A COMPLETE TREATISE OF ELECTRICITY IN THEORY AND PRACTICE; WITH ORIGINAL EXPERIMENTS.

Avery Vokins

BY

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TO

WILLIAM WATSON,
M. D. F. R. S. M. Br. Cur.

THIS

TREATISE

OF

ELECTRICITY

IS,

WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT,

INSCRIBED

BY HIS

MOST OBEDIENT,

AND MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

TIBERIUS CAVALLO.

THE

PREFACE.

THE design of the following Treatiſe is, to preſent to the public a comprehenſive view of the preſent ſtate of Electricity, reduced into as ſmall a compaſs as the nature of the ſcience would admit. It is divided into four parts, in each of which are contained ſuch particulars, as had leſs connection with the reſt; and the diſtinct view of which, it was thought, might be a means of preventing a confuſion of ideas in the minds of thoſe readers, who before have not been much converſant with the ſubject.

The firſt part treats of the laws of Electricity only; *i. e.* of ſuch natural laws concerning Electricity, as by innumerable experiments, have been found uniformly true, and are independent on any hypotheſis. In this part, the Author has not deſcended to any particulars, which were not clearly aſcertained, or which were inconſiderable; but he has, at the ſame time, taken care not to omit any thing material, or which ſeemed to promiſe future diſcoveries.

The ſecond part is merely hypothetical; relating not to facts, but to opinions. The great improbability of moſt of theſe hypotheſes determined the Author to render this part of his work as ſhort as poſſible.

The third part contains the practical branch of Electricity. Here the Author has taken care to inſert a deſcription of all the new improvements in the apparatus; which ſerve to leſſen the expence of it, and at the ſame time, to facilitate the performance of the experiments. As to the experiments themſelves, he has chiefly inſiſted on a few principal ones, which ſeemed moſt neceſſary to illuſtrate, and confirm the laws of Electricity; omitting a great number of others, which he has met with, as they appeared to be only variations of the former. He has however given an account of ſome others, which, though not abſolutely neceſſary, ſeemed very deſerving of notice.

The fourth and laſt part contains a brief account of the principal experiments, which have been made by the Author himſelf, in purſuance of what occurred to him in the courſe of his ſtudies in this branch of philoſophy. In this part he has omitted to mention, not only thoſe attempts, which did not produce any conſiderable effect, but alſo the innumerable conjectures he formed about them and others, not yet brought to the teſt of actual obſervation.

The Author takes this opportunity of acknowledging the obligations he is under to ſeveral of his ingenious friends, for various experiments, and remarks, communicated by them; and particularly to Mr. WILLIAM HENLY, who has done as much as laid in his power to inform him of every particular, which he thought would enrich and embellish the work.

It was deemed unnecessary to point out those gentlemen, whose experiments and observations introduced in this work, were before well known to the world; for which reason the Author has confined himself to the mention of the names of those persons, whose experiments were new, or not commonly noticed by the writers on this subject.

To

To render the Treatiſe more intelligible, and uſeful, three copper-plates are added to it; and a copious index of the particulars which are moſt deſerving of attention.

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THE

CONTENTS.

PART I.

Fundamental Laws of Electricity.

CHAP. I.

CHAP. II.

CHAP. III.

CHAP. IV.

CHAP. V.

CHAP.

CHAP.

INTRODUC-

INTRODUCTION.

ARTS and Sciences, like Kingdoms and Nations, have each in their turn, ſome happy period of glory and ſplendor, in which they more than ever attract the human attention, and, by caſting a ſtronger light than at other times, become the favourite object and purſuit of the age; but theſe periods are ſoon over, and a few years of luſtre and fame, are often overbalanced by centuries of oblivion. From undergoing this fate, ſome Sciences are however excepted, which, owing to the vaſt and neceſſary extent of their uſe, and to the fruitfulneſs of their productions, are ever-flouriſhing; and although once unknown, yet when fame had proclaimed their birth, or publiſhed their advancement, they never afterwards declined; and though they grew old, yet never decayed. Of this kind is Electricity, the moſt pleaſing, and ſurpriſing, among all the branches of natural philoſophy that ever were culti-vated by man. This Science, after it began to ſhew the extent and generality of its power; after it was known to be one of the greateſt agents of nature, remained always in vogue, was profitably cultivated, irre-mittedly advanced, and is now brought to a ſtate, in which, inſtead of becoming ſterile, it ſeems further to engage the general atten-tion, and to promiſe to its followers more munificent rewards. Optics, indeed, ſhew many enchanting and uſeful properties, but concerning viſion only: Magnetiſm exhibits the force of attraction, repulſion, and pola-rity in that ſubſtance called a Magnet; Chy-miſtry treats of the various compoſitions and decompoſitions of bodies; but Electri-city, containing as it were, all, within its power, alone exhibits the effects of many Sciences, combines together different powers, and, by ſtriking the ſenſes in a particular and ſurpriſing manner, affords pleaſure, and is of uſe, to the ignorant as well as the Philo-ſopher, the rich, as well as the poor. In Electricity, we are pleaſed with beholding its penetrating light exhibited in numberleſs different forms; we admire its attraction and repulsion acting upon every kind of body; we are surprised by the shock, terrified by the explosion and force of its battery; but when we consider and examine it as the cause of thunder, lightning, aurora borealis, and other appearances of nature, whose direful effects we can in part imitate, explain, and even avert, we are then involved in a maze, that leaves nothing to contemplate but the inexpressible and permanent idea of admiration and wonder.

The earliest account we have of any known electrical effect is by the famous ancient naturalist, THEOPHRASTUS, who florished about 300 years before the present era. He tells us that amber (whose Greek name is ηλεκτρον, and from whence the name Electricity is derived,) as well as the lyncurium *, has the property of attracting light bodies. This, and only this, was almost all that was known of the subject, for about fifteen centuries after THEOPHRASTUS, in which long period

* It hath been in a manner proved, that the lyncurium of THEOPHRASTUS, is the very same substance that now goes under the name of TOURMALIN, of which we shall have occasion to speak in the course of this treatise.

we find no mention in hiſtory of any perſon having made any diſcoveries, nor even any experiments in this branch of philoſophy; the Science remaining quite in the dark till the time of WILLIAM GILBERT, an Engliſh Phyſician, who lived about the twelfth century; and who for his diſcoveries in this new, and uncultivated field, may be juſtly deemed the Father of the preſent Electricity. He obſerved, that the property of attracting light bodies, after rubbing, was not peculiar to amber, or the lyncurium; but that many other bodies poſſeſſed it as well as amber. He mentions a great number of thoſe, together with many particularities, which, conſidering the ſtate of the Science at that time, may be deemed truly great and intereſting.

After GILBERT, the Science advancing, although by ſmall degrees, paſſed, as it were, from infancy to puerility; many an excellent philoſopher undertaking to examine nature in this walk. Such was Sir FRANCIS BACON, Mr. BOYLE, OTTO GUERICKE, Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and moſt of all Mr. HAWKESBEE, a perſon to whom we are much

much indebted for many important difcoveries, and a real advancement of Electricity. Mr. Hawkesbee was the firft that obferved the great electric power of glafs, a fubftance, that, fince his time has been generally ufed by all Electricians in preference to any other electric. He firft remarked various appearances of the electric light, and the noife accompanied with it, together with a variety of phænomena relating to electric attraction, and repulfion.

After Mr. Hawkesbee, the Science of Electricity, however hitherto advanced, remained for about twenty years in a ftate of quiefcence, the attention of Philofophers being at that time engaged in other philofophical fubjects, which, on account of the new difcoveries of the incomparable Sir Isaac Newton, were then greatly in repute. Mr. Grey was the firft after this period of oblivion to bring the Science again to light. He by his great difcoveries reintroduced it to the acquaintance of Philofophers, and from him the true flourifhing era of Electricity may be faid to take its date.

The number of Electricians that hath been daily multiplying ſince Mr. GREY, the diſcoveries made, and the uſes derived from theſe till the preſent time, are matters really worthy of attention, and deſerve to be admired by every lover of the Sciences, and well-wiſher to the human race.

Whoever would make himſelf acquainted with the particular tranſactions concerning thoſe advances, ſhould read the elaborate Hiſtory of Electricity compiled by the learned Dr. PRIESTLEY, a work that will inform him of whatever had been done relative to the ſubject till its publication. I for my part muſt forbear making any long hiſtorical detail; this Treatiſe being intended to give an account of the preſent ſtate of Electricity, and not an hiſtory of the ſame. I ſhall in general only obſerve, that although the Science had, through the indefatigable attention of ſo many ingenious perſons, and by the diſcoveries that were daily produced, excited the curioſity of Philoſophers, and engaged their attention; yet, as the cauſes of every thing, whether ſmall or great, known or unknown, are ſeldom much attended

tended to, if their effects are not ſtriking and ſingular; ſo Electricity had, till the year 1746, been ſtudied by none but Philoſophers. Its attraction could in part be imitated by a loadſtone; its light by a phoſphorus; and, in ſhort, nothing contributed to make Electricity the ſubject of the public attention, and excite a general curioſity, until the capital diſcovery of the vaſt accumulation of its power, in what is called the Leyden Phial, was accidentally made, by Mr. MUSCHENBROECK, in the memorable year 1746. Then, and not till then, the ſtudy of Electricity became general, ſurpriſed every beholder, and invited to the houſes of Electricians, a greater number of ſpectators, than ever were before aſſembled together to obſerve any philoſophical experiments whatſoever.

