



**FRIAR BACON, HIS  
DISCOVERY OF THE  
MIRACLES OF ART,  
NATURE, AND MAGICK**

**ROGER BACON**

Global Grey ebooks

**FRIAR BACON**  
**HIS DISCOVERY OF THE**  
**MIRACLES OF ART, NATURE, AND**  
**MAGICK**

**BY**  
**ROGER BACON**

FAITHFULLY TRANSLATED OUT OF DR DEE'S OWN COPY,  
BY T.M. AND NEVER BEFORE IN ENGLISH.

Friar Bacon, His Discovery of the Miracles of Art, Nature, and Magick By Roger Bacon.

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## THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER

A Prejudate eye much lessens the noblenesse of the Subject. *Bacons* name may bring at the first an inconvenience to the Book, but *Bacons* ingenuity will recompence it ere he be solidly read. This as an Apology is the usher to his other Workes, which may happily breath a more free Air hereafter, when once the World sees how clear he was, from loving *Negromacy*. 'Twas the *Popes* smoak which made the eyes of that Age so sore, as they could not discern any open hearted and clear headed *soul* from an *heretical Phantasme*. The silly *Fryers* envying his too prying head, by their craft had almost got it off his shoulders. It's dangerous to be wiser than the multitude, for that unruly *Beast* will have every over-topping head to be lopped shorter, lest it plot, ruine, or stop the light, or shadow its extravagancies. How famous this *Frier* is in the judgment of both godly and wise men, I referre you to the Probatums of such men, whose single *Authorities* were of sufficiency to equallize a Jury of others; and as for the Book, I refer it to thy reading. As for myself, *I refer me to him, whom I serve, and hope thou wilt adore.*

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## THE JUDGMENT OF DIVERS LEARNED MEN CONCERNING FRYER BACON

IO Selden de Diis Syris Sintag.I.r.2. — 7.25.

That singular Mathematician, learned beyond what the Age he liv'd in did ordinarily bring forth, Roger Bacon an Oxford man, and a Fryer minorite.

The Testimony of Gabriel Powel in his Book of Antichrist in Preface, p.14.

Roger Bacon an Englishman, a founded Scholar of Merton-Colledg in Oxford, a very quick Philosopher, and withall a very famous Divine, he had an incredible knowledge in the Mathematicks, but without Necromancy (as John Balleus doth report) although he be defam'd for it by many: Now this man after he had sharply reprov'd the times wherein he liv'd; these Errours, saith he, speak Antichrist present. Nicholas the Fourth Pope of Rome did condemn his Doctrine in many things, and he was by him kept in prison for many years together; as Antonine hath it in his Chronicle. He flourished in the year of our Lord, 1270.

John Gerhard Vossius in his Book of the four Popular Arts, printed at Amsterdam, 1650 is every where full of the praises of Bacon, as in the year 1252. About these mens time Roger Bacon also flourished, an Englishman, and a Monk of the Order of St. Francis; who as he had div'd into all Arts and Sciences: so also he writ many things of them, he was a man both learned and subtil unto a Miracle, and did such wonderfull things by the help of Mathematicks, that by such as were envious and ignorant, he was accused of Diabolical Magick, before Pope Clement the 4th, and for that cause was detained in prison by him for some time. Jo. Pecus Earl of Mirandula, the Phenix of all the wits of his Age, calls him likewise, very ingenious. Moranlicus also commends highly his Opticks. He was buried at Oxford in the Monastery of the Monks of his own Order, anno 1284. So Chap.35. §.32. anno 1255. So Chap. 60. §. 13. Of

Musick, anno 1270. So Chap.70§.7. 1270. Roger Bacon flourisht in England,a man wonderfully learned. And Chap. 71.§.8. anno 1270. Roger Bacon a Franciscan Monk, and a Divine of Oxford, was famous amongst the English in all sorts of Sciences; a man of so vast learning, that neither England, no nor the world beside, had almost any thing like or equal to him. And either by envy or ignorance of the Age, wherein he lived, was accused of Magick. He in the mean time did write and recommend to the Memory of Posterity, a Book of Weights, of the Centers of heavy things, of the Practicks of Natural Magick, &c. For he was a man well vers'd in all sorts of study, very learned in the Latine, Greek and Hebrew Tongues, a Mathematician every way accomplisht, and very skilfull both in Philosophy, Physick, Law and Divinity.

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# CHAPTER 1. OF AND AGAINST FICTITIOUS APPARENCES AND INVOCATION OF SPIRITS

A  
LETTER

SENT BY  
Frier *ROGER BACON*

TO

William of Paris,

Concerning both  
The Secret Operation  
OF  
NATURE & ART,

As also  
The Nullity of Magick.

THAT I may carefully render you an answer to your desire, understand, *Nature is potent and admirable in her working*, yet Art using the advantage of nature as an instrument (experience tels us) is of greater efficacy than any natural activity.

Whatsoever Acts otherwise than by natural or artificial means, is not humane, but merely fictitious and deceitfull.

We have many men that by the nimblenesse and activity of body, diversification of sounds, exactness of instruments, darkness, or consent, make things seem to be present, which never were really existent in the course of Nature. The world, as any judicious eye may see, groans under such bastard burdens. A Jugler by an handsome sleight of hand, will put a compleat lie upon the very sight. The *Pythonissæ* sometimes speaking from their bellies, otherwhile from the throat, than by the mouth, do create what voices they please, either speaking at hand, or farre off, in such a manner, as if a Spirit discoursed with a man, and sometimes as



though Beasts bellowed, which is all easily discovered by private laying hollow Canes in the grasse, or secret places, for so the voices of men will be known from other creatures.

When inanimate things are violently moved, either in the Morning or Evening twilight, expect no truth therein, but down-right cheating and cousenage.

As for consent, men by it may undertake any thing they please, if so be they have a mutual disposition.

