

De unione rerum commixtarum atque introductione nobilioris formae vitaeque sensibilis. Cap. xxxvi

Sciendum vero quo alicuius rei nobilior forma est, eo res ipsa promptior est et propensior ad recipiendum, eo etiam potentior ad agendum: redduntur itaque incomprehensibilia rerum mirabilia quando scilicet, materiis commixtis opportunisque temporibus praeparatis, ad vivificandum ponuntur, vitam illis ex stellis animamque sensibilem tanquam nobiliorem formam conciliando. Tanta quippe est in materiis praeparatis potentia, quas tunc vitam adipisci videmus quando qualitatum perfecta commixtio priorem iam contrarietatem fregisse videtur; perfectiorem vero adeptae sunt vitam, quatenus complexio a contrarietate est remotior. Coelum vero causa praepotens ab initio cuiusque rei generandae, concoc-tione materiae et digestionem perfecta, coelestes influxus dotesque mirificas cum vita simul largitur, quatenus in ipsa vita anima-que sensibili est comprehensio ad nobiliores virtutes ac sublimiores concipiendas. Virtus praeterea coelestis alibi quidem sopita iacet, ceu sulphur a flamma remotum; in viventibus autem corporibus saepe flagrat, sicut sulphur accensum, tum vapore suo proxima omnia complet: sic miranda quaedam opera procreantur, qualia leguntur in libro *Nemith*, qui et *Legum Plutonis* inscribitur, quia eiusmodi generationes monstrosae sunt, neque secundum leges naturae producuntur. (Nos enim scimus quod ex vermibus generantur culices, ex equo vespae, ex vitulo et bove apes; ex cancro, ablatis pedibus inhumato, generatur scorpius; ex anate tosta, donec in pulverem teratur, illo in aquam proiecto, generantur ranae; si autem in pastillo cocta et per frusta incisa in loco humido et subterraneo dimittatur, generantur bufones; ex basilicone herba, inter duos

3-8 Sciendum ... conciliando] Ficin. Vita 3: 2, p. 533; cf. 26, p. 571; "redduntur ... mirabilia": ps. Albert. Mirab. sig. g1v
 9-15 Tanta ... largitur] Ficin. ib. 16, 19, pp. 554, 560
 17-20 alibi ... complet] Ficin. ib. 22, p. 565
 20-23 qualia ... producuntur] Alvern. Leg. 12, p. 43C
 23-24 ex vermibus ... vespae] Horap. 2: 44, 47, pp. 78-79

1-2 Capitulum 28^m W 7 post praeparatis] sub fimo vel alibi add. W
 9 quippe] enim W; post tunc] demum add. W 11 adeptae sunt] om. W
 16 apprehensio W 18 autem] vero W 23 * Varia variorum animalium
 procreatio K 25 testa A

lapides trita, generantur scorpiones; et ex capillis mulieris menstruatae, sub fimo locatis, fiunt serpentes; et pilus ex cauda equi, in aquam proiectus, vitam concipit et transit in vermem perniciosum; et est artificium quo in ovo, excubante gallina, generatur forma similis homini, qualem ego vidi et componere novi, quam magi mirandis virtutibus efficacem perhibent et hanc veram mandragoram dicunt. > Oportet igitur cognoscere quae et quales materiae, sive natura sive arte incohatae vel perfectae, sive ex pluribus aggregatae, quales coelitus influxus suscipere possunt. Congruitas enim rerum naturalium ad coelestia sufficit ut ab illis hauriamus influxum: quia, cum nihil prohibeat ad inferiora coelestia lumen suum diffundere, materiam nullam permittunt expertem fore suae virtutis. Quapropter quantumcunque materiae perfectum ac purum est, ad coelestem influxum non ineptum est: ea enim est colligantia et continuitas materiae ad animam mundi, quae quotidie influit super naturalia et super omnia quae natura praeparavit, ut impossibile sit praeparata materia non influi vitam aut nobiliorem quandam formam.

Quomodo certis quibusdam praeparamentis naturalibus et artificialibus coelestia quaedam et vitalia dona desuper trahimus. Cap. xxxvii

<Dicunt Academici, simul cum Trismegisto, et Iarchas Brachmanus atque Hebraeorum Mecubales fatentur omnia, quae sunt sub lunari globo in hoc inferiori mundo generationi et corruptioni subiecta, eadem etiam esse in coelesti mundo, sed modo quodam coelesti, deinde etiam in mundo intellectuali, sed multo perfectiori et meliori nota, perfectissimo tandem in archetypo: atque hac serie unumquodque infernum suo superiori et per hoc supremo pro suo

7-9 Oportet . . . possunt] Ficin. ib. 26, p. 571
 9-14 Congruitas . . . ineptum est] Iambl. Myst. 1: 15 § 49 [= p. 1877]; 5: 23 § 233 [= p. 1899]
 21-p.154,9 Dicunt . . . emanat] Georgius 1: 4, 20, f. 76v *apud quem*: Corp. Herm. Fragm. 2A § 2-4, pp. 4-5; Philostr. 3: 34, p. 308; Zohar 1: 7, p. 214