Since the time of this diſcovery, the prodigious number of Electricians, experiments, and new facts that have been daily produced from every corner of Europe, and other parts of the world, is almoſt incredible. Diſcoveries crouded upon diſcoveries, improvements upon improvements, and the Science ever ſince that time went on with ſo rapid a courfe, and is now fpreading fo amazingly faft, that it feems as if the fubject would foon be exhaufted, and Electricians arrive at an end of their refearches: but, alas! the *ne plus ultra* is, in all probability, as yet at a great diftance, and the young Electrician has a vaft field before him, highly deferving his attention, and promifing further difcoveries, perhaps equally, or more important than thofe already made.

A COM-

A COMPLETE TREATISE OF ELECTRICITY.

PART I.

Fundamental Laws of Electricity.

CHAP. I.

Containing the Explanation of ſome Terms principally uſed in Electricity.

IF a perſon, holding with one of his hands a clean and dry glaſs tube, rubs it with his other hand, alſo clean and dry, ſtroking it alternately upwards and downwards; and after a few ſtrokes preſents to it ſmall light bits of paper, thread, metal, or any other ſubſtance, the rubbed tube will immediately attract them, and after a little time will repel them,—preſently, attract them again, and ſo alternately continue this attraction, and repulſion, for a conſiderable time. If this tube be rubbed in the dark, and after having been rubbed, a finger be preſented to it at the diſtance of about half an inch, a lucid ſpark will be ſeen between the

the finger and the tube, accompanied with a ſnapping noiſe; the finger at the ſame time receiving a puſh, as if it was from air iſſuing with violence from a ſmall pipe.

In this experiment, the attraction, repulſion, ſparkling, &c. are the effects of that unknown cauſe called *Electricity*; and hence they are called *electrical appearances*. The glaſs tube itſelf is called the *electric*, and all bodies capable by any means of producing ſuch effects, are called *electrics*; and as the rubbing awakes, as it were, in them the power of producing electrical appearances, they are therefore ſaid to be *excited* by the rubbing. The hand, or any other body rubbing an electric, is called the *rubber*; and if inſtead of the perſon rubbing the glaſs tube, a machine be conſtructed capable by any means to excite an electric, this, will be an *electrical machine*.

If at the end of the tube, oppoſite to that held by the hand, a wire of any length be tied, ſuſpending a metallic ball at its end, and the tube be excited as before, the metallic ball will, in this caſe, acquire all the properties of the excited tube, *i. e.* it will

will attract, ſparkle, &c. like the tube itſelf, the electric virtue paſſing through the wire to the ball: hence, the wire is ſaid to be a conductor of electricity, and all ſuch bodies capable of tranſmitting the electric virtue, like the above wire, are called *conductors*.

But, if inſtead of the wire, a ſilk ſtring be uſed in the above experiment, and the tube be excited as before, the ball will in this caſe ſhew no ſigns of Electricity, the ſilk ſtring not permitting the electric virtue to paſs from the tube to the ball: hence the ſilk ſtring in this caſe, and all ſubſtances through which the electric virtue cannot be tranſmitted, are called *non-conductors*.

A body reſting intirely upon non-conductors is ſaid to be *inſulated*; ſo in the laſt experiment the metallic ball was inſulated, for it was ſuſpended entirely by the ſilk ſtring, which is a non-conductor.

What bodies are conductors, and what electrics, together with their particular properties, as far as it is known, will be plainly laid down in the following Chapters.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Electrics and Conductors.

THE firſt and principal maxim in Electricity is, that all the known bodies in nature are divided into two claſſes, *i. e.* Electrics and Conductors; experiments ſhewing, that whatever ſubſtance is a Conductor of Electricity cannot be excited (hence Conductors are alſo called *non-electrics*), and whatever ſubſtance can be excited is not a Conductor: (hence Electrics and *Nou-conductors* become ſynonymus terms). This maxim, however, is not to be conſidered as ſtrictly true and general; for in reality we know no ſubſtance that may be called a perfect Electric, nor any that may be called a perfect Conductor; the electric virtue finding ſome reſiſtance in going through the beſt Conductors, and being in part tranſmitted through, or over the ſurface of moſt, and perhaps all the Electrics. The leſs perfect a Conductor any ſubſtance is, the nearer it comes to the nature of an Electric; and, on the other hand, the leſs perfect Electrics come neareſt to the nature of Conductors. The limits of theſe two

two claſſes come ſo far one within another, that there are many ſubſtances which may actually be excited, and at the ſame time are pretty good Conductors. If the reader be deſirous to know theſe ambiguous ſubſtances, he muſt ſeek for the worſt Electrics among the Electrics, and for the worſt Conductors among the Conductors, excepting ſuch on which the experiment cannot be made, as fluids, powders, &c.

The two following liſts contain, in general, all the Electrics and Conductors, diſpoſed in the order of their perfection, beginning in each liſt with the moſt perfect of their claſs. In this order, however, the reader muſt not expect a great exactneſs; that being impracticable, when ſubſtances are ſet under general articles, and at the ſame time is of little, if indeed of any uſe whatever.

ELECTRICS.

Glaſs, and all vitrifications, even thoſe of metals.

All precious ſtones, of which the moſt tranſparent are the beſt.

All

All resins *, and resinous compositions.

Amber.

Sulphur.

Baked wood.

All bituminous substances.

Wax.

Silk.

Cotton.

All dry animal substances, as feathers, wool, hairs, &c.

Paper.

White sugar, and sugar-candy.

Air.

Oils.

Calces of metals and semimetals.

The ashes of animal and vegetable substances.

The rust of metals.

All dry vegetable substances.

All hard stones, of which the best are the hardest.

* Under the name of resins, I would be understood to mean all such consistent oily vegetable productions that are inflammable, and not soluble in water; gum-lac, therefore, and all such substances improperly called gums, are also meant under this article. See MACQUER's Chemistry, vol. I. chap. xi.

Many

Many of the above ſubſtances, and perhaps all, upon which the experiment can be made, when very hot, loſe their electric property, and become abſolutely Conductors; ſo red hot glaſs, melted reſin, hot air, baked wood made very hot, &c. become Conductors of Electricity.

It has been obſerved, that glaſs, eſpecially the hardeſt and beſt vitrified, is often a very bad Electric, ſometimes being quite a Conductor. Glaſs veſſels made for electrical purpoſes are often rendered very good Electrics by uſe and time, though they might be very bad ones when new.

A glaſs veſſel, out of which the air has been exhauſted, on being rubbed, ſhews no ſigns of electricity upon its external ſurface, but all the electric power appears within the veſſel †; and a glaſs tube, or globe, with the air condenſed in it, or full of ſome con-

† Although a glaſs veſſel exhauſted of air ſhews no ſigns of electricity without; yet it has been obſerved, that the electric power of a glaſs cylinder is the ſtrongeſt, when the air within it is a little rarefied, i. e. ſomewhat leſs denſe than the external air. See L'Elletricifmo Artificiale of G. B. BECCARIA, § 411.

ducting

ducting ſubſtance, is incapable of being excited.

CONDUCTORS.

Gold.
Silver.
Copper.
Braſs.
Iron.
Tin,
Quickſilver.
Lead.
Semi-metals.

Ores, of which the beſt are thoſe that contain the metallic part in the greateſt quantity, and come neareſt to a metalline ſtate.

Charcoals, made either of animal, or vegetable ſubſtances.

The fluids of an animal body.

All fluids, excepting air and oils.

The effluvia of flaming bodies.

Ice.

Snow.

Moſt ſaline ſubſtances, of which the metallic ſalts are the beſt.

Stony ſubſtances, of which the hardeſt are the worſt.

Smoak

Smoak.

The vapours of hot water.

Electricity pervades alſo vacuum, or the abſence of air cauſed by an air-pump, almoſt as freely as the ſubſtance of a good Conductor.

Beſides theſe, all bodies in which more or leſs of ſome of the above-mentioned Conductors are contained, are alſo proportionably Conductors; thus, green vegetables, raw meat, &c. are Conductors on account of the fluids they contain.

From this principle it follows, that all Electrics before excitation ſhould be well cleaned, dried, and ſome made even very hot, in order to free them from every humidity, otherwiſe they are ſo far from the nature of Electrics, that they become actually Conductors, on account of the moiſture which they contain within their pores, or upon their ſurfaces.

In regard to the conducting power of charcoal, it muſt be obſerved, that all charcoal will not conduct equally well, there being ſome that will hardly conduct at all; and sometimes it is in such a ſtate, that it will aſſiſt the paſſage of a large quantity of electric fluid along the ſurface, when it will not conduct it any other way. This difference, however, is not occaſioned by the difference of the wood from which the coals are made, but by the degree of heat that is applied in the proceſs of making them; the beſt Conductors being ſuch as have been expoſed to the greateſt heat.*

Whether the piece of wood in the proceſs of coaling is ſuffered to flame, or not, is quite immaterial; and the continuance of the ſame degree of heat has no apparent effect with reſpect to the conducting power of the charcoal.

It will not be improper to obſerve in this place, the different changes from Conductor to Non-conductor, occaſioned in the ſame ſubſtance by different preparations. A piece of wood juſt cut from a tree is a good Conductor; let it be baked, and it becomes an Electric;

* See Dr. PRIESTLEY's ſecond volume of Obſervations on different Kinds of Air, Sec. xiv.

tric; burn it to a coal, and it is a good Conductor again; laſtly, let this coal be reduced to aſhes, and theſe will be impervious to electricity. Such changes are alſo obſervable in many other bodies; and very likely in all ſubſtances there is a gradation from the beſt Conductors to the beſt Non-conductors of Electricity.