These I mention, as practices wherein neither philosophical Reasons, Art, or power of Nature is prevalent. Beyond these there is a more damnable practice, when men despising the Rules of Philosophy, irrationally call up wicked Spirits, supposing them of Energy to satisfie their desires. In which there is a very vast errour, because such persons imagine they have some authority over Spirits, and that Spirits may be compelled by humane authority, which is altogether impossible, since humane Energy or Authority is inferiour by much to that of Spirits. Besides, they admit a more vast mistake, supposing such natural instruments, as they use, to be able either to call up, or drive away any wicked Spirit. And they continue their mistake in endeavouring by Invocations, Deprecations or Sacrifices to please Spirits, making them propitious to their design. Without all question, the way is incomparably more easie to obtain any thing, that is truly good for men, of God, or good Angels, then of wicked Spirits. As for things which are incommodious for men, wicked Spirits can no further yeeld assistance, then they have permission, for the sins of the sonnes of men, from that God, who governs and directs all humane affairs. Hence therefore I shall conclude (these things being beyond, or rather against the Rules of Wisdome) No true Philosopher did ever regard to work by any of these six wayes.

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## CHAPTER 2. OF CHARMS, FIGURES, AND THEIR USE

WHAT men ought to believe touching Figures, Charmes, and such stuff, I shall deliver my opinion. Without doubt there is nothing in these dayes of this kind, but what is either deceitfull, dubious, or irrational, which Philosophers formerly invented to hide their secret operations of Nature and Art from the eyes of an unworthy generation. For instance, if the virtue of the Load-stone, whereby whereby it draws iron to it were not discovered, some one or other who hath a mind hereby to cosen the people, so goes about his businesse, as lest any by-stander should discover the work of attraction to be natural, he calls Figures, and mutters forth some Charmes. Thus many things lie dark in Philosophical writings; in which the wiser sort of Readers will expresse so much discretion, as reject the Figures and Charmes, eying the works of Nature and Art, that so they may see the mutual concurrence of animate and inanimate creatures, occasioned by Natures conformity, not any efficacy of Figures or Charmes. This is the cause why the unlearned crew have judged such natural or artificial operations to be merely Magical. And some fond Magicians beleeve, That their casting of Figures and Charmes was the sole cause of such operations; hereupon leaving their natural and artificial operations have stuck close to their erroneous casting of Figures and Charmes. And thus they both have by their own folly deprived themselves of the benefit of the others wisdom. In times past, godly and religious men, or rather God himself, or his good Angels composed several Prayers which yet may retain their primitive virtue. As to this day, in several Countreys certain prayers are made over hot irons, and water in the River, &c. By which the innocent are cleared, and guilty condemned; yet all this is done by the Authority of the Church, and her Prelates. Our Priests exercise their holy water, {Numb. 5.} as formerly the *Jews* did in the Old Testament, in making the water of Tryal, whereby the wise was tryed, whether she were an adultresse, or honest. Not to instance in others of the like nature. Concerning those Secrets, which are revealed in Magicians writings, although they may contain some truth, yet in regard those very truths are enveloped with such a

number of deceits, as it's not very easie to judge betwixt the truth and falshood, they ought all worthily to be rejected. Neither must men be believed, who would assure us, That *Solomon*, or some other of our sage Progenitors were Authors of such Books, because those Books are not received either by the Churches Authority, or by any prudent men, but only by a few cheating Companions to be the work of such men. Mine own experience assures me they compose and set forth new works and inventions of their own, in lofty high flown expressions, the more colourably to make their lies passe under the shelter of the Text; prefixing some specious titles, the better to set them off, impudently ascribe such bastard births to famous Authors.

Figures are either composed of words involved in the formes of letters, invented to contain the sense of some \* speech or prayer {\* Oraionis.}; or they are made according to the face of the Heavens in proper and select seasons. The Figures of the former sort must have the same sentence that I gave of prayers formerly; as for Figures and \* {\* Sigillis.} Impressions of the other kind, unlesse they be made in their peculiar seasons, they are not of any efficacy. And hence it is that all wise men think they effect nothing, who only go according to their prescribed Characters, not at all regarding more than the bare external forme. The more knowing sonnes of Art, dispose all their works of Nature and Art according to the power of the Heavens, casting their work under a right Constellation, no lesse than the casting it in a right Figure. Now in regard there is much difficulty to discern the motion of Celestial Bodies, many are cousened, and very few know, how to begin their work either profitably or truly. Hence it comes to passe, that the croud of judicious Mathematicians and Starre gazers effect little, and that unprofitable, while the more expert Professours, who sufficiently understand their own Art, attain many conveniences both by their Operations and Judgements in select and proper opportunities: And yet let us take notice, how the Physician, or he that would re-erect a drooping soul, effects his designe by the use of Figures or Charmes, which in themselves are meerly fictitious (as *Constantine* the Physician is of opinion.) {Thus some think the Kings evil is cured, by creating a belief the touch of the King can cure.} Physicians use Figures or Charmes, not for any prevalency in them, but that the raising of the soul is of great efficacy in the curing of the body, and raising it from infirmity to health, by oy and

confidence is done by Charmes; for they make the Patient receive the Medicine with greater confidence and desire, exciting courage, more liberal belief, hope and pleasure. The Physician then who would magnifie his cure, may work some way of exciting hope and confidence in his Patient; not that hereby he should cheat, but stirre up the sick to believe he shall recover, which if we pin our faith on *Constantines* sleeve, is very tolerable. {This may be done lawfully, if the party that is the principal agent doth nothing by way of compact with any Spirit, or sinistrously.} Upon this account he defends the hanging Charmes or Figures about the Neck. The soul no question is of much prevalency by reason of its strong affections over its proper body, as *Avicen* saith in *lib. de anima, &8. & animal.* to which all wise men accord. Hereupon it was, that they concluded sick persons should be delighted by the company of children to play before them, and other pleasing objects. Yea they frequently consent to such things as please the appetite, though they be obnoxious to their disease; because affection, desire and hope of the soul conquers many diseases.

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## CHAPTER 3. SERMONIS. OF THE FORCE OF SPEECH, AND A CHECK TO MAGICK

IN regard truth must not receive the least injury, we should take more exact notice how every agent communicateth the Virtue and *Species* which is in it to other extrinsecal objects; I mean not only the substantial Virtue, but even A-ctive Accidents, such as are in *tertia specie Qualitatis*.

