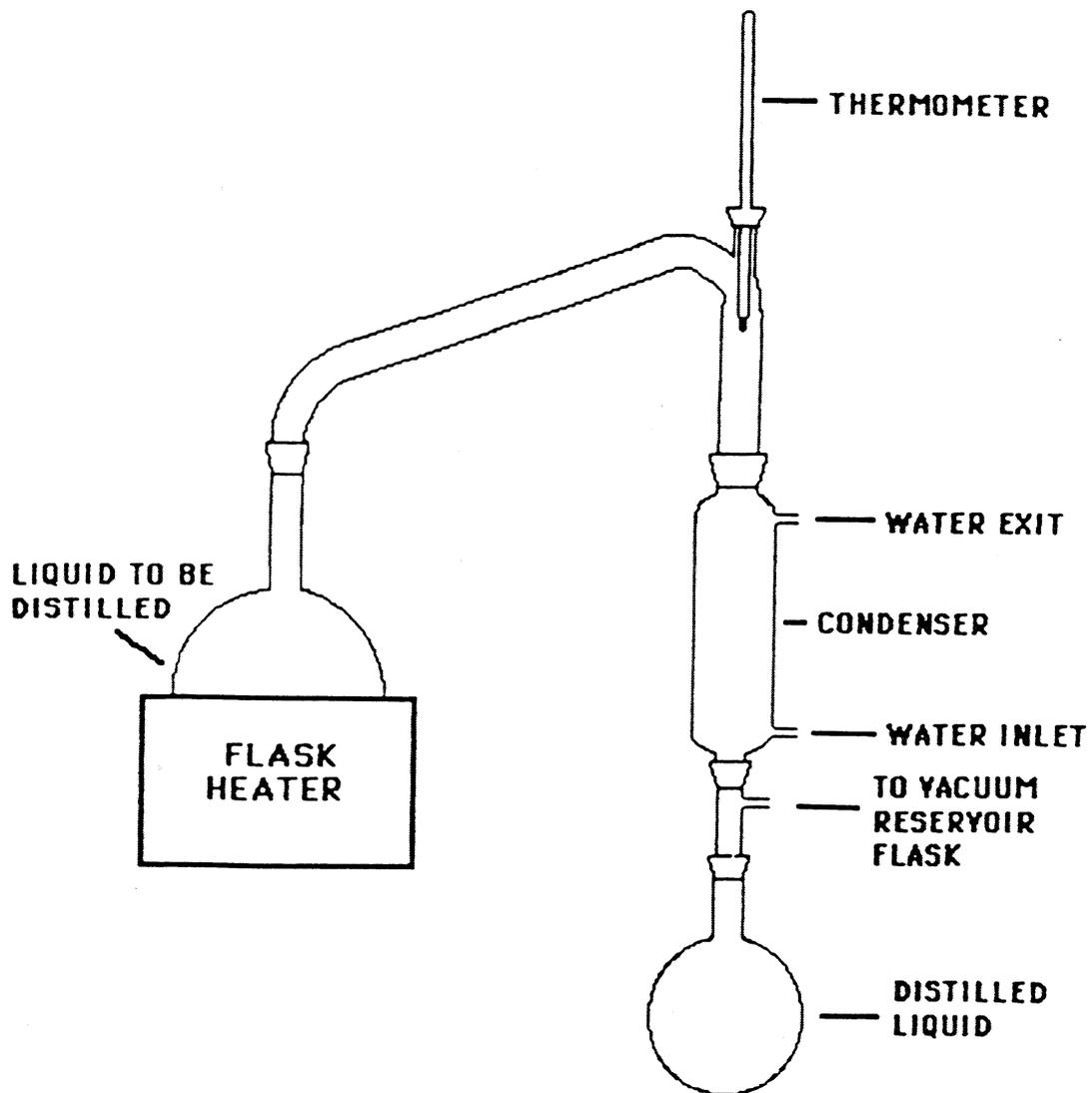
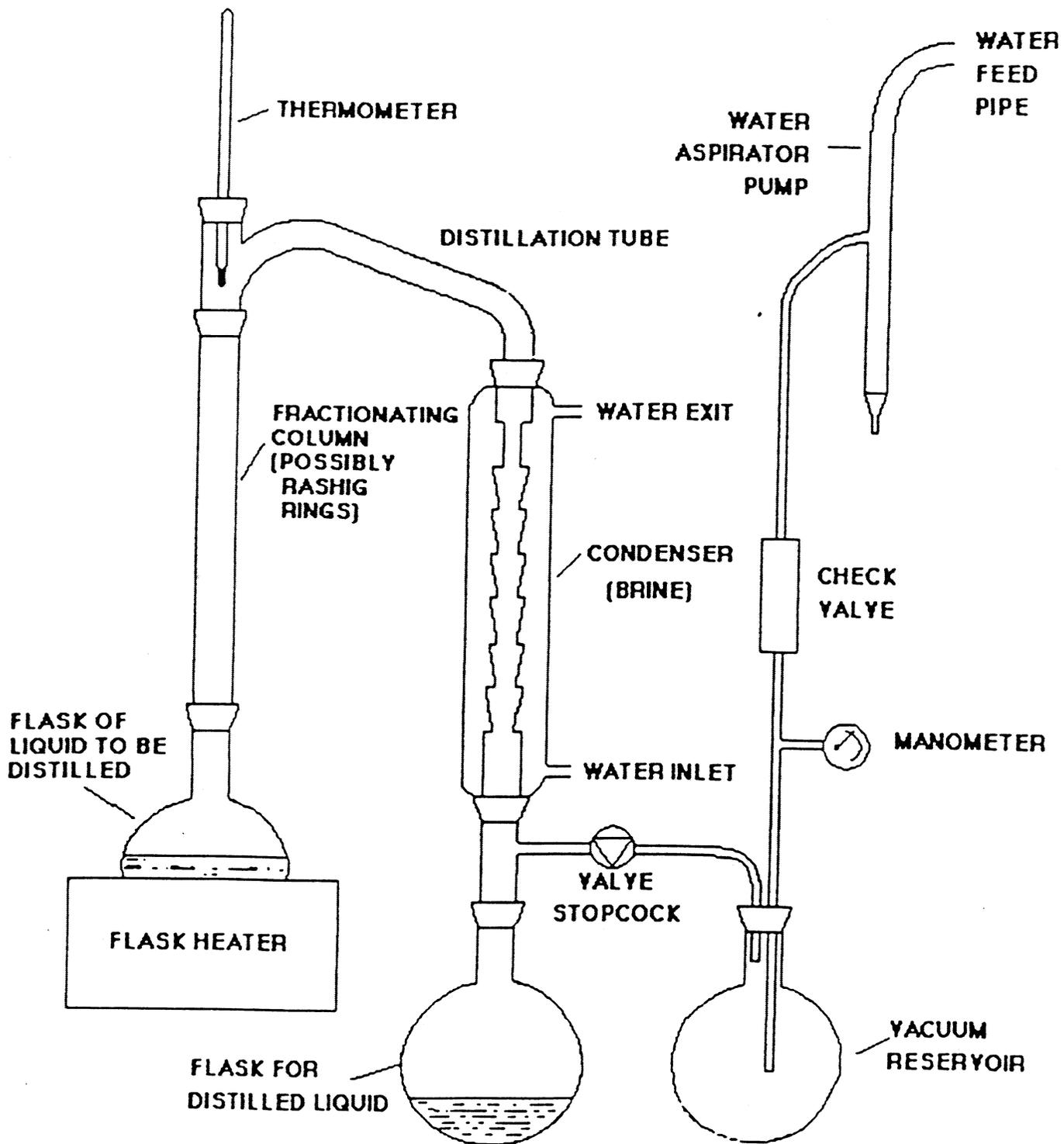


Figure #5

VACUUM DISTILLATION APPARATUS (Complete System)



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Figure #6

CHART OF THE BOILING POINTS OF WATER AND ETHANOL AT VARIOUS PRESSURES

	Boiling Point of Liquid	Boiling Point of the Mixture	Azerotropic Percentage	Pressure in the system of distillation
Ethyl Alcohol	109	109	95.2	3 Kg
Water	134	109	4.8	3 Kg
Ethyl Alcohol	78.2		95.6	1 Kg Normal
Water	100	78.2	95.6	1 Kg Normal
Ethyl Alcohol	33.5	33.4	99.5	1/8 Atmosphere
Water	51	33.4	0.5	1/8 Atmosphere

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Lesson 10

Dear Friend,

How is an extraction performed? Our practical section will attempt to answer this question.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The Notion of Absolute

The Alchemy student must be tolerant. This is why we are considering the notions of Absolute and not the Absolute itself, because, according to the mystics, the Absolute is the Whole, the Unity, which is only accessible through Being Re-integration.

The only absolute which exists in this world is precisely the fact that, physically speaking, Absolute is inaccessible here below.

In our daily life, in the current and philosophical discussions, it is always useful to keep in mind that Absolute is not of this world. When an argument seems decisive and categorical, most likely one part of the reality is being veiled-doubt, for instance, may be hidden, and this takes away the absolute character of the argument. By uncovering this veiled aspect one can see the fault in the argument or the error in the situation thus presented. Conversely, if an idea appears to be whole, then probably the problem wasn't studied well enough; one must then look for the elements which will smooth the edges.

The fact of realizing that the Absolute is not accessible in this world leads to tolerance, to comprehension. However, doubt should not lead us to hesitation or even indecisiveness.

We can compare each situation to the two sides of a coin, each side having its advantages and drawbacks. After an observation or a meditation, we choose one or the other knowingly.

This notion of the relativity of the physical absolute should be considered in relation to what is often heard among scientists, "this is scientifically demonstrated, this is a certitude". Further, no more in the mathematical realm than in sciences, is there an absolute demonstration.

When the scientists, relying on their knowledge, challenge metaphysical concepts, we can answer that nothing is verified in an absolute manner; that mathematics are based upon postulates that can't be demonstrated; that other sciences are based upon sensory experiments, and thus their knowledge is no more certain than their senses.

When you discuss metaphysical or mystical problems, try to remain logical and coherent and take advantage of the fact that your mind is not limited like that of a scientist so that it can show and lead to a broader understanding of things, and to tolerance.

Tolerance does not mean to accept all beliefs, we would otherwise become unstable and changing. True tolerance consists in the willingness to examine facts, compare them with our own concepts and accept to modify or change what was accepted until then. Tolerance is a mandatory element to evolution, as evolution is itself constant modification. Whoever places himself in a fixed, determined point of view, cannot progress because his intolerance leads him to refuse any change required for any kind of progress.

One aspect of tolerance is understanding; understanding is in fact the application of tolerance to the domain of others behavior in life.

True understanding of others is only awakened within us through the elevation of our feeling of universal fraternity, and inner charity. To understand is to not judge, nor to excuse, but only to try to light the way for our kin onto his path.

In knowledge, there is no good nor evil, just a degree of understanding.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

We are providing here a few elements needed to understand our first practical work.

Some philosophical schools classify their members into three categories:

- apprentices
- journeymen
- masters

The apprentice performs the separation, the journeyman performs the purification, and the master performs the cohobation.

If, due to instructions given in the preceding lessons, we distilled a 96% alcohol at 96C, originating from red wine only, we then have our first menstruum which should enable us to do our initial separation.

Our menstruum must be sharp. If there is residual water in this alcohol, it will dissolve some salts of the plant and the separation will not be perfect.

In addition, if our alcohol is not absolute, it will not be indeterminate. A universal menstruum for a realm must be indeterminate, it shouldn't have any specific traces of its origin. It must be at the point of highest maturity for its realm. This is the case with the absolute grape alcohol for the vegetable realm. One must remember that the Stone or Elixir is made from only one thing. For example, for lemon balm, we have a choice between indeterminate, absolute alcohol and the alcohol extracted from the balm which will be sharpened later by cohobation on the lemon balm salt. This is a general principle. We shall see as we progress in our work that it is mandatory, and we shall strive to give the operative processes corresponding to one or the other solution.

If we are capable of producing a perfect vegetable mercury, that is, the indeterminate absolute grape alcohol, the separation of the seven planetary elixirs will be greatly facilitated.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

Rectification

Now, let us examine the final preparation of our menstruum and the operation of extraction.

If our grape alcohol has been distilled six or seven times, or if it has been distilled in vacuo, there is a little water left and it must be completely eliminated.

There are several methods. We shall present the simplest one. First, we need to buy the tartar sold under the name of potassium carbonate; later, we shall make it ourselves. Spread it onto an oven proof dish and place the dish in the oven at 150-200C (300-400F) for an hour. Collect it while it is hot and place it in a sealed jar. After it has cooled down, we add 125 to 300 grams of this substance per liter of alcohol.

Shake the mixture once in a while, after having placed it in in a hermetically sealed flask.

After a 24 hour maceration, proceed with distillation, avoiding any air intake into the apparatus. The distillation must not be pushed beyond 2/3 of the alcohol contained and the alcohol must be kept in airtight flasks. The less contact the alcohol has with the air, the better it will keep, for it absorbs the moisture from the surrounding air until it decreases to 96.5%.

Extraction

The instrument which is most often used nowadays is the SOXHLET extractor. It consists of three parts.

—bottom, a flask which contains the extraction liquid. This flask may be heated until its contents reach the boiling point.

—middle, the body of the extractor. On the side is a tube to lead the vapors upward to the condenser; a siphon connects the middle part to the bottom part (flask).

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—In the upper part of the body, a thimble is placed; it may be made of special paper or porous ceramic. It contains the plant which is reduced to as fine a powder as possible.

Operations

The solvent (water, alcohol or acetic acid) boils, its vapors condense in the upper condenser; from there, the distilled liquid falls drop by drop into the thimble, impregnates the vegetable powder, dissolves its principle, fills the thimble and slowly fills up the body of the extractor. When the liquid reaches the upper level of the siphon, the latter is primed and the liquid flows into the bottom flask where it is again boiled and the cycle starts all over again.

Because the vegetable powder is saturated with a hot distilled liquid, the extraction is more dynamic than a maceration or circulation.

The liquid siphoned off will be very dark at first, then lighter and lighter. When it has become very clear, generally following 7 or 12 cycles of the siphon, the extraction is finished.

To correctly perform of this operation requires a few precautions:

—The heat must be reduced progressively as the liquid in the bottom flask becomes more concentrated, for these products are often sensitive to heat. A certain volume (about 1/4 of the total) of liquid should remain in the flask at the time of the priming of the siphon.

—It is necessary to install a chimney made of filter paper in the center of the thimble, down to 2/3 of its height. It helps the saturation of the plant matter.

—On the soxhlet, a stop-cock may be installed at the base of the middle part to help evacuate the liquid without taking the thimble out, which is useful in certain cases.

—A paper thimble may not be used again unless it is used for a product similar to the one last used.

You can also find Pyrex thimbles with a porous glass bottom; they have the following advantages:

- 1) it prevents the retention of alcohol in the paper of the thimbles.
- 2) thus distillation is not needed to recover the alcohol.
- 3) it can be used again with any kind of plant, after it has been cleansed.

There are two kinds of condenser (upper part), those in which the vapor circulates in the same direction as the liquid and the others where the condensed liquid flows back, (called reflux condensers). These are condensers with big tubes or with balls called ALLIHN balls; they are necessary in the Soxhlet extraction.

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We recommend that you use a Saturn plant for the first extraction. The liquid thus obtained is called the plant tincture. It contains both its Sulfur and its Mercury. The salts will be extracted from the residues of the plant contained in the Soxhlet thimble.

We recommend the 200 or 250 ml Soxhlet; fill the bottom flask with 300 to 350 ml of menstruum. Close the top of the condenser to avoid any intake of moisture; a flat lid with a small weight on top of it (or a balloon slipped over the top of the condenser) prevents the risk of explosion in case of overpressure. When the extraction is complete, the residue contained in the thimble is burnt and we proceed, then, as in our first experiment.

This apparatus is very useful for a certain number of other operations whether on the vegetable or the other realms. However, for our members who are unable to financially afford one, we describe another possible method of extraction. It will require more time than a Soxhlet extraction.

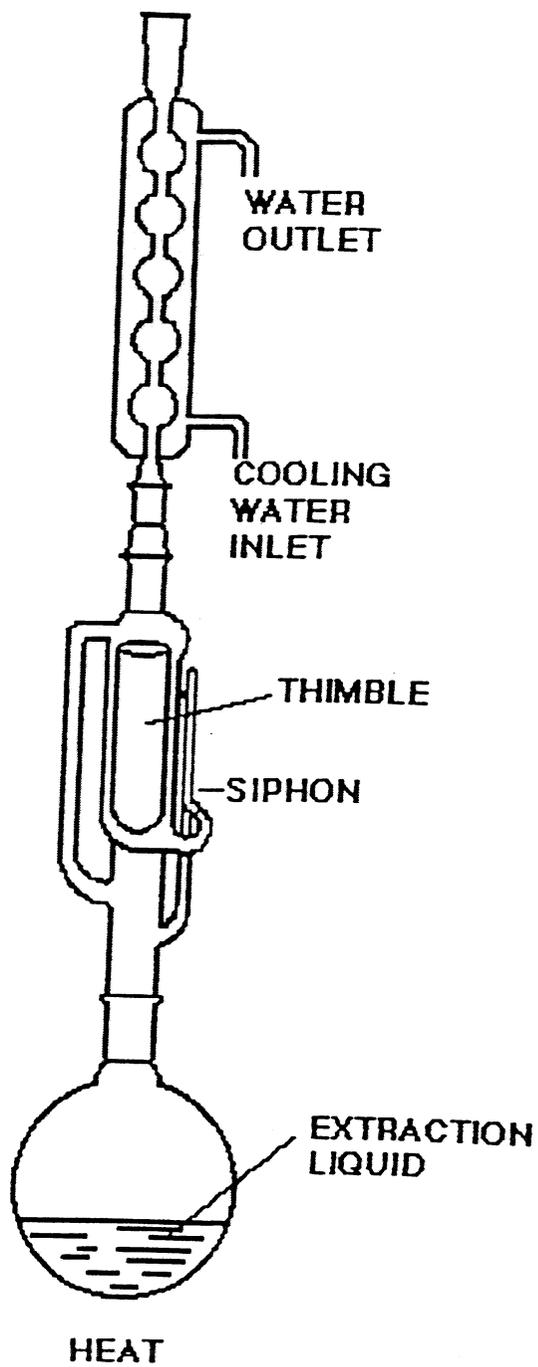
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ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Soxhlet Extractor Setup

Figure #1

SOXHLET EXTRACTOR SETUP



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Lesson 11

Dear Friend,

This lesson will focus on the four elements and a number of alchemical principles. We also resume our commentary about distillation.

Some people think that electrical heat is a heresy, in alchemy or spagyrics. But, based on our experience, our point of view is different. We think this opinion is a superstition due to a misunderstanding of the alchemical problem. Alchemy is a process which is similar to the generation brooded while in the egg by the hen, hence the name of the philosophical Egg. The animal sperm mixed with animal Sulfur and Salt will awaken the life in this realm. In the same manner, in our philosophical Egg, the metallic Sperm will animate the mineral life, uniting Sulfur and Salt; it would be the same in the vegetable realm. An electrical incubator allows the hatching of the chicks it does not block the evolution of the animal sperm; why should it not be the same for the metallic or vegetable sperm?

In the philosophical part of our preceding lessons, we have attempted to present three points we judge important for the rest of our studies:

- to give an overview of the spiritual concept that alchemists have of the world.
- to present the nature of Knowledge and its development through the elevation of the levels of consciousness.
- to understand that personal experience has priority over dogma.

We are now getting into the true alchemical philosophy.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The world is created by the repetition of the phenomenon of dividing a primary element. This leads to a ternary law expressed in the symbol of the triangle. From the Apex, two lines diverge, representing the two elements created by the dividing of one.

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On figure #1, we start from the universe's most subtle matter, the chaos (or hyle), called the water of Chaos in the Bible, the ones above and the ones below. This chaos, a wholly spiritual element, is divided into two imperfect spiritual elements: Niter and Salt; Niter is a positive-active element; Salt is a negative-passive element.

The Niter consists of the active Fire and the passive Air, therefore the symbol of the line in the triangle, that of an enclosed energy, an obstacle. The Salt consists of Water, an active element, and the Earth, a passive element. Here we are not speaking of the Salt which is part of the three principles: Sulfur, Mercury and Salt.

We now have the four elements:

— Fire, Air, Water and Earth.

As primary elements, Fire and Air are elements of the invisible worlds. Water and Earth belong to the material world.

In the sequence, Fire, Air, Water, Earth, we go from the most volatile to the most fixed. In reverse, Earth, Water, Air, Fire, we go from the most fixed to the most volatile. Air is fixed in relation to fire, but volatile in relation to Water.

The Alchemists attribute colors to these elements; the presence of the colors inform them as to the nature of the dominant element, and thus, of the stage in progress of the experiment or process.

The colors are as follows:

— Fire; red

— Air; yellow

— Water; blue (white in solid bodies)

— Earth; green (black in solid bodies)

In alchemical operations, the sequence of colors will be:

— black, white, yellow, red, whether we are talking about the vegetable Stone or the mineral Stone.

When we calcine a salt, we have the sequence: black, white, yellow, red.

The black is death or putrefaction or separation.

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The white is purification.

The yellow is the successful fecundation.

The red is the mature and perfect fruit.

In alchemy, symbols have a precise meaning, their design corresponds to precise laws. We shall study these laws in another part of the course, but let's note a few points here. The first divisions are not taking form into what the ancients called the sublunar world; they are represented by circles. The horizontal line symbolizes the passive; the vertical one, the active. Upon arrival in the world of form, the division into duality is represented by a triangle with its point above for the subtle, below for the coarse.

Because of the presence of these four elements in all mixtures, operations will be carried out in four successive stages. As each of the elements has a different degree of volatility or fixity, different reactions occur in the various stages of the operation. This is a very important point for the transformation of water into universal menstruum.

For those of you who are interested in numerology, there are seven secondary causes which govern the material world; they will give birth to the three principles, which gives us ten. We will see later how the seven secondary causes lead to evolutionary and involutionary twelve phase cycles.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

The Water — The Archeus — the Gur

For the continuation of our experiments, some products require a lengthy maturation before they can be used. Therefore, if you have the opportunity to obtain them, it might be good to be aware of their future usefulness. This is the case for rain water and is what we intend to explain now.

Spreading sheets on grass to collect the dew is romantic but completely useless; the dew water from plants is not the best: the greater part of its alchemical force has already been lost.

Rain water is useful in Alchemy if it is charged with the niter coming from Chaos — which the Easterners refer to as prana — in fact the spiritual principle of life.

As soon as the water touches the earth or the plants, it loses its niter and from "electrical" it becomes "magnetic". Its charge of niter is higher in the summer, especially during thunderstorm rains.

When the rain touches the earth, it gives its niter away to everything that lacks it. On a roof, the rain progressively charges the tiles with niter; when the tiles are saturated, the water ceases to lose its niter. Note that this explains why some alchemical recipes recommend the use of old crushed tiles.

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Thus, after the rain falls for an hour or two the roof is washed and the water keeps its niter. That is when it needs to be collected, before it reaches the ground. We collect it directly into a glass or plastic container but never into a metallic container. For the continuation of our experiments, we need at least a few dozen liters of water thus collected. However, the first experiment we propose may be performed with four liters.

The water is immediately filtered through some cotton or filter paper in a funnel made of glass or plastic. The water will be kept in open flasks; cover the neck with fabric of which the weave is as tight as possible. The fabric will enable the air to come in and out, while preventing the contamination of the water with dust.

Now, we must be sure of the quality of our water. The first test consists of pouring water in a pyrex dish which is very clean to a height of 1/2 cm and let the water evaporate by heating it without boiling it. We should be very close to the boiling point without ever reaching it. When the dish is dry, there should not be any deposit. If there is a deposit, either our filtering through the cotton was not done well or the rain still had not washed the roof clean enough.

The second test consists in taking a liter or half a liter of this water and distilling it; we should be able to observe then that everything passes over. The distilled water may be kept for maturation or any other use.

The water must now be kept in a lukewarm spot: in winter close to a radiator, and in summer in a moderately warm room or in the attic but not in the basement. The ancient Philosophers say that, during this time, it is desirable that the water not be seen by either the sun or the moon. A maturation period of one lunar month is a minimum but six to seven lunar months is better.

The water will then be ready for the preparation of the universal menstruum of water, the Archeus, and for the extraction of the universal seed, the Gur, the primordial elements brought to the earth by the air and then by the rain water.

We invite you to prepare this water in view of this experiment which we shall present in detail, in a few months, precisely because of the maturation delay and also because this work demands a certain degree of distillation skill. The success of this experiment shows that all the composites are produced from the universal seed fertilized by the Archeus; and that the predominance of one or two elements directs the creation towards a particular realm:

- Fire predominates in the animal
- Air and Fire predominates in the vegetable
- Earth predominates in the mineral

We insist on the preparation of this experiment which will give important experimental

results. When it is well performed, the experiment shows that creation belongs to Alchemy: it shows in the microcosm what is possible in the macrocosm.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

We hope you have performed some distillation experiments. The efficiency of distillation may be greatly increased by the use of a KJELDAHL sphere, called the reflux sphere, which is placed immediately above the evaporation flask. (See figure #2).

When the liquid to be distilled is boiling, small bubbles burst on the surface; a large portion of the liquid falls back down, but some micro-droplets of liquid are carried away by the vapor and may reach the receiving flask without undergoing distillation. The Kjeldahl sphere is a trap for these micro-droplets.

The control of the distillation is done by measuring the temperature of the vapors.

We believe it is good to have the following set of thermometers:

— alcohol thermometer from -50°C to 50°C
(Absolute alcohol freezes at -117°C ; mercury at -39°C)

— several mercury thermometers from -10°C to 160°C

— a thermometer from 10°C to 150°C with a 10/30 ground glass fitting if you are equipped with ground glass apparatus.