CHAP. III.

Of the two Electricities.

IF, in the experiment, mentioned in the firſt chapter, the perſon that rubs the tube be inſulated, *i. e.* be ſet with his feet upon a cake of reſin, a ſtool, with glaſs feet, or any other good Electric, ſo that the communication between his body and the earth be cut off by means of Electrics; and if in this ſituation he rubs the tube with his hand as before; this perſon, as well as the tube, will, in this caſe, appear electrified. If any light bodies be preſented to any part of his body, they will be attracted and repelled. If another perſon preſents his finger to him, a lucid ſpark will follow, with a ſnapping noiſe; and, in ſhort, this inſulated perſon will ſhew every ſign of electricity that the tube exhibits. But their electricities are not the ſame; the electricity of the tube being juſt the reverſe of the electricity of the perſon, and their particular appearances are the following.

1. Whenever a light body inſulated, as, for inſtance, a ſmall piece of cork ſuſpended by a ſilk thread, has been attracted by the tube, and afterwards repelled, if no conducting ſubſtance touches it in this ſtate of repulſion, it will not be attracted by the tube again. The ſame happens with the inſulated perſon; for when this light body has been once attracted by any part of his body, and afterwards repelled, it will not be attracted again; but if in this ſtate of repulſion the tube be preſented to it, it will then be attracted, and that violently by the tube; and when repelled by the tube, it will be attracted by the inſulated perſon. Further, if two or more light inſulated bodies, like the above-mentioned piece of cork, be ſeverally attracted by the tube, and when afterwards repelled, be brought within a ſmall diſtance of one another, they will repel each other, and if well inſulated, continue in this electrified and repulſive ſtate for a conſidera-

ble

ble time. The ſame will happen, if they are preſented to the perſon inſtead of the tube; they will alſo, after being once repelled by this, repel one another. But, if one, or more of thoſe light inſulated bodies be attracted and repelled by the tube; and one or more others be attracted and repelled by the perſon, and afterwards both or all (*i. e.* ſuch as were preſented to the tube, and ſuch as were preſented to the inſulated perſon) be brought within a ſufficient diſtance of one another, they will then, inſtead of repelling, attract each other; and inſtead of continuing electrified, extinguiſh at once every ſign of electricity. Theſe two electricities, therefore, are (as it was ſaid before) the one juſt the contrary of the other, the one attracting what the other repels; and, as if one was an affirmative, and the other a negative power, when equal quantities of each are ſummed together, they balance each other, and loſe every property.

2. Another characteriſtic of each of the two electricities, conſiſts in the appearance of their light. If a pointed body, as a needle, a wire, or the like, be preſented to the ex-

cited tube in the dark, a lucid globule, like a ſtar, will be ſeen upon the point; but if this pointed body be preſented to the inſulated perſon, then in the place of the ſtar a lucid pencil appears, compoſed of rays, ſeemingly iſſuing from the point, and diverging towards the perſon.†

3. Laſtly, in ſome experiments (which will be hereafter particularly mentioned, and this property better explained) the electricity of the tube, when in the act of paſſing from a body overcharged with it to another, either not electrified, or poſſeſſed of the contrary electricity, ſhews an indiſputable current from the former to the latter; and the electricity of the inſulated perſon, when in the act of paſſing from a body overcharged with it to another, either not electrified, or poſſeſſed of the contrary electricity, ſhews clearly a current from the latter to the former.

Theſe two electricities are not only obſerved in the above-mentioned experiment, but

† This pencil of rays will appear better, if a pointed needle be preſented to the inſulated perſon, at the diſtance of about one inch from ſome part of his body, while he is actually rubbing the tube in the dark.

in

in ſeveral other caſes alſo; and they always accompany each other; for when different Electrics are rubbed, ſome will acquire one electricity, and others will acquire the contrary; the rubber, if inſulated, ſhewing at the ſame time, ſigns of the electricity contrary to that acquired by the excited electric: beſides this, almoſt all Electrics may be made to ſhew at pleaſure the one or the other electricity, according to the ſubſtance uſed for a rubber. Hence the following corollaries may be deduced: *viz.* 1. Whenever two different ſubſtances (being both inſulated, or only that which is a Conductor) are rubbed together, except they are both good Conductors, they will be both electrified, and one acquire the electricity contrary to the electricity of the other. 2. Almoſt all the Electrics may be made to acquire, at pleaſure, the one or the other electricity, by uſing proper rubbers.

The firſt of theſe two electricities, *i. e.* that poſſeſſed by the glaſs tube in the above experiment, as it was thought to be the conſtant production of rubbed glaſs, was called the *Vitreous Electricity*; and the other, as it was firſt obſerved to be produced by reſinous ſubſtances, was called the *Reſinous Electricity.* The Vitreous Electricity is alſo called *Poſitive,* or *Plus Electricity,* for a reaſon that will be conſidered in the courſe of this Treatiſe; and the Reſinous is called alſo *Negative,* or *Minus Electricity.* A body, therefore, poſſeſſed of the Vitreous, Poſitive, or Plus Electricity, is that which ſhews ſuch ſigns as the tube was ſaid to exhibit; and a body poſſeſſed of the Reſinous, Negative, or Minus Electricity, is that which ſhews ſuch ſigns as the inſulated perſon was ſaid to exhibit in the above-mentioned experiment.

In the following Table may be ſeen what Electricity will be excited in different bodies, when rubbed with different ſubſtances. Smooth glaſs, for inſtance, will be found by this Table to acquire a Poſitive Electricity, when rubbed with any ſubſtance hitherto tried, except the back of a cat; (by which I mean the ſkin of a cat while on the animal alive) rough glaſs will be found to acquire the Poſitive Electricity, when rubbed with dry oiled ſilk, ſulphur, &c. and the Ne-

gative

gative, when rubbed with woollen cloth, the hand, &c. and ſo of the reſt.

The back of a cat	Poſitive.	Every ſubſtance with which it has been hitherto tried.
Smooth glaſs	Poſitive	Every ſubſtance hitherto tried, except the back of a cat.
Rough glaſs	Poſitive	Dry oiled ſilk, ſulphur, metals.
	Negative	Woollen-cloth, quills, wood, paper, ſealing-wax, white-wax, the human hand.
Tourmalin	Poſitive	Amber, air.*
	Negative	Diamond, the human hand.
Hare's ſkin	Poſitive	Metals, ſilk, loadſtone, leather, hand, paper, baked wood.
	Negative	Other finer furs.
White ſilk	Poſitive	Black ſilk, metals, black cloth.
	Negative	Paper, hand, hairs, weaſel's ſkin.
Black ſtik	Poſitive	Sealing wax.
	Negative	Hare's, weaſel's, and ferret's ſkin, loadſtone, braſs, ſilver, iron, hand.
Sealing-wax	Poſitive	Metals.
	Negative	Hare's, weaſel's, and ferret's ſkin, hand, leather, woollen cloth, paper.
Baked wood	Poſitive	Silk.
	Negative	Flannel.

* *i. e.* By blowing with a pair of bellows upon it. By this means many Electrics may be excited, and ſome better if the air blown is hot, although, in both caſes, very little Electricity can be obtained.

The

The preceding Table might have been much extended, had I chosen to bring into it all the minutiæ attending this matter as far as it is known; but this I have thought unnecessary and impracticable, because experiments of this kind are of so nice a nature, that they require the most scrupulous attention in making them; and then their effects depend upon so small and variable circumstances, that often the very same Electric, rubbed with the same rubber, gives at one time signs of one Electricity, and at another time signs of the contrary. A very little alteration in the surface, a different degree of dryness, and even a different application of the same substances often occasions a difference in the Electricity. I shall only observe in general, that as far as may be deduced from the greatest number of experiments, it appears, that when the different substances are rubbed together, that whose Electric power is the strongest, in general acquires the Positive, and the other the Negative Electricity; and when two bodies, differing in the smoothness or roughness of their surfaces, are rubbed together, the smoothest acquires the Positive, and the roughest the Negative Electricity,

tricity. Thefe two qualities are often to be confidered both together; for except the two bodies are of the fame fubftance, as fmooth and rough glafs, white and black filk, &c. they generally differ in both, *i. e.* they have not the fame electric power, and at the fame time their furfaces differ in fmoothnefs. This rule, however, is not to be confidered as a conftant and general one; for, according to this principle, it fhould feem, that a piece of fealing wax when rubbed with the hand, or paper, would acquire a Pofitive Electricity; but this is contrary to experience.

In cafe that two electric fubftances, equal in every refpect, are rubbed together, it is to be obferved that the fubftance which fuffers the greateft friction acquires the Negative, and the other the Pofitive Electricity. Suppofe, for inftance, that a piece A of filk be drawn acrofs another piece of filk B, in every refpect equal to the former, fo that the furface of the whole piece A, *i. e.* of one fide of it, be fucceffively drawn over one part of the piece B, then A will acquire the Pofitive, and B the Negative Electricity. The reafon of this may probably be, becaufe the part of of the piece B, over which the piece A has been drawn, has acquired a greater degree of heat; for it has been obſerved, that heat rather diſpoſes bodies to be electrified Negatively.

CHAP. IV.

Of the different Methods of exciting Electrics.

