ROGER BACON



THE MIRROR OF ALCHIMY

Roger Bacon

The Mirror of Alchimy

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The Preface.

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n times past the Philosophers spake afters diuers and sundrie manners throughout their writings, sith that as it were in a riddle and cloudie voyce, they haue left vnto vs a certaine most excellent and noble science, but altogither obscure, and without all hope vtterly denied, and that not without good cause. Wherefore I would aduise thee, that aboue all other bookes, thou shouldest firmly fixe thy mind vpon these seuen Chapters, conteining in them the transmutation of mettalls, and often call to minde the beginning, middle, and end of the same, wherein thou shalt finde such subtilitie, that thy minde shalbe fully contented therewith.

The Mirrour of Alchimy, composed by the famous Fryer,

Roger Bachon, sometime fellow of Martin Colledge, and Brasen-nose Colledge in Oxenforde.

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CHAP. I.Of the Definitions of Alchimy.

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N many ancient Bookes there are found many definitions of this Art, the intentions wherof we must consider in this Chapter. For *Hermes* saith of this Science: *Alchimy* is a Corporal Science simply composed of one and by one, naturally conioyning things more precious, knowledge and effect, and conuerting them by a naturall commixtion into a better kind. A certain other saith: *Alchimy* is a Science, teaching how to transforme any kind of mettall into another: and that by a proper medicine, as it appeareth by many Philosophers Bookes. *Alchimy* therfore is a science teaching how to make and compound a certaine medicine, which is called *Elixir*, the which when it is cast vpon mettals or imperfect bodies, doth fully perfect them in the verie proiection.

CHAP. II.

Of the naturall principles, and procreation of Minerals.

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SEcondly, I will perfectly declare the naturall principles & procreations of Minerals: where first it is to be noted, that the naturall principles in the mynes, are *Argent-uiue*, and *Sulphur*. All mettals and minerals, whereof there be sundrie and diuers kinds, are begotten of these two: but I must tel you, that nature alwaies intendeth and striueth to the perfection of Gold: but many accidents comming between, change the mettalls, as it is euidently to be seene in diuers of the Philosophers bookes. For according to the puritie and impuritie of the two aforesaide principles, *Argent-uiue*, and *Sulphur*, pure, and impure mettals are ingedred: to wit, Gold, Siluer, Steele, Leade, Copper, and Iron: of whose nature, that is to say, puritie, and impuritie, or vncleane superfluitie and defect, giue eare to that which followeth.

Of the nature of Golde.

Gold is a perfect body, engendred of *Argent-uiue* pure, fixed, cleare, red, and of *Sulphur* cleane, fixed, red, not burning, and it wanteth nothing.

Of the nature of Siluer.

Siluer is a body, cleane, pure, and almost perfect, begotten of *Argent-uiue*, pure, almost fixed, cleare, and

white, & of such a like *Sulphur*: It wanteth nothing, saue a little fixation, colour, and weight.

Of the nature of Steele.

Steele is a body cleane, imperfect, engendred of Argentuine pure, fixed & not fixed cleare, white outwardly, but red inwardly, and of the like Sulphur. It wanteth onely decoction or digestion.

Of the nature of Leade.

Leade is an vncleane and imperfect bodie, engendred of Argent-uiue impure, not fixed, earthy, drossie, somewhat white outwardly, and red inwardly, and of such a Sulphur in part burning. It wanteth puritie, fixation, colour, and fiering.

Of the nature of Copper.

Copper is an vncleane and imperfect bodie, engendred of Argent-uiue, impure, not fixed, earthy, burning, red not cleare, and of the like Sulphur. It wanteth purity, fixation, and weight: and hath too much of an impure colour, and earthinesse not burning.

Of the nature of Iron.

Iron is an vnclean and imperfect body, engendred of Argent-uiue impure, too much fixed, earthy, burning, white and red not cleare, and of the like Sulphur: It wanteth fusion, puritie, and weight: It hath too much fixed vncleane Sulphur, and burning earthinesse. That which hath bene spoken, euerie Alchimist must diligently obserue.