— a thermometer from -10°C to 250°C for the distillation of essential oils.

— we strongly recommend against buying mercury thermometers with a graduation going beyond 350°C , for mercury boils at 356°C and a gas under pressure prevents it from boiling; but in case of violent breakage, the vapor of mercury spreads and it is lethal to inhale this vapor.

Control of the distilled product:

The simplest control is done by measuring the density. It is the weight in grams of one liter of liquid. The density of water is 1.000.

The measure of the density makes two things possible:

- the research of the nature of the liquid
- the evaluation of the quality of the liquid when its name is known.

Some advice for distillation in vacuo

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 11

A manometer or a vacuum gauge is absolutely necessary. It must be graduated either in vacuum millibars from 0 to 100, or in mercury mm from 0 to 760. We shall indicate the desirable vacuum as a function of each operation.

Prior to all distillation, it is necessary to do a vacuum test for at least one hour without heating. If the vacuum is not maintained, the ground joints should be taken apart, cleaned with some trichlorethylene, or sulfuric acid and chromic acid cleaner, greased again making sure there is absolutely no dust. If the vacuum is still not maintained, the covers must be taken apart and cleaned, as well as the check valve.

As it heats up, the vacuum may decrease; in this case, the condensing circuit is not sufficient; surround the receiving flask with a mixture of water and ice.

The chart below gives the percentage of alcohol in volume as a function of the density, at the temperature of 20 C.

% of alcohol in volume	density at 20C
0	1.000
10	.981
20	.969
30	.953
40	.935
50	.913
60	.891
70	.862
80	.843
90	.818
96	.801
100	.789

COMMENTS OF A MEMBER ABOUT THE LEXICON IN LESSON 9

There remains much to be said about the equivalences given in this lexicon, because they were valid at the end of the 18th century, at the time of the last spagyrist and encyclopedists. If we read more ancient authors, especially authors of the 15th and 16th century, one might be completely misled by these equivalences. There was no exact term equivalence; the designations were rather generic terms.

The name "salt" was given to derivatives of alkaline bases, potash, soda ash, ammoniac, etc... They usually appear in a pulverized or powdered form or as fine, colorless crystals which have the common characteristic of no bitterness of taste. The name of vitriol was given to all kinds of metallic salts with a glassy, translucent, and colored consistency which generally have a rather bitter or astringent taste. Metallic and alkaline salts have also been called vitriols.

According to an ancient author such as Christopher Glaser, the vitriols may be all kinds of chemical compounds. For example, Moon vitriol is silver nitrate, copper vitriol may be the acetate, the chloride or the sulfate, the oil of vitriol is the product of the distillation of one of the above. In Basil Valentine we find: during the distillation of a vitriol we extract a spirit and an oil which do not seem to be of identical nature. One might conclude that they are complex salts.

Ammoniac salt was the name that was given to all volatile salts, to all those which can be collected in an alembic dome or a sublimation vase. This name was used until the era of Glauber, that is, to the end of the spagyrist. Glauber could already count 6 or 7 in his time. All the volatile chlorides may be considered to be ammoniac salts and also most of the ammonium salts.

ORA ET LABORA !

ENCLOSED FIGURES:

- Figure #1 - Condensation of Energy into Matter
- Figure #2 - Distillation in vacuo with a Kjeldahl sphere.

Figure #1

CONDENSATION OF ENERGY INTO MATTER

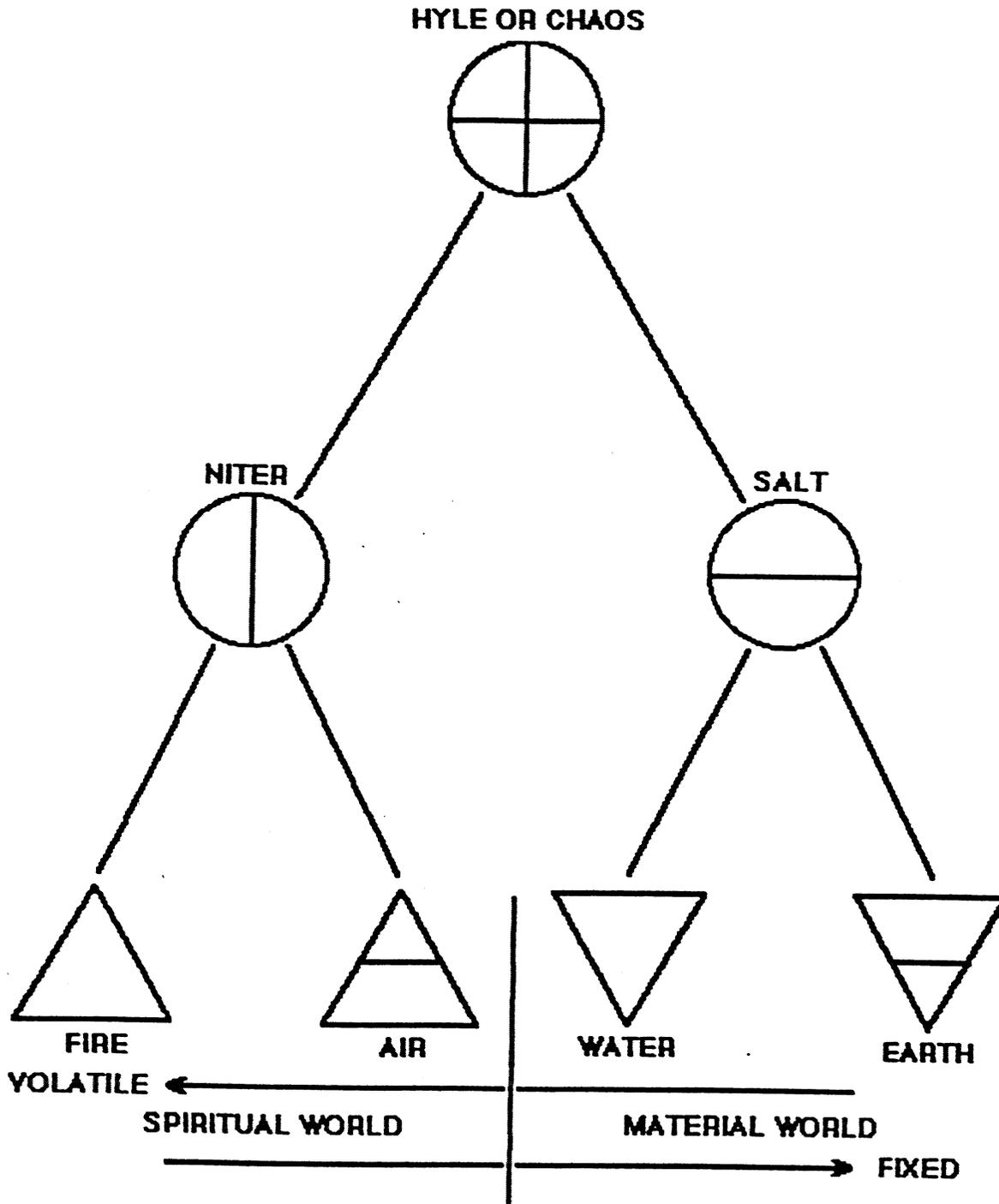
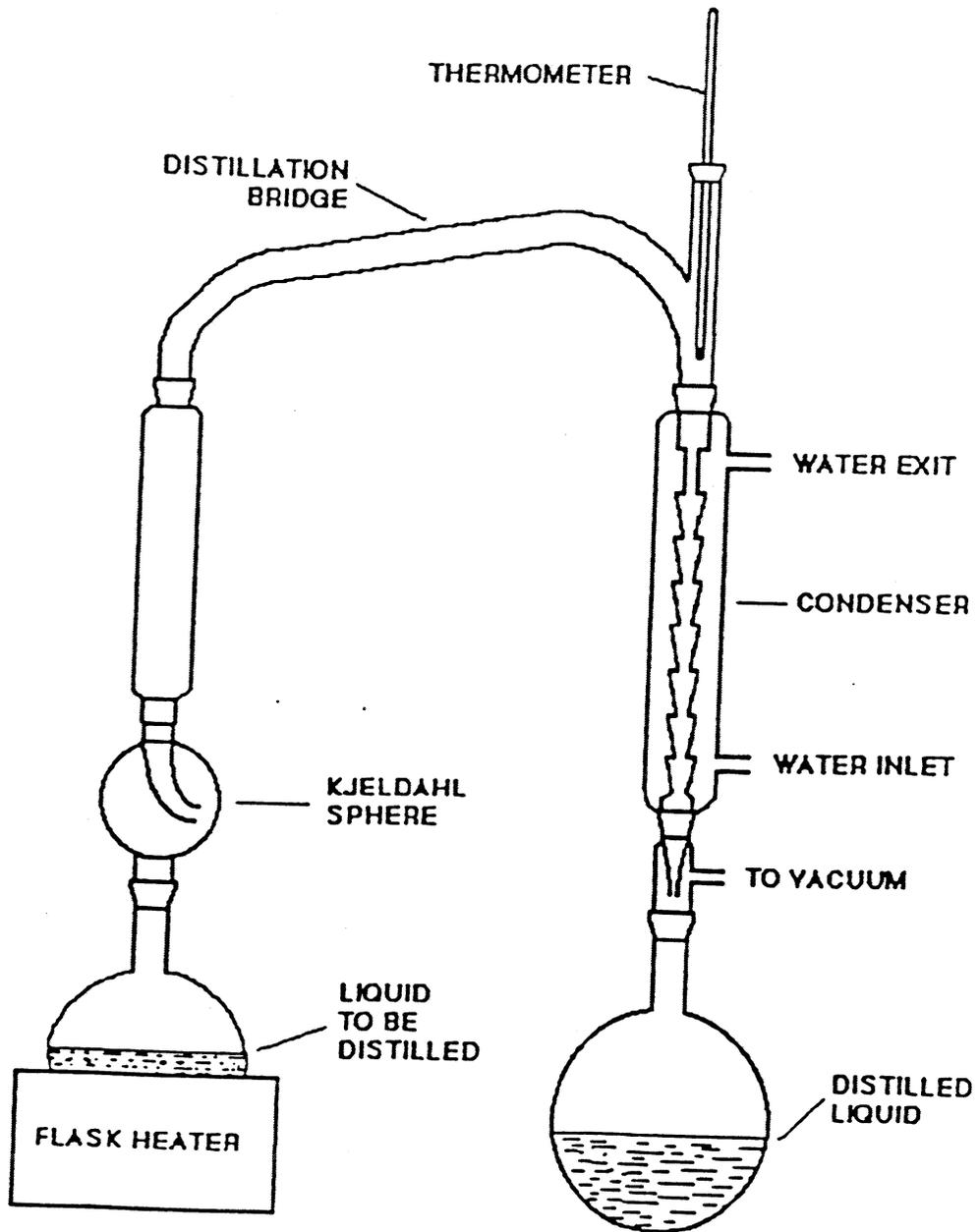


Figure #2

DISTILLATION IN VACUO WITH A KJELDAHL SPHERE



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 12

Dear Friend,

You will find, in the practical section of this lesson, a few tricks enabling you to inexpensively put together the assemblies you need for your work. We shall expand on the subject in lesson 16. If you have built assemblies quickly and cheaply, you may share your success with us and we shall, in turn, make it known to our members.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

The Elements Fire, Air, Water, and Earth can act upon each other or can be combined. On Figure #3 (page 7) we can see the reciprocal action:

- Fire and Air give the hot quality.
- Air and Water give the humid quality.
- Water and Earth give the cold quality.
- Earth and Fire give the dry quality.

The combinations of the elements two by two have an even greater importance.

Fire and Air, the subtle elements, give the Sulfur and are said to belong to the “electrical” realm; the Sulfur is the power, the means.

Air and Water — one is subtle, the other coarse — give the Mercury, the force; the Mercury is essentially the link which unites the two worlds.

Water and Earth give the Salt, the coarsest element. It is the element of the body which has the potential to realize what the power of the Sulfur imposes on it through the vehicle of the Mercury. If the Mercury is the volatile Elixir, the Salt is the foundation of the Fixed Stone. The two elements Earth and Water are said to be “magnetic”.

The balanced combination of the four elements gives the quintessence which, like the Mercury, is a linking element. We shall approach the subject of the quintessence in more detail

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 12

during our study of the Universal seed. We may, however, say that there are different kinds of quintessences, and that it is the balance of the elements which gives the vegetable quintessence which is not the same as the balance of the mineral or animal quintessence.

This order is that of Nature, but the Art which completes the work of nature proceeds differently. We can purify the three principles with the ALKAHEST. Their combination will give the Passive Philosophical Silver and the Active Philosophical Gold, which have nothing in common with the metals bearing the same names. The AZOTH allows their union, the outcome of which is the Fixed Red Stone.

To complete our reflection for today, we would like to clarify two points:

1. ALKAHEST, MERCURY, AZOTH are of the same nature, but they differ from each other in their degree of life force and maturity.

2. The elements are not indentially distributed in the various parts of a given being. In the vegetable realm, the roots are the element Earth, the trunk and the branches the element Water, the leaves, the element Air, and the flowers the element Fire. Thus, if we compare this theory with the theory of the four temperaments we can find in each vegetable what is suitable for each one, in order to compensate for the imbalance of elements in oneself.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

We think it is now possible and useful to examine the hierarchy of the processes which are to follow as well as of the products which shall result from them.

We have seen in our preceding lessons that there are in Alchemy various operative processes which may be summarized as follows:

1. repetition of the same operation on the same product to obtain evolution.
2. fermentation or putrefaction to liberate certain elements; death to experience rebirth.
3. separation or cohobation of the principles to obtain through their reunion a product exalted to a higher level.

If we consider that a psychic man must be prepared planet by planet, sephiroth by sephiroth or chakra by chakra, we may view our work in the following way.

We could start with the making of the seven infusions, one per planet, always starting with Saturn. But the principles of the plants, and in particular their essential oils (Sulfur) are partly lost and there is neither repetition nor purification.

We can then make a series of seven elixirs. The method of our first experiment is not adequate here because, even if one uses a repeated cohobation on the salts, which increases the

power of the elixir, it still remains determined on two planets, Jupiter and the Sun. If we use the undetermined menstruum we mentioned in pages 3 and 5 of lesson 10, we can make the seven elixirs, one per planet. They are already much more powerful because the menstruum is more perfected.

To proceed to the next stage we must undertake the separation of the three principles.

As soon as this method is known, several approaches are possible to obtain the same result. As a priority, we shall study the different alchemical operations and, after that, we shall give a few concrete examples of various methods which may lead us to the quintessences, and to the primal being and the vegetable stone called *circulatus minor* when it is prepared in a liquid state.

As we advance in Alchemy, we should keep in mind that nature and its inner mechanisms are only slowly awakened. Nobody tears the Veil of Isis; it may only be lifted with patience and the love of Nature and Humankind.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

Low cost construction of a distillation apparatus

You need the following elements:

- a gas blowtorch (turbogas type)
- 1 kg (2.20 lbs) of pyrex tube, 8 mm in diameter, that is to say 12 lengths of 1,50m (4.92 ft).
- 1 kg (2.20 lbs) of a pyrex tube, 28 mm in diameter, that is 3 tubes of 1,50m (4.92 ft).
- one tube-cutter for glass.

First, cut a 28 mm diameter tube in 4 pieces: two pieces of 50 cm (19.68 in.) and two of 25 cm (9.84).

One should get sulfur-free rubber stoppers, of a 22 mm size (small diameter) which are perforated with two holes. You can also get champagne corks and boil them, which brings them back to their original size. Perforate two 6 mm holes in them and finish with a smooth rat-tail file, so that the 8 mm tubes are able to pass through if you push them in. For greater safety, this last operation should be performed with thick gloves.

All ends of the glass tubes are fire-polished. The 8 mm tubes should not be bent at a radius of curvature less than 3 cm (1.18 in) or better 5 cm (1.96 in), otherwise the tube will collapse and the section is shortened.

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 12

The result we shall obtain is very similar to the fractional distillation apparatus represented on figure #1 of Lesson 6; we reproduced the same figure in this lesson also. However, we recommend the use of Erlenmeyer one or two-liter flask as it can be easily placed on an electrical heating plate, while the round flask requires a more expensive flask heater. To improve the thermal output we can also insulate this Erlenmeyer with glass wool or fabric or aluminum foil.

Fill up to a height of 15 cm (5.90 in) a 25 cm (9.84 in) long blowpipe (28 mm in diameter) with glass pieces that you can obtain in the following manner. Mix half of glass pieces and half of sand. Pour the mixture into a metallic box mounted on the table of an old turn-table (Figure #2 C). After rotating for several hours, the glass becomes round. Separate it from the sand with a strainer, and clean it with rain water. This glass has a disadvantage; it retains much liquid. You should have several numbered columns and use each one always for the same product. In this method, one cannot grind the glass. Thermal insulation done with insulating jackets shall improve the functioning of the column.

Assembly of this apparatus: Pour a disk of lead of 15 cm (5.90 in) to 20 cm (7.87 in) in diameter and 1 cm (0.39 in) thick in a frying pan for example; and fix upon it, with the help of a base, a metallic tube of a 10mm diameter and 1 m (3.28 ft) high. Make then a pair of pinchers out of a wood which is 15 mm thick. These pinchers are tightened with butterfly screws (Figure #2, A and B).

In lesson 16, we shall present the assembly of a Soxhlet apparatus, that can be done starting with the same elements, and we shall give a few tips to reduce the loss inherent to the operations of calcination, circulation, maceration etc..

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ENCLOSED FIGURES:

- Figure #1 - Fractional distillation apparatus
- Figure #2 - Tips for the lab
 - A — pinchers
 - B — lead support base
 - C — turntable
- Figure #3 - The qualities resulting from the four elements and their combinations

Figure #1

FRACTIONAL DISTILLATION APPARATUS

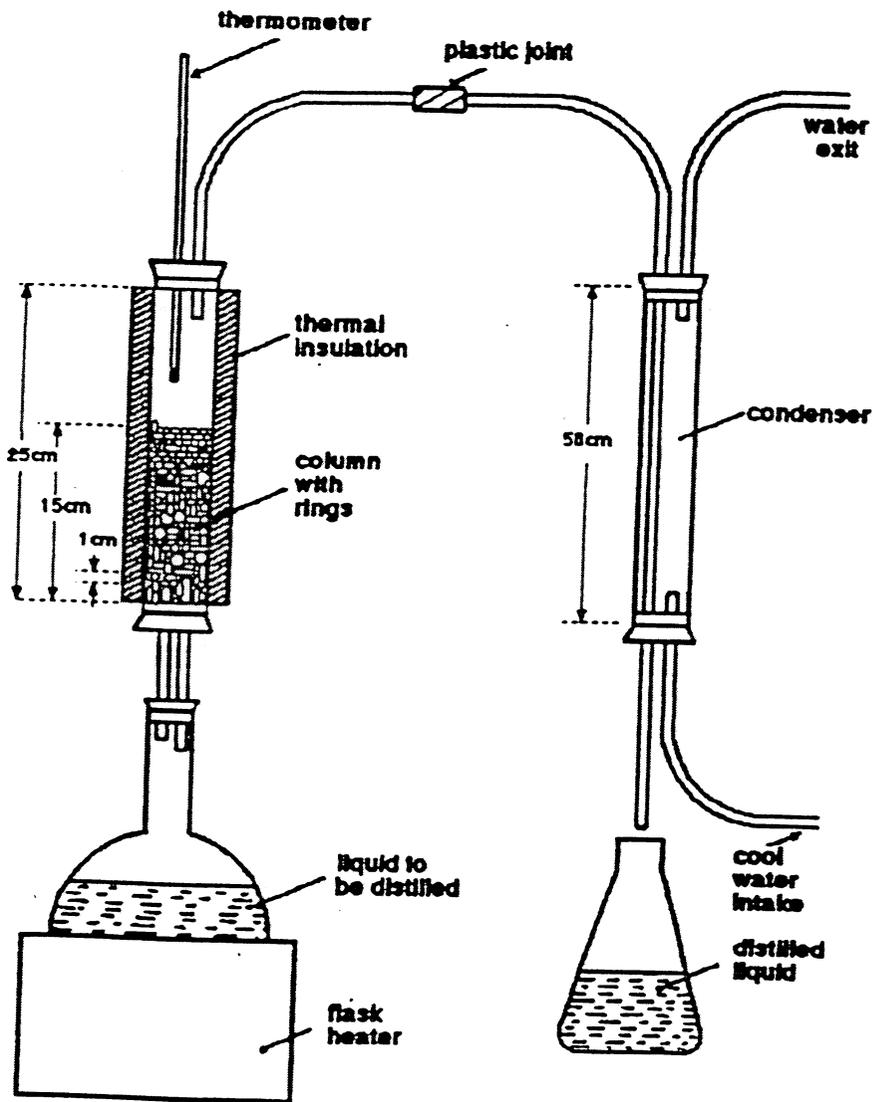
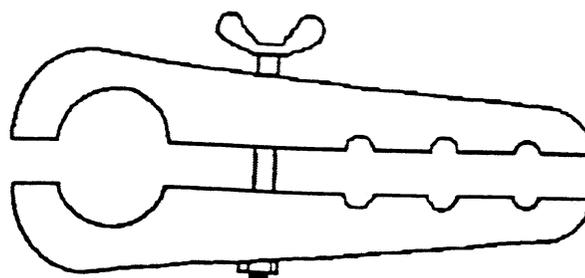


Figure #2

TIPS FOR THE LAB

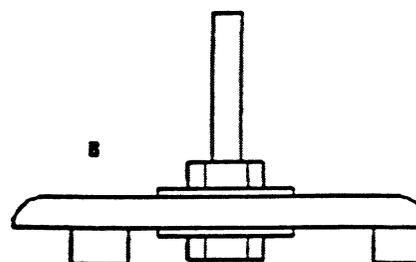
A. PINCHERS TO ASSEMBLE THE APPARATUS

Use plywood, 10 to 15 mm thick.
The size of the holes is to be determined according to the diameter of the tubes and assembly rods.

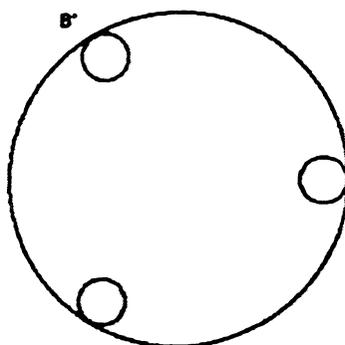


B-&-B'. LEAD SUPPORT BASE

Pour molten lead into a frying pan. 8 to 10 mm thick 20 cm (7.87 in) in diameter. The vertical 10 mm threaded rod is mounted with two nuts which rest on two thick washers.



Three legs placed in a triangle guarantee stability.



C. CONTAINER MOUNTED ON A TURN-TABLE sloped at 45 degrees.

This arrangement enables the grinding of materials or the shaking of liquids. Do not exceed the level material shown in this figure. The container or the flask filled with liquid may be held on the turntable with rubber bands (see a & b) attached to the edges of the turntable.

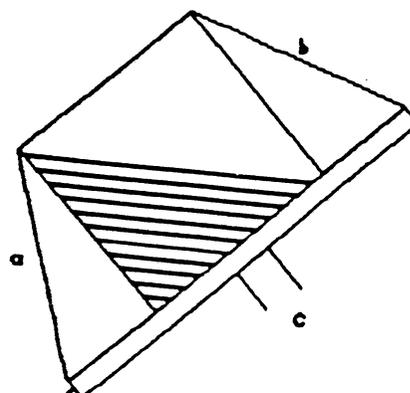
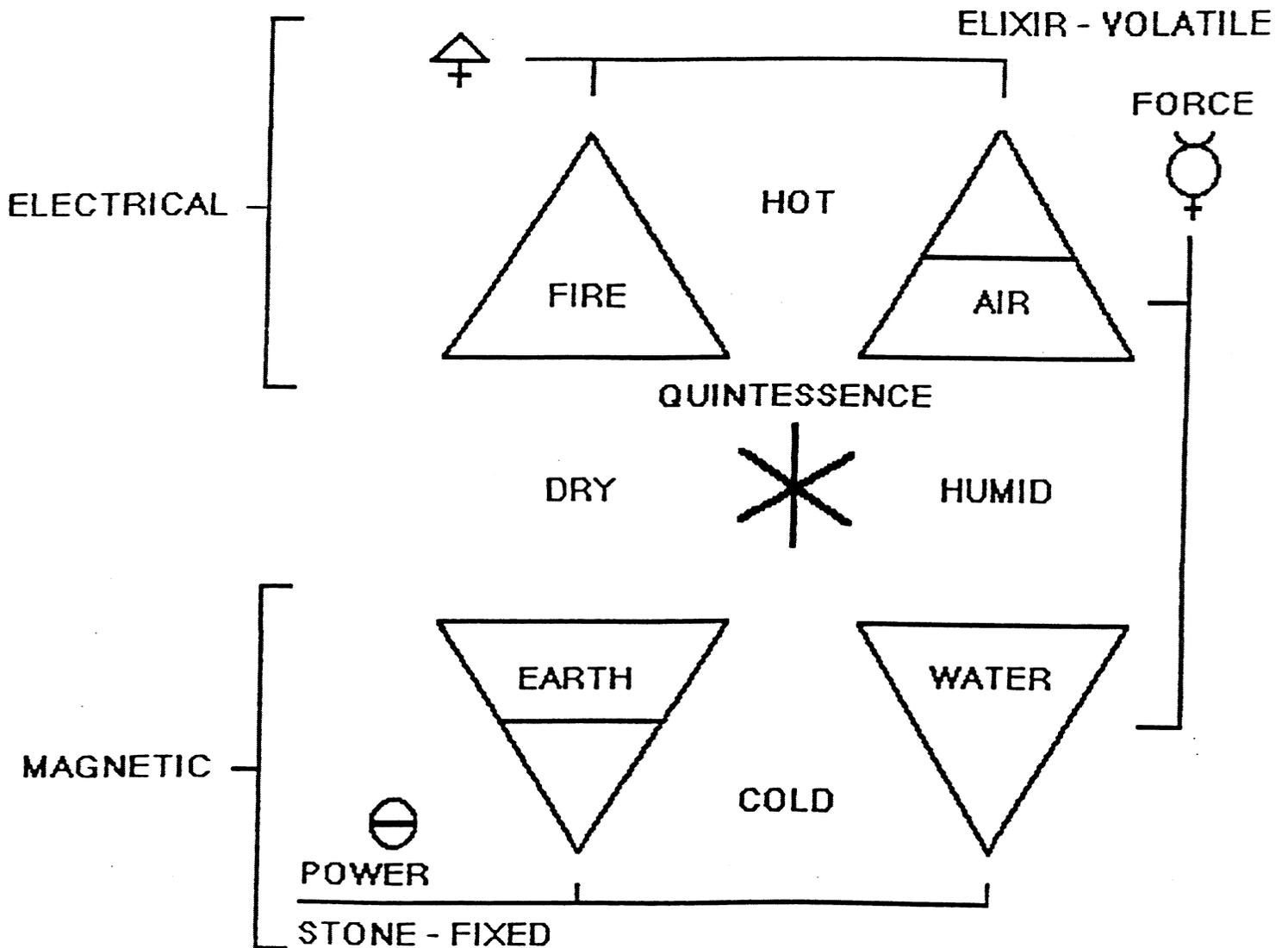


Figure #3

THE QUALITIES RESULTING FROM THE FOUR ELEMENTS AND THEIR COMBINATIONS



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 13

Dear Friend,

In most hermetic texts, important sentences are often buried in the midst of long discourses or symbolic allegories. The following text is quoted from an old hermetic book from which we eliminated the unnecessary and obscure terms.

