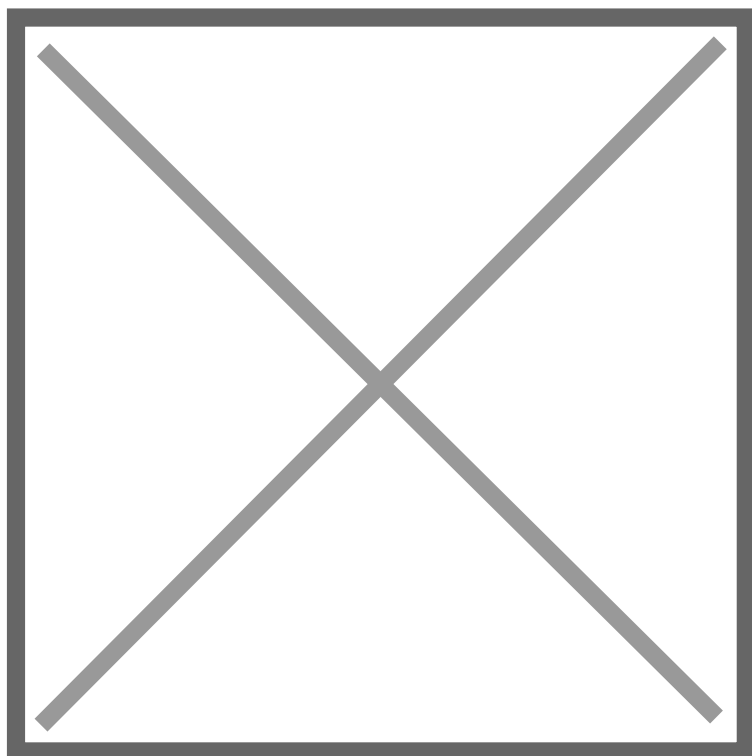


46 Francis Anthony

Aurum Potabile, drinkable gold, was a Paracelsian idea based on the perfection of gold being used as a perfect medicine. In reality, it is a deadly poison; the gold, as Au^{+3} ions, takes the place of iron, Fe^{+3} , but will not change its charge as iron does, as the $\text{Fe}^{+2}/\text{Fe}^{+3}$ couple does with ease to move electrons in biochemical reactions.

It's still being sold.



Francis Anthony, amateur physician, published the method for making *Aurum Potabile* in his pamphlet *Aurum-Potabile: or the Receipt of Dr. Fr. Antonie. Shewing, His Way and Method, how he made and prepared that most Excellent Medicine for the Body of Man, in Collectanea Chymica: a collection of Ten Several Treatises in Chymistry*, London, 1684.

“ Take Block-tinn, and burn it in an Iron Pan (making the Pan red-hot before you put it in) and keeping a continual Fire under it, and stirring it always till it be like unto Ashes, some will look red, it will be burning a day, or half a day at the least, it must be stirred with an Iron Cole-rake, a little one, the handle two Foot long.

G. H. M. made an Iron Pan a Foot and half long, and a Foot broad, the Brims two Inches deep, and made an Oven in a Chimney with Bars of Iron in the bottom, whereon he placed the Pan, and a place under to make Fire, and it will after this manner sooner be burned (*viz.* half a day) the Smoak will not hurt it.

This Ashes keep in a Glass close covered. Take of these Ashes 4 ounces, and of the strongest red Wine Vineger 3 Pints; and put them in a Glass like an Urinal. The Ashes being put in first lute the Vessel, and let him stand in an hot Balneum 10 days, which ended, take it forth, and set it to cool, and let it stand 2 or 3 whole days that the Feces may sink unto the bottom, the glass must be shaken 6 or 7 times every day.

That which is clear let it run forth unfiltred by 2 or 3 Woolen-threds into a Glass Bason, and distil it in a Glazen Still, till the Liquor be stilled all forth; this distilled Water put upon 4 ounces of fresh Ashes, upon the Ashes from which the first Liquor was filtred, put also a Quart of strong red Wine Vinegar, lute the Glass as before, and put him into the Balneum, and there let him stand to digest 10 days, filter this, and distil it as aforesaid, thirdly pour on that Ashes one pint of the like Vineger, and put it in Balneum 10 days, filter it, and distil it as aforesaid, after the third Infusion throw away the Ashes.

Distil all the Infusions apart, till the Liquor be clean distilled forth.

Take this distilled Water as often as it is distilled, and pour it upon new Ashes, keeping the weight and order, their Infusions, Filtrings, and Destillations, reiterate 7 times.

And you shall have of this Water the Menstruum sought for.

You must take heed that the Vineger be of red Wine, and very strong, otherwise your Menstruum will not perform your Expectation.

The Bishop gave Dr. Anthony 30 s. for a quart of Menstruum.

