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**A New Light Of Alchymy**

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Paracelsus**

**London, 1674**

Of the element of water

[urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-96299](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bsz:31-96299)

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OF THE  
ELEMENT  
OF  
WATER.

**W**ater is the heaviest Element, full of unctuous Flegm, and it is an Element more worthy in its quality than the Earth, without volatile, but within fixed, it is cold and moist, and tempered with the Air: it is the Sperm of the world, in which the Seed of all things is kept: it is the keeper of the Seed of every thing. Yet we must know that the Seed is one thing, and the Sperm another: the Earth is the receptacle of the Sperm, but Water is the receptacle of the Seed. Whatsoever the Air doth distil into the Water, by means of the Fire, the same doth the Water convey to the Earth. Sometimes the Sperm lacks sufficiency of Seed, for want of heat which should digest it; for there is always plenty of Sperm, expecting Seed, which by the imagination of Fire through the motion of the Air it carries into its Matrix: and sometimes there being lack of Seed the Sperm enters, but it goeth

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forth again without fruit : but of this more at large hereafter in the third Treatise of Principles, viz. in that of Salt. It happens sometimes in Nature, that the Sperm enters into the Matrix with a sufficiency of Seed ; but the Matrix being indisposed, by reason of being filled with offensive, sulphureous and flegmatick vapours, doth not conceive, neither doth that come to pass that should. Also nothing is properly in this Element, but only as it is wont to be in the Sperm. It is delighted chiefly in its own motion, which is made by the Air, and it is apt to mix with things by reason of its superficial, volatile body. It is, as we said before, the receptacle of all manner of Seed : in it the Earth is easily purified and resolved, and the Air is congealed in it, and is joined with it radically. It is the Menstruum of the world, which penetrating the Air, by means of heat, draws along with it self a warm vapour, which causeth a natural Generation of those things, which the Earth as a Matrix is impregnated withal, and when the Matrix receives a due proportion of Seed, of what kind soever, it proceeds, and Nature works without intermission to the end ; but the remaining moisture or Sperm falls to the side, and by vertue of the heat in the Earth is putrified (that which is cast to the side) and of that afterwards are generated other things, as small Vermin, and Worms. The Artificer of a quick Wit may indeed see in this Element, as it were out of Sperm, divers wonders of Nature ; but it will be needful to take that Sperm, in which the Astral Seed in a certain proportion is already imagined, or conceived ; because Nature makes and produceth pure things by the first putrefaction, but by the second far more pure, worthy,

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worthy, and noble; as thou hast an example in Wood, which is Vegetable, where in the first composition Nature maketh Wood, but when that is after maturity corrupted, it is putrified, and of it worms are bred, and such kind of vermin as they are, which have both life and sight; for it is manifest that a sensible thing is always more worthy than a vegetable; for to the Organs of sensible things much more subtil and purer matter is required: But to return to our purpose.

This Element is the Menstruum of the world, and is divided into three sorts, *viz.* pure, purer, and most pure. Of the most pure substance of it the Heavens are created, the purer is resolved into Air, but the pure, plain, and gross remains in its sphere, and by Divine appointment, and operation of Nature doth preserve and keep every thing that is subtil. It makes one Globe together with the Earth: it hath also its Center in the heart of the Sea: it hath one Axel-tree and Pole with the Earth, by which all Courses and Fountains of Water issue forth, which afterward increase and grow up into great Rivers. By these issuing forth of Waters the Earth is preserved from burnings, and with this moistning the universal Seed is carried forth through the Pores of the whole Earth, which thing is caused through heat and motion. Now it is manifest that all Courses of Waters return into the heart of the Sea; but whither afterward they run is not known to every body. There be some that think that all Rivers, Water and Springs, which have their Course into the Sea, do proceed from the Stars, who, when they know no other reason why the Sea should not increase, and be fuller, by