ALCHEMICAL PHILOSOPHY

As we previously mentioned, we do not use dead bodies in Alchemy. That is why regular metals can't be used. Only living metallic salts are useful for the work in the mineral realm.

Since we imitate Nature in Alchemy we are going to examine the creative process. In Nature, everything issues from a unique operative principle which produces all generations and all dissolutions.

Nature is the body of all beings forming the visible world and of the invisible principle which animates them and which, although distinct from God, emanates from Him.

God drew Nature out of the Void by virtue of his Word which engendered an immense and subtle Vapor in which he imprinted a Spirit of force and power.

Vapor condenses into a Water qualified as Universal and Chaotic by Philosophers: The Chaos. From this water the universe is formed.

The chaotic water is twofold, the universal, visible water and the invisible spirit inherent within it. Two things in one.

Water without Spirit would be without form. Spirit without water would be without action.

All things draw their existence from the same root and all can therefore be reduced to that same root.

This is why philosophers say: "our matter is in all things, but not in the same quality or quantity in all things."

Spagyrics

Lesson 13

The original crystal-clear and pure water is passive, but under the action of the active Spirit, it putrefies. Subtle parts and coarser parts are formed.

The most subtle form the Sky or Fire, the less subtle form the Air, and the coarsest form the Water and finally, the Earth.

These four elements only differ between them in their degree of fixity or subtlety. But the double chaotic water becomes quadruple through the separation of elements.

Each element continually produces a seed in the likeness of itself, in its center. From the union of these seeds a chaotic water of the same nature as the primordial water is engendered.

This chaotic water insures the generation, the conservation and the destruction of all created things. This water generated by the elements is called: Universal Seed, Soul and Spirit of the World. It is the unspecified universal spirit, visible in the form of water: the ARCHEUS of Nature.

The Animating Spirit provokes emanations:
coming from above, these are influences
coming from below, these are exhalations.

Emanations provoked by the Spirit as specific seed engender The Universal Seed through their reunion. Fire with Air, Water with Earth and the two composites unite as male and female.

You can't go from one extreme to the other without passing through the middle.

The union of elements fixes the volatile if we have the following sequence: Fire with Air, then with Water, then with the Earth.

The union of the elements renders the fixed quality of the Earth volatile if we have the sequence Earth with Water, with Air, then with Fire.

Each element has three intermediate degrees, very subtle, subtle, somewhat subtle or
♁ ♀ ⊖.

The Universal Seed is formed through the emanations of the Sky, Air, Water, Earth, through the degradation of these elements into their respective coarse matter. Its elements are homogeneous as they are only constituted from Chaotic Water and Spirit.

The Earth is a fixed Sky, the Sky a volatile Earth, Air is a rarefied Water, and Water a condensed Air. The most subtle element is also the most mobile; it is the one which transmits motion to others.

We recommend you read this part again and meditate upon it before undertaking the distillation of elements or experiments on the GUR.

ALCHEMICAL THEORY

Chemistry and Alchemy

Even a superficial study of modern chemistry is not without interest for an alchemist. Modern alchemists have established a link between certain simple bodies of current chemistry and alchemical elements:

- Fire to hydrogen
- Air to nitrogen
- Water to oxygen
- Earth to carbon.

We note that carbon is a key element of nature; it insures the link between the mineral world and the organic, animal and plant worlds.

In our experiments, the residual vegetable salt is a body without carbon that has been burned, the salt is thus brought back to its mineral world. The mineral world provides the plant world with its matrices. As soon as carbon is present, organic life appears. The alcohols or vegetable spirits — the animating force — are composed of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. In essences and essential oils, there is sometimes some nitrogen.

If we consider the division of modern chemistry, organic chemistry deals with the realm of vegetable sulfur and mercury and inorganic chemistry with that of vegetable salt. We should note that in the process of the separation of the plant, volatile salts are forming which belong to the organic world. They should be incorporated with the vegetable Sulfur. Later, we shall examine a few methods to separate volatile salts.

The primary component of the earth's vegetable realm is its salt, potassium. Tartar salt is potassium carbonate. The primary component of the salt of sea vegetables is sodium; sodium is a metal very close to potassium. The blood of man belongs to the realm of sodium.

We think that these few remarks will be profitable during your spagyric operations.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

We are studying the separation of vegetable Sulfur which, for the greatest part, lies in the essential oils of the vegetable realm. These can only be separated through steam distillation.

The plant chosen for this work can be either caraway (seeds) or lavender (flowers) or matricary. Proportions are 50 g for a 1 liter flask, or 250 g for a 5 liter flask. The flask is one third filled with rain water and allowed to macerate from 24 to 48 hrs.

Spagyrics

Lesson 13

In enclosed figure #1, if the (B) flask is a 5 liter flask, the (A) flask will be a 2 liter flask and filled with one to one and a half liters of rain water. The tube (C) is filled with water; it can be replaced by a relief valve, for its role is simply to prevent flask (A) from exploding if the steam circuit becomes clogged. Heat flasks (A) and (B); when water boils, stop heating flask (B) and heat only (A), which is the steam-generator.

You can plan, on part (D) of the tube, for an electrical resistance-heater in order to superheat the steam for certain categories of plant (rare).

The steam injector (B), should have a small diameter curved outlet so that the vapor stream stirs the plant/water blend.

Two possible alternatives:

— the first one: set up a distillation head followed by a condenser on flask B, then the vapor and the oil will condense into one container; the oil is separated from the water only by slowly decanting but the separation won't be perfect.

In the figure we represented an extractor for essential oils. Vapor condenses in the condenser and the oils are deposited on the walls. It all descends into the decantation chamber (G), the oil swims on the surface and the water returns to flask (B) through tube (K); the tap (R) enables us to get rid of the water and to draw off the oil at the end of the operation.

The experiment shows that if, after the extraction, you let the plant sit, when you again operate 24 hrs later you can obtain the same quantity of oil again, sometimes repeating this 3 or 4 times in a row.

The extraction of the plant's soul principle kills the plant which thus undergoes the putrefaction stage accompanying death. It is the fermentation process, which allows the separation of the spirits of the elements from the body (Mercury and Salt). These spirits are the object of more advanced study in our next lessons.

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NOTES AND ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Complementary Notes
- Figure #1 - Separation of the Vegetable Sulfur

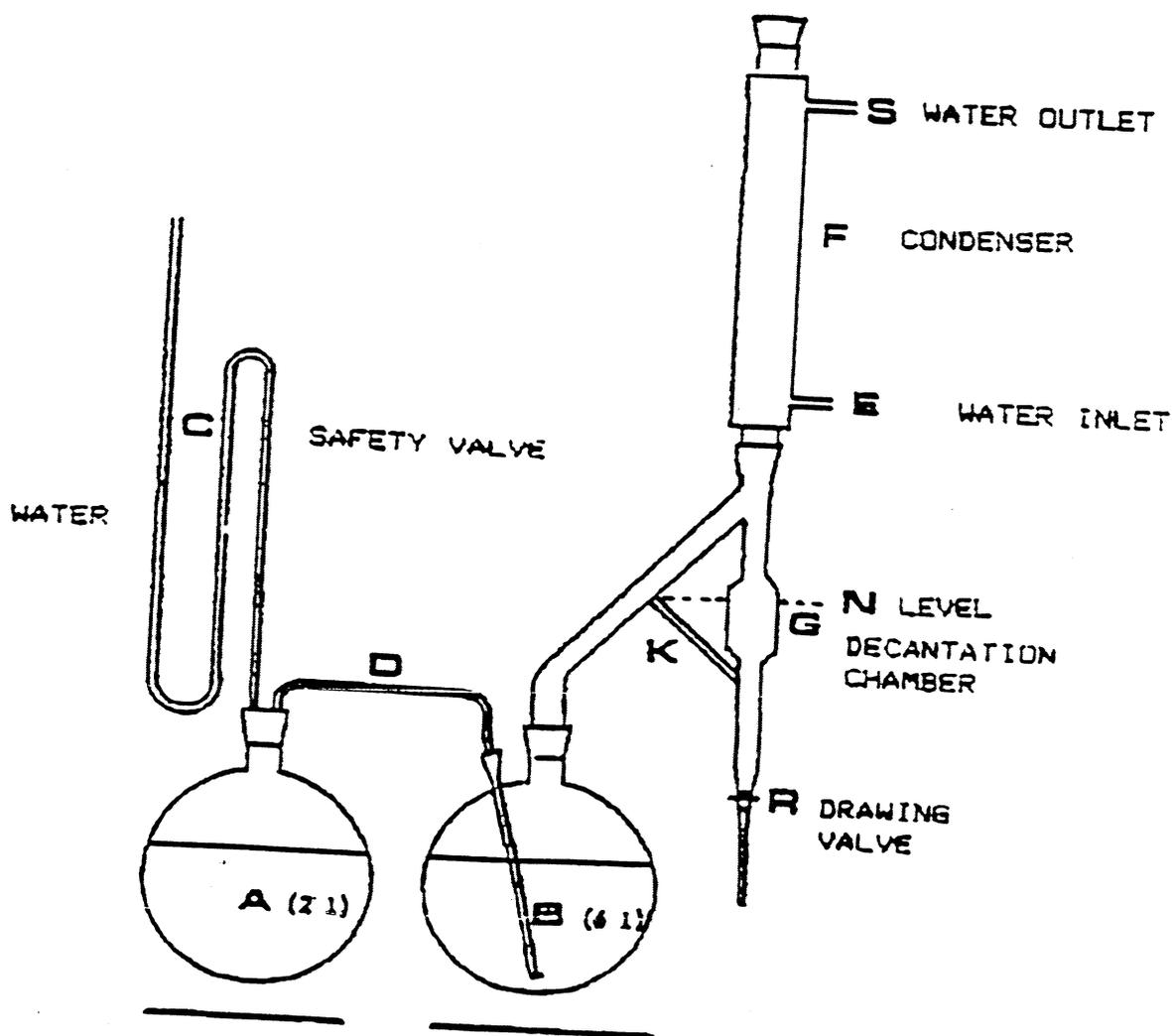
Complementary Notes:

Page 1 — the definition we give of nature is a little bit short for the philosophical tradition. One member had to give a definition for a discourse on biological agriculture, he defined it as being the comprehensive set of moods and humours that life gives to beings. It seems impossible to talk about Nature without evoking the word life. In Latin, "natura" is the female form of "naturus", that which is destined to be created, and, is the future participle of the verb "nascor" (to be born). Nature is the comprehensive set of inner relations, which are inherent to vital phenomena.

Page 4 — the primary component of the earth's vegetable salts is potassium. This was learned from the washing of the salts where we usually draw only potassium salt, mainly the carbonate, but don't forget that the most common element in the vegetable realm is calcium. Most vegetable ashes and wood are composed of calcium carbonate. Calcium (Atomic number 40), according to the theory of Kervran, is only K + H, that is to say 39 + 1

Figure # 1

SEPARATION OF THE VEGETABLE SULFUR



HOT PLATES
(IN CASE ERLLENMEYER
FLASKS ARE USED)
OR FLASKS-HEATERS

SPAGYRICS

Lesson 14

Dear Friend,

For some time, we shall concentrate almost exclusively on practical experiments.

We shouldn't forget that, in the mental realm, when you take note about a subject, when you study it, it is like performing an "alchemical fixation". To meditate on a problem is like an "alchemical circulation".

In one case, matter becomes fixed therefore stable and durable; in the other, matter matures and perfects itself.

FERMENTATION

After having taken the vegetable sulfur away through steam distillation, we have a dead plant and we should separate its various elements through fermentation.

Fermentation is the key that opens the secrets of Nature, that is why it should be seriously studied and experimented with.

All fermentations or putrefactions require the reunion of three conditions to be realized:

- the presence of a living element
- an adequate composition or an adequate state of the body to be fermented
- temperature conditions and, depending on the nature of the fermentation, presence or absence of air.

If we take into account the evolution of terms in general and in particular the meaning that the word "putrefaction" has taken since Pasteur's theories and the inception of microbiology, we should emphasize that, in the old days, the "putrid" characteristic wasn't attributed to putrefaction as it is presently.

The living element is usually killed through heat. The steam extraction kills the ferment. In the same way, in the metallic realm, the ferment is killed by the fusion of metal and

Spagyrics

Lesson 14

fermentation cannot start. We should then always add a ferment to it. In the case of the vegetable realm, some authors recommend the use of brewer's yeast, but this is an error. Nature is unique, we have to use the specific ferment for each plant or metal. Otherwise we need an undetermined ferment, and unfortunately there is none in the vegetable realm.

It is better to mix in with the dead plant a little bit of a plant which didn't undergo any treatment so as to bring the elements needed for the fermentation.

In the metallic realm, the metal to be fermented is dead. It should be mixed with a part of its ore which can't be fermented but which brings life to the prepared metal.

If, following agricultural treatments, the plant doesn't have its own ferment any longer, one possibility would be to seed it with a foreign yeast which should preferably be obtained from the bottom of a wine tun. Do this only as a last resort.

To the plant which is macerated in rain water and whose sulfur was just extracted, we add a little bit of the fresh plant to obtain the start of the fermentation while respecting the following conditions:

— If air is in contact with the liquid, it is mostly the yeast which develops, while little alcohol is produced. (aerobic fermentation).

— If little air comes in contact with the liquid, yeast develops only a little while a great deal of alcohol is produced (anaerobic fermentation).

— Alcoholic yeasts become dull and lose their liveliness at a temperature above 30C and under 20C.

— Yeasts do not live in a basic (alkaline) milieu, they only develop in a neutral or acidic milieu; the latter often blocks the proliferation of parasitic ferment. For the most part, the cut stalks and seeds of the fruit produce the acidity of the liquor ($\text{ph} < 7$).

— Vegetable and metallic fermentation produces heat, and the flask should be ventilated.

— During the 2 or 3 first days, you should renew the stagnant air which is above the liquid to evacuate the carbon dioxide which hinders yeast development.

— Stir the plant/water mass with a wooden or glass rod.

— After two or three days, let the carbon dioxide stagnate in order to increase alcohol production.

Spagyrics

Lesson 14

— In alcoholic fermentations, yeasts cease to work when the alcohol is at 32 to 34%, whether there is any transformable matter left or not. In acetic fermentation, which we shall deal with later, yeasts cease their work when the acidity is 8%.

— When fermentation is complete, separate the solid mass from the liquid through filtering.

— Slowly distil the liquid to recover the alcohol.

— Plant fermentation essentially produces two kinds of alcohol:

— ethyl alcohol

— methyl alcohol; the latter is very dangerous and should be carefully eliminated from spagyric products.

The separation of the methyl alcohol is rather simple because no azeotropes are formed with the ethyl alcohol and its boiling point is at a temperature of 64C. Eliminate then all liquid that distils under 76C.

The artificial enrichment of a vegetable maceration with solutions similar to the sweetening of the must in wine making very strongly increases the presence of methyl alcohol.

To summarize, all vegetable or metallic spagyric fermentations are controlled through three elements:

— choice of the ferment

— choice of the solution to be fermented and its chemical composition

— choice of the temperature and whether it is the aerobic or anaerobic.

It is a delicate matter to attempt to change the realms of the mercuries. But, for the principles of fermentation and putrefaction it isn't the same. An ancient Philosopher used to say:

“Seek what rots quickly in the animal realm. Using fish, extract the fish principle, and it shall accelerate metallic putrefaction which is otherwise very long.”

As everything in Alchemy follows logic, so does Kerkring's menstruum which allows a rather rapid extraction of the metallic Alkahest and is composed of sal ammoniac (principle released by the putrefaction of fish) and of absolute alcohol, a vegetable median which permits the animal to act in the vegetable realm. One can't go from one extreme to the other without going through a median.

We shall describe the making of this menstruum at the end of the lesson concerning vegetable processes.

PHILOSOPHICAL DISTILLATION

This mode of distillation is typically alchemical. Philosophers assemble under that heading two very different methods.

We already know that boiling creates myriads of micro bubbles which, carried away by the vapors, short-circuit the process of distillation. The reflux sphere of KJELDAHL eliminates most of them, but it is best to have none. For that reason, the temperature of the liquid should be just below boiling temperature. Thus all the liquid passes to the vapor state. This implies that the steam rises very little. We can then position the flask in such a way that we have the neck softly slanted directly into the condenser. This distillation should be very slow, a drop every 7 to 8 seconds. Ancient Philosophers recommend reciting a Pater Noster between the drops.

The second method consists in repeated distillations of the same product that is poured over the feces that were left in the bottom of the flask. The aim we are looking for here is the enrichment of the product, not separation. Repeated distillation surprisingly reinforces the alchemical elements of the product.

Repeated distillation of the vinegar does not increase its percentage of acetic acid, but its "maturing and fixing power" according to alchemical concepts.

Always let the flask cool down before adding the distilled liquid to it. If the feces are solid, remove them from the flask and reduce them to as fine a powder as possible.

This principle is applied as a continuous operation in the "circulations".

SOLVE ET COAGULA

This operation has the essential aim of purification. It can be conducted in two different ways:

— the first method consists in dissolving the body to be purified, generally a salt, in a liquid, usually water. If the salt is insoluble in water, you can try alcohol or acetic acid.

When the salt is dissolved, filter the solution and slowly evaporate, without boiling. Recover the salt cleansed of its insoluble impurities, but the soluble impurities are not eliminated.

The second method also consists in a dissolution and a filtering, but do not evaporate to dryness. Reduce, for example, the volume of the liquid to a fourth of its initial volume and let it cool down.

In many cases, crystals will appear and develop in the cold liquid. Collect them and dry them. They should be kept in an air-tight container, for they often are hygroscopic and liquify in contact with the humidity of the air.

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Crystallization partly eliminates insoluble impurities.

As the water progressively cools down, the solid parts crystallize.

Here is a list of a few salts, and their quantities in grams soluble in water at 20 C and 100 C.

	20 C	100 C
Sal ammoniac $\text{NH}_4 \text{Cl}$	30	76
Lead acetate $\text{Pb}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2)_2$	44	221
Potassium carbonate (tartar) K_2CO_3	12	156
Sodium tetraborate (borax) $\text{Na}_2 \text{B}_4 \text{O}_7 + 10\text{H}_2\text{O}$	2	170
Sodium chloride Na Cl	29	36

Let's take the example of lead acetate. If we saturate water at 100C, once the water cools down to 20C, we have:

$$221 - 44 = 177 \text{ grams of crystals with } 1/10 \text{ liter of water to begin with.}$$

Do not try to crystallize the totality of the salt because the solution precipitates impurities that are eliminated by filtering.

Let's return to the lead acetate. The first crystals shall as be thin as needles, but at each cycle of dissolution and crystallization, the salt is purified and crystals grow larger.

A first phenomenon occurs:

Done cold, the crystallization won't happen, which indicates that the degree of purity of the salt is good. If you have been careful to keep a few crystals from the first experiments, throw a little piece of it into the solution to obtain in a few seconds the crystals in the solution.

If we keep going, a refusal to crystallize occurs, the crystalline seed has no effect, and it is the indication of purification. You should then thicken the solution by heating it slightly until it reaches the consistency of a wax which becomes very fusible when hot.

When the salt reaches the degree of purity indicated, it is said by Philosophers to be "reincrued to Chaos".

Whether vegetable, mineral or metallic, if it is correctly nourished, it can be lead to real alchemical fermentation.

For some salts, Chaos can be reached in 6 or 7 crystallizations; for others, several dozen or even hundreds of crystallizations are necessary, hence the saying "The labors of Hercules".

CALCINATION

It is not as simple an operation as it seems.

If vegetable residues come from an alcohol extraction, it suffices to burn them when they are still saturated with alcohol, in order to attain the black-grey phase.

If the vegetable residues come from rain-water maceration, dry them first in a fire-resistant dish. Then reduce them to powder.

Reduction to powder of the black-grey ashes of alcoholic extraction, or of the dried plant of the wet maceration save time and energy.

For the rest of the experiments, it is a good idea to have two identical crucibles, made of porcelain, or fireproof terra cotta, or silica.

If you heat the crucible by gas heat, the matter doesn't receive the temperature of the flame because the burners caloric contribution is not sufficient. Experience taught that, for an open crucible, temperature rarely goes beyond 500C.

As soon as the color grey is reached, you can put a piece of stainless steel mesh over the crucible to prevent the snow-like powder from flying away and to quicken the whitening. For two reasons, it is preferable to place an identical crucible reversed on top of the crucible containing the matter:

1. Temperature increases of at least 200C
2. Volatile salts are sublimed and deposited in the upper crucible. In addition, they have a greater degree of purity than those which remained at the bottom. They must be collected separately and kept for higher experiments (like a circulatum or stone).

For the salts of the plant, you obtain different results whether you calcine the residues before or after the extraction.

Generally, if you calcine before extraction, salts are more fusible and using the technique of the reversed crucible, or using an enameling kiln, it is easy to obtain a vegetable glass. If this vegetable glass is soluble in water, or in alcohol or in the oil of the plant, it yields a better result.

The stone or circulatum, summum bonum of the vegetable work, can only be obtained through soluble glass or volatilized or sublimed salts.

Complementary note:

Page 2, fermentation of plants, there are rather few yeasts to be found on plants. They are mostly on fruit. They become active only on glucosidic substances. The bacterial population of plants is composed for the most part of lactic bacterias or infusorians. When a plant is put to maceration for the purpose of fermentation, more often a development of infusorians and bacterias is obtained, the action of a lysis rather than an alcoholic fermentation.

To put a plant to fermentation, we should add a bit of sugar.

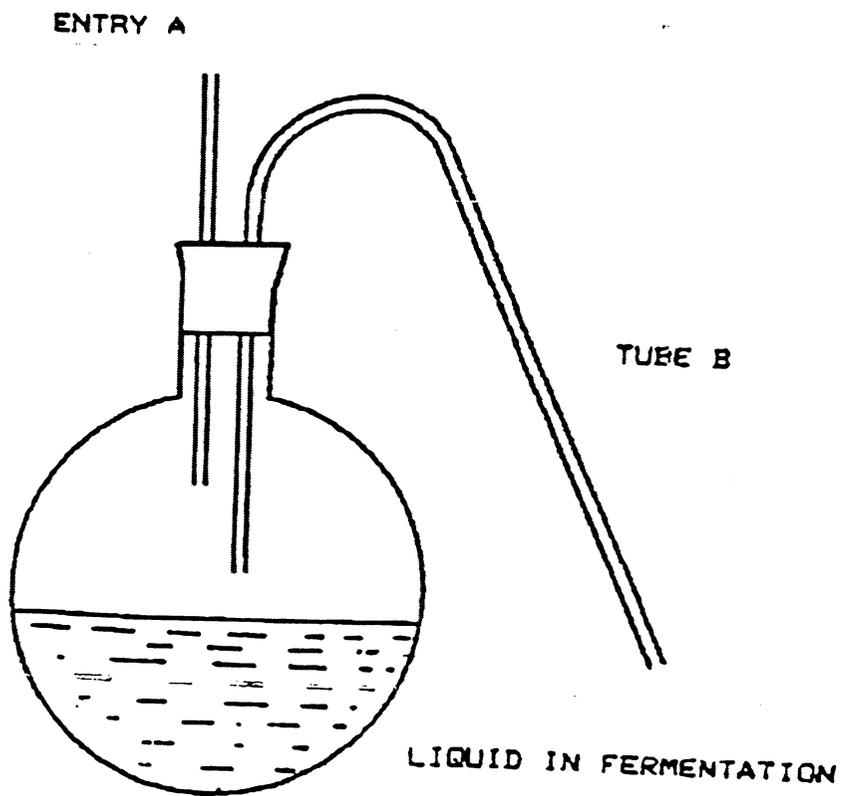
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ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Fermentation

Figure #1

FERMENTATION



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 15

Dear Friend,

At this point in our studies, we believe it is good that each of us thinks of all the various and possible alchemical options. In fact, it depends on the direction you choose; material and documentation are different for each of the options. It is good to avoid mental overeating, in the same way it is good to prevent our laboratory and work library to be overloaded with useless references.