7 igitur] itaque *W*; qualis *A* 9 post aggregatae] et *add. W*; coelites *A*
 10 naturalium] nostrarum *W* 11 prohibet *W* 12 nullam materiam *W*
 13 matetiae *K* 14 est ineptum *W*; * Materiae ad animam mundi col(li)gantia
K 15 quotidie] continue *W* 17 materiam *W* 19-20 Capitulum 29^m
W 20 vitalia] utilia *A*

genere respondere et ab eisdem suscipere—e coelis quidem vim
 illam coelestem, quam quintam essentiam, sive spiritum mundi,
 sive mediam naturam vocant; ab intellectuali autem mundo spiri-
 tualem viventemque vigorem, omnem qualitativam virtutem tran-
 scendentem; ab archetypo denique per haec intermedia pro gradu
 suo originalem vim totius perfectionis. Hinc ab istis inferioribus ad
 sydera, ab illis ad eorundem intelligentias et inde ad archetypum
 unaquaeque res apte reduci potest: ex quarum serie tota magia et
 omnis occultior philosophia emanat. > Trahitur enim quotidie ali-
 quid naturale per artem, trahitur quotidie divinum aliquod per
 naturam: quod intuentes Aegyptii naturam magam vocaverunt, hoc est
 vim ipsam magicam in attractu similium per similia et convenien-
 tium per convenientia. Attractus autem huiusmodi per rerum
 mutuam convenientiam ad se invicem superiorum cum inferioribus
 Graeci συμπάθειαν vocaverunt: sic convenit cum terra aqua frigidi-
 tate, aqua cum aëre humore, aër cum igne calore, ignis convenit
 cum coelo in materia; nec miscetur ignis cum aqua nisi per aërem,
 nec aër cum terra nisi per aquam; sic nec miscetur anima corpori
 nisi per spiritum, nec intellectus spiritui nisi per animam. Sic vide-
 mus, cum natura foetus corpus humanum figuraverit, hoc ipso
 praeparamento spiritum statim ab universo deducit; spiritus hic
 fomes est ad animam corpori copulandam, anima fomes est in
 spiritu corporeque ad intelligentiam mentemque divinitus conse-
 quendam: sicut in ligno siccitas parata est ad penetraturum oleum,
 oleum huic imbibitum esca est ad ignem, ignis ipse luminis est vehi-
 culum. His exemplis videmus quomodo certis quibusdam praepara-
 mentis naturalibus et artificialibus coelestia quaedam dona desuper
 suscipere possumus. <Conveniunt enim lapides et metalla cum her-
 bis et hae cum animalibus, haec vero cum coelis et hi cum intelligen-
 tiis et istae cum divinis proprietatibus et attributis atque cum ipso

9-13 Trahitur ... convenientia] Ficin. In Apol. p. 1388
 13-15 Attractus ... vocaverunt] Pic. Apol. p. 121
 15-17 sic convenit ... materia] Reuchl. Verb. 1, sig. b3r
 17-28 nec miscetur ... possumus] Ficin. Vita 3: 26, p. 570
 28-p.155,4 Conveniunt ... repraesentat] Georgius 1: 6, 2, f. 100r; 1: 1, 7, f. 8v

8 * Magia unde emanet K 9 enim] om. W 12 convenientium W
 13 eiusmodi W 15 sympathiam W simpathiam A; sicut W 20 ipsi W
 22 ad animam corpori copulandam anima fomes est] om. AK 30-p.155,1 cum
 ipso Deo] ipsi Deo A

Deo, ad cuius similitudinem et imaginem omnia creata sunt. Prima autem Dei imago mundus, mundi homo, hominis animal, animalis zoophytum, illius vero planta, plantae autem metalla et horum lapides similitudines imaginesque repraesentant. > Rursus in spiritualibus convenit planta cum bruto vegetatione, brutum cum homine sensu, hic cum daemone intellectu, ille cum Deo immortalitate. Iungitur divinitas menti, mens intellectui, hic intentioni, haec imagini, illa sensationi, ea sensibus, ipsi tandem rebus. Ea enim est naturae colligantia et continuitas, ut omnis virtus superior per singula inferiora longa et continua serie radios suos dispersiendi usque ad ultima fluat et inferiora per singula sua superiora ad suprema perveniant. Sic enim inferiora ad superiora invicem connexa sunt, ut influxus ab eorum capite prima causa, tanquam chorda quaedam tensa, usque ad infima procedat, cuius si unum extremum tangatur, tota subito tremat et tactus eiusmodi usque ad alterum extremum resonet <ac moto uno inferiori moveatur et superius, cui illud correspondet, sicut nervi in cythara bene concordata.>