RUBBING, as we obſerved before, is the general mean by which all electric ſubſtances that are at all excitable, may be excited. Whether they be rubbed with Electrics of a different ſort, or Conductors, they always ſhew ſigns of Electricity, and in general ſtronger when rubbed with Conductors, and weaker when rubbed with Electrics. But beſides friction, there are other means by which ſome Electrics may be cauſed to ſhew electric appearances, theſe are by melting, or pouring a melted Electric into another ſubſtance; and by heating or cooling. The particulars obſerved by uſing the firſt of theſe two methods are the following:

If

If ſulphur be melted in an earthen veſſel, and left to cool upon Conductors: if taken out of the veſſel, when cold, it will be found ſtrongly electrical; but not at all ſo, if it be left to cool upon Electrics.

If ſulphur be melted in glaſs veſſels, and afterwards left to cool, they will both acquire a ſtrong Electricity, the ſulphur Negative, and the glaſs Poſitive, whether they be left to cool upon Electrics or Conductors; however, they always acquire a ſtronger power in the former caſe than in the latter, and a ſtronger ſtill, if the glaſs veſſel is coated with metal. It is remarkable that the ſulphur acquires no electricity till it begins to cool; its power increaſes in proportion as it contracts, and is the ſtrongeſt when in the ſtate of greateſt contraction; but then the electricity of the glaſs veſſel is at the ſame time the weakeſt.

If melted ſulphur be poured into a veſſel of baked wood, it acquires a Negative, and the wood a Poſitive Electricity; but if it be poured into ſulphur, or rough glaſs, it acquires no ſenſible electricity.

Melted

Melted ſulphur poured into a metal cup, and there left to cool, ſhews no ſigns of Electricity whilſt in the cup; but if they are ſeparated, they will then appear ſtrongly electrified, the ſulphur Plus, and the cup Minus. If the ſulphur is again replaced in the cup, every ſign of Electricity will vaniſh; but if, whilſt they are ſeparate, the Electricity of either of them is taken off, they will both, on being replaced, appear poſſeſſed of that Electricity which has not been taken off.

Melted wax, poured into glaſs, or wood, acquires a Negative Electricity, and leaves the glaſs or wood Poſitive. But ſealing-wax poured into ſulphur, acquires a Poſitive Electricity, and leaves the ſulphur Negative.

Chocolate, freſh from the mill, as it cools in the tin pans in which it is received, becomes ſtrongly electrical: when turned out of the pans, it for ſome time retains this property, but ſoon loſes it by handling. Melting it again in an iron ladle, and pouring it into the tin pans as at firſt, will for once, or twice, renew the power; but, when the

maſs

mafs becomes very dry, and powdery in the ladle, the Electricity is revived no more by fimple melting; but if then a little olive oil be added, and mixed well with the chocolate in the ladle, on pouring it into the tin pan, as at firft, it will be found to have completely recovered its electric power.†

Now that we are fpeaking of melted Electrics, it will not be improper to obferve, that it fometimes happens, that fome electric fubftances, by being melted and left to cool, acquire an electrical power, which they retain for a confiderable time, often for months together, efpecially if they are preferved free from dampnefs and duft. Such effects have fometimes induced Electricians to think, that fome bodies are poffeffed of a permanent or perpetual Electricity, which is as inherent in their fubftance as the magnetic power of a loadftone: in truth, however, no fuch fubftance has yet been found; and although rofin, fulphur, amber, and fome other Electrics, fhew figns of Electricity for a confi-

† The above remark on chocolate, together with the method of reftoring its power by means of olive oil, is a recent difcovery of my friend Mr. W. Henly, F. R. S.

derable

derable time after they have been rendered electrical, yet their power is continually diminishing till it quite vanishes. It is remarkable, however, that sulphur, resinous, and bituminous substances, retain in general the electric power much longer than glass, or any other Electrics; the reason may be, that they do not attract moisture like glass and other substances.

The property of exhibiting electrical phœnomena, by means of heating and cooling, was first observed in a hard semi-pellucid fossil, known under the name of Tourmalin ‡. This stone, which is generally of a deep red, or purple colour, and seldom exceeds the size of a small walnut, is common in several parts of the East Indies, and especially in the Island of Ceylon. Its properties in regard to Electricity are the following:

1. The Tourmalin, while kept in the same degree of heat, shews no signs of Electricity, but it will become electrical by in-

‡ This stone is called *aschentrickker* by the Dutch, from its property of attracting the ashes, when layed near the fire. Linneus calls it *lapis electricus*. See his Flora Zeylonica.

creasing

creaſing or diminiſhing its heat, and ſtronger in the latter than in the former circumſtance.

2. Its Electricity does not appear all over its ſurface, but only on two oppoſite ſides, which may be called its poles, and they always lay in one right line with the center of the ſtone, and in the direction of its ſtrata; in which direction the ſtone is abſolutely opaque: though in the other, ſemi-tranſparent.

3. Whilſt the Tourmalin is heating, one of its ſides (diſtinguiſhed by A) is electrified plus, and the other ſide B minus. But when it is cooling, A is minus, and B plus *.

4. If it be heated, and ſuffered to cool without either of its ſides being touched, then A will appear poſitive, and B negative, all the time of its heating or cooling.

* From this law may be eaſily deduced, that if one ſide of the ſtone, in ſome circumſtance or other, is growing hot, while the other is cooling, then both ſides will appear poſſeſſed of the ſame electricity at the ſame time; and if only one ſide changes its degree of heat, while the other remains the ſame, then the former ſide only will appear electrified.

 5. If

5. If this ſtone be excited by friction, like any other Electric, then each of its ſides, or both at once, may be made Poſitive.

6. If the Tourmalin be heated or cooled upon ſome other inſulated body, that body will be found electrified as well as the ſtone, and poſſeſſed of the Electricity contrary to that, acquired by that ſide of the ſtone which was laid upon it.

7. The Electricity of each ſide, or of both, may be reverſed by heating or cooling the Tourmalin in contact with various ſubſtances; ſo if it is cooled, or heated in contact with the palm of the hand, that ſide of it, which would have been poſitive if cooled in the open air, is now negative; and that, which would have been negative, is now poſitive.

8. If a Tourmalin be cut into ſeveral parts, each piece will have its poſitive and negative poles, correſponding to the poſitive and negative ſides of the ſtone from which it was cut.

9. Theſe

9. These properties of the Tourmalin are also observable in vacuo; but not so strong as in the open air.

10. If this stone be covered all over with some electric substance, as sealing-wax, oil, &c. it will in general show the same appearances with this coating, as without it.

11. Mr. WILLIAM CANTON hath lately observed a very vivid light to appear upon the Tourmalin, while heating in the dark: he can by this determine, which end of the stone will be positive, and which negative. Further, when the stone is strongly excited, it emits very strong flashes from the positive to the negative end, in the dark †.

12. In the last place, it is remarkable that the power of the Tourmalin is sometimes injured by the action of a strong fire, sometimes improved, and sometimes not at all affected by it. The laws, however, of

† The Brasilian emerald Mr. Canton has observed to have also this property of emitting light, whilst heating in the dark.

theſe uncertain effects have not yet been aſcertained.

The moſt of the above properties, which were firſt obſerved, and thought peculiar to the Tourmalin, have been found to belong to almoſt all hard precious ſtones, they being alſo made electrical by heating and cooling, and have their poſitive and negative ſides laying in the direction of their ſtrata or cryſtals; and, in ſhort, as far it as has been obſerved, they have been found to act exactly like Tourmalins.

We ſhall laſtly obſerve, in this chapter of excitation, that whenever an Electric is rubbed with another inſulated ſubſtance, although it acquires an electric power, and ſhows electrical appearances, yet that power is very weak; and in order to obtain a conſiderable Electricity, it is neceſſary that the rubber ſhould have a regular communication with the earth, by means of good Conductors.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of Communicated Electricity.

IN the preceding Chapters we have considered Electricity no further than in respect to its quality; we have remarked the differences between the Positive and the Negative, and have noted which bodies, and by what means, they could acquire this property.---But now a vast prospect is opening to our view, full of extraordinary appearances; and we are to consider in this Chapter, not the mere kind of Electricity, but its numerous effects. Under the title of Communicated Electricity falls almost all that is known of the subject; the passage of this virtue from one body to another is what causes its light; by being communicated to other bodies, we see its attraction; by its quick transition it is that it melts metals, destroys animal and vegetable life; and, in short, it is by this communication that the Science is at all known and cultivated. In order, therefore, to preſerve perſpicuity, and diſtinction in deſcribing ſuch a multitude of facts, I ſhall employ more chapters on this ſubject, and arrange in each ſuch particulars as ſeem moſt proper to be placed together, at the ſame time contriving to reduce the whole into as few principal heads as it is poſſible, without confuſion.

Whenever Electricity is by any means ſuperinduced on a body, it is there confined only by Electrics, and remains with that body a longer or a ſhorter time, according as the Electrics that confine it are more or leſs perfect. A glaſs tube, for inſtance, when rubbed, acquires a quantity of that power, whatever it is, which we call Electricity. That Electricity remains, and is perceivable upon the glaſs, inſomuch as it is ſurrounded by the air, which is an Electric; and as the air is in a more or leſs perfect electric ſtate, ſo that virtue is retained upon the glaſs longer or ſhorter; and becauſe the air is never a perfect Electric, therefore the excited tube can never preſerve the acquired Electricity perpetually, but it is con-

tinually

tinually imparting ſome of it to the contiguous air, or the conducting particles that float in that element, 'till at laſt it quite loſes its power. If a finger, or any other Conductor be preſented towards an excited Electric, it will receive a ſpark, and in that ſpark part only of the Electricity of the Electric; but why not all? Becauſe the excited Electric being a Non-conductor, cannot convey the Electricity of all its ſurface to that ſide, to which the Conductor has been preſented. Hence, if a conducting ſubſtance be ſucceſſively preſented to different parts of an excited Electric, it will receive at every approach a ſpark, without repeating the excitation, 'till all the power of that Electric is exhauſted, and then a new excitation is neceſſary in order to revive it.