As for the Virtues which flows from the Creature, some of them are sensible, some insensible. Man which is both the most noble corporeity, and dignified rational soul, hath no lesse than other things heat and spirits exhaling from him and so may no lesse than other things emit and dispose of his Virtues and *Species* to external Objects.

Some creatures we know have power to metamorphose and alter their objects. {Plin. Nat.Hist. lib.39.c.4.} As the Basilisk, who kills by sight alone. The Wolf, if she first see a man before the man see him, makes the man hoarse. {Plin. lib.8.cap. 22. Solin. Poly. cap 8. Plin. lib.8. cap.30. Solin.c 30.} The *Hyæna* suffers not the dog which comes within his shadow to bark (as *Solinus de mirabili bus mundi*, and others) And *Aristotle lib.3. de Vegetab.* saith, That Female Palm-trees bring forth fruit to maturity by the smell of their Males.

And Mares in some Kingdoms impregnate by the smell of Horses (as *Solinus* affirms.) *Aristotle* in his Secrets assures us of several other contingencies which issue from the *Species* and Virtues of Plants and Animals. Hence I argue, If Plants and Animals, which are inferiour in dignity to our humane Nature, can emit, then surely may man more abundantly emit *Species*, Virtues and Colours to the alteration of external Bodies. To this purpose is that, which *Aristotle* tels us (*Lib. de somno & Vigilia*) a menstruous woman looking in a glasse, doth infect it with spots, like clouds of blood. *Solinus* further writes, {Cap.6. vid. & C.Plin. 1.7.c.2.} That in *Scythia* there are women which have two sights in one eye. (Hence *Ovid, Nos et pupilla duplex*) and that these women by their glances kill men. {In the Norhern Country some are said to have an evil eye, and to do harm by their looks, yea though they do it not

voluntarily.} And we our selves know, That men of an evil complexion, full of contagious infirmities, as Leprosie, the Falling-sickness, spotted Fever, bleer-eyed, or the like, infects those men in their company: While on the other side, men of a sound and wholesome complexion, especially young men, do by their very presence exhilarate and comfort others; which no question, as *Galen* in his *Techne*, proceeds from their pure spirits wholsome and delightsome vapours, their sweet natural colour, and from such *Species* and *Virtues* as they emit. {He holds sight by emission.}

That man whose soul {The soul sinful or not, works morally, not physically to the hurt of others, but the man who hath a body may do something *Medicante corpre.*} is defiled with many hainous sins, his Body infirme, his Complexion evil, and hath a vehement fancy and desire to hurt his neighbour, may bring more inconveniences, then another man. The Reason may be, the Nature of Complexion and infirmity yeelds obedience to the thoughts of the Heart, and is more augmented by the intervention of our desires. Hence it is that a leprous person, who is solicitous, desirous and fancying to infect some one or other in the room, may more easily and forceably effect it, than he which hath no such intention, fancy or desire. For (as *Avicen* observes in the fore cited place) the nature of the body is obedient to the thoughts, and more intent fancies of the soul. And (as *Avicen* in the 3<sup>d</sup>*Metaph.* affirms) the thought is the first mover, after that the desire is made conformable to the thought, then after that the natural virtue, which is in the members, obeys the desire and thought; and thus it is both in good and bad effects. Hence it is that a young man of a good Complexion, healthfull, fair, well featured Body, having his soul not debauched with sinne, but of a strong fancy and vehement desire to compasse the effecting of some magnificent designe, withall adding the power of his *Virtues*, *Species* and natural heat; He may by the force of these \*Spirits, {\* Al. *Species.*} Vapours and influences work both more powerfully and vehemently, than if he should want any of these fore going qualifications, especially strong affections and forceable imaginations. Hence I conclude, Men by the concurrence of the foresaid Causes, Words and Works being the Instruments, bring great undertakings to perfection.

As for words, they are hatched within, by the thoughts and desires of the mind, sent abroad by heat, *Vocale arteries*, and motion of the Spirits.

The places of their generation are in open passages, by which there is a great efflux of such spirits, heat, vapours, virtues, and *Species*, as are made by the soul and heart. And therefore words may so farre cause alterations by these parts or passages, as their Nature will extend. For it's evident, That breathings, yawnings, several resolutions of Spirits and heat come thorow these open passages from the heart and inward parts: Now if these words come from an infirm and evil complexionated body, they are constantly obnoxious. But if from a pure sound and wholesome constitution, they are very beneficial and comfortable. It's clear then, That the bare generation and prolation of words joyned with desire and intention are considerable in natural operations. Hereupon we do justly say, *Vox viva magnum habet virtutem*; Living words are of great Virtue. Not that they have any such Virtue of doing or undoing, as *Magicians* speak of, but only they have the Virtue of Nature, which makes me put in this Caution of being extream cautelous herein. For a man may, as many have already done, erre on both hands: Some wholly denying any operation of words: Others superfluously decline to a Magical use thereof. Our duties should be to have a care of such Books, as are fraught with Charms, Figures, Orizons, Conjurations, Sacrifices, or the like, because they are purely Magical. For instance, the Book *De Officiis Spirituum, liber de morte animæ, liber de arte notoria* with infinite others, containing neither precepts of Nature or Art, having nothing save Magical Fopperies. Yet herewithall we must remember, there are many Books commonly reputed to be Magical, but have no other fault then discovering the dignity of wisdom. What Books are suspicious, and what not; Every discreet Readers experience will show him. The Book which discovers natural or artificial operations imbrace; that which is void of either or leave both, as suspitious and unworthy the consideration of any wise man. 'Tis usual with *Magicians*, to treat of both unnecessary and superfluous subjects. 'Twas excellently said of *Isaac* (in lib. de Febribus,) *The rational soul is not impeded in its operations, unlesse by the Manicles of ignorance.* And *Aristotle* is of opinion, (in lib. secret.) *That a clear and strong intellect, being impregnated by the influences of divine Virtue, may attain to anything which is necessary.* And in 3<sup>d</sup> Meteor, he saith, *There is no influence or power, but from God.* In the Conclusion of his Ethics, *There is no Virtue, whether Moral or Natural without divine influence.* Hence it is, that when we discourse of particular agents, we exclude not the Regiment of

the universal Agent, and first Cause of all things. For every first Cause hath more influence on the Effect, than any second Cause, as he speaks in the first proposition of Causes.