Quomodo dona non solum coelestia et vitalia, verumetiam intellectualia quaedam et divina desuper suscipere possumus. Cap. xxxviii

Tradunt magi per inferiora, superioribus conformia, posse opportunis coeli influxibus coelestia dona trahi atque sic quoque per haec coelestia coelestes daemones, quatenus stellarum pedissequos, nobis conciliari et insinuari. Quare certis quibusdam materiis naturalem vim divinitatis habentibus, hoc est quae naturaliter superis consentaneae sunt, rite collectis, partim physice, partim astronomice,

4-8 Rursus . . . rebus] Reuchl. ib. sig. b3r-b4r
 8-16 Ea . . . resonet] Ficin. Theol. 13: 2, p. 207; Reuchl. ib. sig. b4r
 20-p.156,4 Tradunt . . . confirmant] Ficin. Vita 3: 15, 13, pp. 552, 549 *apud quem*: Iambl. Myst. 2: 5-6 § 79-83 [= p. 1880]; Procl. Sacr. p. 148 [= p. 1928]; Synes. 2, pp. 147-48 [= p. 1969]; cf. Ficin. In Plot. 4: 4, 42, p. 1748

3 zeophitu A 4 post Rursus] autem *add.* W 6 illi AK 7 iunguntur A
 iungantur *ex* iunguntur *corr.* K 9 * Naturae mira colligantia K 10 dis-
 partiendo A 11 sua] *om.* W 12 perveniat W 13 influxus *om.* W
 15 tremit W; et] ut videlicet W 16 resonat W 18-19 Capitulum tricesi-
 mum W 22 quatenus] prout W

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CORNELIUS AGRIPPA
DE OCCULTA PHILOSOPHIA
LIBRI TRES

EDITED BY

V. FERRONE COMPAGNI



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CHAP. XXXVI.

Of the Union of mixt things, and the introduction of a more noble form, and the Senses of life.

Moreover we must know, that by how much the more noble the form of any thing is, by so much the more prone, and apt it is to receive, and powerfull to act. Then the vertues of things do then become wonderfull, *viz.* when they are put to matters that are mixed, and prepared in fit seasons, to make them alive, by procuring life for them from the Stars, as also a sensible soul, as a more noble form. For there is so great a power in prepared matters which we see do then receive life, when a perfect mixtion of qualities seems to break the former contrariety. For so much the more perfect life things receive, by how much their temper is more remote from contrariety. Now the Heaven, as a prevalent cause doth from the beginning of every thing to be generated by the concoction, and perfect digestion of the matter, together with life, bestows Celestiall influences, and wonderfull gifts, according to the Capacity that is in that life, and sensible soul to receive more noble, and sublime vertues. For the Celestiall vertue doth otherwise lyè asleep, as Sulphur kept from Flame, but in living bodies it doth alwaies burn, as kindled Sulphur, then by its vapour it fills all the places that are next to it; so certain wonderfull works are wrought, such as are read in the book of *Nemith*, which is tituled a Book of the Laws of *Pluto*, because such kind of monstrous generations are not produced according to the Laws of Nature. For we know that of Worms are generated Gnats, of a Horse Wasps, of a Calf, and Ox Bees, of a Crab, his legs being taken off, and he buried in the ground, a Scorpion; of a Duck dried into powder, and put into Water, are generated Frogs; but if it be baked in a Pie, and cut into pieces, and put into a moist place under the ground, Toads are generated of it: of the Hearb Garden Basill bruised betwixt two stones, are generated Scorpions, and of the hairs of a menstruous Woman put under dung, are bred

bred Serpents; and the hair of a Horse taile put into Water, receiveth life, and is turned into a pernicious Worm. And there is an art wherewith by a Hen sitting upon Eggs may be generated a form like to a man, which I have seen, & knew how to make, which Magicians say hath in it wonderfull vertues, and this they call the true Mandrake. You must therefore know which, and what kind of matters are either of nature; or art, begun, or perfected, or compounded of more things, and what Celestiall influencies they are able to receive. For a Congruity of naturall things is sufficient for the receiving of influence from Celestiall; because when nothing doth hinder the Celestials to send forth their lights upon inferiours, they suffer no matter to be destitute of their vertue. Wherefore as much matter as is perfect, and pure, is not unfit to receive the Celestiall influence. For that is the binding and continuity of the matter to the soul of the world, which doth daily flow in upon things naturall, and all things which nature hath prepared, that it is impossible that a prepared matter should not receive life; or a more noble form.

CHAP. XXXVII.

How by some certain naturall, and artificiall, preparations We may attract certain Celestiall; and vitall gifts.

