

## **“Elixir of Immortality”**

**In the ninth century, Chinese alchemists attempted to concoct and “elixir of immortality,” combining saltpeter, sulfur, realgar\* (a rare mineral from which arsenic is derived) and dried honey. The result – gunpowder – arguably produced quite the opposite effect.**

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**\* – realgar | rē'algər; -gär |**

noun

a soft, reddish mineral consisting of arsenic sulfide, formerly used as a pigment and in fireworks.