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## CHAPTER 4. OF ADMIRABLE ARTIFICIAL INSTRUMENTS

THat I may the better demonstrate the inferiority and indignity of Magical power to that of Nature or Art, I shall a while discourse on such admirable operations of Art and Nature, as have not the least Magick in them, afterwards assign them their Causes and Frames. And first of such Engines, as are purely artificial.

It's possible to make Engines to sail withall, as that either fresh or salt water vessels may be guided by the help of one man, and made sail with a greater swiftness, than others will which are full of men to help them.

It's possible to make a Chariot move with an inestimable swiftnesse (such as the *Currus falcati* were, wherein our fore fathers of old fought,) and this motion to be without the help of any living creature.

It's possible to make Engines for flying, a man sitting in the midst whereof, by turning onely about an Instrument, which moves artificiall Wings made to beat the Aire, much after the fashion of a Birds flight.

It's possible to invent an Engine of a little bulk, yet of great efficacy, either to the depressing or elevation of the very greatest weight, which would be of much consequence in several Accidents: For hereby a man may either ascend or descend any walls, delivering himself or comrads from prison; and this Engine is only three fingers high, and four broad.

A man may easily make an Instrument, whereby one man may in despite of all opposition, draw a thousand men to himself, or any other thing, which is tractable.

A man may make an Engine, whereby without any corporal danger, he may walk in the bottome of the Sea, or other water. These *Alexander* (as the Heathen Astronomer assures us) used to see the secrets of the deeps.

Such Engines as these were of old, and are made even in our dayes. These all of them (excepting only that instrument of flying, which I never saw or know any, who hath seen it, though I am exceedingly acquainted

with a very prudent man, who hath invented the whole Artifice) with infinite such like inventions, Engines and devices are feisable, as making of Bridges over Rivers without pillars or supporters.

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## CHAPTER 5. OF PERSPECTIVE ARTIFICIAL EXPERIMENTS

THE physical figuration of rayes are found out to be very admirable. Glas-ses and Perspectives may be framed, to make one thing appear many, one man an Army, the Sun and Moon to be as many as we please. As *Pliny* in the 2<sup>d</sup> Book, Nat. Hist. chap. 30. saith, *That Nature so disposeth of vapours, as two Sunnes, and two Moons ; yea sometimes three Sunnes shine together in the Air.* And by the same Reason one thing may in appearance be multiplied to an infinity, in regard that after any creature hath exceeded his own virtue (as *Aristotle cap. de vacuo.*) no certain bounds is to be assigned it.

This designe may seem advantagious to strike terrours into an Enemies Camp or Garison, there being a multiplication of appearances of Starres, or men assembled purposely to destroy them; Especially if the following designe be conjoynd to the former (*viz.*) Glasses so cast, that things at hand may appear at distance, and things at distance, as hard at hand: yea so farre may the designe be driven, as the least letters may be read, and things reckoned at an incredible distance, yea starres shine in what place you please. A way, as is verily believed, *Julius Cæsar* took by great Glasses from the Coasts of *France*, to view the site and disposition of stoth the Castles and Sea Towns in great *Britain*. By the framing of Glasses, bodies of the largest bulk, may in appearance be contracted to a minute volumne, things little in themselves show great, while others tall and lofty appear low and creeping, things creeping and low, high and mighty, things private and hidden to be clear and manifest. For as *Socrates* did discover a Dragon, whose prestiferous breathings and influences corrupted both City and Countrey thereabouts, to have his residence in the Caverns of the Mountains. So may any other thing done in an Enemies Camp or Garison, be discovered. Glasses may be framed to send forth *Species*, and poisonous infectious influences, whither a man pleaseth. And this invention *Aristotle* shewed *Alexander*, by which he erecting the poison of a Basilisk upon the Wall of a City, which held out against his Army, conveyed the very poison into the City it self. Glasses may be so framed and placed, as that any man coming into a

room, shall undoubtedly imagine he sees heaps of gold, silver, precious stones, or what you please, though upon his approach to the place he shall perceive his mistake.

It's then folly to seek the effecting that by Magical Illusions, which the power of Philosophy can demonstrate.

To speak of the more sublimate powers of Figurations, leading and congregating rayes by several Fractions and reflexions to what distance we please, so as any object may prove combustible. It's evident by Perspectives they burn backward and forward, which Authours have treated on in their Books. That which is the most strange of Figurations and Mouldings, is the description of Celestial Bodies, both according to their Longitude and Latitude, in such Corporeal Figures, as they naturally move by their diurnal motion. An Invention of more satisfaction to a discreet head, than a Kings Crown.

But this will suffice as to Figurations, though we might produce infinite prodigies of the like Nature.

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## CHAPTER 6. CONCERNING STRANGE EXPERIMENTS

TO our former discourse we may adjoyn such work as are effected without Figurations. We may have an artificial composition of Saltpeter, and other ingredients; or of the oil of Red Petrolei, {Oleum rubrum Petroleum.} and other things, or with Maltha, Naphtha, with such like, which will burn at what distance we please, with which *Pliny* reports, *Lib. 2. Chap. 104.* that he kept a City against the whole Roman Army: For by casting down *Maltha* he could burn a Souldier, though he had on his Armour. In the next place, to these we may place the *Grecian* fire, {Ignis Gracus.} and other combustibles. To proceed, Lamps may be made to burn, and waters to keep hot perpetually. For I know many things which are not consumed in the fire, as the Salamanders skin Talk, with others, which by some adjunct both are inflamed and shine, yet are not consumed, but rather purified. Besides these, we may speak of divers admirable peeces of \* Nature. {\* Art it should be, as I suppose.} As the making Thunder and Lighting in the Air; yea with a greater advantage of horreur, then those which are onely produced by Nature. For a very competent quantity of matter rightly prepared (the bignesse of ones thumb) will make a most hideous noise and corruscation, this may be done several wayes; by which a City or Army may be overcome, much after the fashion as *Gideon* overcame that vast Army of the *Midianites* with three hundred men, by the breaking of their Pitchers, and shining of their Lamps, together with the sudden leaping forth of the fire, and inestimable crackings. These would appear strange, if they were designed to their just height both of proportion and matter. I might produce many strange works of another kind, which though they bring no sensible profit, yet contain an ineffible spectacle of wit, and may be applied to the probation of all such secrets, as the ignorant crew will not imbrace. Such might I name the attraction, of Iron to the Loadstone, a thing so incredulous, as none save an eye-witnesse would believe. And in this attraction of Iron, experience will show a diligent searcher, more wonders than any vulgar capacity can entertain.