Platonists, together with *Hermes*; say; and *Jarchus Brachmanus*; and the *Mecubals* of the Hebrews confesse, that all sublunary things are subject to generation, and corruption; and that also there are the same things in the Celestiall world, but after a Celestiall manner, as also in the intellectuall world, but in a far more perfect, and better fashion, and manner; but in the most perfect manner of all in the examplary. And after this course; that every inferiour should in its kind answer its superiour, and through this the supream itself; and receive from heaven that Celestiall power which they call the quintes-

quintessence, or the spirit of the world, or the middle nature, and from the intellectuall world a spirituall and enlivening vertue transcending all qualities whatsoever, and lastly from the exemplary or originall world, through the mediation of the other, according to their degree receive the originall power of the whole perfection. Hence every thing may be aptly reduced from these inferiours to the Stars, from the Stars to their Intelligencies, and from thence to the first cause it self; from the series, and order whereof whole Magick, and all occult Philosophy flowes: For every day some naturall thing is drawn by art, and some divine thing drawn by nature, which the Egyptians seeing, called Nature a Magicianess, (i.e.) the very Magicall power it self, in the attracting of like by like, and of sutable things by sutable. Now such kind of attractions by the mutuall correspondency of things amongst themselves, of superiours with inferiours, the Grecians called *συμπαθια*: So the earth agrees with cold water, the water with moist Aire, the Aire with Fire, the Fire with the Heaven in water; neither is Fire mixed with water, but by Aire, nor the Aire with the Earth, but by water. So neither is the soul united to the body, but by the spirit, nor the understanding to the spirit but by the soul. So we see when nature hath framed the body of the infant, by this very preparative she presently fetcheth the spirit from the Universe. This spirit is the instrument to obtain of God the understanding, and mind in the soul, and body, as in wood the dryness is fitted to receive oile, and the oile being imbibed is food for the Fire, the Fire is the vehiculum of light. By these examples you see how by some certain naturall, and artificiall preparations, we are in a capacity to receive certain Celestiall gifts from above. For stones, and Metals have a correspondency with Hearbs, Hearbs with Animals, Animals with the Heavens, the Heavens with Intelligencies, and those with divine properties, and attributes, and with God himself, after whose image, and likness all things are created. Now the first Image of God is the world, of the world, man, of man, beasts, of beasts, the Zoophyton (i.e.) half Aniamll, and half Plant; of Zoophy-

tion, plants, of plants, metals, of metals, stones. And again in things spirituall, the Plant agrees with a bruit in Vegetation, a bruit with a man in sense, man with an Angel in understanding an Angell with God in immortality. Divinity is annexed to the mind, the mind to the intellect, the intellect to the intention, the intention to the imagination, the imagination to the senses, the senses at last to things. For this is the band, and continuity of nature, that all superiour vertue doth flow through every inferiour with a long, and continued series, dispersing its rayes even to the very last things; and inferiours through their superiours, come to the very supream of all. For so inferiours are successively joynd to their superiours, that there proceeds an influence from their head, the first cause, as a certain string stretched out, to the lowermost things of all, of which string if one end be touched, the whole doth presently shake, and such a touch doth sound to the other end, and at the motion of the inferiour, the superiour also is moved, to which the other doth answer, as strings in a Lute well tuned.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

How we may draw not only Celestiall, and vitall, but also certain Intellectuall and divine gifts from above.

MAgicians teach that Celestiall gifts may through inferiors being conformable to superiors be drawn down by oportune influences of the Heaven; and so also by these Celestiall, the Celestiall Angels, as they are servants of the Stars, may be procured, and conveyed to us. *Jamblichus*, *Proclus*, and *Synesius*, with the whole School of *Platonists* confirm, that not only Celestiall, and vitall, but also certain Intellectuall, Angelicall, and divine gifts may be received from above by some certain matters, having a naturall power of divinity (*i. e.*) which have

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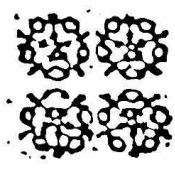
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THREE BOOKS
OF
Occult Philosophy,

WRITTEN BY
Henry Cornelius Agrippa,

OF
NETTESHEIM,
Counsellor to CHARLES the Fifth,
EMPEROR of Germany:
AND
Iudge of the Prerogative Court.

Translated out of the Latin into the
English Tongue, By J. F.



Second enlarged Chthonios edition - with index

CHTHONIOS BOOKS 1987

does not exist in a mixed body in its ultimate state and excess, but in a somewhat restrained state.

Question 13: Whether putrefaction is a path to generation.

Further one inquires whether putrefaction is a path to generation.

1. It seems not. For putrefaction is a final corruption. But corruption is not a path to generation, since these are contraries. Therefore, etc.

2. In addition, art imitates nature to the extent that it is able. But art casts off or rejects the superfluous and creates a work of art [*artificiatum*] from the residue. Therefore, so too does nature, in the same way. But something made through putrefaction is superfluous and is expelled by nature. Therefore, putrefaction does not become generation.

3. In addition, the corruption that proceeds from heat is of two types, namely, combustion and putrefaction. But an animal is not generated from combustion, and therefore neither is it generated by putrefaction.