The first way is that of spagyric alchemy, which, in fact, can be only followed by people who are certified doctors. This alchemy specifically treats healing through alchemical vegetable extracts. In this path, elixirs and quintessences are sufficient.

The second way, a little different from the first one, consists in attempting to obtain the mastery of the vegetable realm either through "circulatus" or through the vegetable stone.

The third way concerns those, who, after learning in the vegetable realm, wish to go on into the metallic realm.

We shall start then with some advice about the lessons. Do not read too many books, but read and reread thoroughly the ones you chose to read. It is obvious that these three ways have a common ground of material and documentation.

For the vegetable realm, we recommend the following books:

— The three volumes of :

"Le livre des plantes medicinales et veneneuses de France" (The book of medicinal and toxic plants of France) by P. Fournier - Paul Le Chevalier, publisher, Paris. This book is rather expensive, but it is the most complete book about the characteristics and uses of the plants.

— The two volumes of :

"Les plantes medicinales" (Medicinal Plants) by Emile Perrot. This expensive book contains 245 color plates enabling identification of almost all the plants of France.

— Essential Oils of Gunther, in English, (for those who want to study aromatherapy), gives all the characteristics of plants and the oils obtained along with various methods of extraction and purification.

Those who only intend to pass through the vegetable realm can be content with more modest works:

- Dictionary of Medicinal Plants by Morgan
- Name of Flowers through the Simple Method by Bonnier
- The portable flora of France, Switzerland and Belgium by Bonnier, is useful to those who want to prospect for wild plants.

We shall mention typically spagyric books when mentioning the alchemical books.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

In the last lesson, we examined the principles and rules of various operations. We shall continue to explore these subjects in the present lesson, so that we can resume the study of the general processes without elaborating the details of each operation.

MACERATION

Do not confuse this operation with fermentation. In maceration, there is simply dissolution, in the maceration liquid, of the principles contained in the vegetable or mineral.

Maceration occurs at a lower temperature than fermentation, just so as to prevent fermentation from occurring. Generally maceration occurs at room temperature, between 18 and 20C. Note, however, that the disciples of Von Bernus macerate at 40 C. Finally, we can also undertake this operation at a temperature neighboring that of fermentations, but in such conditions that the milieu doesn't ferment, that is to say with a slight addition of alcohol.

In principle, there should not be any release of gas: maceration can therefore occur in a closed container. The maceration liquids used are generally water and ethyl alcohol or spirit of wine.

Maceration is mainly used in the preparation of plants. Dried plants are macerated in wine spirit, fresh plants preferably in distilled rain water, generally for 24 or 48 hours.

The water must be well distilled because if it were to contain some salts, they would contaminate the Salt of the plant and the spagyric purification would no longer be possible.

The maceration is particularly important before the extraction of essential oils through steam distillation.

It is better not to use too much water because it must be evaporated in order to recover the salts of the plant.

CIRCULATION

Circulation is a continuous distillation in which the distilled liquid falls back into the liquid to be distilled. This operation is designed to enrich the products in volatile elements (in the alchemical sense), that is to say spiritual elements.

There are different types of distillation apparatus; each has a specific aim.

Figure # 1 (Page 5)

Traditional apparatus, the Pelican, designed for slow circulations with spontaneous condensation in the neck of the flask which is naturally stopped.

Figure # 2 (Page 5)

Rapid circulation with condenser. The heating occurs preferably through a water-bath.

Figure # 3 (Page 6)

Traditional apparatus called the "two brothers" or meeting vessel, which can be either a continuous operation or an alternating operation. Each flask is alternatively heated; with each change of fire, the degree of the liquid increases. (In Christopher Glaser, the definition of this flask is a little bit different. They are two florentine vases (matras), the necks going into each other.)

Circulation is an important operation in alchemy. It can last many months. During the practical work, we shall find out that some liquids circulate almost spontaneously.

In lesson 16, we shall give the description of a circulation apparatus that every one can set up by himself.

DIGESTION

Digestion occurs in a closed air-tight container. There is no yeast as in the case of fermentation. The temperature conditions are the same, often 40C. It generally lasts longer than fermentation. In principle, no gas is released. Only the appearance of the matter and the circulation of the vapor in the flask gives any indication of the stage of the digestion.

The flask should have a rather long neck and the matter shouldn't fill more than a third of its volume. It is very important that the temperature be constant during the whole digestion: as the cooling down of eggs kills a brood, likewise a momentary cooling down blocks the cohobation resulting from the digestion.

Maceration concerns the preparation of the product. The term digestion is used to design a terminal operation in the making of the product. Digestion is sometimes combined with circulation.

According to Von Bernus definition, the aim and the effect of digestion is to obtain the loosening of the texture of substances to allow their opening and dissolution. This phenomenon must be considered as identical to the one that happen in the stomach of an animal. Cohobation, in alchemy, is the assembling of the purified elements. It is different from Glaser's definition, for whom cohobation is the act of passing again and again a solvent over a substance to open it and to dissolve it.

COHOBATION

In Alchemy, cohobation is the reassembling of purified elements.

In principle, it occurs when reuniting the alchemical Sulfur, Mercury and Salt. It certainly is the most delicate operation. Since the general conditions are rather variable, details shall be given in each procedure when it is studied.

However, if the Sulfur and the Salt have been purified, the cohobation between them occurs equal weight to equal weight. As for the Mercury, it should only imbibe the other two. Only by carefully watching the operation can you tell if there is too much or too little Mercury.

During this operation, you can direct the product toward the fixed or the volatile, toward the stone or the elixir, because this orientation depends on the proportion of the components.

Once the cohobation is done, the product undergoes a long digestion at a constant temperature, or a circulation.

IMBIBITION

This operation consists in impregnating a solid, generally a salt, with a liquid, its Sulfur, its Mercury or a Menstruum.

The liquid must be completely absorbed and the surface just damp, without any liquid oozing. The product is then put into an air-tight flask and put to digestion for 8 to 10 days. The liquid impregnates matter interiorly and the surface dries out.

Start the imbibition again until the matter refuses it, which is manifest when its surface no longer dries out.

Imbibition through a menstruum nourishes matter and can re-vivify it. Thus a dead molten metal can find its metallic sperm again, even with a Menstruum that is not specifically of its realm. In this case, the operation can be rather long, a few months generally.

Our next notice will be exclusively devoted to the description of apparatus that we can build ourselves from inexpensive elements.

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ENCLOSED FIGURES:

- Figure #1 - The Pelican
- Figure #2 - Apparatus for Quick Circulation
- Figure #3 - "The Two Brothers" or "The Meeting"

Figure #1

THE PELICAN

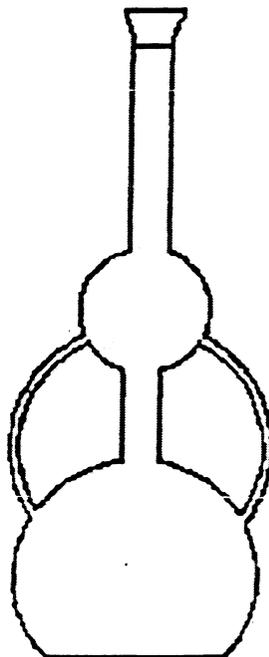


Figure #2

APPARATUS FOR QUICK CIRCULATION

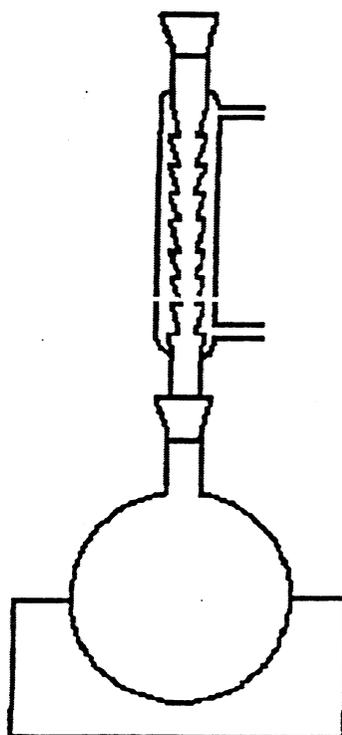
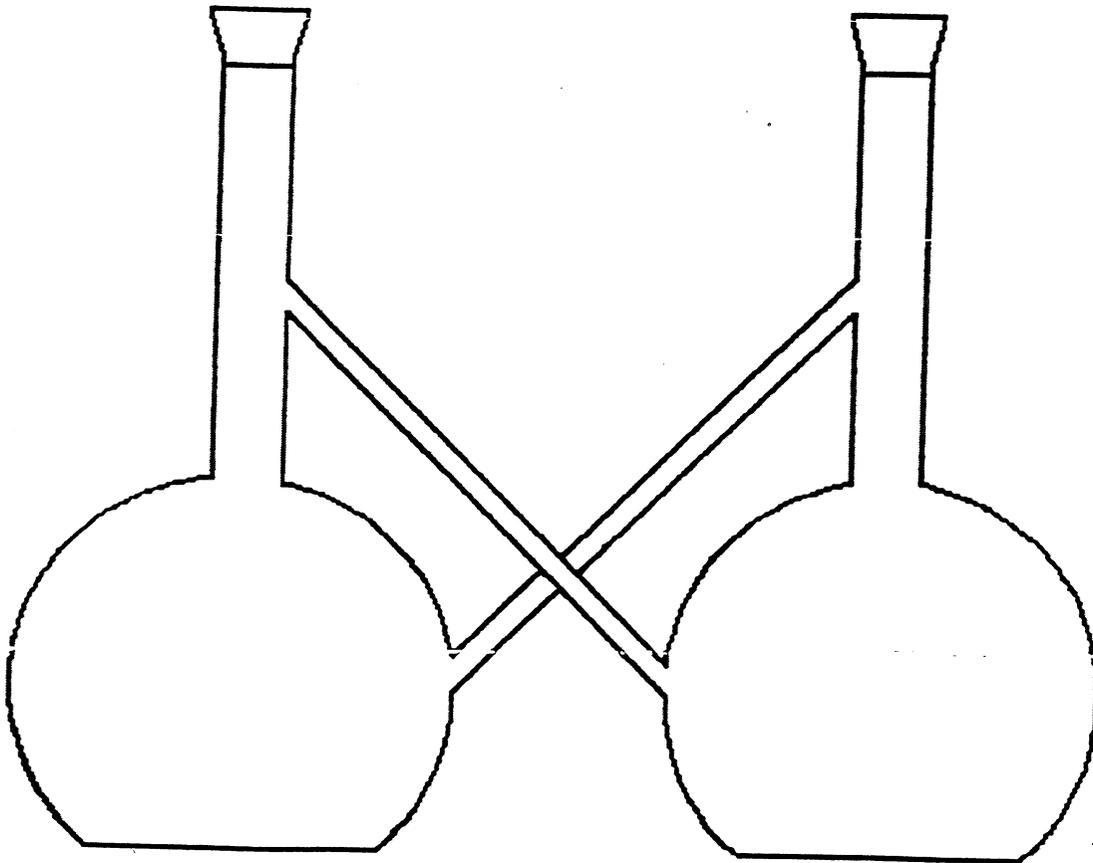


Figure #3

"THE TWO BROTHERS " OR "THE MEETING"



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 16

Dear Friend,

Again, we should emphasize the fact that it is useless to buy all the materials described in the lessons: each works according to his own path and must thus choose his material accordingly.

In this lesson, we shall continue the description of the material which can be made inexpensively.

SOXHLET EXTRACTOR

a. Simplified Method

If you want to avoid buying a Soxhlet apparatus, which is a rather expensive purchase, you can proceed as follows:

— choose the menstruum with which you'll operate the extraction. Let's take, for example, rectified alcohol.

— pour 500 cm³ of alcohol on the powdered plant

— let macerate 1, 2 or 3 days

— filter

— distil 3/4 of the volume of the filtered liquor, or more even, if the liquor doesn't leave a deposit on the side of the flask.

(X) — pour distilled alcohol again on the plant

— let it macerate again

— filter the liquor

— mix the filtered liquor with the rest of the liquor from the preceding distillation

— distil again

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— repeat the process from (X) above until the alcohol ceases to be colored when in contact with the plant. As the plant is saturated in the alcohol of the preceding maceration, examine the color right away, as soon as you have poured and mixed the distilled alcohol. The next day, see if the color has evolved. We usually count 7 distillations for the extraction to be complete.

Extraction through this process will require between one and two weeks, whereas extraction through a Soxhlet apparatus barely takes a whole day.

Home-made set up:

This set up (figure #1) is made from the elements that are described in the building of a distillation train (Lesson 12) and the condensers described further on (figure #2). At the points A, B and C there are joints which are made of silicon plastic tubes. They are designed to strengthen the set-up. The plugging is done with absorbent cotton or equivalent matter.

The condensers (figure #2) are set up with various pieces:

— a, b, e, f, g, are made of an 8mm-diameter pyrex tube. To obtain e, curve it first at the bottom. Then put on the stopper and heat the two branches into 90 degree angles.

— d, is a sulfur-free rubber stopper. You can pierce it with an electric drill. Start with a 3mm hole and wet it and drill it with water as lubricant.

— c is a 28 to 40cm-diameter pyrex tube. Its length may vary between 30 and 50cm.

The reflux-condenser is easier to clean and is also more efficient than a simple condenser. Note the various water inlets and outlets on the different types of condenser.

CALCINATION

Use small fire porcelain containers and assemble them as in figure # 3. The upper container (reversed) is only put on when the grey color is attained. Collect the volatile salt on the reversed container and mix it with the sulfur or with the tincture.

CIRCULATION, MACERATION

To put into circulation, we use a long-neck flask placed in a 1 to 3cm-thick polystyrene box. Let the neck come out 10 to 15cm. Place a lamp inside which has a maximum power of 10 watts and which has been painted red. The difference of temperature between the inside and outside creates a rapid circulation that can reduce the time-span of the operation considerably. It is always better to circulate the menstruum which are ameliorated through this operation.

To maintain a constant heat, the ancients used manure. It can be efficiently replaced by a used refrigerator (figure #5) from which you remove the mechanics. In the lower part place two 15 to 25 watt light bulbs which you place in lines, after they have been painted black. Half-way, place a thermostat graduated from 0 to 60 degrees or 0 to 100 degrees, then regulate the temperature to 42C. The final regulation occurs with a thermometer placed in the cold chamber.

Each preparation is enclosed in a polystyrene box in order to avoid provoking a thermal shock to the preparations which are still undergoing treatment, when introducing new ones.

EXTRACTION OF ESSENTIAL OILS (LESSON 13)

FIGURE #6

Tube a is used as a safety valve and is filled with water to level H. The tube b has a tapered extremity so that the vapor stirs the maceration. c is a silicon tube that can be pinched at the beginning of the operation to prevent vapor from passing through. Take the clamp away when d contains a little bit of water. The clamp is used to collect the oil after the decantation. The Erlenmeyer type flasks can be heated on regular electrical heating plates.

Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about details of the set-up.

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ENCLOSED FIGURES:

- Figure #1 - Soxhlet extractor (home-made)
- Figure #2 - Condensers
- Figure #3 - Set-up for calcination
- Figure #4 - Device for circulation
- Figure #5 - Changes in an old refrigerator
- Figure #6 - Essential oil extractor

Figure #1

HOME MADE SOXHLET EXTRACTOR

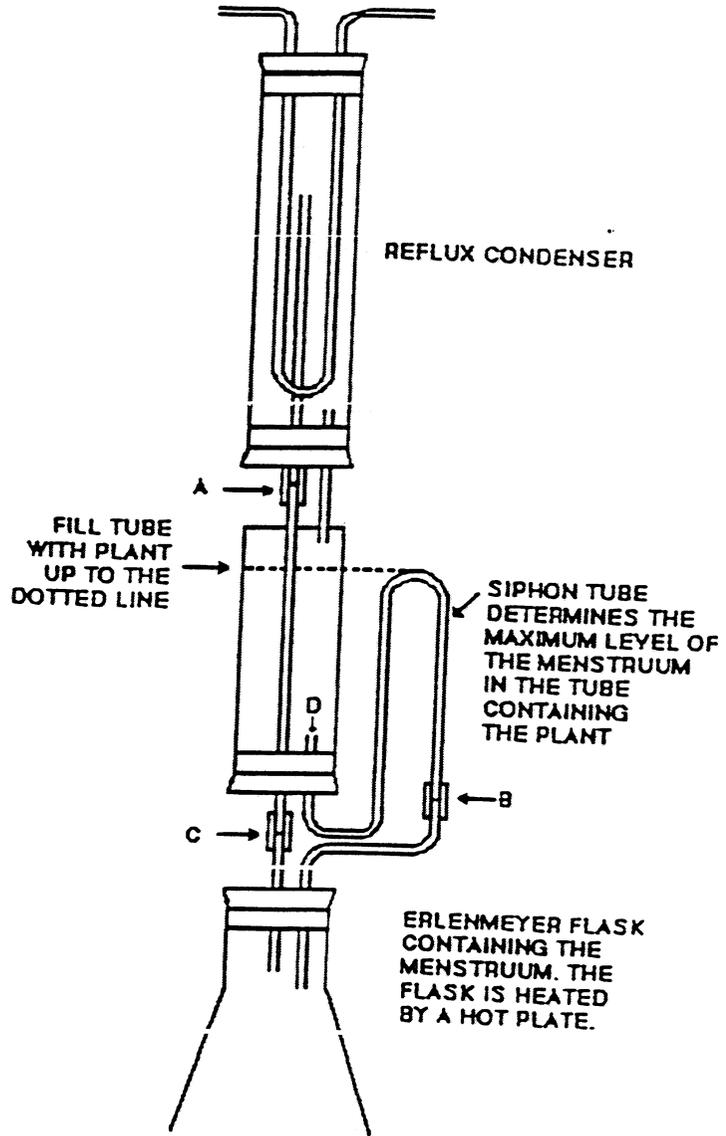
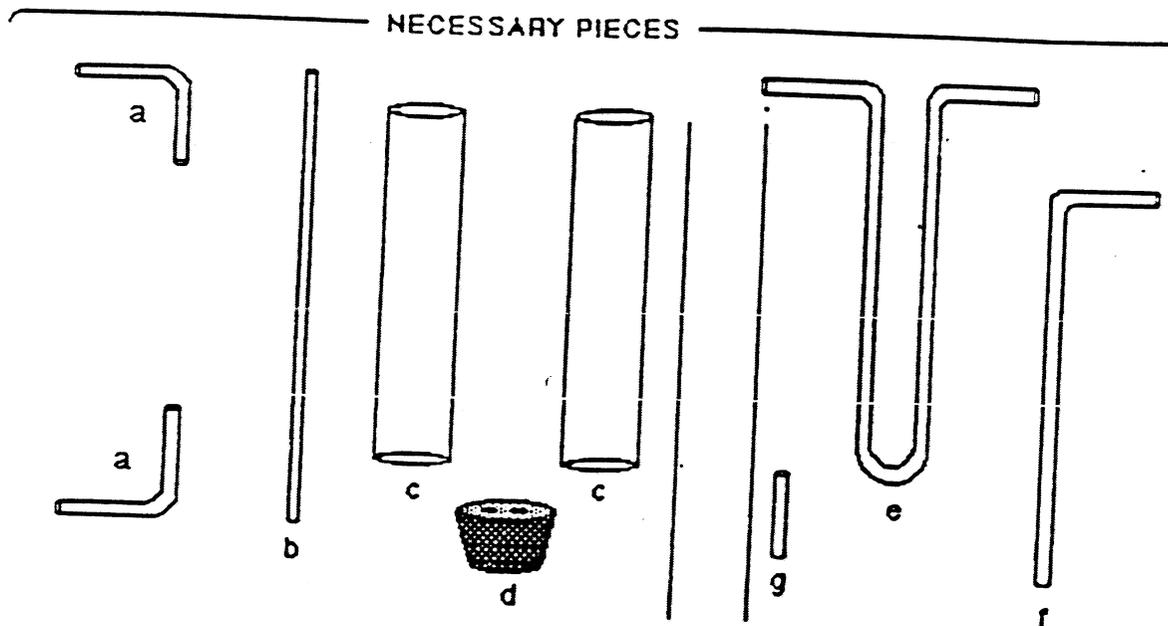
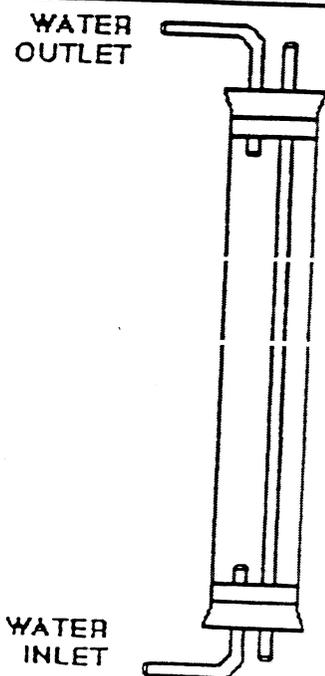