But to proceed to greater, and more than these. There is an attraction of gold, silver, and all other metals, by a certain stone, much after the same manner. {Silver and all other metals. Plin.Hist.l.36. cap.20. Aliter Vinegar.} Besides one stone will runne to the heap. Plants may have their mutual concurrence, and the parts of sensible creatures locally divided, will naturally move to a mutual imbracement. The consideration whereof makes me think, that there is not any thing, whether in divine or outward matters too difficult for my faith. To proceed higher, The whole power of the Mathematicks may compose a spherical Engine, according to *Ptolomies* frame in eight *Almagest*; which sincerely describes both longitude and latitude of all Celestial Bodies; but to give them a natural diurnal motion is not in the power of the Mathematicks. However a discreet head-piece would do well to try the making hereof of such materials and artifice, as it might have a natural diurnal motion.

Which seems to me possible; and because many things are moved with the motion of the Heavens, as Comets, the Sea tides, with several other things, which are turned about either in the whole or in part. Such a work might be thought more miraculous, and of a vaster benefit than any thing hitherto mentioned. For the perfecting of this would frustrate all other, whether the more curious, or the more vulgar Astronomical Instruments, which surely would be more valuable than a Kings Coffers; and yet there may matters be brought to passe, which though they will not reach so near a miracle, yet of farre greater publick and private profit.

As the producing so much gold or silver, as we please, not by the work of Nature yet accomplishment of Art: seeing there may be ten and seven wayes of gold, eight by the mixture of silver with gold; and the first way is made by sixteen parts of gold with some parts of silver, which will attain the four and twentieth degree of gold, alwayes augmenting one degree of gold with one of silver, and so for the mixture of brasse with gold.

So the last way is \* {\* Ex from.} by the four and twenty degrees of pure gold without mixture of other metal. And beyond this, Nature knows no further progresse, as experience tels us. Though Art may augment gold in the degrees of purity, even to infinitenesse, and compleat silver, without the least cheat: And yet that which seems more rare than all this is, That

though the rational soul (hath so farre its free-will, as) it cannot be compelled, yet may effectually be excited, induced and disposed freely to alter its affections, desires and behaviours to the dictates of another man. And this may not only be practiced upon one particular person, but upon a whole Army, City, or Body of a Nation living under one Region, if we believe experience. And this experience, *Aristotle* discloseth in his Book of Secrets, both of an Army, Region and single person. And thus I have well nigh finished my thoughts of Nature and Art.

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## CHAPTER 7. OF RETARDING THE ACCIDENTS OF OLD AGE, AND PROLONGATION OF LIFE

THE furthest attainment, which the complement of Art, joynd with the whole Energy of Nature can reach unto, is the Prolongation of Life to a very old date. How farre this is attainable, manifold experience hath shewed us. *Pliny* reports, {Lib.22.cap.24.} That *Pollio*, a man of a strong body and mind, lived much longer then men usually now: of whom *Octavius Augustus* enquiring, What course he took to live so long? was answered ænigmatically, he used Oyl without, and Mulsum within (now according to the opinion of some, it's eight parts of water, and nine of honey) I might produce many examples of the same quality: as that which fell out in the dayes of King *William*; A Countreyman plowing in the field, found a golden vessel, containing a certain liquor, which he supposing to be the Dew of Heaven, washed his face withall, and drunk of it, whereby he became renewed in spirit, body and excellency, *De bubulio factus est Bajulus Regis Sicilie*, from a Plow-man he was made Porter to the King of *Sicily*. And the Popes Letters assures us, That *Almannus*, held Prisoner by the *Saracens*, through the use of a Medicine lived five hundred years. For the King, whose Captive he was, having received this Medicine from the Embassadours of the great King, and being suspicious of them, made tryall hereof upon this Captive, which was brought him for that purpose. And the Lady of the Woods in great *Britanny* searching for a white Hinde, found an Ointment, wherewith the Keeper of the Woods anointed his whole body, except the soals of his feet, and he lived three hundred years without any corruption, save in the soals of his feet, which had some passions. We our selves know it frequent in these dayes, That plain Country men, without the advantage so much as of a Physicians advice, live very healthfully an hundred years, or little lesse. And these are the rather confirmed by the operations of Animals, as Harts, Eagles, Serpents, and many other, who by the efficacy of heart or stones, have renewed their youth: And wise men seeing that even bruits could reach so farre to their Prolongation, adjudging it no lesse feisable by reasonable men, set themselves on the Spurre to find out this secret. Hereupon *Artefius* from



his own ingenuity, having found the Secrets, of Stones, Herbs, Sensibles, &c. both for the knowledge of Nature, and especially the Prolongation of Life, did \* rejoyce, {\* Al. Glory. } that he had lived 1025 yeares. Further, to confirme this Assertion of the Prolongation of Life, it's considerable, That man naturally is immortal, that is to say, *Potens non mori*, hath a possibility of not dying. Yea, even after his fall, he might live a thousand years, though by degrees the length of life was abbreviated. Hence it follows, That this abbreviation is Accidental, and consequentially may be repaired in whole or in part; and upon search we shall find the accidental cause of this corruption, is not from the Heavens, or any other than the defect of true Government of our health. In that our Fathers are corrupt and imbecil, they beget sonnes of a corrupt complexion and composition, and their children upon the same score are corrupted. Thus the Pedigree of corruption is deprived from Fathers to sonnes, until we settle upon our heirs an assured abbreviation of our dayes. Yet this doth not conclude, That to perpetuity there shall succeed an abreviation of our life, since there is a positive period set to our life, men may live till they be eighty years, though then their dayes be but labour and sorrow. {Psalm 90.}