The Philosopher says the opposite.¹⁸

To the first, one must reply that an animal can be generated from putrefaction. For just as the semen in the womb is digested and completed during an act of digestion by an internal power, and whatever is impure is expelled and whatever is pure that remains is converted into the matter for the fetus, so the putrefied matter in the earth's belly can be digested correctly by the heat of a celestial body, of the earth's body, or of the containing body, and what is impure can be expelled, and what is pure and remains can be in potency to the animal's form, because, just as an internal heat disposes the animal's matter for the generation of something animate, so the external heat can dispose the matter for the generation of an imperfect animal.

18. Ar., *Meteora* 4.1 (379a2-18). Cf. A., DA 6.3.3.123 (SZ 1: 584); *Meteora* 4.1.11.

1. On to the arguments. To the first, one must reply that, according to the Philosopher in the first book of *On Generation*, "the generation of one thing is the corruption of another."¹⁹ Therefore, although putrefaction represents the final corruption of one thing, nevertheless it can be a pathway into the generation of another.

2. To the second argument one must reply that just as art does not form a work of art out of a separated superfluity, but out of what remains, so too does nature operate in putrefaction.

3. To the third argument one must reply that life depends on the hot and the moist, and not the hot and the dry. But in putrefaction the hot operates with the moist, whereas in combustion the hot operates with the dry. This is why combustion does not cause generation as putrefaction does.

Question 14: Whether animals like this are generated by a superior power.

Further one inquires whether animals like this are generated by a superior power.

1. It seems that they are not generated by a superior power. For a cause and effect are so proportioned that the universal is proportioned to the universal and the particular to the particular. But a superior power has the nature of a universal agent, but the one generated is a particular, and therefore, etc.

2. In addition, motion impedes the generation of animals like this. An indication of this is that they are not generated in running water, whereas they are generated in standing water. Since, then, celestial bodies are in continuous motion, it seems that animals like this are not generated by the power of superior bodies.

The Philosopher says the opposite.²⁰

One must reply that two powers are required for the generation of animals like these, namely, a superior power and an inferior power. The inferior power disposes the matter for putrefac-

19. Ar., *DG* 1.3 (318a23f.).

20. Ar., *Phys.* 2.2 (194b13).

tion, into which, once it has been disposed, the celestial power is introduced, operating on the matter just as sperm operates on the menses. And this is why, just as the power of the sperm disposes the menses to the form of a perfect animal, so the celestial power operates through an elemental power on matter that is disposed to the form of an imperfect animal. Therefore, just as "the human generates a human as does the sun," so it can be said that the sun and the surrounding material generate this sort of imperfect animal. The fact that an animal like this can be generated without a seed arises from its imperfection, since the more perfect an inferior thing is, the more things are required to produce it. And this is why, although an animal like this can be produced without seed by a celestial body's power and by the power of the body containing it, nevertheless a horse and an ass and a human cannot be produced solely by a universal agent without the seed of a particular animal agreeing with it in species.

1. On to the arguments. To the first, one must reply that a universal is of two kinds: one for causing and the other for disposing. Aristotle's remark must be understood to apply to the second universal and not to the first, and a celestial body is a universal agent for causing and not for disposing, and this is why it can produce a particular effect well. And this is the reason why a universal agent or celestial body acts only with a particular agent mediating it instrumentally, since all inferior things are instruments of superior ones.

2. To the second argument one must reply that the motion of the surrounding material prohibits putrefaction, and this is why water's motion thins and purifies more than it putrefies, because its own motion continually incorporates the superior power into the impure water. But this is not so for the motion of superior bodies, because their motion causes heat here below. And likewise motion continues here below because, if the first mover should happen to cease to move, then all motion here below would cease. Therefore, the motion of a superior body does not impede putrefaction, but rather arouses the heat needed for generating, although the water's motion impedes the putrefaction of the surrounded body.

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ALBERT THE GREAT

QUESTIONS CONCERNING
ARISTOTLE'S ON ANIMALS

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Frankenstein

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THE 1818 TEXT

Edited with an Introduction and Notes by

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Monique d. Mayne, Frankenstein - English ^{University} ^{Reading}

Milton, etc?

David King, Frankenstein London (1998)

scribble, and then
the book is the most - can't be
the 1818 text - can't be
- c) Walton + Frankenstein

cation, and our amusements would have been the labour of other children. Perhaps we did not read so many books, according to the ordinary methods; but those who are disciplined impressed the more deeply on our memories.

In this description of our domestic circle I include Henry Clerval; for he was constantly with us. He went to school with me, and generally passed the afternoon at our house; being an only child, and destitute of companions at home, his father was well pleased that he should find associates at our house; and we were never completely happy when Clerval was absent.

I feel pleasure in dwelling on the recollections of childhood, before misfortune had tainted my mind, and changed its bright visions of extensive usefulness into gloomy and narrow reflections upon self. But, in drawing the picture led, by insensible steps to my after tale of misery: for when afterwards ruled my destiny, I find it arose, like a mountain river, from ignoble and almost forgotten sources; but, mounting as it proceeded, it became the torrent which, in its course, has swept away all my hopes and joys.