Whenever a Conductor communicating with the earth is exhibited at a convenient diſtance to an excited Electric, it acquires on that exhibited ſide an Electricity contrary to that poſſeſſed by the Electric: this Electricity increaſes the nearer it is approached, and at laſt, as there is an eager attraction between Poſitive and Negative Electricity, the Conductor receives a ſpark from the Electric, and ſo the balance is reſtored. If this Conductor does not communicate with the earth, but is inſulated, and approached to the excited Electric as before, then not only that ſide of it which is towards the Electric, but the oppoſite alſo, will appear electrified; with this difference, however, that the ſide, which is expoſed to the influence of the Electric, has acquired an Electricity contrary to that of the excited Electric, and the oppoſite ſide an Electricity of the ſame kind with that of the Electric. Theſe two different Electricities of the Conductor increaſe as it comes nearer to the Electric, and at laſt the former receiving a ſpark from the latter, becomes throughout poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity with the Electric, from which it has received the ſpark. All theſe effects will happen in the ſame manner, if between the excited Electric and the approached Conductor there is interpoſed ſome other electric ſubſtance beſides air; as for inſtance, a thin plate of glaſs, roſin, ſealing-wax, &c. but then a ſpark can never come from the excited Electric to the Conductor, except it forces, or burſts its way through

the

the interpofed Electric, as it always does through the air. This difplacing of the air is what caufes the noife that attends a fpark, and that noife is more or lefs loud in proportion to the quantity of Electricity, and to the refiftance it meets with in its paffage.

An infulated Conductor having received the Electricity from an excited Electric, (in which ftate it is faid to be electrified by communication) will act in every refpect like the excited Electric itfelf, except, that when it is approached by another Conductor communicating with the earth, the former gives one fpark to the latter, and by that difcharges all its Electricity. The reafon why an electrified Conductor lofeth its Electricity all at once, when touched with another Conductor communicating with the earth, and not part of it only, like the excited Electric, is, becaufe the Electricity belonging to the whole of the Conductor is eafily conducted through its own fubftance, to that fide, to which the other Conductor is prefented. Hence it appears that, in general, the Electricity difcharged from an electrified Con-

Conductor is much more powerful, than when discharged from an Electric; for the Conductor may acquire a great quantity of Electricity from an Electric, by receiving spark after spark, and afterwards if touched, discharge it all at once, and not by little and little as it was received.

If an insulated Conductor be touched with another Conductor electrified, it will acquire part of the Electricity belonging to the electrified Conductor, and afterwards each will show signs of it. The Electricity in this case will not always be equally divided between the two Conductors, nor will it keep any proportion to the quantity of matter in each contained; but will observe the following laws.

1. If two insulated Conductors, that in respect to their external surfaces are equal and similar, and both, or only one electrified, are touched together, the Electricity will be equally divided among them.

2. If their surfaces are equal and dissimilar, as for instance a square foot of tin foil in one

one piece, and another ſquare foot of it cut in a long ſlip, then that body, whoſe ſurface has a greater extenſion, will acquire more Electricity than the other.

3. Laſtly, if their ſurfaces are unequal and diſſimilar, the Electricity that each acquires after the contact, ſeems pretty clear from experiments, and in conſequence of the above two laws, to be in a compound proportion of their ſurfaces, and the extenſions of the ſame.

The electric ſpark (*i. e.* a ſeparate quantity of Electricity) will go a greater or leſs diſtance through the air, in order to reach a Conductor, according as its quantity is greater or leſs; as the parts from which it flies off, and on which it ſtrikes, are more ſharp or more blunt, and as the Conductor is more or leſs perfect. The noiſe together, and the light with which the ſpark is attended, is greater or leſs, according as the Electricity is greater or leſs; as the parts from which it flies, and on which it ſtrikes, are more blunt or more ſharp, and as the Conductor is more or leſs perfect. Thus, for inſtance, a ſharp point-

ed

ed body will throw off Electricity to, and receive it from a greater distance, than a body of any other shape; but then that passage occasions no noise, and but little light, for, in this case, the Electricity does not come in a separate large body, but by little and little, or rather by a continuate stream.

It is remarkable in the case of points throwing off, or receiving Electricity, that a current of air is sensible at an electrified point, which is always in the direction of the point, whether the Electricity is positive or negative.

The electric spark, taken upon any part of a living animal body, causeth a disagreeable sensation, which is more or less troublesome, as the spark is stronger or weaker, and the part, upon which it is taken, is more or less delicate.

A large quantity of Electricity, pervades the substance of a Conductor of a considerable length, with a surprising and imperceptible velocity; but a small quantity of it has been found to take some little time in

passing

paſſing through a long, and leſs perfect Conductor.

Bodies, poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity, whether poſitive or negative, repel each other. But bodies, poſſeſſed of different Electricities, attract each other; and there is no electric repulſion, but between bodies poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity, nor electric attraction but between bodies poſſeſſed of different Electricities, *i. e.* between bodies poſitively, and bodies negatively, electrified ‡.

Electricity, ſtrongly communicated to inſulated animal bodies, quickens their pulſe, and promotes their perſpiration. If it is communicated to inſulated fruits, fluids, and in general, to every kind of bodies that are actually in a ſtate of evaporation, it alſo

‡ This law, i. e. that there is no electric attraction, except between bodies poſſeſſed of different Electricities, will, perhaps, appear paradoxical upon obſerving, that an excited Electric attracts ſmall bodies, which never were by any means made electrical before; but the paradox will ſoon vaniſh, if what has been ſaid above be conſidered, i. e. that when Conductors, and indeed Electrics too, come near an electrified body, they become actually poſſeſſed of a different Electricity. But this will appear much clearer from the experiments that are to be mentioned hereafter.

in-

increaseth that evaporation, and that in a greater or less degree, as those bodies are more or less subject to evaporate of themselves, as the vessels, that contain the same, are Conductors or Electrics, and as they have a greater or less surface exposed to the open air §.

By increasing the perspiration of vegetables, Electricity promotes their growth; it having been found, after several experiments, that such plants, which have been often, and long electrified, have shewed a more lively and forward appearance, than others of the same kind that were not electrified.

When Electricity is communicated to insulated vessels, containing water, that is actually running from a pipe, the effects will, as far as may ingross, be deduced from experiments, observe the following laws.

" 1. The electrified stream, though it di-
" vides, and carries the liquid further, is
" neither

§ Although it has been by some pretended, that Electricity caused several substances to evaporate through the pores of glass, and metals, yet that could never be observed, though many accurate experiments were made for that purpose; besides, this pretended evaporation, seems on all accounts exceedingly improbable.

" neither ſenſibly accelerated nor retarded,
" when the pipe through which it iſſues is
" not leſs than a line in diameter.

" 2. Under this diameter, if the tube is
" wide enough to let the liquid run in a con-
" tinued ſtream, Electricity accelerates it a
" little, but leſs than a perſon would ima-
" gine, if he judged by the numbers of jets
" which are formed, and by the diſtance to
" which they go.

" 3. If the tube be a capillary one, from
" which the water only drops naturally,
" the electrified jet not only becomes a con-
" tinued ſtream, and even divided into ſe-
" veral ſtreams, but is alſo conſiderably acce-
" lerated; and the ſmaller the capillary
" tube is, the greater, in proportion, is the
" acceleration.

" 4. So great is the effect of the electric
" virtue, that it drives the water in a con-
" ſtant ſtream out of a very ſmall capillary
" tube, out of which it had not before been
" able even to drop."

The electric virtue has been found not to be affected by, or affect, the magnetic virtue of a loadſtone; neither is it affected by heat or cold; ſince, an iron bar made red hot, or any conducting ſubſtance hard frozen, when electrified, attracts, repels, gives ſparks, &c. in the ſame manner as in its natural temperature. Electric attraction is obſervable alſo in vacuo, where it acts nearly at the ſame diſtance, as in the open air; and electric ſubſtances may alſo be excited in vacuo.

Laſtly, we ſhall conclude this chapter with remarking two peculiarities, reſpecting excited and communicated Electricity. The firſt of theſe is, that if the face, or any part of the body, is preſented to an excited Electric, it will feel as if a wind was blowing, or rather, as if a ſpider's web was drawn over it, whereas this is ſeldom produced by communicated Electricity. The other particular conſiſts in this, that if the noſtrils are preſented to an excited Electric, they will be affected by a ſmell, much reſembling that of phoſphorus; but communicated Electricity does not occaſion any ſuch ſenſation, except when a large quantity of it does ſuddenly paſs from one body to another.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of Electricity communicated to Electrics.