Figure #2

CONDENSERS



MOUNTED SIMPLE CONDENSER



MOUNTED REFLUX CONDENSER

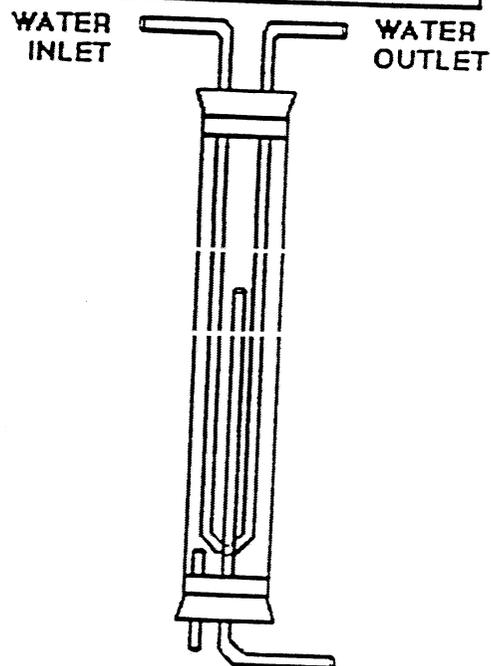


Figure #3

SET UP FOR CALCINATION

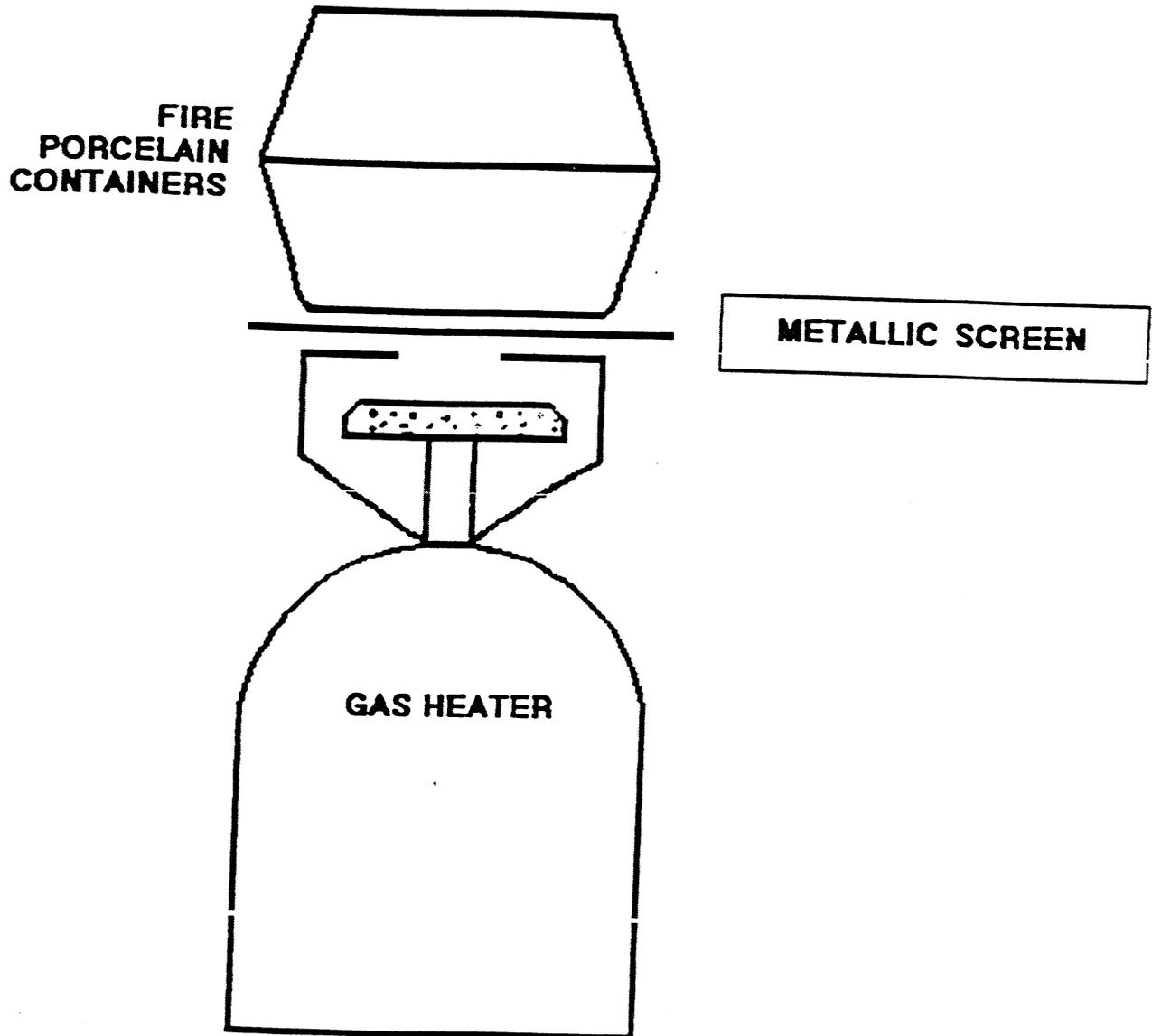


Figure #4

DEVICE FOR CIRCULATION

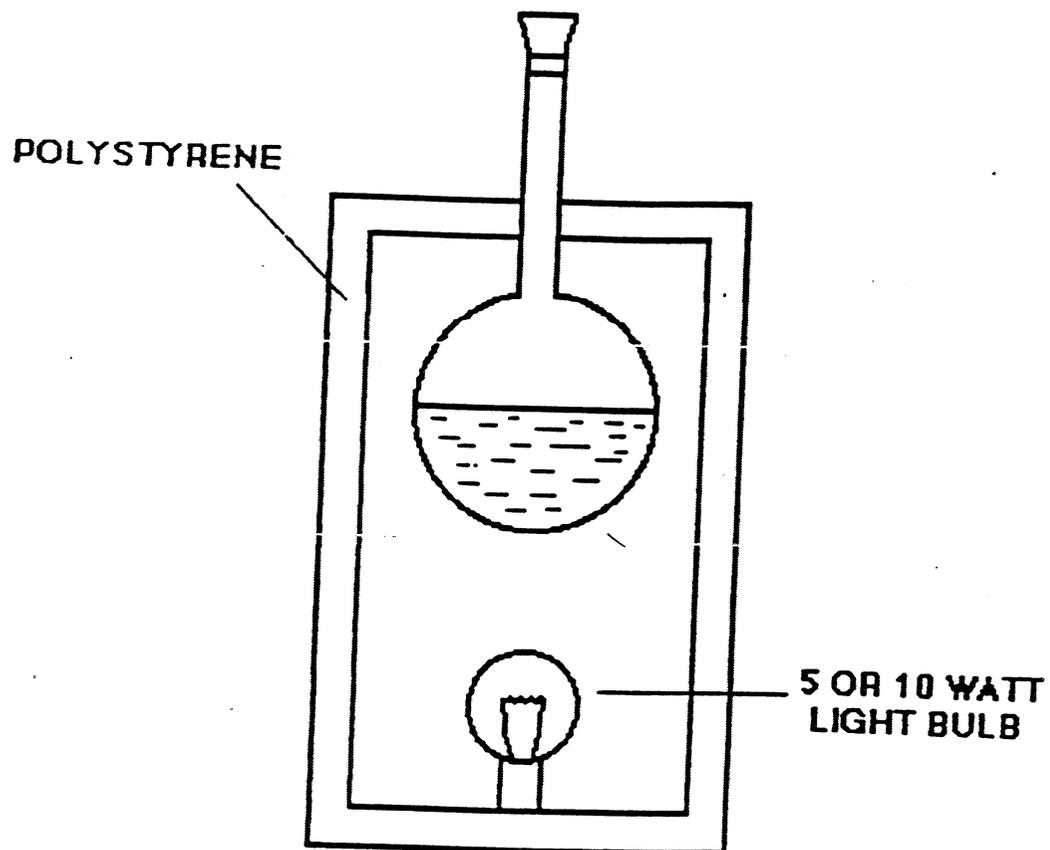


Figure #5

CHANGES IN AN OLD REFRIGERATOR

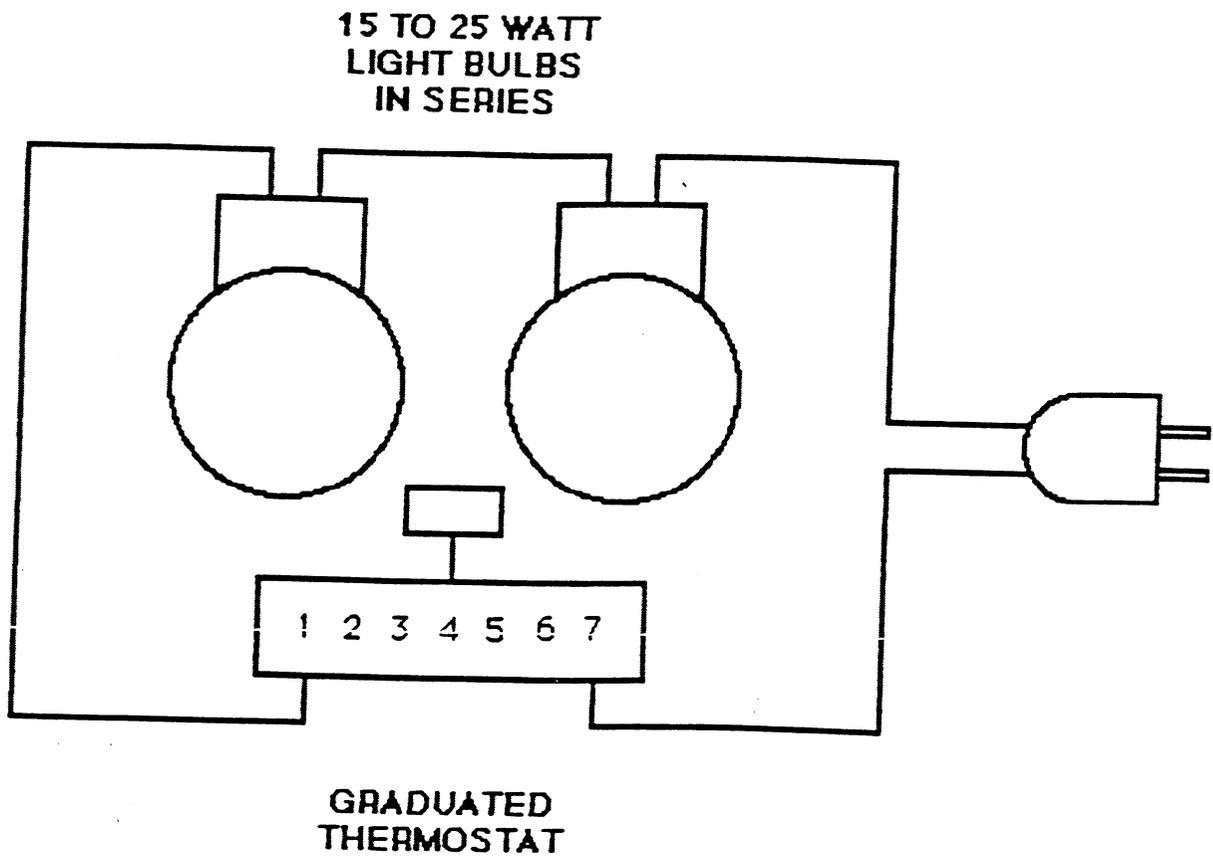
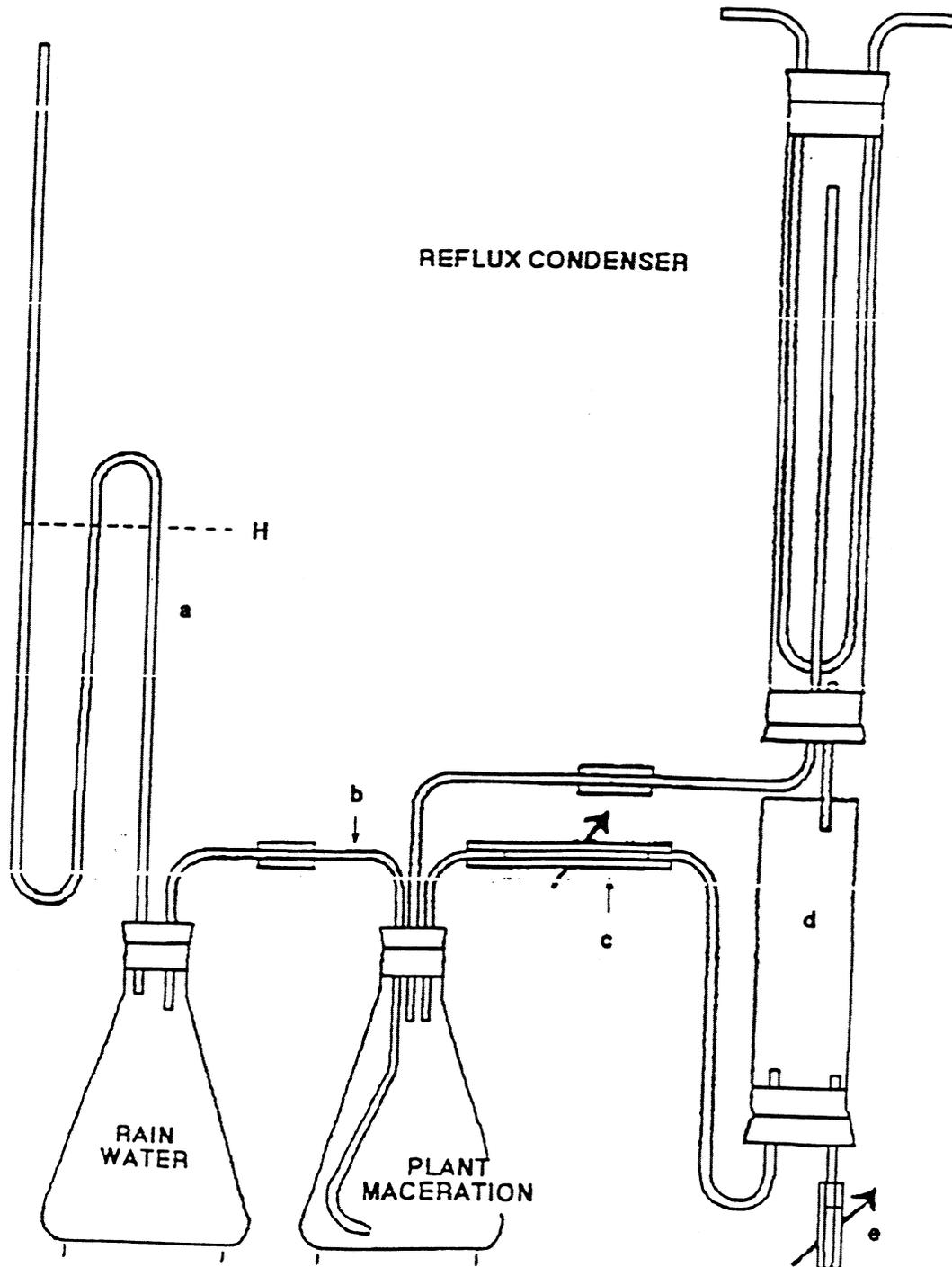


Figure #6

ESSENTIAL OIL EXTRACTOR



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 17

Dear Friend,

In the preceding lessons, we mentioned a few elements concerning the state of mind of the alchemist. We ceased the study of these texts for a while, because we believed the content should be put to maceration-circulation. Given the great variety of members, we provided these indications so that all can have an idea of the basic elements needed for this process, in case they hadn't known them before. Our aim was to prepare each member to use the experimental method and to give minimal notions concerning the concept of the world view that Alchemy is leading to.

In the present lesson, we are returning to extractions with a Soxhlet, by adding a few complementary and precise details.

What book should you chose? We shall attempt to provide a first answer.

Concerning the practice of spagiry or alchemy, the most "talkative" books are those who were written at the time where the transition chemistry-alchemy occurred. There are three interesting books from this epoch:

- Glaser, Chemistry Course
- Lemery, Chemistry Course
- Crollius, The Royal Chemistry

There are other books, but these have the advantage of describing the material in detail, the method and many of the necessary precautions, both in the mineral and vegetable realms.

Many experiments described in these lessons were taken from these books.

During the workshops of our teaching, we can show you these books and some others of the same epoch. In the books that are re-printed today, we recommend for those who are thinking of taking the metallic path, the books of Basil Valentine:

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- Treatise on the Tinctures of the 7 Metals
- The Triumphant Chariot of Antimony
- The Last Will and Testament.
- The Twelve Keys of Philosophy

Let's approach now the principles which are at the source of classical alchemical methods.

First let's briefly recall the menstrua. They can be divided in two categories:

- universal menstrua
- specific menstrua

In the universal menstrua, we distinguish the following hierarchy:

- Philosophers Mercury
- Philosophic Mercury
- Menstrua extracted from human urine
- the Archeus of Water

In specific menstrua and even in universal menstrua, we can distinguish two categories: those which give the volatile and those which give the fixed.

This distinction is important for various alchemical and spagirical reasons. In the old treatises, it is said that the volatiles heal temporary illness's and the fixed, chronic diseases, whether in the vegetable, animal or metallic realms.

Let us take an image to illustrate this adage:

The first vegetable fermentation is alcoholic, it gives a menstruum that makes volatiles.

The second vegetable fermentation is acetic and gives a "fixing" vinegar.

A first metallic fermentation of the ore releases the "volatile" Philosophical Mercury.

The fermentation of the Philosophical Mercury gives elements that lead to the fixed Stone.

This shows the parallel principle between the vegetable and the metallic realm.

If we wish to obtain products that are neither fixed nor volatile, the vegetable menstruum would be acetone, and the metallic one, the Acetone of the Sages, derived from Antimony.

Let us tell you right away to be careful in the way you use these products. Commercial acetic acid is forbidden because it doesn't come from wine and contains toxic products. In Alchemy, acetic acid only comes from vinegar (a delicate extraction which we shall study later on). Acetone is a very flammable product and it is only mentioned here as a theoretical example.

Toward the end of this lesson we shall approach the subject of extraction of a universal menstruum, for it requires an important practical experience.

We shall now talk about dried plants. They didn't necessarily lose their germinative power, their sperm. They are able to determine their species, their type. They cannot correctly produce their own Mercury, because the yeasts which are the typical ferment of the plant, have disappeared. The plant must be as dry as possible because the little humidity it contains strongly decreases the power of extraction of the vegetable Mercury (absolute alcohol). With a dried plant, the use of an undetermined Menstruum is mandatory.

We are going to begin the work on dried vegetables with a Soxhlet extraction or with the substitute method if you do not own an extractor.

At the end of the operation, we have:

A. the tincture can be used as is or:

B. we can attempt to separate the Sulfur and the Mercury through distillation. This is rarely possible. Only by trying can we know if we can separate the essential oils. In this case, it is better to operate in vacuo at a temperature as low as possible to not deteriorate the product.

If the separation doesn't happen, mix the products of the distillation and use the tincture as it was in the beginning.

1. the tincture
2. the feces

The feces are calcined. They shouldn't contain any products soluble in alcohol. Extract the Salt through leaching, or as in the solve-coagula, or by placing the salts in a Soxhlet. In this last case, we can do two extractions, one with distilled water, the other with acetic acid. If you use both methods, carefully mix the Salts together that you recovered, and then reduce them to powder.

The acetic acid, in this case can be "dead". It is important that it be pure so as not to

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add any impurities to the Salts. You can buy glacial acetic acid (at laboratory suppliers), or buy acetic acid at a drugstore in which case distill it with the required precautions. This acid boils at 117 C and its vapor is toxic. You can use a simple set-up as in lesson # 5, but make the exit air-tight. Let the outlet tube through a double hole rubber stopper which closes the receiving flask. Pass a glass tube in the second hole onto which you mount a plastic tub which can channel parasite vapor outside or in a potash solution.

When the Soxhlet has been filled with the acetic acid and the extraction has been complete, recover the acid from the distillation apparatus and the Salts from the evaporation flask.

The alchemical path is never, just one way only, and so each must experiment and choose the path that suits him the best.

We can operate as follows:

1. Practice the imbibition that is described in a preceding lesson with the tincture, on the Salts. Then, on a clean copper sheet, attempt the experiment of the Salt melting as a wax without smoke and which re-solidifies when cooling down. If this test is conclusive, determine the solvent of this salt, either:

- distilled water
- diluted alcohol
- simply distilled ordinary vinegar (we'll get back to this point).

We use this elixir in the following dose: 1 grain, about 50 milligrams of Salts, in a glass of liquid. If, for example, 100 ml of vinegar dissolved 1 gram of salt, you'll need 5 ml of this solution in a glass of wine or water.

It is good to keep the mother solution fifteen days as it must not form any deposit.

2. Pour the tincture and the salts into a flask onto which a condenser is mounted. Circulate for a few hours (according to the method described earlier). Separate Salt and tincture, calcine the Salts and so on.

a) after 10 to 12 circulations, the Salts are dissolved in the tincture and the elixir is complete.

b) the Salts do not dissolve, the tincture changes color. Try the experiment of fusion on the salt and proceed as the remainder of the preceding imbibition.

3. Distill the tincture and you have:

- the essential oils

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- The purified transparent Mercury
- the white Salts

We practice the imbibition of Salts with transparent Mercury outside the laboratory because the Salt "opens up" in this operation and can absorb a parasitic Sulfur impossible to extract afterwards. When the refusal of Mercury is reached, practice the imbibition with the essential oils, then digest at 42C. Watch the colors which should be white at first, then black, yellow and red.

If this is attained, we have a vegetable stone which should be able to separate vegetable macerations without fire. The success in this case depends on the quality of the Salt when starting and the absence of Sulfur. The digestion with the color phases can require 9 months to a year.

This stone must be insoluble in water. If this weren't the case, it would be due to the quantity or the quality of the Sulfur (essential oil) which must have been insufficient.

4. Place in a small high-form flask, filled to one third, the same quantity of oil, Mercury and Salt and place it into digestion. In fact, circulation must happen. The whole thing must become homogenized and give a volatile elixir.

In this method, the Salts must have been extracted only with distilled water, whereas in the preceding case, it was better to have extracted them with water and acetic acid.

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SPAGYRICS

Lesson 18

Dear Friend,

We shall examine today the English books that present some interest.

“COCKREN’s Alchemy Recovered and Restored:”

This book is of interest to those who are considering work on the metallic realm. It contains about 70 pages of practical advice concerning an inexpensive path (we are currently translating it into French and presenting in addition the commentary of a foreign alchemist).

“LAPIDUS’: Pursuit of Gold”

It concerns another metallic path, its practical aspect is important.

“John French’s A rt of Distillation:”

Collection of clearly explained processes, such as the extraction of Philosophic Mercury.

“Reproduction of the 1770 edition of Encyclopedia Britannica”

Collection of alchemical and spagyric processes, clear extraction of mineral kermes, treatment of plant oils, metals, etc..

The two volumes of Alchemical Writings by Paracelsus, translated from Latin into English by A. Waite.

Thick but extremely interesting book. It requires a very good alchemical knowledge.

We already gave in the preceding lessons a few glimpses about the Vegetable Stone. This question shall be explored further in a later lesson.

However, let us say that:

- for the Vegetable Stone
- for the Circulatum Minor
- for the Great Elixir
- for the Philosophers Stone

There are always different paths which all lead to the same result. Numerous variations are possible within each path.

What is given in this lesson only concerns one path in the making of the Vegetable Stone. It is not the easiest or the quickest, but the only one possible considering the current state of our work.

We shall later give other indications about other paths, particularly about the *circulatum minor*.

The elixirs of the preceding lesson which were done with a Soxhlet are obtained from dried plants, because it is useless to purify the vegetable mercury if it is contaminated with the water of the plant.

We shall now study a first method to work with fresh plant; we already partly described this method in lesson 13.

The mastery of the vegetable realm is obtained when one achieves either the making of a *circulatum*, or a Vegetable Stone. The *circulatum* and the Stone have the advantage over an ordinary menstruum, in that you can at the same time achieve the separation and the purification. If we dip the dry powdered plant into the *Circulatum Minor* (name of the completed plant circulation), the Sulfur which contains the dissolved Salt floats on the surface. The Spirit is dissolved in this *circulatum* and the earth falls to the bottom of the flask.

It is the same if we dip the Stone into a plant maceration. Here, maceration is done with rain water and a fresh plant.

The Stone shouldn't melt and can serve indefinitely. The making of the stone is time consuming. We shall delineate the method with its various possible variations.

VEGETABLE STONE

The choice of the plant is important but few plants are satisfactory. As a matter of fact, the plant needs to yield a maximum of oil, to correctly ferment and its salt needs to be relatively abundant. Our experiments showed us that caraway seeds or lavender flowers are suitable for this work.

First, extract the Sulfur in the form of essential oil with the method described in lesson 13, (a simple extractor is described in lesson 16). This extraction should be renewed three to four times every 24 hrs in order to draw out all the oil of the plant.

A first purification of the Sulfur can be done through vacuum distillation. It is also possible, but not essential, to purify the Sulfur by dissolving it into absolute alcohol, filtering and distilling it.

Spagyrics

Lesson 18

Then begin to ferment the plant with the water that was used for the steam extraction. Add a little bit of the fresh plant to help the fermentation to start. If it doesn't start, put a little bit of yeast which, if possible, you collected from a wine barrel. This is a "substitution", like brewer's yeast, but put in a very little bit.

For this operation (see lesson 14) slowly distil to recover the vegetable mercury which must be rectified 7 times. Some German authors proceeded with the fermentation, before the extraction of the oils. It is possible, but it seems to us that it is of no advantage for this present case. If a natural fermentation is easier to obtain, we lose a quantity of the oils when they are already very scarce.

Separate the solid from the liquid, calcine the solid residue to the white which, once cooled down, is mixed with the extraction and fermentation water. Filter this water and evaporate until coagulation of the salt. The latter is then dissolved in freshly distilled rain water, and it is coagulated again after filtering, two or three times. Place the salts in a rather high flask, if possible with a long neck.

After having calcined the solid residue to black, place a porcelain cover, or hard glass, above the calcination container. It is possible that some salts deposit on the cover. They must be recovered and mixed with the Sulfur, if they turn out to be insoluble in oil. You must practice repeated distillation of these oils on these salts.

Mix a mixture of half Sulfur for half Mercury, that you pour on the Salt so that about 1 cm of liquid remains above (the solid). Make the flask air-tight. It shouldn't be filled more than 1/3rd of its height, and put in the mixture to digestion-circulation for a whole week.

After this time, distil the Sulfur and the Mercury; calcine the salt when it is dry. When the latter is cool, pour the Sulfur-Mercury mix again and put again to distillation for a week.

The operation is renewed until the fact that during calcination, the salt melts without releasing smoke, like wax. The Stone is then completed.

Take a little piece of it to find out if it melts in water. If it is the case, put the Stone back in a flask with a mix richer in Sulfur (Sulfur 90%, Mercury 10%). Proceed to 2 or 3 calcinations, and circulations and try again. It is the lack of Sulfur that makes the Stone soluble in water.

Use a pyrex flask. Distil without taking the Stone out. But for the calcination, the salt should be out. If you want to avoid this manipulation, a quartz flask which is very expensive material, must be used instead of a pyrex flask.

A successful Stone produce the separation in about 20 minutes. Some Stones, which are less active, require up to 24 hours.

To a higher degree, the Stone possesses the properties of the plant from which it issued. But it extracts the elements of any other plant and in this case, these elements are extremely potent.

For the cohobation, variations are possible. Some authors recommend, for the beginning, a Sulfur-Salt cohobation, a separation of Sulfur through distillation, and only then, cohobation of the three.

Everyone has his method, and we hope that each one of you, according to his way of sensing Nature, will achieve his own.

ALCHEMICAL PRACTICE

One of the problems that you could have encountered or that you will inevitably encounter in the course of the practical work is the one of odors released during certain types of experiments. Each one of you that has been confronted with this problem knows how difficult it is to get rid of some of the smells released by certain experiments or, an even more delicate problem, to find a plausible explanation for a neighbor who becomes increasingly concerned for his immediate environment...

The enclosed figure #1 (Page 5) describes a device designed to neutralize bad odors but also toxic acid vapors.

The set comprises four flasks. The tubes that link the flasks with one another and to the rest of the distillation train have an outer diameter of 8 mm.

Flasks 2 and 4 prevent liquids from mixing or contaminating the products of distillation in case of low pressure.

The flask #1 can contain a potash solution and the flask #3 a solution of acetic acid.

The tubes reaching to the bottom must have a tapered end in order to neutralize the small bubbles more easily.

We can also put into each line (tube) a check-device (device A) which is formed with a little steel ball placed between two 8 mm tubes.