Natural philosophy* is the genius that has regulated my fate; I desire therefore, in this narration, to state those facts which led to my predilection for that science. When I was thirteen years of age, we all went on a party of pleasure to the baths near Thonon: the inclemency of the weather obliged us to remain a day confined to the inn. In this house I chanced to find a volume of the works of Cornelius Agrippa. * I opened it with apathy; the theory which he attempts to demonstrate feeling into enthusiasm. A new light seemed to demonstrate, to my father. I cannot help remarking here the many opportunities instructors possess of directing the attention of their pupils to useful knowledge, which they utterly neglect. My father looked carelessly at the title-page of my book, and said,

FRANKENSTEIN
Victor, do not waste your
My dear Victor, do not waste your

time upon this; it is sad trash. Ah! Cornelius Agrippa! My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this; it is sad trash. Ah! Cornelius Agrippa had been explained to me, and that a modern system of science had directly exploded, which possessed much greater powers than been introduced, because the powers of the latter were chimerical, the ancient, because the former were real and practical; under such while those of the former were real and practical; under such circumstances, I should certainly have thrown Agrippa aside, and, with my imagination warmed as it was, should probably have applied myself to the more rational theory of chemistry which has resulted from modern discoveries. It is even possible, that the train of my ideas would never have received the fatal impulse that led to my ruin. But the cursory glance my father had taken of my volume by no means assured me that he was acquainted with its contents; and I continued to read with the greatest avidity.

When I returned home, my first care was to procure the whole works of this author, and afterwards of Paracelsus and Albertus Magnus. * I read and studied the wild fancies of these writers with delight; they appeared to me treasures known to few beside myself; and although I often wished to communicate these secret stores of knowledge to my father, yet his indefinite censure of my favourite Agrippa always withheld me. I disclosed my discoveries to Elizabeth, therefore, under a promise of strict secrecy; but she did not interest herself in the subject, and I was left by her to pursue my studies alone.

It may appear very strange, that a disciple of Albertus Magnus should arise in the eighteenth century; but our family was not scientific, and I had not attended any of the lectures given at the schools of Geneva. My dreams were therefore undisturbed by reality; and I entered with the greatest diligence into the search of the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life. But the latter obtained my most undivided attention: wealth was an inferior object; but what glory would attend the discovery, if I could banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!

Nor were these my only visions. The raising of ghosts or devils* was a promise liberally accorded by my favourite authors, the fulfilment of which I most eagerly sought; and rather to my own inexperience and mistake, than to a want of skill or fidelity in my instructors.

The natural phenomena that take place every day before our eyes did not escape my examinations. Distillation, and the wonderful effects of steam, processes of which my favourite authors were utterly ignorant, excited my astonishment, and the my utmost wonder was engaged by some experiments; but the airpump, which I saw employed by a gentleman whom I were in the habit of visiting.

The ignorance of the early philosophers on these and several other points served to decrease their credit with me; but I could not entirely throw them aside, before some other system should occupy their place in my mind.

When I was about fifteen years old, we had retired to our house near Belrive, when we witnessed a most violent and terrible thunder-storm. It advanced from behind the mountains of Jura; and the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness from various quarters of the heavens. I remained, while the storm lasted, watching its progress with curiosity and delight. As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak, which stood about twenty yards from our house; and so soon as the dazzling light vanished, the oak had disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump. When we visited it the next morning, we found the tree shattered in a singular manner. It was not splintered by the shock, but entirely reduced to thin ribbands of wood. I never beheld any thing so utterly destroyed.

The catastrophe of this tree excited my extreme astonishment; and I eagerly inquired of my father the nature and origin of thunder and lightning. He replied, 'Electricity.' He constructed at the same time the various effects of that power, and few experiments; he made also a kite, with a wire and string, which drew down that fluid from the clouds.*

This last stroke completed the overthrow of Cornelius Agrippa, Albertus Magnus, and Paracelsus, who had so long reigned the lords of my imagination. But by some fatality I did not feel inclined to commence the study of any modern system; and this disinclination was influenced by the following circumstance.

My father expressed a wish that I should attend a course of lectures upon natural philosophy, to which I cheerfully consented. Some accident prevented my attending these lectures until the course was nearly finished. The lecture, being therefore one of the last, was entirely incomprehensible to me. The professor discoursed with the greatest fluency of potassium and boron, of sulphates and oxyds, terms to which I could affix no idea; and I became disgusted with the science of natural philosophy, although I still read Pliny and Buffon* with delight, authors, in my estimation, of nearly equal interest and utility.

My occupations at this age were principally the mathematics, and most of the branches of study appertaining to that science. I was busily employed in learning languages; Latin was already familiar to me, and I began to read some of the easiest Greek authors without the help of a lexicon. I also perfectly understood English and German. This is the list of my accomplishments at the age of seventeen; and you may conceive that my hours were fully employed in acquiring and maintaining a knowledge of this various literature.