reason of them. say that these Waters are consumed in the heart of the Sea. But this Nature will not admit of, as we have shewed when we spake of the Rain. The Stars indeed cause but do not generate Water; seeing nothing is generated but in its own like of the same species: Now the Stars consist of Fire and Air, how then should they generate Waters? And if it were so, that some Stars should generate Waters, then necessarily also must others generate Earth, and also others other Elements; because this fabrick of the world is so upheld by the four Elements, that one may not exceed another in the least particle, but they strive one with the other in an equal ballance; for otherwise if one should exceed the other, destruction would ensue. Yet let every one persevere in what opinion he please, it is thus shewed to us by the light of Nature, that this Fabrick of the World is preserved by these four Elements, their equality being proportioned by the great God, and one doth not exceed the other in its operation. But the Waters upon the basis of the Earth are contained as it were in some vessel from the motion of the Air, and towards the Artick Pole are by it constringed, because there is no *vacuum*, or vacuity in the world: for this cause is there in the Center of the Earth the Fire of Hell, which the Archeus of Nature doth govern.

For in the beginning of the Creation of the World the great and good God out of the confused Chaos, in the first place exalted the quintessence of the Elements, & that is made the utmost bound of all things: then he lifted up the most pure substance of Fire above all things, to place his most

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Sacred Majesty in, and set and established it in its bound. In the Center of the Chaos (by the good pleasure of Gods infinite Wisdom) that Fire was kindl'd, which afterward did distil those most pure Waters. But because now that most pure Fire hath obtained the place of the Firmament, together with the Throne of the most high God, the Waters are condensed under that Fire: and that they might be more strongly fortified and sealed, the Fire that is grosser than the former was then raised (this by means of the Central Fire) and remained in the Sphere of Fire under the Waters: and so the Waters are congealed, and shut up betwixt two Fires in the Heavens. But that Central Fire never ceaseth, but distilling more Waters, and those less pure did resolve them into Air, which also abides under the Sphere of Fire in its proper Sphere, and is enclosed by the Element of Fire, as with a sure and strong Foundation; and as the Waters of the Heavens cannot go beyond that supercelestial Fire, so the Element of Fire cannot go beyond the Waters of the Heavens, neither can the Air go beyond or be exalted above the Element of Fire. As for the Water and the Earth, they remained in one Globe, because they have no place in the Air, except that part of the Water which the Fire doth resolve into Air, for the daily fortifying of this Fabrick of the World. For if there had been a vacuity in the Air, then all the Waters had distilled, and been resolved into Air: but now the Sphere of the Air is full, and is always filled through the distilling Waters, by the continual Central Heat, so that the rest of the Waters are by the compression of the Air rolled round the Earth, and with the Earth

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make up the Center of the World; and this Operation is performed daily, and so also this world is fortified daily, and shall for ever be naturally preserved from Corruption, unless it be the good pleasure of the most high Creator (whose Will is absolute) that it shall be otherwise. Because that Central Fire never cease:h to be kindled by the universal motion and influence of the heavenly Virtues, and so to warm the Waters; neither shall the Waters cease to be resolved into Air; neither shall the Air cease to compress and keep down the residue of the Waters with the Earth, and so to contain them in the Center, that they may not be moved out of their Center: thus even in a natural manner this world is made and continued through the mighty Wisdom of God; and so according to the example of this it is necessary that all things in the world be naturally made. We are willing to discover to thee further this Creation of this Fabrick of the World, that thou maist know that the four Elements have a natural sympathy with the superior, because they were made out of one and the same Chaos: but they are governed by the superior, as the more worthy; and from thence came this obedience into this sublunary place. But know that all those things were naturally found out by the Philosopher, as shall be shewed in its own place. Now to our purpose concerning the Courses of Waters, and the Ebbing and Flowing of the Sea, how by the Polary Axel-tree they are carried from one Pole to another. There are two Poles, the one is Artick, and in that part that is superior and Northern, but the other Antartick under the Earth, and in the Southern part. The