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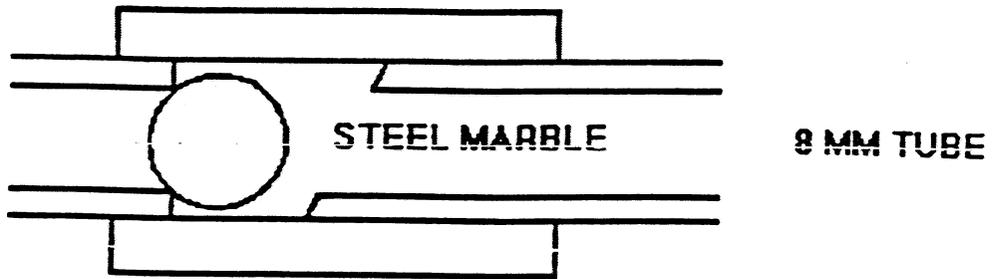
ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Device to Control Odors

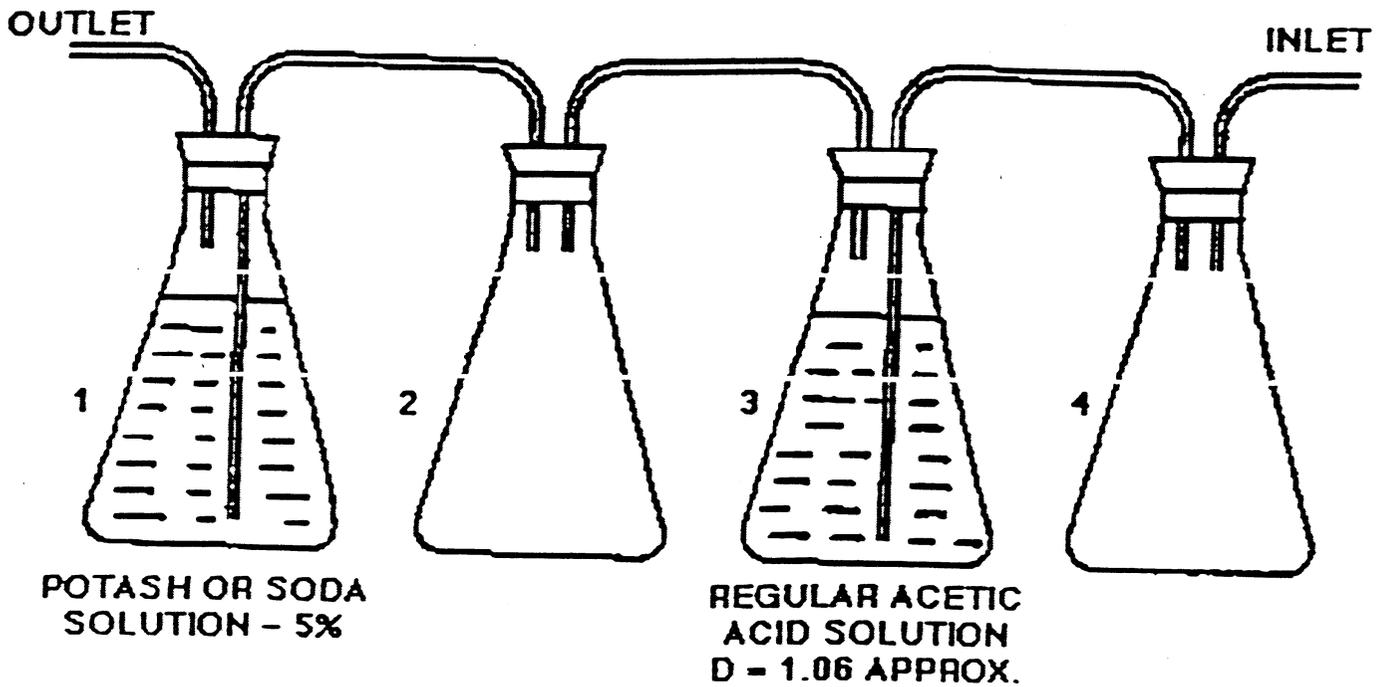
Figure #1

DEVICE TO CONTROL ODORS

A. CHECK DEVICE



B. PROTECTION AGAINST BAD ODORS OR ACID AND CORROSIVE VAPORS



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 19

Dear Friend,

All Alchemists agree that astrological conditions have an influence on alchemical processes. But as the Chinese saying goes: "the star leads the fool but the Wiseman guides his star".

We can therefore choose one of two attitudes: being subjected to astrological conditions or attempting to master them through various techniques.

Regarding the process of plant alchemy, to wait for the proper time to operate is the most important consideration.

PLANETARY VEGETABLE ALCHEMY

The determining planet in vegetable alchemy is the Moon. We should consider the moon here as being like the sun of classical astrology, with, however, a few modifications, because of the differing phases of the two planets.

From new moon to full moon, the planet is called positive; from full moon to new moon, it is called negative.

A positive moon is propitious for enriching a vital element and for accomplishing the following operations: the last cohobations before the digestion, or a distillation with cohobation or circulation.

The negative moon is propitious for operations such as distillation, separation or purification, or the separation of the pure from the impure.

Whenever possible, it is preferable to complete a menstruum around the time of a full moon.

Let us return to lesson #9 where we had a figure of the Chymical Sky (figure #2). During its cycle, the moon passes through all the 12 signs. This determines another aspect: if the moon is in Sagittarius, it is positive for all the plants under the rule of Jupiter, for example, lemonbalm. When in Pisces, it will be negative for the same plants.

The latter influence is certainly less powerful than the influence of the moon phases, but there is an obvious advantage of combining these two effects properly. However, because of the rotation of the earth around the sun, a shift occurs with the moon in relation to the signs. Consequently, the maximum positive or negative combination of the two effects doesn't happen with every moon cycle. The full moon occurs in the sign when the sun is in the opposite sign and the new moon occurs when the sun is in the same sign as the moon.

You can find out which sign the moon is in by consulting specialized astrological papers but you can also find it - approximately - by the following method: knowing the date of the new moon, find out in which sign the sun was on that day. The moon was in the same sign and in the same position as the sun. Then calculate the number of signs the moon went through, considering it goes through a sign in 2 1/4 days (approximately). Therefore, 9 days after a new moon, the moon has already passed through 4 signs. Note that during a complete moon cycle, the moon goes through almost 13 signs (12.97). This method is not absolutely accurate, because of the irregular course of the moon; thus, if you operate around the beginning or the end of a sign, it is better to refer to a chart of lunar positions.

The preceding considerations are effective mostly for the major plant operations or for the preparation of its necessary elements as the Circulatum Minor, the Stone or the complete Elixir.

For the lesser works, such as the elixir without the Sulfur-Mercury separation or the quick spagyric preparations that we shall see later, the German alchemists use the following method: work with the plant on the plant's day, Jupiter-Thursday, Sun-Sunday but start the true work, for example the extraction, only at sunrise.

We shall come back to the subject, especially when approaching the mineral work, but we believe that what we mentioned is a sufficient guide for the vegetable work.

PARACELSUS' METHOD

We have already explained some of the existing methods for the separation of the three vegetable principles \ominus \triangleleft \wp and for their cohobation also.

These methods are not always practically applicable. Extracting the tincture with an absolute alcohol using a Soxhlet is only possible for dry plants. And even in this case, the separation of the Sulfur and Mercury tincture is not always possible nor necessarily advantageous.

On the other hand, some plants such as a vine whose oil is fixed can only be extracted through mechanical compression or by using dangerous solvents such as diethyl oxide (ether).

Paracelsus's method has the advantage of requiring very little material. In addition, it can be applied to most dried and fresh plants. Finally, it causes less damage to the products than a quadruple distillation of which we shall speak later on.

Spagyrics

Lesson 19

In order for you to follow the mechanism more easily, we enclose a diagram of the operations (see page 6).

1. The plant is macerated in rain water (preferably distilled) for 24 or 48 hrs. The plant shouldn't be crumpled up.

2. Distil the whole and recollect D, the distillate or distillation water; R is the residue in the flask. The distillation ceases as soon as R becomes dry.

3. R is cooled down. Pour D, the water, on the plant. Let macerate for 24 hrs. Distil again until dry. Let the new residue R heat for about 10 min.

Practical note:

If you continue with a dry-heat in the round bottom flask, even if it is made of pyrex, it obviously won't last very long. Stop as soon as it starts to smoke.

Later on you can take the plant out and calcine it in a dish. Only terra cotta or quartz round bottom flasks resist this operation; but the first is not convenient and the latter is very expensive. After each heating cycle, solid residues are reduced to powder.

4. The water D is poured on the plant; macerate for 24 hours.

Distillation: If you have a decantation bulb, use it to recover the water. Otherwise, collect the water in a open mouth flask. Strive then to collect the oil which floats on the surface of the water D. The dry plant R is heated as before but for a double amount of time. If you do not heat in the flask, the heating dish should have a cover; the vapors that condense on it yield a black-brown resinous residue which should be added to the already collected oil.

Practical note:

This residue is often difficult to collect, but you can achieve this by dissolving it in distilled trichlorethylene and add it to the oil flask.

5. This operation should be repeated at least three times until the residue no longer releases any empireumatic oil - also called in some alchemical books stinking oil.

6. The solid residue is washed (leached) several times (see lesson on the Solve Coagula).

We now have the Salt and the Sulfur of the plant.

This is where Paracelsus's document ends.

We shall complement the above with what we learned from our own studies and experiments about the Sulfur obtained through this process. These conclusions are applicable

in the case of the quadruple distillation.

Essential oils or Sulfur obtained through steam distillation:

These oils are soluble in absolute alcohol; it is useful to dissolve them, for instance, in a 1 to 10 ratio. The alcohol enables us to recollect the oil which sticks to the glass in the extractor or the condenser and reduces loss of it during filtering. Then, we distil to separate the oil from the alcohol. The solubility of these oils diminishes with each distillation.

Oils which are obtained through pressing in Paracelsus's method or through quadruple distillation:

These last two are empireumatic and called stinking oils. They are not soluble in normal absolute alcohol.

For the filtering, only trichlorethylene or acetone is appropriate. The solvent is eliminated through distillation.

These oils must be distilled 10 to 12 times; with each distillation the solubility increases. Little by little, they near the quality and even the smell of essential oils.

The alcohol called "tartarized alcohol" which is treated with salt of tartar without distillation dissolve these oils better and can be used for their decantation.

In this method, the distillate should also undergo rectification in case it should contain some alcohol. If it isn't the case, it is better to start again. Have the plant ferment first and separate the alcohol from the distillate. As soon as the fermentation is complete and whenever possible, it is always better to perform the cohobation with the alcohol of the plant.

We shall study next the characteristics of the essential salts which must be joined to the oils we mentioned above.

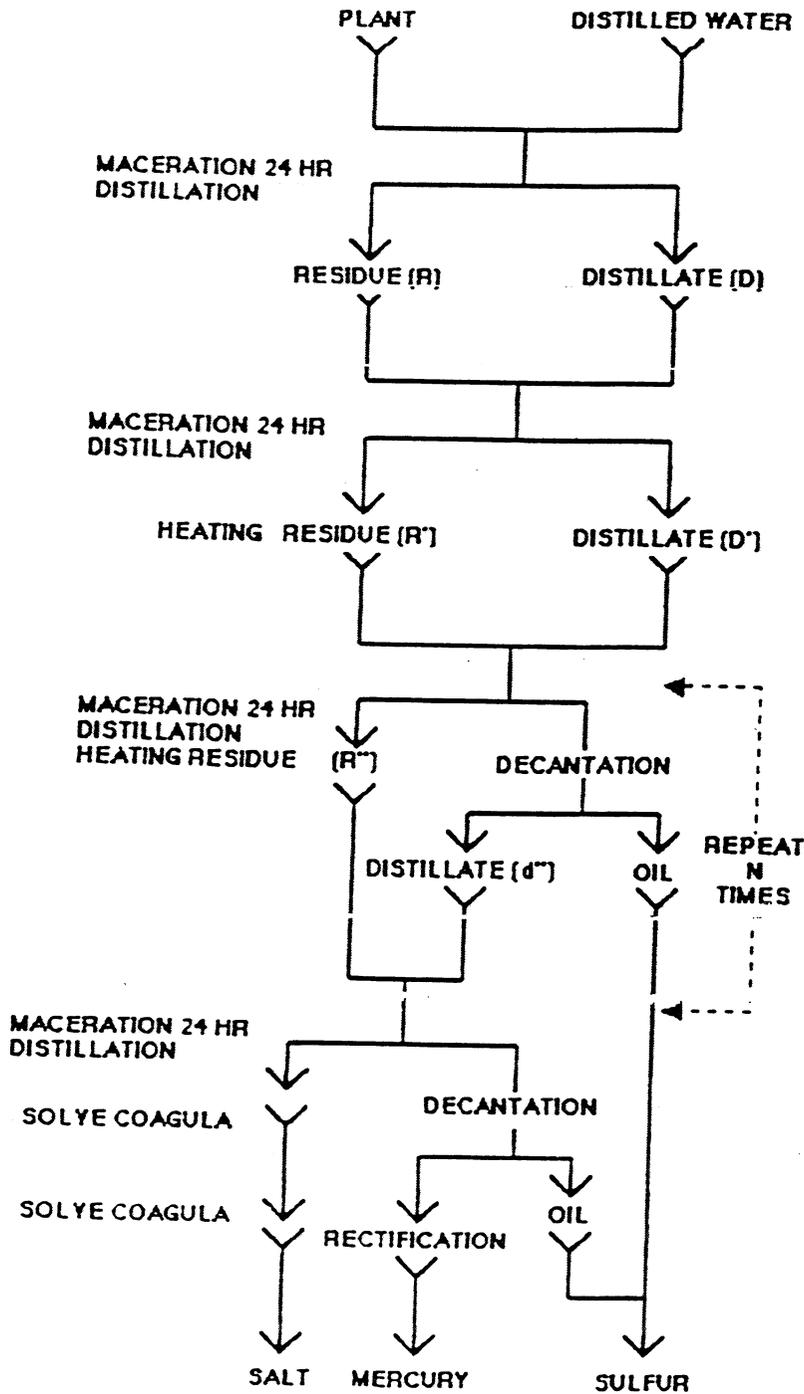
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ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Separation of the elements (Method of Paracelsus)

Figure #1

SEPARATION OF THE ELEMENTS
(Method of Paracelcus)



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 20

Dear Friend,

Numerous alchemists or so-called alchemists fail their experiments for the simple reason that they do not know the theory or do not understand what is happening during experiments. Applying cookbook recipes to Alchemy never yields the desired results. When you don't understand what you are doing, you kill the subtle principles and you move from Alchemy back to chemistry.

In the experiments we are proposing, we often leave a few unknown factors. These unknown factors become obvious to those who actually perform the experiments. They find the solution on their own and question us about their difficulties.

If we proceed in this way, it is not because we wish to hide a few keys or principles, but because we wish that those who participate in our group form the habit to seek on their own. We do not wish for blind followers, but enlightened and independent seekers.

EXPLANATIONS FOR THE EXPERIMENT WHICH WAS PROPOSED IN LESSON #3

Alcohol is the cloak of Mercury in the vegetable realm. When Nature acts, fermentations spontaneously occur which yield alcohol and the invisible principles of the vegetable seed take refuge in it. The seed includes the true invisible germinative principle, but it is not this principle.

The maceration of a plant in brandy (cognac) produces the following results: the alcohol dissolves the vegetable Sulfur and absorbs the vegetable Mercury along with various plant impurities. The water contained in the brandy (cognac) partially dissolves the vegetable salts; as a matter of fact, these salts can only be partly dissolved because:

- a) the alcohol disturbs the water in this particular work
- b) the salts haven't been liberated through calcination.

After maceration and solid/liquid separation, the calcination performs the separation of the mineral from the vegetable elements and the solve coagula(e) yields a salt uniquely of the mineral world.

Spagyrics

Lesson 20

According to the Ancients, calcination opens the pores of mineral matter and the salt more or less becomes sal amoniac, that is to say harmonic. It will then harmonically fix the elements which befit it.

If you then cohobate the Salt with the impure Sulfur/Mercury tincture, the Salt will absorb the Sulfur and the impurities. But if the Salt is in harmony with the Sulfur, it won't be in harmony with the impurities and the calcination is going to fix the Sulfur in the Salt and draw the impurities out. Thus, little by little, with each cohobation, the ratio of Sulfur in the Salt increases and the dissolved impurities of the menstruum disappear.

As the Sulfur is the tingeant, the menstruum normally loses its color. It must come back to a transparent clear color, a little like scintillating water.

The Salt is charged with Sulfur and should become white and a bit oily; it becomes progressively sticky and shouldn't fall off an upside down spoon. In addition, its fusion temperature progressively decreases. If the process were brought to perfection, we would obtain a Sulfur-saturated Salt and a perfectly pure Mercury. This is only possible, however, in a reasonable amount of time, if we begin with different elements than those used in the first experiment.

The elixir includes then two elements: a Sulfur-enriched Salt and a purified Mercury. The Salt/Mercury cohobation can lead to an elixir, as the Salt is dissolved through repeated maceration and distillation in the Mercury. We obtain an element which is more or less close to the Stone - that is a Mercury-saturated Salt/Sulfur.

Actually, the process of making a vegetable or metallic Stone is different from what precedes.

Purifying the elements often renders weak or downright destroys the female germinative power, that of the Mercury. It should then be replaced. This happens in the following way: the vegetable or metallic Salt is deprived of its Sulfur/Mercury elements through the appropriate menstruum; then we open its pores through calcination; the Salt then becomes what the ancients call a magnet which only waits to attract the Universal Astral Spirit: the niter or the prana. Particularly, if this salt is exposed to air at night-temperature, in the spring or summer, it becomes deliquescent and is therefore charged with "angel water". For example, calcined potassium carbonate or potash yield an oily liquid if they are exposed in thin layers on a glass plate to the night. The water of the carbonate is called tartar oil through deliquescence.

We can then cohobate the Salt with the Mercury which will absorb the germinative power. A very slow vacuum-distillation will give a re-vivified Mercury.

The alchemical Salt can have two functions:

- 1) a function of purification due to its "armoniac" characteristic when it is combined with the appropriate Sulfur;
- 2) a magnet to attract the niter, often through the atmospheric dew.

The Philosophical Egg is a symbol used by the Ancients. The yolk is the Sulfur, - the male ferment; the white is the Mercury, - the female ferment; the shell is the Salt which enables the union of the two. The incubation temperature of the egg is moreover identical to that of the vegetable and even mineral Philosophical egg, at least in the beginning.

True alchemy is the creation of the Alchemical Child through the union of the male Sulfur and female Mercury in conjunction with the Salt matrix. While the quality of the Sulfur resists well the necessary purification treatment, it is not the case with the female seed of the Mercury which is easily destroyed and which, when free, immediately returns to the Chaos.

We shall consider this subject again in a further lesson.

We hope that this will shed some light on the principles at play in our first experiment and the latter and will enable you to avoid a few errors in the process.

PERSONAL INITIATION THROUGH ALCHEMY

We believe our members to be, by now, sufficiently advanced in the practice to consider the first part of personal initiation through alchemy.

The first step is the psychic preparation which yogis call the cleaning of the nadirs. You must clean the body's psychic part of the impurities which prevent a normal functioning of the spiritual and invisible energies.

The first task is to prepare seven elixirs, one for each planet. To start with, use for each of them a plant classified in the #1 category in the chart of lesson #8. These elixirs are made with dried plants and an undetermined menstruum.

After the extraction of the tincture, the calcination and the leaching of the salts, the tincture is poured on the salts and macerated for a week, then distilled to the dry point on the salts which should be calcined again. Do this 3 times, and reduce the Salts to powder after each calcination. Then, macerate the distilled tincture on the Salt for a week and simply filter the result.

A German Alchemist says to take two drops of elixir every morning in a glass of water, if possible by sunrise: on Sunday, take the Sun's elixir, on Monday the Moon's, on Tuesday Mars's, on Wednesday Mercury's, on Thursday Jupiter's, on Friday Venus', on Saturday Saturn's. Progressively increase the dose to 10 drops. Generally, you observe a considerable

amelioration of the body's spiritual functioning. Expect to do about 1 year to 18 months of this practice before considering the first metallic phases.

After a few months, consider replacing the first series of elixirs with a second series made with the complete Sulfur/Salt/Mercury separation. In the method described above, the Sulfur's Salt is incorporated into the Salt. The effects of these elixirs are significant.

We shall study further the theoretical aspect of elixirs in later lessons.

ARCHEUS AND GUR

Let us approach one of the fundamental principles of alchemy, which is at once theory, philosophy and practice.

In lesson #11 we explained how Chaos generates elements. In lesson #12 we saw how elements are generating principles. Let's examine and modify figure #1 in lesson #11 (enclosed). Under every element we drew a small line which symbolizes the fact that in each element the three principles, Sulfur, Mercury and Salt are present. Moreover, each element contains a little bit of the other three because everything is in everything.

In 1, we have the Sulfur of Fire; in 2, the Mercury of Fire; in 3, the Salt of Fire; in 4, the Sulfur of Air; and so on until 12, the Salt of the Earth.

1 is the most volatile, 12 the most fixed. The degree of volatility diminishes from left to right and the degree of fixity diminishes right to left.

In nature, the energy - the essence - starts with an involution from 1 to 12, in twelve obligatory steps in the same numerical order as in the figure.

When it arrives in 12 and after having experienced the fixed, the energy - the essence - reverses its tendency and climbs back up, evolves, towards the volatile in the reversed order but always without missing a step.

The alchemist must obey this rule: all the steps must be made one at a time; the duration of a step can only be shortened through Art.

In addition, only the universals contain - equally or sensibly so - the elements of the 12 steps. All other mixtures only contain a few phases. In an important way, the Archeus, or universal spirit, contains these twelve phases of evolution.

Water can also, in some cases, contain these 12 phases because the Archeus can be concentrated in it. We shall examine this.

In lesson #11, we gave indications on how to collect rainwater. We know that it is not convenient for everyone. There is another way to obtain whole water. Gather some snow

Spagyrics

Lesson 20

during the winter. Solid bodies only loose their niter with fusion. As long as the water is in the snow state, it is electrified. Let it melt in a glass or plastic container to obtain whole water. Filter it and have it undergo the trials described on page 5 of lesson #11 and ferment it. Let's repeat the necessary precautions:

1) the flask should be closed with a fine weave cloth so that air can circulate but dust is prevented from entering the flask.

2) the water should not be exposed to sun or moonlight.

3) the temperature shouldn't be too low, 20C is good, but between 25 and 30C is better.

4) the longer the fermentation, the better the result: 7 moon cycles are enough but 12 are better.

What we are going to explain in our next lesson about this experience may seem incredible for some, so we believe it useful to give specific information about the following items: What we are going to explain is based on oral information from two foreign Alchemists and from two alchemical texts, one very ancient, the other modern. The synthesis we shall present will be a synthesis of the oral instructions, these two texts and our experience in this domain.

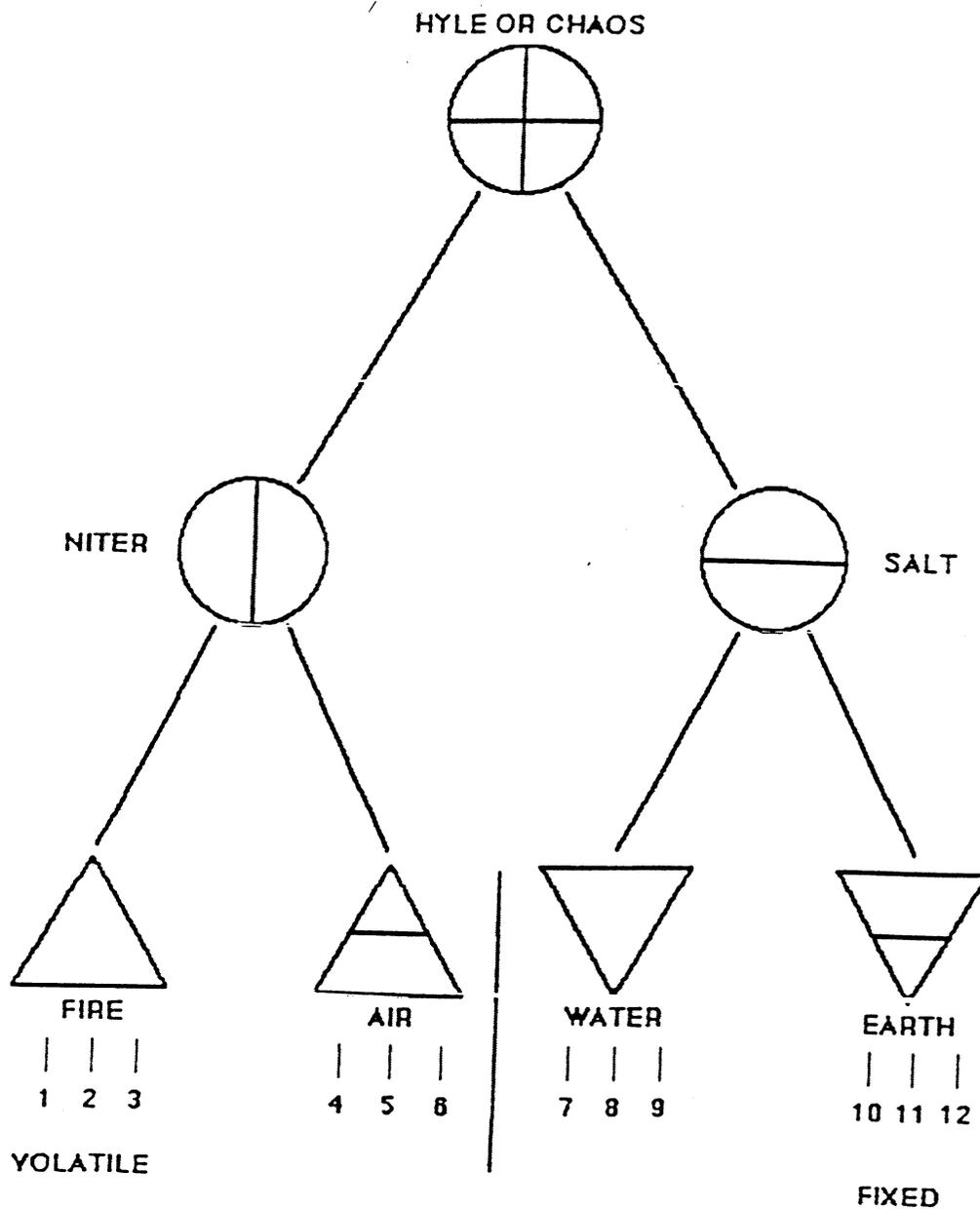
ORA ET LABORA !

ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - The 12 evolutionary stages of matter.

Figure #1

THE 12 EVOLUTIONARY STAGES OF MATTER



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 21

Dear Friend,

This lesson will be entirely devoted to our research concerning the Gur and the Archeus.

This experiment can be conducted in the three realms, and we experimented in the vegetable and mineral realms, but not in the animal realm as yet. As a result of these experiments, we had to modify certain details concerning our knowledge of the subject. We mentioned in the beginning that we were excluding animal Alchemy from our lessons and that is why we didn't experiment with it. In addition, for various very serious ethical reasons, we believed it is better not to conduct this experiment in the animal realm.

In order for the results of the experiment we are attempting to make tangible, approximately 40 liters (10.5 gal.) of water is required. However, for practical reasons, we suggest operating on a smaller quantity. For instance, if you have 40 liters (10.5 gal.) of water at your disposal, go through the process described ten times, and only treat 4 liters (1.05 gal.) of water at a time because the distillation should be very slow and with ordinary equipment these 4 liters will require between 24 and 48 hrs of distillation.