Now if every man would from the brest exercise a compleat Regiment of health (which consists in such things as have relation to Meat, Drink, Sleep, Waking, Motion, Rest, Evacuation, Retention, Air, and the Passions of the mind) He might find a remedy resisting his proper malady. For upon the prosecution of such a Regiment, one might arrive at the uttermost limit of that Nature he had from his Parents will permit, {Deest parenthesis in alio exemplo.} and be led to the very last period of Nature (I mean Nature fallen from its original uprightnesse) beyond which there is no further progresse; because it doth little or nothing availe against the corruption of our Ancestours: and yet the great impossibility of any mans so ordering himself in a mean, in all the fore-mentioned things, as the Regiment of health exacts, wherefore abbreviation of our dayes does not only from our Progenitors, but hath its advantages from the want of Regiment. However the Art of Physick sufficiently determines this. Although nor rich, or poor, wise or ignorant, no nor the most accurate Physicians themselves, do accomplish this Regiment in themselves or others, as every eye can discern; Yet Nature is not deficient in Necessaries, or Art any wayes incompleat, but rather is

advantagious to make insurrections and irruptions against, and so farre into these accidental passions, as they are either wholly or in part rooted out. At first, and in the beginning of our ages declining, the remedy was easie: But since we have five thousand years or more disadvantage, the Cure is more craggy.

But waving the Inconveniencies wise men moved by the considerations forementioned, have endeavoured to find out the means and wayes, which not only are forceable against the defects of every mans proper Regiment, but also against the corruptions of our Parents: Not that hereby they can attain to the yeares of *Adam* or *Artesius*, by reason of the growing corruption, but that our dayes may be augmented an hundred yeares, or more, above the ordinary age of most men in these dayes. And though it be impossible absolutely to retard the accidents of old age, yet hereby they may mitigate them, so as life will happily be prorogued beyond the common account, yet alwayes within the ultimate circuit of Nature. There is a bounder of Nature, set in men since their Fall. There is a bounder of every particulate man arising from the proper corruption of his Parents. Beyond both these bounders it's impossible to passe; yet happily one may arrive beyond the latter: nor yet so farre to go beyond it, as that the wisest of men can never reach the former. Although there be a possibility and aptitude of Nature to proceed to that boundary our first Parents set them. Let no man think this strange, since this aptitude extends itself to immortality, as appears both before the fall, and shall be evident after the Resurrection.

Perhaps you may object, That neither *Aristotle*, *Plato*, *Hippocrates*, or *Galen* ever attained that prolongation. I shall answer, They have not attained the knowledge of many ordinary truths, which other ingenious heads have found out; and if so, they may easily miscarry in a businesse of such weighty consequence, though they made it their study: especially, if we consider, how they were burdened with other impertinencies, and so were sooner brought to their gray haire, spending the inch of their Candles in more debased and vulgar subjects, than in finding out the wayes to so great Secrets. We are not ignorant *Aristotle* sayes in his Predicaments, *That the Quadrature of a Circle is possible, yet not then known*, Yea he cofesseth, himself and all his Predecessors were ignorant hereof, yet we in our times know it. Now if *Aristotle* did come short in such a trivial, much more might he in the

deep mysteries of Nature. Even in these dayes wise men are ignorant of many things, which the most ordinary capacity shall understand ere long. Thus the Objection is of little force.

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## CHAPTER 8. OF OBSCURING THE MYSTERIES OF ART AND NATURE

After an enumeration of some few examples concerning the prevalence of Nature and Art (that by these few we may gather many,) by these parts the whole; and so from particulars, universals, which will demonstrate the unnecessary aspiring to Magick, since both Nature and Art afford such sufficiencies. I shall now endeavour a methodical procedure in singulars, laying open both the causes and wayes in particular: and yet I will call to mind how as Secrets (of \* Nature) {\* Deest in alio.} are not committed to Goats-skins and Sheeps-pelts, that every clown may understand them, if we follow *Socrates* or *Aristotle*. For the latter in his *Secreta Secretarum* affirms, *He breaketh the Heavenly Seal, who communicateth the Secrets of Nature and Art; the disclosing of Secrets and Mysteries, producing many inconveniences*. In this case *Aulus Gellius* in *Noct. Atti. de Collatione Sapientum*, sayes, *It's but folly to profer Lettices to an Asse, since hee's content With his Thistles. Et in lib. lapidum, The divulging of Mysteries is the diminution of their Majesty, nor indeed continues that to be a Secret, of which the whole fry of men is conscious.*

For that which all men, which wise, and the more noted men affirme is truth. That therefore which is held by the multitude, as a multitude, must be false ; I mean of that multitude, which is distinct from knowing men. The multitude, it's true, agree with wise men in the more vulgar conceptions of their mind; but when they ascend to the proper principles and conclusions of Sciences and Arts, they much dissent (striving to get onely the appearancies in Sophismes and subtilties which wise men altogether reject.) {Al. Vacans sophisinatibus & inutilibus.} And this their ignorance of the properties and Secrets, makes the division from knowing men. Though the common conception of the mind, have all one Rule and Agreement with knowing men. Yet as for common things, they are of small value, nor enquirable for themselves, but rather for particular and proper ends.

The Reason then, why wise men have obscured their Mysteries from the multitude, was, because of their deriding and flighting wise mens Secrets of wisdom, being also ignorant to make a right use of such excellent matters. For if an accident help them to the knowledge of a worthy Mystery, they wrest and abuse it to the manifold inconvenience of persons and communities. Hee's then not discreet, who writes and Secrets, unlesse he conceal it from the vulgar, and make the more intelligent pay some labour and sweat before they understand it. In this stream the whole fleet of wise men have failed from the beginning of all, obscuring many wayes the abstruser parts of wisdom from the capacity of the penerality. Some by Characters and Verses have delivered many Secrets. Others by ænigmatical and figurative words, as *Aristotle* sayes, (*in lib. Secret, O Alexander, I shall disclose to you the greatest of Secrets, which it becomes you by divine Assistance to keep secret, and perfect the thing proposed. Take then then the Stone, which is no Stone, which is in every man, and in every place, and in all times; and it shall be called the Philosophers Egge, and the Terminus Ovi.* And thus we find multitudes of things obscured in the Writings and Sciences of men, which no man without his Teacher can unvail.