Another task also devolved upon me, when I became the instructor of my brothers. Ernest was six years younger than myself, and was my principal pupil. He had been afflicted with ill health from his infancy, through which Elizabeth, and I had been his constant nurses: his disposition was gentle, but he was incapable of any severe application. William, the youngest of our family, was yet an infant, and the most beautiful little fellow in the world; his lively blue eyes, dimpled cheeks, and endearing manners, inspired the tenderest affection.

Such was our domestic circle, from which care and pain seemed for ever banished. My father directed our studies, and my mother partook of our enjoyments. Neither of us pos-

FRANKENSTEIN
or
The Modern Prometheus

Mary Shelley

Introduction and Notes by
DR SIV JANSSON
University of Greenwich



WORDSWORTH CLASSICS

FRANKENSTEIN

Swiss home — the sublime shapes of the mountains, the changes of the seasons; tempest and calm; the silence of winter, and the life and turbulence of our Alpine summers — she found ample scope for admiration and delight. While my companion contemplated serious and satisfied spirit the magnificent appearances of things which I delighted in investigating their causes. The world was to me a scene of which I desired to divine. Curiosity, earnest research to learn the hidden laws of nature, gladness akin to rapture, as they were unfolded to me, are among the earliest sensations I can remember.

On the birth of a second son, my junior by seven years, my parents gave up entirely their wandering life, and fixed themselves in their native country. We possessed a house in Geneva, and a *campagne* in Belrive, the eastern shore of the lake, at the distance of rather more than a league from the city. We resided principally in the latter, and on lives of my parents were passed in considerable seclusion. It was my temper to avoid a crowd, and to attach myself fervently to a few. I was indifferent, therefore, to my schoolfellows in general; but I united myself in the bonds of the closest friendship to one among them, Henry Clerval was the son of a merchant of Geneva. He was a boy of singular talent and fancy. He loved enterprise, hardship, and even danger, for its own sake. He was deeply read in books of chivalry and romance. He composed heroic songs, and began to write many a tale of enchantment and knightly adventure. He tried to make us act plays, and to enter into masquerades, in which the characters were drawn from the heroes of Roncesvalles,¹⁹ of the Round Table of King Arthur,²⁰ and the chivalrous train who shed their blood to redeem the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidels.

No human being could have passed a happier childhood than myself. My parents were possessed by the very spirit of kindness and indulgence. We felt that they were not the tyrants to rule our lot according to their caprice, but the agents and creators of all the many delights which we enjoyed. When I mingled with other families, I distinctly discerned how peculiarly fortunate my lot was, and gratitude assisted the development of filial love.

My temper was sometimes violent, and my passions vehement; but by some law in my temperament they were turned, not towards childish pursuits, but to an eager desire to learn, and not to learn all things indiscriminately. I confess that neither the structure of languages, nor the code of governments, nor the politics of various states, possessed attractions for me. It was the secrets of heaven and earth that I desired to learn; and whether it was the outward substance of things, or the inner spirit of nature and the mysterious soul of man that occupied me,

FRANKENSTEIN

directed to the metaphysical, or, in its highest sense, the physical secrets of the world. so to speak, with the moral sense, the busy stage of life, the virtues of heroes, and the relations of men, were his theme; and his hope and his dream was to become one adventurous benefactor of our species. The saintly soul of Elizabeth shone there to bless and animate us. She was the living gallant and mine; her smile, her soft voice, the sweet glance of her sympathetic eyes, were ever there to attract: I might have become sullen in my celestial eyes, to soften the ardour of my nature, but that she was there to spirit of love through the noble spirit of Clerval? — yet he might not have study, rough through the noble spirit of Clerval? — yet he might not have subdue me to a scumbance of her own gentleness. And Clerval — could subdue me to a scumbance of her own gentleness. And Clerval — could might perfectly humane, so thoughtful in his adventurous exploit, had been so perfectly humane amidst his passion for adventure, and made the might perfectly humane amidst his passion for adventure, and made the kindess and tenderness amidst the real loveliness of ambition.

I feel exquisite pleasure in dwelling on the recollections of childhood, before extensive usefulness had tainted my mind, and narrow reflections upon self. Besides, in drawing the picture of that passion, which those events which led, by insensible steps, to my after tale of misery; for when I would account to myself for the birth of that passion, it afterwards ruled my destiny, I find it arise, like a mountain river, ignoble and almost forgotten sources; but, swelling as it proceeded, it became the torrent which, in its course, has swept away all my hopes and joys.