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Artick Pole hath a magnetick virtue of attracting, but the Antartick Pole hath a magnetick virtue of expelling, or driving from: and this Nature holds forth to us in the example of the Loadstone. The Artick Pole therefore draws Waters by the Axel-tree, which after they are entred in, break forth again by the Axel-tree of the Antartick Pole: and because the Air doth not suffer an inequality, they are constrained to return to the Artick Pole, their Center, and so continually to observe this Course. In which Course from the Artick Pole to the Antartick Pole by the middle, or Axel-tree of the world, they are dispersed through the pores of the Earth, and so according to more or less do Springs arise, and afterward meeting together increase and become to be Rivers, and are again returned thither, from whence they came out; and this is uncessantly done through the universal motion. Some (as I said before) being ignorant of the universal motion, and the operations of the Poles say that these Waters are consumed in the heart of the Sea, and generated by the Stars, which produce and generate no material thing, impressing only virtues and spiritual influences, which cannot give any weight to things. Waters therefore are not generated; but know that they come forth from the Center of the Sea, through the pores of the Earth into the whole world. From these natural Conclusions or Principles Philosophers have found out divers instruments, and conveyances of Waters, as also fountains, since it is known that Waters cannot naturally ascend higher than that place is, from whence they come; and unless it were so in Nature,

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ture, Art could never do it, because Art imitates Nature; and that which is not in Nature cannot succeed by Art; for Water, as I said before, doth not ascend higher than the place from whence it was taken: thou hast for an example that instrument with which Wine is drained out of a Barrel.

To conclude therefore, know that Springs or breakings forth of Water are not generated of Stars, but that they come from the Center of the Sea, whither they return, and that thus they observe a continual motion. For if this were not so, nothing at all either in the Earth or upon the Earth could be generated, yea the Ruin of the World would of necessity follow. But lest it may be objected, that in the Sea all Waters are salt, and that the Waters of Springs are sweet: Know that this is the reason, because the Water distills through the pores of the Earth, and passing many miles through narrow places, and through Sands, the saltness being lost, is made sweet: After the example of which Cisterns are found out. There are also in some places greater and larger pores and passages through which salt Water breaks through, where afterwards are made Salt Pits, and Fountains, as at *Halla* in *Germany*. Also in some places the Waters are constringed with heat, and the Salt is left in the Sands, but the Water sweats through other pores, as in *Polonia*, at *Wielicia* and *Bochia*: So also when Waters pass through places that are hot, sulphureous, and continually burning, they are made hot, from whence Bathes arise: for there are in the bowels of the Earth places in which Nature distills and separates

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rates a sulphureous Mine, where, by the Central Fire it is kindled. The VVaters running through these burning places, according to the nearness or remoteness are more or less hot, and so breaks forth into the superficies of the Earth, and retains the tast of Sulphur, as all Broth doth of the Flesh that is boiled in it: After the same manner it is, when VVater passing through places where are Minerals, as Copper, Allum, doth acquire the favour of them. Such therefore is the Distiller, the Maker of all things, in whose hands is this Distillatory, according to the example of which all Distillations have been invented by Philosophers; which thing the most High God himself out of pity, without doubt, hath inspired into the Sons of Men: and he can, when it is his holy VVill, either extinguish the Central Fire, or break the Vessel, and then there will be an end of all. But since his Goodness doth intend the bettering of all things, he will at length exalt his most sacred Majesty, and raise up higher the purest Fire of all, which is higher than the VVaters of the Heavens which are above the Firmament, and will give it a stronger degree of Heat then the Central Fire, that all the VVaters may be exhaled up into the Air, and the Earth be calcined, and so the Fire, all the impurity being consumed, will make the VVaters of the purified Earth, being circulated in the Air, to be more subtil, and will (if we may thus speak in a way of Philosophy) make a VVorld much more excellent.

Therefore let all the Searchers of this Art know that the Earth and VVater make one Globe, and being together make all things, because they are tangible



tangible Elements, in which the other two being hid do work. The Fire preserves the Earth, that it be not drowned, or dissolved: the Air preserves the Fire that it be not extinguished: the VVater preserves the Earth that it be not burnt. It seemed good to us to describe these things, as conducing to our purpose, that the studious may know in what things the Foundations of the Elements consist, and how Philosophers have observed their contrary actings; joining Fire with Earth, and Air with VVater: although when they would do any excellent thing, they have boiled Fire in VVater, considering that one Blood is purer than another, as a Tear is purer than Urine. Let that therefore suffice which we have spoken, *viz.* that the Element of VVater is the Sperm and Menstruum of the world, as also the Receptacle of the Seed.

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