AS the Electric Virtue can be superinduced on Conductors by communication, so may it also be communicated to Electrics: the difference however is, as might be expected, very remarkable; for when one side of a Conductor is presented to an electrified body, the Electricity will instantly pervade its whole substance, on account of its conducting nature; whereas when an Electric is presented to another Electric excited, or to an electrified Conductor, it will with some difficulty acquire any Electricity, because its substance is impervious to that virtue, and in order to make it acquire some, it must be several times, and in different parts, touched with the electrified body. That it is as difficult to deprive an Electric of its acquired Electricity, as it is to superinduce it on its surface, I think might easily be supposed; for the very same quality, which causeth it to acquire that power slowly (namely its being a Non-conductor) makes it also part with it ſlowly; and, in order abſolutely to deprive the Electric of its acquired Electricity, it muſt be touched ſeveral times, and in almoſt every part of its ſurface, with ſome conducting ſubſtance.

In the preceding chapter we obſerved, that when an inſulated Conductor is preſented to an electrified body, it acquires, on the part neareſt to that body, a contrary Electricity; and on the oppoſite part, an Electricity of the ſame kind with that of the electrified body; we alſo obſerved that theſe two Electricities increaſe, as the Conductor comes near to the electrified body, and that when the Conductor is arrived within the ſtriking diſtance of that body, a quantity of Electricity flies off from the latter; forces its way through the intermediate air, and, ſtriking upon the former, renders it throughout poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity. Theſe effects are in a certain degree alſo obſervable when an Electric, inſtead of a Conductor, is preſented to an electrified body; for the electric will alſo acquire on different ſides, contrary Electricities: theſe Electricities increaſe, as the diſtance decreaſes; but, if at laſt a ſmall quantity of

Elec-

Electricity is communicated to the Electric, that Electric will not become throughout possessed of one Electricity, but will still, in some cases, shew different Electricities on different sides, and in some circumstances many repeated changes from positive to negative Electricity may be observed upon the same Electric, as will appear from the following experiment.

If the end of a pretty long glass tube be presented to a body electrified, for instance positively, the tube will be found electrified positively also for the space of one or two inches at that end; but, beyond that space, will be found two or three inches electrified negatively; after that, another positive Electricity will appear, and so alternately, a positive and a negative zone will follow one another, always weaker and weaker in power, till at last they quite vanish. Now the cause of these effects is always to be deduced from the two above-mentioned principles, i. e. the non-conducting quality of an Electric, and the property of bodies in general to acquire an Electricity contrary to that possessed by another contiguous electrified body: so in the above experiment, that end of the tube which was presented to the body electrified positively, before it received any Electricity from that body, appeared negative on the part presented to it, but after it had received some Electricity, appeared to be positive no further than that Electricity could be spread over its surface, but beyond that place a part of the tube appeared to be negative, on account of its contiguity to the part electrified positively; after that, another place appeared to be positive, because of its contiguity to the part electrified negatively, and so of the subsequent changes; and the positive Electricity of one part of the tube cannot mix with the adjoining negative part so as to prevent these appearances, because the non-conducting quality of the glass will always hinder such an effect from taking place.

If to one side of an Electric sufficiently thin, as for instance a pane of common window-glass, a plate of sealing-wax, &c. be communicated one Electricity, and to the opposite side be communicated the contrary, that plate in that case is said to be *charged*, and the two Electricities can never come together, except a communication of conducting ſubſtances be made between both ſides, or the Electric be broken by the power of electric attraction. When the two Electricities of a charged Electric are by any means united, and therefore, their power deſtroyed, that Electric is then ſaid to be *diſcharged*, and the act of union of theſe two oppoſite powers is, for a reaſon hereafter to be mentioned, what is called the *electric Shock*.

In order to avoid the difficulty of communicating Electricity to an electric plate, it is cuſtomary to coat the ſides of it with ſome conducting ſubſtance, as tin foil, gilt paper, &c. by which means the charging and diſcharging becomes very eaſy; for when the Electricity is communicated to one part of the coating, it is immediately ſpread through all the parts of the Electric that are in contact with that coating, and when the Electric is to be diſcharged, it is ſufficient to make a conducting communication between the coatings of both ſides, in order to diſcharge entirely the Electricities of that Electric.

It will be readily underſtood why the coatings of both ſides of an Electric ſhould not come very near one another towards the edge of the plate, for then a communication between the ſame coatings is ready at hand, and although they do not abſolutely touch one another, yet when they are electrified, the Electricity will eaſily force a paſſage through the air, and, by paſſing over the ſurface of the Electric from one coating to the other, renders it incapable of receiving any charge*.

By means of charged Electrics, we may ſee a diſplay of the greateſt powers of Electricity; we can accumulate this power, and uſe it advantageouſly in different experiments. By conſidering the properties of a charged Electric, we become further and better acquaiuted with this ſcience, than by any other means, and for the enumeration of theſe properties the following chapter is employed.

* The property of conducting the Electricity over the ſurface is ſo remarkable in ſome kinds of glaſs, that they are on this account abſolutely unfit for the purpoſe of charging and diſcharging.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of charged Electrics, or the Leyden Phial.

IF a glaſs plate, whether ſmooth, or rough, is coated with ſome conducting ſubſtance on both ſides, ſo that the coatings do not come ſo very near the edge of the glaſs, as to render it unfit to be charged, and if to one of thoſe coatings be communicated ſome Electricity, the other coating, while communicating with the earth, or with a ſufficient quantity of conducting bodies, acquires by itſelf an equal quantity of the contrary Electricity; but if whilſt one ſide is acquiring Electricity, the oppoſite ſide does not communicate with the earth, or with a ſufficient quantity of conducting ſubſtances, the glaſs cannot be charged. Now the reaſon why when one ſide of the glaſs is receiving one Electricity, the oppoſite ſide acquires the other, is the ſame as obſerved in the preceeding chapter, *i. e.* the property of bodies to acquire an Electricity contrary to that poſſeſſed by a contiguous electrified body; and the cauſe, that hinders these two Electricities from mixing together, is the interposition of the glass plate, which is impermeable to Electricity *; but if the charge is too high, and the glass plate too thin, then the great attraction, between the two different Electrics, forces a passage through the glass, discharges it, and renders it unfit to receive another charge.

These effects happen in the same manner if the glass be not in the form of a plate, but in any other shape whatsoever, provided it is sufficiently thin, it being not the form, but the thickness of the glass, that makes it more or less fit to be charged: and the thinner it is, the greater charge it is capable of receiving; for the stronger in proportion is

* This remarkable property of Electricity was first observed at Leyden with a bottle containing some water, which served for the inside coating, and the undesigned application of the hands on the outside served for another coating. A bottle coated on the inside and outside for the purpose of being charged, has from thence been called the *Leyden Phial*, otherwise an *electric Jar*; and the charging and discharging in general, of coated glass, has been called the *Leyden Experiment*.

the

the power of the Electricity of one ſide, to cauſe a contrary Electricity on the oppoſite ſide.

How thick a glaſs plate or other Electric ſhould be, to become incapable of being charged, hath not yet been aſcertained.

If a coated glaſs plate, or phial, after being charged, be inſulated, and only one of its ſides be touched with ſome Conductor, that ſide will not part with its Electricity, becauſe the Electricity of one ſide exiſts in conſequence of the contrary Electricity on the oppoſite ſide, and both, by their mutual attraction, confine one another upon the ſurface of the glaſs. In order therefore to diſcharge that glaſs, both its coatings muſt be touched at the ſame time, and connected with the earth: or by means of ſome Conductor a communication muſt be made between them, and in this caſe the diſcharge is ſaid to be made through that Conductor.

When, in order to diſcharge a jar, one of its coatings is touched firſt with a Conductor, as for inſtance, with one end of a chain, nothing

nothing particular in that cafe will appear *; but as foon as the other end of the chain comes within a fufficient diftance of the other coating, a fpark will be feen between the end of the chain, and that coating, accompanied with a noife, &c. juft as when an excited Electric, or an electrified Conductor is made to communicate with another Conductor; but the power, the light, and the report is in general much greater than that of a fpark taken from a body fimply electrified.

It is remarkable that the fpark occafioned by the difcharge of charged Electrics, although it is more denfe, more powerful, and makes a greater report, yet is not fo long as the fpark drawn from an electrified Conductor.

* If one coating of a charged jar communicates with the earth while the other coating is expofed to the free air for fome time, the charge of that jar will be filently and gradually diffipated; for while the Electricity of one fide goes to the earth, the Electricity of the other is communicated to the air, which, as we obferved before, is never a perfect Electric.

When

When the difcharge of a jar is made through the body of a living animal, it occafions a fudden motion by contracting the mufcles, through which it paffes, and gives a difagreeable fenfation, for which reafon the effect of difcharging an electric jar has been generally called the *electric Shock.*

The force of the electric fhock, occafioned by glaffes of the fame thicknefs, is greater or lefs in proportion to the quantity of coated furface, and the height of the charge. Upon this principle, the power of the faid fhock, by increafing the quantity of coated glafs, may be augmented at pleafure, provided means be ufed powerful enough to charge it.

A number of coated jars connected together in fuch manner that their whole force may be united, and act like one jar, conftitutes what is called an *electrical Battery.* This battery is the moft formidable, and entertaining part of an electrical apparatus, and by its ufe many wonderful effects are produced, but as the performing of thefe belongs rather

rather to the practical, than to the present part of this Treatise, I shall only enumerate them in this place, and reserve further particulars for the third part of this work.

In making the discharge of an electric jar it is surprizing to observe with what quickness the Electricity performs the circuit from one side of the glass to the other. It has been found to employ no perceivable time in going through a Conductor of several miles, which connected the two coatings of a phial.