Look at figure #1 in lesson #20. As 2 is less volatile than 1 and 2 is more volatile than 3, in theory a series of a well conducted distillations should separate the 12 elements. In actuality, it is impossible and we are going to describe a system of distillation in 4 and 3 stages which has often been used by ancient or modern Alchemists. Very often when you encounter the sentence "distil seven times" it refers to this system.

If you decide to distil 4 liters (1.05 gal.) at a time, organize it as follows:

Put a Kjeldhal sphere on a 5 liter-flask (1.25 gal.) and a simple condenser after a 120 degree connecting tube. Considering the operating time, an adjustable electrical heating system including a thermostat is recommended (heating mantle with variable transformer or temperature controller).

Spagyrics

Lesson 21

Then prepare the following containers:

- 4 - 1 liter bottles
- 12- 330 ml bottles (11.15 oz)

These flasks are to be thoroughly cleaned, rinsed out with distilled water and dried. In this experiment cleanliness is essential. Close the flasks to preserve them. Mark them in the following manner:

- the 1-liter bottles
- △ Fire, △ Air, ∇ Water, ∇ Earth.

- the 330 ml bottles
- ♁△ Sulfur of Fire; ♀△ Mercury of Fire
- ⊖△ Salt of Fire; ♁△ Sulfur of Air
- ♀△ Mercury of Air and so on until
- ⊖∇ Salt of the Earth.

The distillation can be started. Conduct it like a philosophic distillation (see lesson #14, page 4). If you are experienced and certain not to reach the boiling point, it is better not to use the Kjeldahl sphere. In the philosophic distillation, vapors do not rise up very much and the sphere considerably slows down the distillation. In any case, the distillation should be as slow as possible and shouldn't be interrupted, at least not before the 3/4 of the water has distilled over. If you are really sure to maintain and control it at the limit of the boiling point, we repeat: do not use the Kjeldahl. Then proceed as described on the enclosed figure.

The first liter that goes through is kept in the flask Fire A. The second liter in the flask Air B and the third in the flask Water C.

From there, note that the water in the 5 liter flask seems viscous, sticky. Slow down the distillation to the extreme. If you placed a Kjeldahl sphere in the circuit, it is best to remove it at this point.

When 0.8 liter of the Earth water is distilled, bring the experiment to a stop and leave the 200 ml which are left over to cool down. This water is charged with the Gur, the universal seed which, when it is concentrated, can be easily destroyed around the temperature of 60 to 65C (140 to 149F).

Spagyrics

Lesson 21

Two procedures are now possible:

1) Complete the distillation in a water-bath, by maintaining the bath water between 60 and 65C (140 to 149F). Pull a vacuum in the apparatus so that the water boils at 55 C (131F). Collect the water to complete the ∇ Earth flask.

2) Follow the method of the Ancients who leave the water in the sun so it evaporates. However, the water can be contaminated in this process and it becomes difficult to collect the Gur.

When everything is dry, carefully collect the brown and somewhat silky product which remains at the bottom of the flask. It is the Gur, the universal seed of the three realms.

The first part of our experiment is thus completed.

The second part is devoted to the preparation of the Archeus which is needed for the fecundation of the Gur.

Let's take our first liter again, the \triangle Fire. Now we can distil it in a 2 liter flask, for instance. The other parts of the set up are the same as before and the distillation is conducted is the same way.

The first third to be distilled and collected is the $\nabla\triangle$ Sulfur of Fire, the second is the $\nabla\triangle$ Mercury of Fire and so on. When the first three flasks are full, we go on to the element Air and proceed in the same way for the other elements.

Now, clean the four 1 liter flasks \triangle , \triangle , ∇ , ∇ very carefully. Then proceed in the following way:

From the three flasks $\nabla\triangle$, $\nabla\triangle$, $\ominus\triangle$ set aside 100 ml that you pour into a one liter flask equipped with a check valve condenser. Circulate for at least 7 hours (see lesson #15 about circulation). You can also consider performing a long and slow circulation, taking a whole month for instance, in a high flask one third filled or in a pelican.

Some authors cohobate two principles to start with and then cohobating the two with the last third.

Pour the circulatum into the flask \triangle Fire. Then operate in the same way with the three other elements, keeping aside 300 ml of liquid for each. Our chart is a representation of this solution.

Spagyrics

Lesson 21

From each of the flasks \triangle , \triangleleft , ∇ , $\nabla\leftarrow$, collect 100 ml of circulate and put them together into the one liter flask for a new circulation which can short or lengthy as you choose, and proceed as before.

We obtain then 400 ml of a new circulatum which is the INDETERMINATE UNIVERSAL ARCHEUS.

If you own a pH meter (this is not essential) you can make sure everything is proceeding smoothly by making sure that the following measurements are respected:

- after the first distillation, all Ph should be 5
- the circulatum of 300 ml have the following pH:
 \triangle 5.7, \triangleleft 5.6, ∇ 5.2, $\nabla\leftarrow$ 4.7
- the circulated Archeus has a pH of 4.8

If you do not own a pH-meter, do not attempt measuring pH with papers which can contaminate the water and which are inefficient anyway in measuring such a small variation of pH. Only the Gur water which can attain a ph of 8 before evaporation, could be read accurately.

This is the third and last part of our experiment. It consists in preparing one or two determined Archeus.

In each Archeus, the four elements must be present, but not equally:

- if the earth element is predominant, we have an Archeus of the metallic realm
- if the elements of earth and water are predominant, we have an Archeus of the mineral realm
- if Water and Air are predominant, we have an Archeus of the vegetable realm
- if Fire and Air are predominant, we have an Archeus of the animal realm.

Therefore the various ratios of elements directs the fecundation of the Gur to one realm or another, and the same ratio directs the fecundation within a same realm.

Here are two examples:

1. if, in the four flasks of circulations, we take

▽60 ml, ▽ 20 ml, △ 5 ml, △ 5 ml

we obtain an Archeus of the mineral realm close to the metallic

2. if we take:

▽ 10 ml, ▽ 60 ml, △ 60 ml, △ 5 ml

we obtain an Archeus of the vegetable realm.

Of course, when the mix is done, it should be circulated like the Undetermined Archeus.

When the Archeus of our choice is ready, impregnate the Gur with the Archeus. The Gur must be moist but the liquid shouldn't flow. This part of the experiment is done in an open mouth flask which is then kept closed. The Gur absorbs the moisture and then dries out; start the imbibition again, and let it dry again and so on until the Gur ceases to absorb moisture. Then cease the imbibitions and open the flask.

If the Archeus chosen is from the vegetable realm, a plant will appear after some time. You should then offset, but only offset, the moisture taken by the plant with the Archeus. As soon as this plant dies, calcine it and mix the ashes with the Gur. A new plant will appear. Start the operations of moisturizing, calcination, blending again and a new plant will appear and so on. The reproduction occurs without fecundation and the plants which grow one after the other generally form a sequence which corresponds to a progression up the evolutionary ladder.

If the Archeus chosen belongs to the mineral realm, the Gur will take progressively, as imbibitions proceed, a sandy aspect, and if examined under a microscope it will show some small silver and gold metal particles.

If you choose the Undetermined Archeus and if all works well, you can achieve the Red Stone. But this way is very difficult to follow and the results are very chancy.

The Universal Undetermined Archeus is a menstruum that acts in all realms and which already has important healing powers.

We very strongly recommend against using an Archeus of the animal realm and we won't say any more about it in this lesson. Those driven by curiosity could, before undertaking anything, refer to what Paracelsus wrote about the homonculus.

This experiment on the Archeus and the Gur is a long-term work, and it can happen that you neither have the time or the space required to attempt it. If you do not undertake it,

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study the process of 4 + 3 distillation because we shall give a method for the making of the vegetable Stone which will use this system.

We would be glad to help those of you who are going to launch in this adventure of the Gur and the Archeus. Do not hesitate to write if you need complementary clarifications, or to tell us how you lead the experiment to its completion.

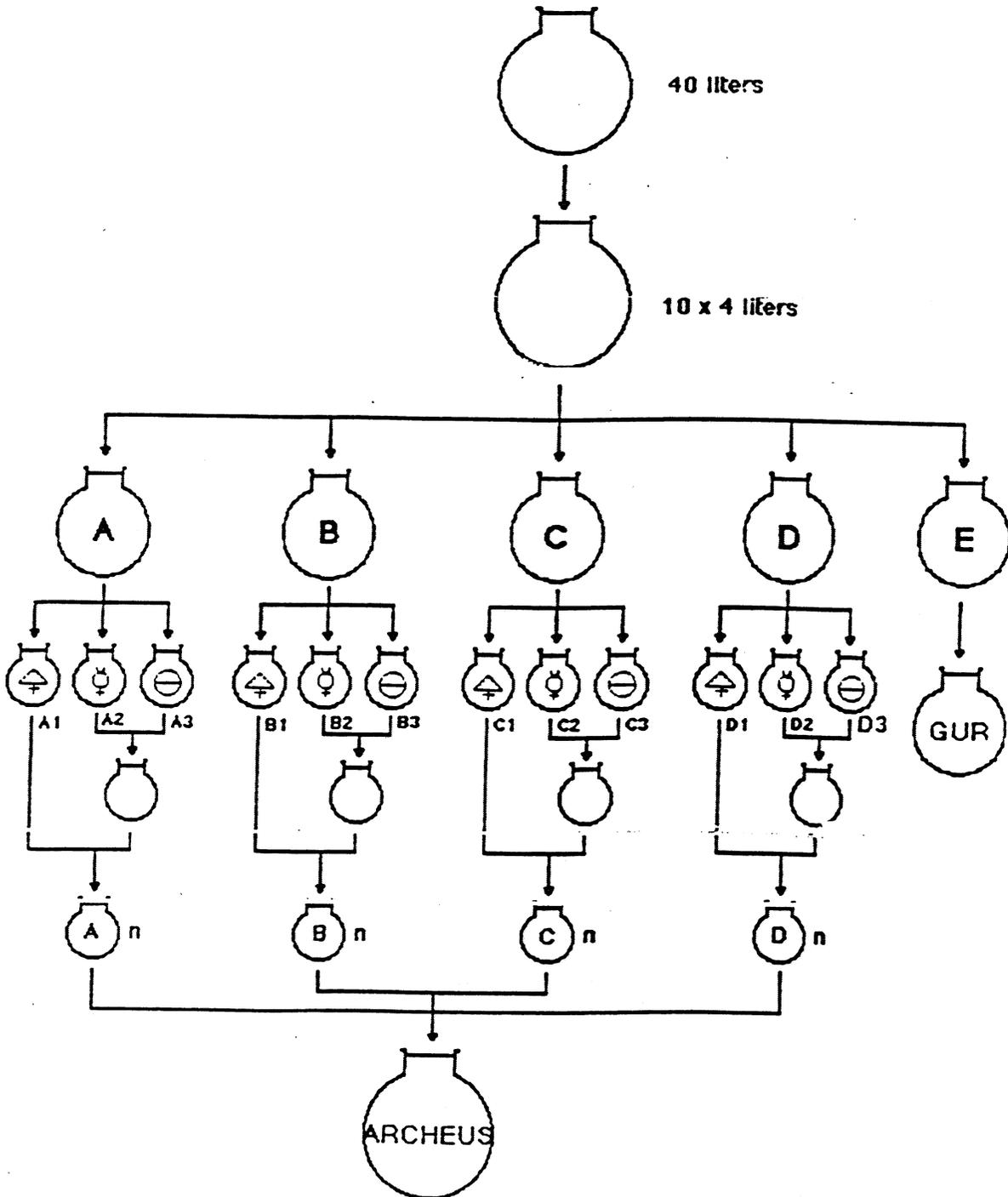
ORA ET LABORA !

ENCLOSED FIGURE:

- Figure #1 - Distillation through the Gur and Archeus

Figure #1

DISTILLATION THROUGH THE GUR AND ARCHEUS



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 22

CIRCULATUS MINUS URBIGERANUM

Dear Friend,

If we describe more than one method or experiment, it is not intended that each of you perform them exactly as described, but rather that you have different ways available, so you can choose the one that appeals to you most. In addition, studying the different systems gives a more or less complete overview of the achemical and spagyric methods; it is an important factor that encourages personal advance on the path.

In Alchemy, you don't need to wait for a master's good will to be initiated. Through study and practical work, we progressively come to the state of mind which opens up for us the the secrets of hermetic books.

To illustrate this we are giving, in this lesson, the translation of an ancient text. You can see for yourself that this text, although it is one of the most accessible ones, is not very easy to transpose into practical experiments. This reading and pondering permits you to determine your degree of progress in hermetic understanding.

If you have some difficulty understanding, we shall strive, in the next lesson, to clarify certain passages or paragraphs.

The following text is entitled Circulatus Minus Urbigeranum and the author dedicated it to all true lovers of hermetic philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

In previous aphorisms, we clearly delivered the unfailing rules and instructions necessary to produce the Great Elixir, the Circulatum Major, the only true secret of the Adepts, which commands all realms of Nature. These instructions will undoubtedly be no less agreeable to other lovers of Science than our own disciples and we are fully disposed to inform them about how to keep themselves and others in perfect health by preventing all disorders which, otherwise, would happen to them before they could accomplish their desires. We thought it convenient to provide in the same way the three different techniques for the

making of the Vegetable Elixir or Circulatum Minor which can be prepared and brought to a greater perfection during a Philosophical Month by any skilled artist who understands and follows our reliable directions. (That is why) we put into writing here the following Aphorisms which demonstrate the entire work so obviously that anybody, somewhat versed in Chemistry, would not fall into error. This is why we do not doubt that all those who will follow with sincere and faithful attention and will examine these aphorisms straightforwardly will find themselves compelled to glorify God Almighty for his infinite mercifulness for inspiring us to open our eyes, for we shall see what is required for our present health and future happiness, two things that we heartily wish to whomever has become a real philosopher, who sincerely loves God and others.

**CIRCULATUM MINUS URBIGERANUM
OR
THE PHILOSOPHIC VEGETABLE ELIXIR
WITH
THREE RELIABLE PREPARATION TECHNIQUES**

I. Our Circulatum Minor is a Specific Elixir which belongs to the Vegetable Realm through which we can, in one moment, extract the true Essence of the Plant which contains its Virtue, Quality and Property, without using any Fire or without any other advanced preparation of the Plant. It is a great chemical curiosity which performs wonders of Physics and demonstrates a few of Nature's Works.

II. We call it Circulatum because, even though it is repeatedly used in some Chemical Extraction or Experiment, it doesn't lose any of its qualities or properties, which is a particularity attached to the Universal Elixir, also called Circulatum Major because it commands in three Realms of Nature, while this one, reduced to only one Realm, is for this reason called Minor.

III. From the extract of the undetermined Tears of Diana when Apollo appeared after the separation of the three Elements, the Determination, Digestion and glorious Resurrection, we can, without the addition of any other created object, prepare the determined Elixir which is the first, the noblest and the most secret art of the Philosophers.

IV. The characteristics of Diana's Tears consist in their perfect and indissoluble union with the fixed vegetable Earth, which is philosophically prepared, purified and spiritualized, and for the love of which the tears are forced to leave their first undetermined Universal Property and be coated with another determined and specific (Universal Property) which is required for the Circulatum Minor.

V. The second way to prepare the vegetable elixir consists in the exact manipulation of a plant of the noblest degree, which stands separate, or supported by others: after its preparation, its putrefaction, its reduction into an oil, separation of the three Principles and their purification, union and spiritualization, the whole must be transformed into an eternal spiritual fountain, which will renew any plant soaked in it.

VI. The third common way only consists in the conjunction of a fixed Vegetable Salt with its own volatile sulfurous Spirit, things that can be easily found already prepared at any drugstore; and since in their preparation the purest sulfur, which contains the spirit suffered through non-philosophical manipulation, they cannot be inseparably linked without a sulfurous medium, through which the Soul is reinforced, whilst the Body and the Spirit are also rendered capable, through it, of the most perfect union.

VII. The specific Medium required for the indissoluble union of these two Subjects is only a sulfurous and bituminous substance extracted from a plant, whether dead or alive, found in various parts of the world, and which is known by all kinds of men. After it has been separated from its starchy parts through our Universal Menstruum, all the pores and the atoms of the fixed vegetable Salt, which is extremely strengthened by this passage, (this substance) as it is dilated, is rendered capable of receiving its own Spirit and uniting with it.

VIII. To fortify the Sulfur and open the Pores of the Salt no method is required other than imbibing this salt with the bituminous substance in a moderate digestive heat, identical to that needed for the brooding of eggs; as the salt is dries up (absorbs the substance), the impregnation (imbibition) is repeated many times until you find it so fully saturated that it refuses to imbibe any more matter.

IX. In the course of the impregnations, the whole mass must be turned over at least nine or ten times a day with a spatula or any other instrument made of dry wood, with a the repeated movement by which the bituminous matter obtains a better access to the Body and perfects its operation very early.

X. Great care must be taken to avoid any kind of dust or rubbish to fall into your Matter during the working of the Impregnations. To prevent this, keep your container covered with a cardboard or any appropriate cover; and nothing should come close that would have its own inner Sulfur because the pores of the Salt are very dilated and open and the Salt can easily determine itself according to any other subject, and thus bring your undertaking to an end.

XI. If in three or four weeks at the most, your fixed vegetable Salt doesn't manifest its true saturation, it would certainly be vain for you to go on further, because you can be certain that you are wrong either in the notion of Salt or in the true sulfurous medium, or in the working of the Impregnations.

XII. When your Impregnations are accomplished, your Salt will then be in a favorable state to receive its own Spirit through which it becomes volatile, spiritual, sheer, and marvellously penetrating, entering in a moment the Pores and particles of any plant and separating, in a brief moment, its true essence or its elements.

XIII. Even though the salt is fully prepared to receive its own Spirit, unless you kept the correct proportions between them (that is to say, you make sure that the volatile always predominates over the fixed), you could never achieve any perfect union between those two subjects which are contrary in quality but not in nature.

XIV. Before you start the Distillations and Cohobations, and after you added the vegetable Spirit to its own salt, a putrefaction of 8 to 10 days must precede during which the sulfurous Spirit, reinforced by the bituminous substance and finding its salt ready for conjunction with it, has the power to enter in its Pores to facilitate its Volatilization and its union.

XV. If, after six or seven Distillations and Cohobations of the Distillate on the residue you do not find that the Spirit is extremely bitter and that the residue is totally insipid, it will be an obvious sign that you failed in the true knowledge of the vegetable Spirit which, as it is volatile, has in its nature the power to volatilize its own Body and to unite inseparably with it, finding it capable of receiving it.

XVI. Note that in the progression of your distillation the sulfurous medium doesn't rise at all because it's a true medium which intervenes to unite the Body with the Spirit before the spiritualization of the Body, and without its help no perfect union of these two subjects can be expected; so, on the contrary, in the course of the work, its participation would be highly disadvantageous for them and would throw your operation overboard.

XVII. The rising of the sulfurous medium when the Spirit starts to move on its own Body to unite with itself irreparably, obviously and certainly means that you didn't adjust your fire as you should have and that, instead of giving a soft and vaporous heat to facilitate union, you gave a violent heat that destroyed it.

XVIII. When your salt is driven to perfect spiritualization and true union with its own volatile spirit, then you obtain the Circulatum Minor or vegetable Elixir or Menstruum with which you are capable of performing wonders in the vegetable realm by separating in a moment not only their principles or elements, but also within a single operation the pure from the impure.

XIX. If, in your vegetable Elixir you put any green vegetable, cut in pieces, it will putrefy in less than 15 minutes without any outer heat and it will fall to the bottom as if dead (which is nothing but damned earth, terra damnata), and on the surface a yellow oil floats which contains the Salt and the Sulfur; the Elixir becomes the color of the plant because it contains its vegetable spirit. If this doesn't happen, it is an indication that the operations were not philosophical.

XX. A single drop of this yellow oil given every morning and evening in a glass of wine to treat nausea, in accord with the virtues and qualities attributed to the plant, will unfailingly and imperceptively cure the disorder and reinforce the vital spirits and purify the blood against nausea or infection.

XXI. If you put some coral in this Menstruum, you'll see a remarkable experience. Even though its pores are more compact than those of any other vegetable, it transmits its inner spirit instantly to the Menstruum, and sends its Soul and Body as a blood colored oil upwards, and it will fall down in the end as a grey excrement.

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XXII. This vegetable Menstruum not only dissolves all kinds of resins and other sorts of substances of the vegetable realm, but also all kinds of oils or bases, which comes from trees. It separates their true essence through which you can accomplish marvellous things on living or dead bodies, which it eternally preserves without need of an opening or later preparations.

XXIII. If myrrh, aloes or saffron, each in equal quantity, is put into this Menstruum, then the true Elixir Proprietatis (as Paracelsus calls it), which is an excellent cordial and as efficient and virtuous as the Universal Elixir itself by healing all curable disorders, will presently float at the top and its Caput Mortem will separate from it and fall to the bottom.

XXIV. Even though this Menstruum is specific to plants, it will extract in one moment tinctures of metals and ores but it will not separate all their principles as it is not the appropriate Menstruum for these operations. Even though these sulfurs are highly balsamic for the lungs and spleen, our Elixir is superior to such preparations which we only indicated as curious chemical experiments.

XXV. Because this vegetable Menstruum is eternal and can be used over and over, make sure that you do not lose any of its quantity or its quality. Separate it from the Oil or the Spirit of the vegetable by gentle distillation or water-bath, while the container is very well sealed with luting and previously dried. The Menstruum, floating on top of the vegetable Phlegm from which it should be separated through distillation or water-bath for later uses, leaves its oil at the top ;the oil is united with its own Spirit which will easily disappear with any common heat, and leave nothing behind it, which is the proof of the Spiritualization, Purification, Regeneration, it received from the Menstruum.

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SPAGYRICS

Lesson 23

CIRCULATUS MINUS URBIGERANUM

Dear Friend,

Let's resume the text we presented in the preceding lesson. (Circulatus Minus Urbigeranum).

XXVI. An extract of your Oil or Essence prepared in this way or any other philosophical way (as specified in the second way to make the Elixir), if you know how to putrefy it naturally without any fire and to separate all the Principles, purify and inseparably unite them together, so that both are rendered transparent and spiritual, you'll have obtained, from this second regeneration, the greatest Arcana in the World for the plants, minerals and metals with the exception of Gold and Silver.

XXVII. If this regenerated Essence is determined with the raw material, it will have the radical capacity of dissolving all kinds of metals and minerals and principally Gold which is imperceptibly dissolved in it, like ice in common water, and common, regular gold can never be separated, whether through distillation or digestion. After a philosophical digestion and a separation of the three principles with their purification, union and digestion and third regeneration, you can prepare the great medicine of the doctors which has an equal virtue and quality on human bodies as the Great Elixir and, with simple mercury, on metals and minerals as well.

XXVIII. The way of determining this regenerated Menstruum with your raw material must be performed through amalgamation with it, during which the Vegetable Menstruum draws all the qualities and properties and unites them with its own and is thus rendered capable of the same properties and virtues like the simple Mercury which dissolves and volatilizes any created object that comes in contact with it.

XXIX. Some believe that the two Elixirs can be produced from several determined objects like human excrements, dew (what is called cloud Water) etc., and that the Great Elixir can be prepared from that or any other regenerated vegetable Menstruum; but since we know that such Menstrua which are called Philosophers Mercury, even though they can dissolve and

volatilize metals, cannot however ameliorate any of them because their dissolution and volatilization are neither natural nor philosophical and we think with good reason that all these opinions are only false and imaginary suppositions, not founded notions.

XXX. We, with our divine master Hermes, solemnly affirm that God Almighty, after he created all things, ordered each one to procreate from its own kind. Then our elixirs shouldn't be produced through sophisticated means, as was clearly mentioned in the preceding and present aphorisms in which we gave ample instruction for the preparation of the Universal Elixir from undetermined matter, and the specific factor from vegetable roots.

XXXI. Apart from the true affection and charity we have for all lovers of the Art, we are warning anyone who wishes to prepare one of our Elixirs only to follow our unailing rules, as they are the sum of the entire theory and practice according to the true philosophers, and without criticizing others, because some have taught the subject from hear-say, some others from readings and few from their own experience, they can easily be impressed by those and deceived by any pseudo-chemist or pretended adept.

We presented this text which we considered one of the least troublesome for the readers. It is surely necessary to reread it a few times before you obtain some kind of teaching out of it.

To help with this study, we are giving a number of commentaries about each paragraph. The number of each commentary refers to the corresponding paragraph.

1. Fire is needed to prepare the Circulatum. It won't serve for the use of the Circulatum, but to collect it.
2. In this specific case, circulation means maceration, percolation or, according to modern means, Soxhlet extraction.
3. The separation of the three elements means that the Sulfur, the Salt and the Mercury must be separated in the form of essential oils, spirit and mineral residue. This first process of preparation happens by applying a Philosophical Mercury of mineral origin into the vegetable realm. The preparation is very fast.
4. A complete separation of these three essential elements is imperative. Without it, nothing can be accomplished thereafter. This means that the Philosophical Mercury becomes specific to the vegetable realm in this operation.
5. We can use a blend of various plants or one plant only. The preparation starts with the putrefaction, which means fermentation. The spirit (alcohol) is liberated. From this tincture we distill the oil or alchemical sulfur. The third principle, salt or mineral is not mentioned. But all three are necessary for the return, the renewal and reinforcement of the plant's vital force, so that it can revivify weak or dead plants. In this second process, the separation

happens in the Philosophical Mercury. The purification comes after the separation. This process is identical to that of the solid Vegetable Stone; it only differs at the last stage.

6. We can obtain the salt at a drugstore. It is almost a paradox because the alchemists claim that we can't obtain their preparations in the shop of a chemist or pharmacist. But here we have the case of a product without sulfur and mercury, which can therefore be bought at a drugstore and bring the expected result.