Take an ounce of pure refined Gold, (which costs 3 l. 13 s. 4 d.) cast into a Wedge and File it into small Dust, with a fine File, put this ounce of filed Gold into a Calcined Pot, and put to it so much white Salt as will near fill the Pot, and set it among Charcoals where it may stand continually hot 4 Hours, (if it stand too hot the Salt will melt) which 4 Hours ended take it forth, and let it stand to cool, then put it on a Painters Stone, and grind it very small with a Muller; then put it into the Pot and Calcine it, and grind it again, till you have done it 4 or 5 times; if it look red and blew when you take it forth it is perfect good.

After this calcining, and grinding, put it into a Glass Bason, and put to it the Bason full of scalding hot Water, and stir it a good while, till the thick part is fully settled to the bottom, then pour away that Water, and put the like, stir it, and let it settle as before, and so do again, till the Water when it is settled have no taste of Salt, this will be doing two or three days.

Of this ounce of Gold, there will be hardly above 16 or 17 Grains brought into fine white Calx, but to separate it from the Gold, leave a little of the last fresh

Water in the Bason, and stir it well together, the Calx will swim to the top, which softly pour from the Gold into another Bason, if all the white Calx go not forth, put a little more Water and stir it again, and pour it into the Bason to the other Calx, then let it settle, and pour away almost all the Water and Evaporate away all the rest over a heat till it be throughly dry, and so put it up into a Glass.

Then put the Gold which is not yet Calx to Salt as aforesaid, and Calcine it, and grind it four times again, and then wash it, and then take the Calx from it as before, and the Gold remains, calcine and wash, as before till it be all Calx.

Take an ounce of this Calx, and put it into an Urinal like Glass, containing about a pint, and put to it half a pint of the *Menstruum*. Set this Glass in a hot Balneum, six days (being close luted) and shake it often every day; when the six days are ended, let it stand two or three days, then pour away that which is clear, very gently, for fear of troubling the Feces; to these Feces put fresh *menstruum* but not fully so much as at the first, and so the third time, but not fully so much as at the second, then take the dry Feces which is the Calx, and keep it lest some Tincture remain in it.

These coloured Liquors put into a Glass Still, and distil them in a Balneum at the first, with a very gentle Fire, till all that which is clear be run forth, and that which remains be as thick as Hony, then take it forth, and set it to cool, then put the Glass into an Earthen Pot, and put Ashes about the Glass into the Pot, and fix the Pot into a little Furnace fast, and make a Fire under, so that the Glass may stand very warm till the Feces be black and very dry, (you may look with a Candle through the Glass Still, and see when it is risen with bunches and dry.) Then take away your Fire, and let the Glass be very cold, then take out the black Earth, this black Earth being taken forth, put it into a Glass Bason, and grind it with the bottom of another round Glass to Powder, then put it into an Urinal-like Glass containing about a pint, and to that put a little above half a pint of the Spirit of Wine, set this Glass in a cold place till it be red, which will be about ten days, shake it often every day, till within three days you pour it forth. Then pour away the clear Liquor gently, and that clear put into a Glass-Still (or other Glass till you have more), then put more Spirit of Wine to that Feces, and order it as before, and if that be much coloured put Spiritus Vini. to it the third time, as at the first, put all these coloured Liquors together, and distil them till the Feces (called the Tincture) be thick as a Syrrup.

Take an ounce of this Tincture, and put it into a pint of *Canary Sack*, and so when it is clear, you may drink of it, which will be about a day and a half.

The Preparation of the Vineger to make the Menstruum.

Glasses necessary get 3 or 4 Glasen Stills which will hold a gallon or two apiece, the Balneum 2 foot and a halfe square to hold many Glasses. Get about 6

gallons of the strongest red Wine Vinegar (Vineger of Claret or White-Wine are too weak) made of red Wine, Sack or Muscadine, and set as many Stills going at a time as your Balneum will hold, take a pint of that which runneth first, and put it away, as weak and not for this use, then Still out all the rest till the Still be dry, wash the Still with a little of the (flegm) first running, and then wipe him dry, then put in that which was distilled, and do as before, putting away the first pint, and so do five times, so of a gallon you shall have 3 Pints of the Spirit of Vineger, and of your 6 gallons, only two gallons and two Pints, and if your Spirit be yet too weak distill it oftner.

This keep in a Glass close stopp'd to make your *Menstruum* with; you may stop it with Cork, and Leather over it.

You must provide three strong green Glasses to make *Menstruum*, with little Mats round the bottoms, containing four Pints apeice.

To Lute them, fit a Wooden stoppel of dry Wood first boyled, and then dried in an Oven, to the Mouth, then melt hard Wax to fill the Chinks, then paste a brown Paper next over that, then prepare luting of Clay, Horse-dung and Ashes, and stop over all that.

Glass Stills 2 or 3 to distil the first Infusions on the Earth, cover 3 or 4 Pints a piece of green Glass.

The Rule of all Stillings, you must paste brown Paper to the closing of the head of the Still, and also paste the Receiver and nose of the Still together so that no strength go forth.

Calcining Pots provide about a dozen, for many when they are put into a strong Fire will break, then must you let your Fire slack.