The force and noise of an electric shock is not affected by the inflexions of the Conductor, through which it goes, but it is sensibly weakened by its length; hence when the circuit, *i. e.* the communication between the two sides of the electric phial, is made by one person touching one side with one hand, and the opposite side with the other, the shock is stronger than when the circuit is formed by many persons together joining hands.

That

That the Electricity finds ſome obſtruction in going through even the beſt Conductors, appears evident, from this, that in ſome caſes it will prefer a ſhort paſſage through the air, to a long one through Conductors, even the moſt perfect. This obſtruction is greater in that place, where the Conductors, forming the circuit, do not lie in perfect contact; and if the circuit being compoſed of Conductors of different natures, the Electricity be obliged to paſs from one Conductor to another leſs perfect, the obſtruction is ſtill greater. If the interruption of a circuit be made in water, on making the diſcharge (notwithſtanding that the water is a Conductor) a ſpark will be ſeen in it, which never fails to agitate the water, and often breaks the veſſel that contains it.

A ſtrong ſhock, ſent through an animal or a plant, puts an end to animal as well as to vegetable life. If the circuit be interrupted by one or more Electrics, or imperfect Conductors, of a moderate thickneſs, the electric ſhock will break them, and in ſome circumſtances diſperſe them in every direction, and in ſuch a manner as if the force

force proceeded from the center of every one of the interpofed bodies *.

A ftrong fhock, fent through a flender piece of metal, makes it inftantly red-hot, melts it, and if the fufion is perfect, reduces it into globules of different magnitudes. If the metal be inclofed between pieces of glafs, the fhock, by melting it, will force it into the fubftance of the glafs, fo that afterwards it cannot be taken off without fcraping part of the glafs with it. In this experiment the glaffes are fhattered to pieces, and it is feldom that they refift the force of a ftrong fhock.

If the glaffes, inclofing the metal, be preffed by heavy weights, then a remarkable fmall fhock is capable often not only to raife the weight, but to break fuch thick glaffes, that otherwife require the force of a large battery.

* In feveral inftances the effect of a fhock upon an interpofed body is evidently greater on that fide of it which communicates with that coating of the jar or battery, that is poffeffed of the pofitive Electricity. But of this more will be faid hereafter.

Thick pieces of glaſs may be alſo broken into innumerable fragments by only ſending a ſhock over a ſmall part of their ſurface, which are preſſed by weights, without the interpoſition of any metal. When theſe pieces of glaſs are not broken, they are marked by the exploſion with the moſt lively priſmatic colours, which lie ſometimes confuſed, and ſometimes in their priſmatic order. The coloured ſpot is evidently formed by thin plates or ſcales, in part ſeparated from the ſurface of the glaſs; and it generally occupies the ſpace of about one inch in length, and half an inch in breadth.

In melting wires of the ſame metal by the electric ſhock, it muſt be obſerved, that the forces required for that purpoſe muſt be greater or leſs according as the lengths or thickneſſes of the wires are greater or leſs, but they are far from bearing any direct proportion to the quantity of metal; for if a wire of a given length and diameter be barely melted by a large battery, a wire of equal length and twice the ſubſtance, would perhaps take ten ſuch batteries to produce the ſame effect upon it.

When

When a moderate ſhock* is ſent through an imperfect metal (eſpecially if the circuit is formed by ſeveral pieces, as by a chain), a black duſt, in the form of ſmoke, will be ſeen to proceed from the metal, which is thought to be ſome of the metal itſelf partly calcined, and, by the violence of the exploſion, forced from it.

If ſuch circuit, or part of it, be laid upon a piece of paper, glaſs, or other Non-conductor, this, after the exploſion, will be found ſtained with ſome indelible marks, and often ſhew evident ſigns of having been burnt. A long and permanent track may be marked upon glaſs, and ſome other bodies, by the electric exploſion, if the interruption of the circuit be made upon its ſurface.

What is more remarkable, in conſidering the effects of Electricity on metals, is, that it revivifies their calces, and, like a true phlogiſtic proceſs, when an exploſion is made be-

* By a moderate ſhock here, I mean, one that is not able to melt the metal through which it paſſes.

tween

tween two pieces of the ſame, they, in part, return into their metalline form.

Although we obſerved, in the fifth chapter, that Electricity and Magnetiſm did not interfere with one another's action, yet that muſt not be underſtood in general, and when a large force of Electricity is meant; for this is capable not only of deſtroying the virtue, or of reverſing the poles of a magnetic needle, but even of giving it that virtue. When the charge of ten, eight, and even a leſs number of ſquare feet of coated glaſs is ſent through a fine ſewing-needle, it will often give it polarity, ſo that it will traverſe when laid on water*. It is remarkable that if the needle be ſtruck, lying eaſt and weſt, that end of it which is entered by the ſhock, will afterwards point north; but if the needle be ſtruck, lying north and ſouth, that end

* A ſmart ſtroke of a hammer will make a needle magnetic: but they ſhould always be tried before the experiment: for many ſmall needles will traverſe upon water, without the electric ſhock, or the ſtroke of the hammer.

of it which lay towards the north, will, in any cafe, point north; and the needle will acquire a ftronger virtue in this, than in the former cafe.

That the electric fpark fhould kindle inflammable fubftances, I think might be expected, when its power has been confidered n many circumftances, in which it has been obferved to act as a moft penetrating and extraordinary fire. In firing feveral fubftances a fmall fhock is fufficient; and inflammable fpirits may be fired even by a fpark proceeding from an electrified Conductor.

If the moderate charge of a large battery is difcharged between two fmooth furfaces of metals, or femi-metals, lying at a fmall diftance from each other, a beautiful fpot will be marked upon them. This confifts of one central fpot, and fome concentric circles*, which are more or lefs diftinct, and more or lefs

* The central fpot as well as the circles lie at a little diftance from one another; and they are compofed of dots and cavities, indicating a true fufion.

lefs in number, according as the metal upon which they are marked, requires a lefs or greater degree of heat to be melted, and as a greater or lefs force is employed.

If the explofion of a battery, iffuing from a pointed body, as the point of a needle, be repeatedly taken upon the plain furface of a piece of metal fituated at a little diftance from the point, or if iffuing from the furface, be taken upon the point, that metal will be marked with a coloured fpot, confifting of all the prifmatic colours difpofed in circles, and evidently formed by fcales, or thin plates of the metal feparated by the force of the explofion*.

When the difcharge of a battery is made by bringing the ends of two Conductors, communicating with the infide, and the outfide of the battery, in contact with, or at a little diftance from the furface of feveral conducting fubftances, as water, raw meat, &c.

* For further particulars concerning thofe circles, fee the Phil. Tranf. vol. LVIII.

it is obſervable that the Electricity, inſtead of entering thoſe ſubſtances, goes over their ſurface, and in a lucid ſeparate body reaches from Conductor to Conductor; ſometimes it prefers a much longer paſſage over the ſurface, to a ſhorter one through any ſubſtance. In this caſe the exploſion never fails to give a concuſſion to the body, over whoſe ſurface it paſſes.

The exploſion, taken in different kinds of air, acts in general like any phlogiſtic proceſs*.

Beſides the above-mentioned properties of charged glaſs, there are a few more obſerved, which as yet have neither been ſufficiently inveſtigated, nor ſo far purſued as to be reduce under any general laws. They afford a great field for ſpeculation, and ſeem more intimately connected with the nature of Electrics in general; but it ſeems not proper to make any general concluſions from the facts

* See Dr. PRIESTLEY's ſecond vol. of Obſervations on different Kinds of Air, ſec. XIII.

already known, at leaſt ſo as to be inſerted in this part of the preſent treatiſe. I ſhall therefore employ a chapter for the hiſtory of the ſame, in which I ſhall relate the principal, and more promiſing experiments hitherto made, and take notice of the beſt conjectures offered for their explanation. This chapter will be found at the end of the third part, in which place, I think, it will be more acceptable to my readers, particularly ſuch, who have not been much converſant with Electricity, and therefore require firſt the deſcription of the electrical apparatus, and the knowledge of the experiments neceſſary to prove the facts recited.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Atmoſpherical Electricity.

WHOEVER has remarked the numerous properties of Electricity already mentioned, and has conſidered their extenſive power, will, I doubt not, be greatly ſurpriſed, when he compares the ſtate, in which the Science remained half a century ago, with that in which it is at preſent; but his wonder will ſtill increaſe, when he is told that Electricity is not only to be obſerved by rubbing an Electric, or warming a Tourmalin, but that it has been found to exiſt in the air, rain, and clouds: that thunder and lightning have been diſcovered to be its effects; and that in ſhort whatever has the appearance of fire, or of any thing extraordinary in the atmoſphere, and upon the earth, has been attributed to Electricity.

That the effects of Electricity bore a great reſemblance to thunder and lightning, had been ſeveral times remarked by philoſophers, and eſpecially by the learned Abbé NOLLET; but

but that they ſhould actually be found to be effects of the ſame cauſe, and that the phenomena of Electricity ſhould be imitated by lightning, or thoſe of lightning by Electricity, was neither thought poſſible, nor ſuſpected, till the celebrated Dr. FRANKLIN made the bold aſſertion, and the French philoſophers firſt, and afterwards Dr. FRANKLIN proved the fact by undeniable arguments in the year 1752.