Thirdly, They have obscured their Secrets by their manner of Writing, as by Consonants without Vowels, none knowing how to read them, unlesse he know the signification of those words. {Significata.} Thus the *Hebrews, Caldees, Arabians*, nay the *major* part of men do most an end write their Secrets, which causeth a great obscurity amongst them, especially amongst the *Hebrewes*. For as *Aristotle* sayes in his fore-recited Book, *God gave them all manner of Wisdom long before they were Philosophers: And all Nations had their Originals of Philosophy from the Hebrewes, as Albumazar in lib. Introductorii Majoris; and other Philosophers, with Josephus lib.I. & lib.8. Antiquit.* makes it evident.

Fourthly, This obscuring is occasioned by the mixture of several sorts of Letters, for so the *Ethnick* Astronomer hid his knowledge, writing it in *Hebrew, Greek and Latine* Letters altogether. {Ethicus Astronomus fortasse. N. deest ergo Anglice dedi Ethnick.}

Fifthly, This obscuring was by their inventing other letters, then those which were in use in their own, or any other Nation, being framed

meerly by the pattern of their own fancy, which surely is the greatest impediment; yet this was the practice of *Artesius in lib. de Secretis Naturæ*.

Sixthly, They used not the Characters of Letters, but other Geometrical Characters, which have the power of Letters according to the several Position of Points, and Markes. And these he likewise made use of.

Seventhly, There is a greater Art of obscuring, which is called *Ars Notoria*, which is the Art of Noting and Writing, with what brevity, and in what manner we desire. This way the *Latines* have delivered many things. I held it necessary to touche at these obscurings, because it may fall out, I shall thorow the magnitude of our Secrets discourse this way, that I may help you so farre as I may.

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## CHAPTER 9. IN ALIIS ADVERG. OF THE MANNER TO MAKE THE PHILOSOPHERS EGGE

NOw I shall methodically handle those things I promised above, the dissolving the Philosophers Egge, and finding out the parts thereof; a work which will give beginning to other enterprises. {These are ænigmatical.} Make a diligent purification of the *Calx* with the waters of the *Alkali*, and other acute waters, grind it by several contrition with the salts, and \* burn it {\* Al. Contermina.} with many assations, that the earth may be perfectly separated from other elements, which I hold worthy the \* longitude of my stature. {\* Al. Melancholia staturæ.} Understand it if you can. For without doubt there will be a composition of Elements, and so it will be part of that Stone which is no Stone, which is in every man, and in every place of man; and you may find this this in all the seasons of the year in its place. Then take oyl after the form of a Saffron-cheese, and so viscouous first (as not to be smitten asunder by a stroak) {Al. Insensibile.} divide the whole fiery virtue, and separate it by dissolution, and let it be dissolved in acute water, of a temperate acutenesse, with a slight fire, and let it be boyled till his ‡ fatnesse, {‡ Al. Terrestitas.} as the fatnesse of flesh be separated by distillation, that nothing of the unctiousnesse may issue forth; and let this fiery virtue be distilled in the water of Urine. Afterwards boil it in Vinegar, until the least part, which is the cause of adustion be dried up, and the fiery virtue may be had; but if there be no regard of it, † again let it be made. {† Al. Tum fac.} Mind and search what I say: for the speech is difficult. The Oyl is dissolved in acute waters, or in common Oil which works more expresly, † or in acute Oyl of Almonds upon the fire; {† Al. Ut.} so as the Oyl be seperated, and the spirit remain occult, in the parts of living creatures, Sulphur and Arsnick. For the stones, in which the Oyl of humidity overflows, have their *terminus* in the union of its parts: for there is no vehement union, but one may be dissolved from another by the nature of water, which is the subject of liquefaction in the spirit, which is the *Medium* betwixt the dry parts and the Oyl.

The dissolution being made there will remain in the spirit, a pure humidity, vehemently mixed with dry parts, which are moved in it, when

the fire resolves it, which is sometimes called of the Philosophers, *Sulphur fusibile*, sometimes Oyl, other while an aery humour, sometime a conjunctive substance, which the fire separates not, sometimes *Camphore*: and if you please, this is the Philosophers Egge, or rather the *Terminus* and end of the Egge; and it came to us from these Oyls, and may be esteemed amongst the subtilities, when it is purged and separated from the water and oyl in which it is. Further, the Oyl is corrupted by grinding it with deficeating things, as with salt or *Atrimentum*, and by assation, because there is a passion arising from the contrary; and afterwards it is to be sublimated, until it be deprived of † its oleagineity, {† Al. Olio suo.} and because its as Sulphur or Arsnick amongst Minerals, it may be prepared, even as it is. Yet it's better to boil it in waters, that are temperate in acuity, until it be purged and whitened. Which wholsom exaltation is made either in hot or moist fire: The distilation must be re-iterated, that it may sufficiently receive its goodnesse, until it be rectified, the signs of its last rectification are candor and crystalline serenity: And when other things grow black, by fire, this grows white, is cleansed, shines with clearnesse and admirable splendour. From this water and its earth comes *Argentum vivum* in Minerals, and \* when the matter hath waxed white, {Al. Quandoque in salem Aru.oniacum.} this way it is congealed; the Stone of *Aristotle*, which is no Stone, it's set in a Pyramid a hot place, or (if you please) in the belly of an Horse or Ox, and it imitateth an acute Feavor. For from seven to fourteen, and from that it sometimes proceeds to one and twenty, that the Fecis of the Elements may be dissolved in its water, before it be separate: The dissolution and distillation is to be iterated, until it be rectified. And here is the end of this intention. Yet know that when you have consummated your work, you are then to begin.