7. The text emphasizes the sulfurous matter also called bituminous. There is a direct relation to the resinous substance which is attached to the pure alchemical Sulfur of the plant. The extraction can be performed on a fresh or dry plant. When the Salt has been purified, it is ready to receive the purified essential oil and the purified spirit that is to say the alcohol.

8. The operation is clearly described here! What is called bituminous is none other than the calcined residue of the sulfur, which is also known as "The Salt of the Sulfur". It is placed in a retort with the residue calcined black (carbon) of the plant which was extracted. Perform a vacuum-distillation with the old method at a temperature that shouldn't go beyond that of the brooding of eggs. The Salt of the Sulfur is the volatile salt with an organic characteristic which can be separated by sublimation. Push the distillation to dryness and then pour the distillate on the bituminous substance until the salt becomes progressively clearer. This process is repeated until no alcohol or oil is retained. The quantity collected at the distillation is equal to the amount that was introduced into the flask.

9. The content of the retort must be shaken at least nine to ten times a day before and after each distillation to allow a better penetration and a deeper whitening of the substance.

10. When you use a retort for distillation you should make sure not to introduce any foreign matter into it. When the Salt becomes more subtle, it attracts dust or fine particles which would be difficult to extract.

11. If, after two or three weeks, the Salt is not saturated by its Mercury and Sulfur, something is defective. The process must be stopped and you should start the whole operation again.

12. When you conduct the impregnations according to this method the Salt should theoretically look like a crystalline transparent substance. The outcome of our own experiment, however, was an opaque white substance.

13. The quantity of each of these three essentials is important. When the Salt doesn't imbibe more of the Mercury and Sulfur, Nature has found its own interest and balance.

14. The Salt should be saturated with its tincture (Mercury and Sulfur; the Sulfur is the tincture) and should remain for eight to ten days to open the Pores of the Salt (to dissolve its soluble substances).

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15. Make sure that none of the volatile spirit is lost. Each part is needed for the penetration of the Salt during the repeated process of cohobations of the Salt and Spirit.
16. The Sulfur should not and won't distill over the Spirit, but it will progressively be more strongly united to the Salt (alchemical marriage).
17. Avoid excessive heat here: the heat needed for this operation is obtained through use of a water-bath.
18. When the Salt is actually united with its own volatile spirit the circulatum minor is complete.
19. When a plant different from that of the circulatum is finely cut and placed in the distilled Spirit mentioned in XV, the dead and damned earth falls to the bottom while the oil which contains the Salt floats. The three essentials are extracted and purified through the power of the Menstruum's spirit. The Spirit is collected by distilling the circulatum.
20. A drop of the oil of a plant prepared in this way in a glass of wine or water has great medicinal virtue.
21. This menstruum acts on the coral, that is to say on a substance which is on the borderline of the mineral realm.
22. This menstruum can also purify and separate principles of vegetable elements like oil, resin, gum...
23. Paracelsus' Elixir whose properties are close to the properties of the Great Elixir is prepared from three plants treated in equal quantities.
24. This menstruum can extract metallic tinctures but it can't dissolve metals like the Philosophic Mercury can. This extraction has been practically demonstrated.
25. A slow vapor-bath distillation regenerates the menstruum.
26. What is explained here is contrary to alchemical principles and only means that the menstruum can extract the mineral tincture but can't perform the transmutation.
27. All this paragraph is true only if the menstruum is united to the Philosophical Mercury.
28. The three alchemical principles found in Nature and united by the spirit of the Philosophical Mercury can realize operations that each one separately cannot accomplish.
29. There must be a distinction between what extracts a tincture and what dissolves a substance. All the menstrua are not like that, even though the common of mortals thinks it is Mercury or Philosophical Mercury and call them so.

30. These elixirs can only be produced through knowledge coming from divine inspiration.

31. If you follow these prescriptions you can avoid many disillusionings, but alchemical practice only can lead you to a valid result. The circulatum is not as easy to use as the Vegetable Stone, but it allows other experiments.

As a practical application of this text you can try this other method to obtain the Stone which we found in an old text. We have not performed the experiment to date.

— put 800 grams (28.21 oz.) of wheat seed to fermentation in 4 liters of water (1.05 gal.) for 6 months until the whole thing is reduced to a mush.

— perform a distillation according to the principles used for the Gur, but here we have the sequence Mercury, Sulfur and Salt and the oil distills after the alcohol.

— distil the water in three parts and the residue is also distilled to obtain thick resins.

— for the earth, the third part is the fixed residue which is the Salt of the earth.

— cohobate an equal part of liquids 1 to 6 and pour them on the solid residues of 12. After 6 weeks of digestion, the liquid should be of a green color. 1 to 6 represent the active positive part of the plant.

— the parts 7 to 12 represent the passive parts of the plant and they are cohobated with the salts of the plant.

— when nothing is absorbed any more the solid residue is melted and, once it cooled down, it is saturated with the essential oil of the plant. The Stone is then completed.

ORA ET LABORA

MANFRED JUNIUS COMMENTARIES ON THE CIRCULATUM MINOR

To clarify the practical work

1. Truly, if the Circulatum Minor is correctly and well prepared it loses nothing of its vigor even after repeated use. A circulatum the author did in his laboratory some years ago continues to instantly separate any plant which is placed in it, into its three essential principles.

2. The Tears of Diana are the Mercury, the undetermined or pure ethyl alcohol, that is to say the ethyl alcohol which hasn't been specified by the addition of mineral salts (Fixed Earth).

Apollo appears, after the volatile Sulfur, meaning the essential oils, have been extracted from the chosen vegetable species by vapor-distillation, for example. Apollo's appearance, the distillation of the essential oils, is always the first stage of the separation.

Urbigerus claims that the separation of a species in its three essential principles (which he calls here elements) is necessary for the accomplishment of the Work. The Mercury is then specified by the addition of the other purified substances. That is to say the Salt as well as the fixed and non-fixed Sulfur. This is followed by a digestion and subsequent distillations. In this way we can prepare the Circulatum Minor starting with one single thing without any addition. Urbigerus considers it to be the noblest way of preparation.

3. Urbigerus clearly exposes what he wants to say by the determination of Diana's Tears. But the Salt extracted from the body of the plant (fixed vegetable Earth) should be alchemically prepared, that is to say correctly calcined, purified and spiritualized (made volatile); this transforms their nature.

4. Urbigerus alludes to the vineyard. During what is called *Opus Vini*, where work on wine is proceeding, there is a stage, at a certain point, where the worker can choose between a liquid and volatile result or a fixed result, a stone. For the reduction into an oil the reader shall refer to *Hollandus*, *Glauberus Concentratus* and *Opera Vegetabilis*. The method is too long and we can't describe it here, that is why we are concentrating on the first and the third method of realization of the Circulatum.

5. The conjunction of a fixed vegetable salt (extracted from the plant's body through calcination and subsequent extractions and purifications) with its own sulfurous spirit, is used in the preparation. The sulfurous volatile spirit is an alcoholic essence which is distilled from a plant. ("Sulfurous Spirit" always indicates an alcohol distillate containing the essential oil that is to say the volatile Sulfur of the species). These aromatic alcoholates were usually sold by apothecaries and numerous treaties on the art of distillation allude to it. THE CARMELITE'S WATER and THE QUEEN OF HUNGARY'S WATER are famous examples of these compound distillates. However, these "waters", or sulfurous spirits are distillates and therefore the fixed part of the Sulfur is missing, which because of its non-volatile nature doesn't pass through distillation and is therefore left aside. From the alchemical point of view, this fractioning is non-philosophical because the fixed part of the Sulfur contains the other part of the soul. (We shall see later that the organic acids it contains are the key to the secret of the volatilization of salts). Since the organic acids which are present in the distillate are not sufficient to realize the operation, you should add some from the outside. Thus the Sulfur will be reinforced and will act as a catalyst for the reunion of the body and spirit, Salt and Mercury. In the following aphorism, Urbigerus says what this sulfurous matter is and where it can be obtained.

6. Urbigerus clearly alludes to resins. These are complex blends mainly of aromatic substances which possess acid properties, of other alcohols, phenols and highly desaturated substances. Resins are close to terpenes. Resins are obtained by cutting certain trees, mainly pines, firs and spruce, larches and some exotic varieties. Amber is a particular kind of resin. Urbigerus's German text contains a conclusive sentence: "Und Von allen Arten derer Meerfishern erkandt Wird" (and this is known by all fish of the sea or fishermen of the sea). This obvious allusion to amber put the author on the right track. (The succinic acid contained in amber is a marvellous catalyst). But Urbigerus tells us himself what are the kind of resins which he considers as particularly fitting for the operation. First comes that of the copaiba (the balm extracted from the copaiba tree, *copaifera officinalis*. N.d.T) then in order of preference, he indicates the Italian resin, extracted from the characteristic pines which are abundantly present in the Italian countryside. Mention is often made of those pines in Italian poetry and even in music (Ottorino Respighi: *I pini di Roma*). This resin must be purified of all its starchy parts through water. The best method of purification seems to be a distillation correctly conducted. In his book *Chymischer Handleiter* Le Febure describes the process as follows:

"One should reduce the resin to powder and mix it with three parts of crushed bricks and a part of common salt which should be first dried out through heat. The whole should be placed in a retort and distilled by continually increasing the temperature. Therefore one can use part of the oily distillate thus obtained. We can also rectify the distillate by adding three parts of common salt and distilling again."

The easiest for us is to buy already clarified resins like balm of copaiba (balms are blends of resins and etheric oils partly mixed with aromatic oils) or balm of Canada which is the exudation of the North American resin pine (*Abies Balsamica*) which is, strictly speaking, a turpentine. It contains approx. 24% essential oil, 60% resin which is soluble in alcohol and 16% resin soluble in ether.

The author conducted experiments with various resins while working on *circulata*.. Because of the excellent results obtained with balm of Canada, he wishes to recommend it to his friends of the Art. Balm of Canada is used in the preparation of the cuts which are examined under a microscope and it is obtainable in a state of high purification. Whatever resinous matter you decide to use, make sure that it is natural and hasn't been fractioned. Natural balm of Canada is easily obtainable, it is not however the cheapest resin.

If you examine the copper engraving with attention you can observe that there is a hole on the trunk of the tree where the resin is flowing from. In fact, the river toward which Apollo and Diana are advancing is resinous. Note also that Diana comes out on the other side of the river with Apollo's sun in her hand, thus did they become one being.

7. "In order to fortify the Sulfur", this indicates that the Salt and the Sulfur have already been conjunct. This is when we add the resinous matter while imbibing the mix with Salt and Sulfur (volatile). The whole is placed under moderate heat (digested). The imbibition is repeated each time the matter dries out.

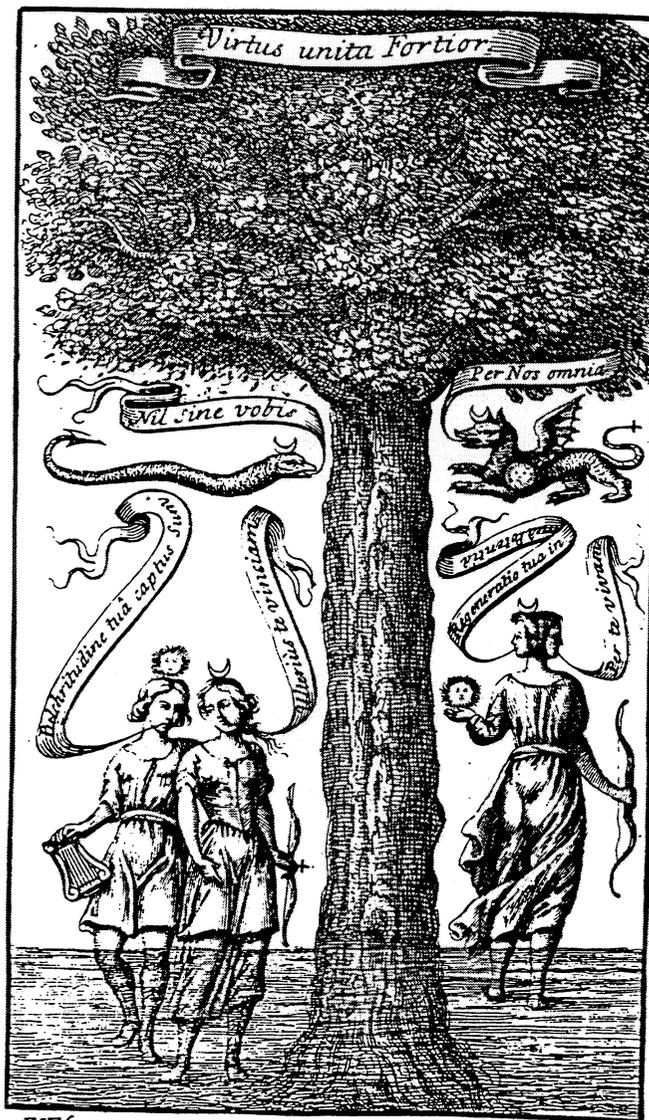
Before he adds the resinous matter, the operant is at a crossroad. He can at that moment choose, if he wants, to use the dry or the wet way. In the first case, the salts of the fixed part of the Sulfur which was obtained by calcination will be added. They won't volatilize the salt of the body and the result will be a stone.

8. Since, at this stage, we already operate on highly purified substances, we should make sure that no impurities contaminate the work. The author obtained good results by using rather big, completely sealed vials. The vials are periodically opened for some time in order for fresh air to come in and then closed again. The dangers of contamination are tremendously reduced when working in a closed oven (incubator).
 9. If everything went well, pour the Mercury, that is the rectified ethyl alcohol.
 10. The alcohol should be in higher proportion than the fixed. The author obtained good results with a proportion of 6 to 1 or even 8 to 1.
 11. During this putrefaction which is none other than a pushed digestion, a color change occurs and the Salt takes the appearance of a kind of phlegm. The reinforced Sulfur and the Spirit act at this moment on the Salt and volatilize it. Then, we start the distillations.
 12. The distillations are performed in a water-bath. Between the distillations, after cohobation (when we reverse the distillate on the residue) a complementary time of digestion is useful. After seven distillations you'll find that your distillate has a characteristic and penetrating odor with an acid and corrosive taste.
 13. To avoid it, proceed with water-bath for all distillations. If the temperature is too high the result will be more a fixation of the volatile parts of the Salt than a volatilization. In all attempts of volatilizations, a careful and slow distillation is required.
 14. If you worked properly, you now obtained the Circulatum Minor in accord with the third method. Now, you can understand the first method because all you have to do is to proceed and start with the same vegetable species you extracted the resinous matter from, like pine or spruce for example. You can extract the resinous matter from small branches of the pine or spruce by vapor-distillation. In this way, you obtain natural turpentine. For the rest, proceed as above.
- In the following aphorisms, Urbigerus gives information about what a Circulatum can help you achieve.
15. When you place a freshly cut green plant in it, one or two leaves for example, you'll notice that the liquid becomes milky and even completely opaque, at first. It indicates an emulsion. If you leave it to rest for some time, very small drops of oil will progressively surface and eventually form a yellow coat of oil. This oil contains the Salt and the Sulfur of the vegetable species that you put in the Circulatum. The author's experience demonstrated that the color

of the oil varies from one species to the other. A dry herb will immediately color the menstruum while separating the principles.

In the aphorism which follows Urbigerus speaks of the therapeutic value of this oil.

16. The aphorisms XXI to XXIV say more about the use of the Circulatum Minor. It can extract a tincture of coral (XXI), it can be used to make the Elixir Proprietatis if equal quantities of myrrh, aloes, and saffron are put into it (XXII), it dissolves all kinds of gums, oils and balms while separating their essences (XXIII). It also extracts the tincture of a certain number of metals and minerals.



SPAGYRICS

Lesson 24

Dear Friend,

We have worked together for a year now. Some of you are still working with the theory and for personal reasons, did not get to the practical work.

To these members, we say that you are losing a legitimate and profitable part of the Alchemical Work.

To those who launched into the difficulties of this work, we wish they find their personal path of progress.

SPAGYRICS AND ALCHEMY

It is certainly useful to specify the difference between the two theories.

Spagyrics essentially deals with the healing of the body and Alchemy with the healing of the soul.

We have medical doctors among our members who can use our teachings as they wish. For those who are not in this category, we think it is useful to recall a certain number of principles.

In general, do not use alchemical elixirs for healing purposes because:

1. it is forbidden by law to prescribe a substance not intended for the accomplishment of medical art.
2. vegetable elixirs primarily have a spiritual effect and we shouldn't deal with another's spiritual facet: an elixir could awaken a chakra in one person who doesn't have an adequate understanding to withstand this awakening
3. the most efficient treatments are metallic extractions but they are not included in the first parts of this class.

Spagyrics

Lesson 24

As Spagyrics doesn't specifically seek a spiritual approach, it uses different processes from those of alchemy. As an example, we shall describe one process used by the spagyrics of the German school.

—a Soxhlet extractor is filled with the chosen plant

—the menstruum used is distilled water

—Perform three cycles of extraction. As water is not bothered by the presence of alcohol, it will dissolve some of the plant's salts specifically those of mineral characteristic. Organic salts are not generally soluble in water; they only become soluble through calcination which, because it eliminates their carbon, returns them to the mineral state.

After the three cycles, let it cool down and carefully pour from the condenser side an equal quantity of 96% alcohol and water for a 200ml -300ml water Soxhlet. There is then in the flask 600 ml of a mix and half of it is alcohol.

In fact, if we provide a little heat, the alcohol alone is going to pass and we'll have an extraction of the tincture which occurs rather quickly in three cycles.

When this is finished, the solid residue of the thimble is calcined at a high temperature: 1200°C (2192°F) minimum, even 1600°C (2912°F) is sometimes preferable. The residual ash is thrown into the menstruum while very hot and the whole is put to maceration for a week. Then a simple filtering yields the spagyric elixir.

Note here that, contrary to Alchemy, there is no clear Salt-tincture separation and no separation Sulfur-Mercury at all. The Salt is not charged with Sulfur, but it simply has the role of absorbing impurities of the tincture.

The German school which uses this process does not intend to join the alchemical path through it. It remains within the framework of healing authorized by laws of this country.

We gave this example solely for the purpose of showing the difference between typical alchemical and spagyric processes.

TWO OTHER METHODS TO MAKE THE VEGETABLE STONE

A. Plant *Artemisia Tridendata*. Use approximately 1800 grams (63.49 oz.) of the fresh plant.

1. vapor-distillation yields 15 ml of oil.
2. ferment the plant in water at room temperature.
3. separate the alcohol and rectify; the alcohol is treated with potassium carbonate.

Spagyrics

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4. the residue is dried, calcined, washed.
5. then, the Salt is saturated with an equal quantity of alcohol and oil and put to digestion for a month at 38°C (100.4°F).
6. Saturate the substance again with a half alcohol half oil mixture and transfer it to a retort. Vacuum distill it slowly to dryness.
- 7 the substance is then extracted from the retort and calcined to grey- white.
8. the process of saturation-distillation-calcination is repeated three times, each cycle of which lasts a month.
9. At this point, the substance is dark with a reddish coloration.
10. The substance is then placed in a porcelain cup and heated with a bunsen burner. It melts into a clear liquid which becomes opaque white while solidifying. This white solid is then reduced to powder (about 2 grams)
11. It is then placed in an apparatus with a check valve and saturated with an oil/alcohol mix. The temperature should be just enough to maintain circulation. This circulation must be maintained for several weeks .
12. The substance is then removed. Its color is clear havana brown.
13. The substance is again melted on a bunsen burner and the fusion is quicker than before and solidifies in an opaque white.
14. Again the substance is reduced to powder and the cycle starts again until the substance no longer absorbs any liquid and easily melts in a flame. The Stone is completed.

This method seems by far the easiest and the most often successful.

B. Another method,

1. 150grams (5.29 oz.) to 200grams (7.05 oz.) of black pepper grains are reduced to powder.
2. extract the tincture with absolute alcohol by cycling it in a Soxhlet
3. the soluble salts obtained from the residue are reduced to a fine powder and saturated with the tincture and maintained at 38°C (100.4°F).
4. the concentrated tincture yields crystals which, once crushed, are mixed with the soluble

salts.

5. the substance is saturated each time it becomes dry and as long as it absorbs liquid.
6. at this point the substance becomes very fusible. Perform then a vacuum-distillation in a retort.
7. the distillate is poured on the residue with, if it is needed, a supplementary extract to obtain saturation.
8. this cycle is repeated until the substance no longer absorbs the extract and becomes opaque white.

The Stone is completed.

PREPARATION OF THE SALT

Those who worked on some of the experiments understand that the problem of the Salt is one of the bigger problems of vegetable Alchemy.

If we don't leach the salt, we apparently have a greater mass, but it takes longer to purify it.

We shall speak of the four phases-distillation later and mention what Paracelsus calls the first being of plants, what others call their quintessence. Various authors recognize the qualities of this product, which are very close to those of the Great metallic Elixer.

Of course, in the cohobation that revivifies the elements of a plant, you need to use the Salt of that plant, but for purification another salt can be used. In addition, if you don't want the Salt to fix the Sulfur, it should not be in harmony with the plant.

The Ancients speak highly of sea salt and its acid, but we should remain circumspect here.

A plant of the earth can be purified with sea salt without losing its Sulfur. But a marine algae can only be purified with potassium salts (see lesson # 13).

Sodium chloride must undergo a long preparation in order to be fit to purify a plant:

- take one liter of rain water and melt 300 grams (10.5 oz.) of salt in it.
- filter the water, evaporate it and gather the salt crystals as they form. Do not push crystallization to the dry point: sacrifice 10 to 15 ml of water.
- repeat the process until the filter remains clean when the water has passed through

it, that is to say at least 10 or 12 times. Keep the salt in a very clean glass jar, well stoppered.

This salt can be used for different things one of which is the extraction of the first being of a well prepared plant.

For other experiments, it is interesting to have some water which is charged with niter and for that we operate in the following way:

1. calcine some potassium carbonate between 200°C (392°F) and 300°C (572°F) for at least an hour.
2. spread a thin coat of it on a glass plate; we can start on a 50cm x 50cm plate with 1 or 2mm of carbonate on the surface.
3. put this plate in a ventilated room, preferably an attic rather than a cellar and slant the plate. The deliquescent salt will flow and the two corners will lead it to the flask where it will be collected.
4. The Ancients call this tartar oil by deliquescence. It must first be filtered and then kept as such.
5. in order to enrich a product in "niter", vacuum-distill this oil and the liquid you obtain is said to be "Angel Water", according to the old texts.
6. Note: we know that some people would put the potassium hydroxide into deliquescence also, but it is very likely that potash treated in this way, no longer is potash. This one, hungry for the CO₂ from the air becomes potassium carbonate. To enrich the potash with "niter", without it becoming a carbonate, you need to imbibe it with "Angel water" and do not leave it in contact with the air for long.

ANIMAL ALCHEMY

A priest lent us a book: *Le Sang peut-il vaincre la mort?* (Can Blood Conquer Death?). This book deals with a part of Animal Alchemy, which in fact is known as the "Blood Arcana".

After dedicating a few nights to the subject, we came to believe that the semi-knowledge transmitted by this book is not without danger, as is any semi-knowledge. We feel therefore compelled to provide you with a theoretical explanation of Animal Alchemy which is clear and complete.

The books of Glaser and Lemery present a certain number of alchemical experiments on animal products. But to our knowledge, only the book *Nature Unveiled*, author anonymous, warns us about the negative, psychic or spiritual reactions of these experiments.

Spagyrics

Lesson 24

Animal Mercury is in the blood; the bones are the Salt and the flesh is a mixture of volatile Salt and Mercury coagulated by animal Sulfur. Obviously these elements can be separated and we can, in this domain, obtain the Sulfur, the Mercury and the Salt, separated and purified, but this is not the problem.

Many people thought that blood alone was enough. In actuality, if blood is the privileged carrier of Mercury, it also contains the Salt and the Sulfur, through the red corpuscles.

This is where the error begins, as we shall see. As a matter of fact, if man is the most evolved of all Nature's products and if he is pure, his blood will contain the most perfect Sulfur, Mercury and Salt of the creation. This blood would then be the Circulatum Major, equal and even higher than the Red Stone.

One of the most awful illustrations of this semi-knowledge is given by Gilles de Rais who, knowing what we just mentioned, sacrificed many new-born infants, thinking that he could find pure blood there. But the blood of a new born is no purer than his mother's blood.

Truly, blood can only become pure through spiritual rebirth: the re-born Master alone possesses that blood. That's where the legend of the Graal came about illustrating the property of the blood of an adept of Jesus.

Moreover, some projections made by ancient masters do not describe a brilliant blood-like red powder but a brownish blood-like red powder.

Hopefully, what we just mentioned will prevent errors or temptations. However, to bring a positive side to this lesson, we shall describe an experiment on animal alchemy which is of no danger to any one.

According to the size of your Soxhlet extractor or equivalent equipment, take 6 to 12 hen eggs as fresh as possible. Hard boil them in the usual way.

Separate the yolks from the whites and crush the yolks to make a powder or a light mixture.

Place this mixture in an open glass jar. Then take a container, like an air-tight preserve jar in which your flask can be enclosed.

Calcine 100 grams (3.5 oz. to 7.05 oz.) to 200 grams of potassium carbonate between 200°C (392°F) and 300°C (572°F) for at least an hour.

Place the carbonate in the jar and on top of it put the flask with the yolks in it.

Spagyrics

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Close tightly.

The carbonate absorbs the jar's moisture and the yolks dry progressively.

When the yolks are dry, reduce them to powder and place them in the Soxhlet extractor; the menstruum used is absolute alcohol.

After at least 12 cycles of extraction, the menstruum is distilled and an oil is collected. Its ancient name is ovum vitelli.

The Ancients say that this oil cures wounds 10 times faster than usual and that through absorption it cures an illness whose name suggests that it is cholesterol.

Dissolve this oil in a strongly flavored alcohol since it tastes awful.

Good luck!

ORA ET LABORA !