Natural philosophy²¹ is the genius that has regulated my fate; I desire, therefore, in this narration, to state those facts which led to my predilection for that science. When I was thirteen years of age, we all went on a party of pleasure to the baths near Thonon: the inclemency of the weather obliged us to remain a day confined to the inn. In this house I chanced to find a volume of the works of Cornelius Agrippa,²² I opened it with apathy; the theory which he attempts to demonstrate, and the wonderful facts which he relates, soon changed this feeling into enthusiasm. A new light seemed to dawn upon my mind; and bounding with joy, I communicated my discovery to my father. 'Ah! father looked carelessly at the title page of my book, and said, 'Ah! Cornelius Agrippa! My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this; it is sad trash.'

If, instead of this remark, my father had taken the pains to explain to

me that the principles of Agrippa had been entirely exploded, and that a modern system of science had been introduced, which possessed much greater powers than the ancient, because the powers of the latter were chimerical, while those of the former were real and the latter under such circumstances, I should certainly have thrown practical returning with greater ardour to my former studies, warned as it was, by that led to my ruin. But the cursory glance my father had taken of my volume by no means assured me that he was acquainted with its contents; and I continued to read with the greatest avidity.

When I returned home, my first care was to procure the whole works of this author, and afterwards of Paracelsus,²³ and Albertus Magnus;²⁴ I read and studied the wild fancies of these writers with delight; they appeared to me treasures known to few beside myself, and I have described myself as always having been imbued with a fervent longing to penetrate the secrets of nature. In spite of the intense labour and wonderful discoveries of modern philosophers, I always myself I have avowed that he felt like a child picking up shells beside the sea and unexplored ocean of truth. Those of his successors in each branch of natural philosophy with whom I was acquainted appeared, even to my boy's apprehensions, as tyros engaged in the same pursuit.

The untaught peasant beheld the elements around him, and was acquainted with their practical uses. The most learned philosopher knew little more. He had partially unveiled the face of Nature, but his immortal lineaments were still a wonder and a mystery. He dissected, anatomised, and gave names; but, not to speak of a final cause, causes in their secondary and tertiary grades were utterly unknown to him. I had gazed upon the fortifications and impediments that seemed to keep human beings from entering the citadel of nature, and ignorantly I had repined.

But here were books, and here were men who had penetrated deeper and knew more. I took their word for all that they averred, and I became their disciple. It may appear strange that such should arise in the eighteenth century; but while I followed the routine of education in the schools of Geneva, I was, to a great degree, self-taught with regard to my favourite studies. My father was not scientific, and I was left to struggle with a child's blindness, added to a student's thirst for knowledge. Under the guidance of my new preceptors, I entered with the greatest diligence into the search of the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life; but the latter soon obtained my undivided attention.

FRANKENSTEIN would attend the interior object; but what glory would attend the FRANKENSTEIN but what glory would attend the

wealth was an inferior object; but what glory would attend the discovery, if I could banish disease from the human frame, and render man invulnerable to any but a violent death!

Nor were these my only visions. The raising of ghosts or devils was a promise I most eagerly sought; and if my incantations were always unsuccessful, I attributed the failure rather to my own inexperience and which I most eagerly sought; and if my incantations were always unsuccessful, I attributed the failure rather to my own inexperience and mistake than to a want of skill or fidelity in my instructors. And thus for a time I was occupied by exploded systems, mingling, like an unskilful apprentice, with the most contradictory theories, and floundering desperately in a sea of contradictions, till an accident again changed the current of my thousand contradictory theories, guided by an ardent imagination of multiform knowledge, till an accident again changed the current of my slough of multiform knowledge, till an accident again changed the current of my ideas.

When I was about fifteen years old we had retired to our house near Belrive, when we witnessed a most violent and terrible thunder storm. It advanced from behind the mountains of Jura; and the thunder burst at once with frightful loudness from various quarters of the heavens. I remained, while the storm lasted, watching its progress with curiosity and delight. As I stood at the door, on a sudden I beheld a stream of fire issue from an old and beautiful oak which stood about twenty yards from our house; and so soon as the dazzling light vanished the oak had disappeared, and nothing remained but a blasted stump. When we visited it the next morning, we found the tree shattered in a singular manner. It was not splintered by the shock, but entirely reduced to thin ribands of wood. I never beheld anything so utterly destroyed.

Before this I was not unacquainted with the more obvious laws of electricity. On this occasion a man of great research in natural philosophy was with us, and, excited by this catastrophe, he entered on the explanation of a theory which he had formed on the subject of electricity and galvanism, which was at once new and astonishing to me. All that he said threw greatly into the shade Cornelius Agrippa, Albertus Magnus, and Paracelsus, the lords of my imagination; but by some fatality the overthrow of these men disinclined me to pursue my accustomed studies. It seemed to me as if nothing would or could ever be known. All that had so long engaged my attention suddenly grew despicable. By one of those caprices of the mind, which we are perhaps most subject to in early youth, I at once gave up my former occupations; set down natural history and all its progeny as a deformed and abortive creation; and entertained the greatest disdain for a would-be science, which could never even step within the threshold of real knowledge. In this mood of mind I betook myself to the mathematics, and the branches of study appertaining to that science, as being built