Another Secret I shall shew you, you must prepare *Argentum vivum* by mortifying it with the vapour of Tin for Pearls, and with the vapour of Lead for the Stone *Iberus*; then let it be ground with desiccating things, and *Attramentis*, and the like, as is said, and let there be an assation: Then let there be a sublimation \* if for Pearles twelve times; {\* Al. Septies.} if for rednesse one and twenty times, until the humidity within it be totally corrupted. Nor is it possible, that its humidity be separated by vapour, as the fore-said oyl; because its vehemently mixed with its dry parts; nor doth it constitute, as in the foresaid metals. In this Chapter you



may be deceived, unlesse you distinguish of the signification of the words. It's now high time I involve the third Chapter: that you acquire the Calx, the \* Calx of the body, {\* Al. Clavem operis.} which you intend, the body is calcined, when it is appodiated, *i.e.* that the humour in it may be corrupted by salt, and with salt Armoniack and vinegar, and sometimes with burning things, and with Sulphur and Arsnick: and sometimes bodies are fed with *Argentum vivum*, and sublimated from them, until they remain putred. The claves of the Art are congelation, resolution, inceration, proportion; and another way purification, distillation, separation, calcination and fixation, and then you may acquiesce. {\* Remaneant putris, ni fallor male imprimitur aut debet esse pura aut putres.}

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## CHAPTER 10. FORTE.620. OF THE SAME SUBJECT ANOTHER WAY

IN the 602. *Arabian* year you intreated me for some Secrets. Take then the Stone, and calcine it with a light assation and strong contrition, or with acute things. But in the end mingle it a little with sweet water, and compound a Laxative Medicine of seven things (if you will) or of six, or of five, or as many as you please; but my mind rests in two things, whose proportion is better than the other fixt proportion, or thereabouts, as experience will teach you. Resolve notwithstanding the gold at the fire, and tried it better; {Al. Mollius caleseant.} but if you will credit me, take one thing that is the Secret of Secrets of Nature, able to do Miracles. Let it be mixed from two or more, or a Phoenix, which is a singular creature † at the fire, {† Al. Adjunge.} and incorporate by a strong motion: to which if hot liquor four or five times be applied, you have the composition. Yet afterwards the coelestial nature is deliberated, if you infuse hot water three or four times. Divide therefore the week from the strong in several vessels, if you believe me: Let that which is good be evacuated. Again, use the pouders, and the water which remains, carefully expresse: For of a certain, it will produce the parts of the pouders, not incorporated: therefore take the water by it self; because the pouders exiccated from it hath power to be incorporated into the Laxative Medicine. Work therefore as formerly, until you distinguish the strong from the weak, and apply the pouders three, four, five times or oftener, and work alwayes the way: And if you cannot work with with hot waters, do it with water of *Alkali*, and by such acute things you make the violence of the Medicine. But if by reason of the acuity and softnesse of the Medicine it be broken, the pouders, being applied, apply very carefully more of the hard and soft. But if it be by reason of the abundance of the pouders apply more of the Medicine; if it be by reason of the strength of the water, water it with pistils; {Pistillo.} and congregate the matter, as you can, and separate the water by little and little, and it will return to its state, which water you must exiccate: for it contains both pouders and water of the Medicine, which are to be incorporated, as the principle pouders. Here you may not sleep, because here is contained a very great

and profitable Secret. If you rightly order in a right series of things, the parts of the Shrub or Willow, they will keep natural union : and do not deliver this to oblivion, for it is profitable for many things. You must mingle Pearls with the made union: {Unione facta.} as I think there will arise some thing like the Stone *Iberus*: and without doubt it mortifies that which is to be mortified by the vapour of Lead. You shall find Lead, if you expresse the living from the dead; and the dead you must bury in *Olibanum* and *Sarcocolla*. Keep this Secret, for it is of some profit, and so must you do with the vapour of Pearls, and the Stone *Tagus*, and you must (as I have said) bury the dead.

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## CHAPTER 11. FORTE.603. OF THE SAME SUBJECT ANOTHER WAY

TO your desire in the *Arabian* year 630. I return this Answer. You must have the Medicine which may be dissolved in the thing liquified and steeped in it, and penetrate its interiour parts, and may be mingled with it; and it may not be a fugitive servant, but transmute it. Let it be mingled by reason of the spirit, and let it be fixed by the Calx of the metal; it is to be thought that fixation is prepared, when the body and spirit are set in its place, and the spirit is made a body. Take then of the bones of *Adam*, and of the Calx the same weight; let there be six to the Stone *Tagi*, and five to the stone of Pearl; let them be ground with *Aqua vitae*, whose property it is to dissolve all other things, so as in it they are dissolved and assated, until it be incerate, *i.e.* let the parts be united, as the parts in wax. The sign of inceration is, that the Medicine liquifies upon iron very hot.

Then let it be put in the same water in some hot and moist place, or let it hang in the vapour of waters made very hot: after that dissolve and congeal them against the Sunne, Afterwards take Saltpeter, and *argentum vivum* shall be converted into lead : And again, wash the lead with it, and mundifie it, that it may be the next to silver, and then work as a pious man, and also the whole weight must be 30. But yet of Saltpeter *L U R U V O P O Vir Can Utriet Sulphuris* : and so you may make Thunder and Lightning, if you understand the Artifice : but you must observe, whether I speak ænigmatically, or according to the truth. Some men have supposed otherwise:

For it is told me, that you must resolve all into its first matter, of which you have *Aristotle* speaking in vulgar and known places, which makes me silent herein.

When you have this, you have pure, simple and equal Elements. And this you may do by contrary thing and various operations, which formerly I have called the Claves of the Art. And *Aristotle* says, *That the equality of potencies excludes action, and passion, and corruption.* And these things *Averrho's* affirms, reproving *Galen*. And this Medicine is

esteemed the more pure and simple which may be found, which is prevalent against Feavers, passions of the mind and body.  
Farewell. *Whoever unlocks these, hath a key which opens and no man shutts: and when he hath shut no man opens.*

In this Translation, I followed Dr *Dees* Edition, Printed at *Hamburg*, 1618.

FINIS.

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