

IX. *A Letter from Mr. Richard Hopton to Mr. John Batchelor; Giving an Account of the Eruption of a Burning Spring at Broseley in Shropshire. Communicated by Dr. William Gibbons, Fellow of the College of Physicians.*

September 18. 1711

S I R,

I Have according to promise here sent an Account of the famous boyling Well at *Broseley* near *Wenlock* in the County of *Salop*, discovered about *June*, 1711.

It was first found out by a terrible uncommon Noise in the Night (about two Nights after a remarkable Day of Thunder :) The Noise was so very great, that it awaked several People in their Beds, that liv'd hard by; who being willing to be satisfy'd what it was, rose up from their Beds; and coming to a boggy Place under a little Hill about 200 Yards off the River *Severn*, perceiv'd a mighty rumbling and shaking in the Earth, and a little-Boyling-up of Water through the Grass. They took a Spade, and digging up some part of the Earth, immediately the Water flew up a great Height, and a Candle that was in their Hand set it on Fire.

To prevent the Spring being destroyed, there's an Iron Cistern plac'd about it, with a Cover upon it to be lock'd, and a Hole in the middle thereof, that any who come may see the Water through. If you put a lighted Candle or any thing of Fire to this Hole, the Water immediately takes Fire and burns like Spirit of Wine, or Brandy, and continues so as long as you keep the Air  
from

from it; but by taking up the Cover of the Cistern, it quickly goes out. The heat of this Fire much exceeds the heat of any Fire I ever saw, and seems to have more than ordinary fierceness with it.

Some People out of Curiosity, after they have set the Water on Fire, have put a Kettle of Water over the Cistern, and in it Green Peas, or a Joint of Meat, and boyled it much sooner than over any artificial Fire that can be made. If you put Green Boughs, or any thing else that will burn upon it, it presently consumes them to Ashes. The Water of itself is as cold as any Water I ever felt; And what is remarkable, as soon as ever the Fire is out, if you put your Hands into it, it feels as cold as if there had been no such thing as Fire near it. It still continues boyling up with a considerable Noise; and is visited by almost all that hear of it; and is look'd upon to be as great a rarity as the World affords.

R. HOPTON.

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