The ſimilarity of lightning and Electricity is not to be remarked in a few appearances only, but it is obſervable throughout all their numerous effects, and there is not a ſingle phenomenon of the one, but may be imitated by the other. Lightning deſtroys edifices, animals, trees, &c.; lightning goes through the beſt Conductors, which it meets in its way, and, if its paſſage is obſtructed by Electrics, or leſs perfect Conductors, it rends them, and diſperſes them in every direction; lightning burns, and melts metals and other ſubſtances; a ſtroke of lightning often diſturbs the virtue of a magnet and gives polarity to ferruginous ſubſtances; and all theſe effects, as has been obſerved above, may be produced by Electricity. But independent of the great similarity existing between lightning and Electricity; what fully proves their identity is, that the matter of lightning may be actually brought down from the clouds by means of insulated and pointed metallic rods, or by electrical kites, and with it any known electrical experiment may be performed.

Clouds, as well as rain, snow and hail, that fall from them, are almost always electrified, but oftner negatively than positively; and the lightning, accompanied with the thunder, is the effect of the Electricity, which, darting from a cloud, or a number of clouds, highly electrified, strikes into another cloud, or else upon the earth, in which case it prefers the most lofty and pointed places, and by this stroke produces all those dreadful effects, that are known to be occasioned by lightning.

The air, at some distance from houses, trees, masts of ships, &c. is generally electrified positively, particularly in frosty, clear, or foggy weather; but how the air, the fogs, and

and the clouds become electrified has not yet been ascertained, although several conjectures have been offered.

After that Electricity, and the matter of lightning were found to be the same thing, philosophers began to suspect the action of Electricity to be where it had before been less imagined, and not without reason endeavoured to reconcile to it several other natural appearances. The aurora borealis, or northern light, was soon attributed to Electricity, on observing that by this that flaming light may be imitated*, and that the aurora borealis, when very strong, has been known to disturb the magnetic needle†, which is also an effect of Electricity.

* The late Mr. CANTON frequently collected Electricity in a considerable degree, during the time of an aurora borealis. His apparatus for that purpose consisted of an insulated fishing rod, erected on the top of his house, and having a wire twisted round.

† See the Phil. Transf. vol. LIX. page 88.

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The accentions, that are often ſeen in the atmoſphere (commonly called *falling Stars)* are thought to be electrical appearances. The ſame is alſo ſuppoſed to be the cauſe of ſuch other meteors like white clouds, that often appear by night-time, particularly in hot climates. Beſides thoſe phenomena, water-ſpouts, hurricanes, whirlwinds, and even earthquakes have been attributed to Electricity. But now, perhaps, the reader will think philoſophers too extravagant, in going ſo far with Electricity. Such thoughts ſeem at firſt ſight to be extravagancies, but if it be conſidered, that they do not appear to contradict the known laws of nature, that they are not aſſertions abſolutely void of proofs, add that they are the thoughts of great philoſophers, then, I think, they may be admitted at leaſt ſo far as to be tried on proper occaſions, and to be conſidered as the moſt plauſible conjectures yet offered in explanation of the moſt ſurprizing phenomena of nature*.

* For further conjectures ſee Dr. FRANKLIN's Letters, and Dr. PRIESTLEY's Hiſt. of Elect. Part I. per. X, ſec. XII.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Advantages derived from Electricity.

NATURE, ever wife and admirable in her actions, feems to follow a certain fimilarity in her works with a conformity of operations, and from the fimpleft to the moft complicated of her objects an analogy is obfervable, which, as it is wonderful to be confidered, fo it is inftructive and ufeful. It is on account of this analogy, that whenever a difcovery is made in any part of natural philofophy; whenever a fcience is advanced, we not only attain to the knowledge of that fingle law, or particular fcience, but at the fame time acquire means in general of inveftigating the operations of nature with fomewhat more certainty and accuracy, and by purfuing that analogy we are enabled to make further difcoveries, and to improve every branch of knowledge. How far Electricity has contributed towards this purpofe, I think it unneceffary to be further proved, when its action has been fhown to be fo general, and fo powerful, as to perform what no art can operate. But, befides the field that Electricity has opened for further difcoveries, and the fatisfaction of that curiofity, which before attended the contemplation of fo many wonderful phenomena as have been explained in this fcience, there are two great advantages derived from Electricity; the one is a defence againft the direful effects of lightning, and the other a remedy for many diforders incident to the human body.

In order to guard edifices or fhips from being damaged by lightning, it was judicioufly propofed, by Dr. FRANKLIN, to raife a metallic Conductor fome feet above the higheft part of the building, and continue it down the wall till it penetrated fome feet into the ground; by this means the houfe could never receive any damage, for whenever the lightning fhould happen to fall upon it, it is evident that the Conductor, being of metal, and higher than any part of the building, would certainly attract it, and by conducting it to the ground, hinder that building from receiving any damage, for it is known that Electricity always ftrikes the neareft and beft beſt Conductors, that it meets within its way.

The reaſonableneſs and truth of this aſſertion has been confirmed by numberleſs facts, and the practice of raiſing ſuch Conductors has been found exceedingly uſeful, particularly in hot climates, where thunder-ſtorms are very frequent, and the damages occaſioned by the ſame, too often experienced.

In regard to the conſtruction of ſuch Conductors there have been ſome controverſies among Electricians; and the moſt advantageous manner of uſing them has not, without a great many experiments, and but very lately, been aſcertained. Some philoſophers have aſſerted that ſuch Conductors ſhould terminate in a blunt end, that they might the leſs invite the lightning from the clouds; for a blunt end will not attract Electricity from ſo great a diſtance as a ſharp point. But ſome other philoſophers have thought a pointed termination to be much preferable to a blunt one, and their aſſertion ſeems, on the following accounts, founded on much better reaſoning.

A ſharp-

A ſharp-pointed Conductor, it is true, will attract Electricity from a greater diſtance than a blunt one, but at the ſame time, will attract and conduct it by little and little, or rather by a continued ſtream, in which manner a remarkably ſmall Conductor is capable of conducting a very great quantity of Electricity; whereas a blunt terminated Conductor attracts the Electricity in a full ſeparate body, or exploſion, in which manner it is often made red-hot, melted, and even exploded in ſmoke, and by ſuch a quantity of Electricity, as perhaps would not have at all affected it, if it had been ſharply pointed.

A ſharp-pointed Conductor, certainly, invites the matter of lightning eaſier than a blunt one, but to invite, receive, and conduct it in ſmall quantities never endangers the Conductor; and the object of fixing a Conductor to a houſe, is to protect the houſe from the effects, and not the Conductor from tranſmitting the lightning.

It is an obſervation much in favour of ſharp-pointed Conductors, that ſuch ſteeples of churches, and edifices in general, that are ter-

terminated by pointed metallic ornaments, have never, or very ſeldom, been known to be ſtruck by lightning, whereas others that have flat or blunt terminations, and have a great quantity of metal in a manner inſulated on their tops, are often ſtruck by it, and it is but ſeldom that they eſcape without great damage.

Beſides thoſe conſiderations, a ſharp-pointed Conductor, by the ſame property of attracting Electricity more than a blunt one, may actually prevent a ſtroke of lightning*, to do which a blunt-en ded one is abſolutely incapable.

A Conductor therefore to guard a building, as it is now commonly uſed in conſequence of ſeveral conſiderations, and experiments, ſhould conſiſt of one iron rod† about three

* This and other properties of pointed Conductors will be made to appear very evidently by experiments.

† Copper would do much better than iron for a Conductor; it being a more perfect Conductor of Electricity, and at the ſame time not being ſubject to contract ruſt like iron.

quarters

quarters of an inch thick, faſtened to the wall of the building, not by iron cramps, but by wooden ones. If this Conductor was quite detached from the building, and ſupported by wooden poſts at the diſtance of one or two feet from the wall, it would be much better for common edifices, but it is more particularly adviſable for powder-magazines, powder-mills, and all ſuch buildings as contain combuſtibles ready to take fire. The upper end of the Conductor ſhould be terminated in a pyramidal form, with the edges, as well as the point, very ſharp*; and if the Conductor is of iron it ſhould be gilt, or painted for the length of one or two feet. This ſharp end ſhould be elevated above the higheſt part of the building (as above a ſtack of chimnies, to which it may be faſtened) at leaſt five or ſix feet. The lower end of the Conductor ſhould be driven five or ſix feet into the ground, and in a direction leading from the foundations; or it would be better to connect it with the neareſt piece of water,

* This pyramidal termination of the Conductor is an improvement of an ingenious Electrician, Mr. SWIFT at Greenwich.

if

if any be at hand. If this Conductor, on account of the difficulty of adapting it to the form of the building, cannot conveniently be made of one rod, then care ſhould be taken, that where the pieces meet, they be made to come in as perfect contact with one another as poſſible; for as we obſerved before, Electricity finds conſiderable obſtruction where the Conductor is interrupted.

For an edifice of a moderate ſize one Conductor, in the manner already deſcribed, is perhaps ſufficient; but, in order to ſecure a large building from ſuſtaining any damage by lightning, there ſhould be two, three, or more Conductors, in proportion to the extent of the building.

On board ſhips a chain has often been uſed for this purpoſe, which, on account of its pliableneſs, has been found very convenient, and eaſy to be managed among the rigging of the veſſel; but as the Electricity finds a great obſtruction in going through the ſeveral links, for which reaſon chains have been actually broken by the lightning, ſo their uſe has now been almoſt intirely laid aſide, and in their ſtead, copper wires a little thicker than a gooſe quill have been ſubſtituted, and found to anſwer very well. One of theſe wires ſhould be elevated two or three feet above the higheſt maſt in the veſſel; this ſhould be continued down the maſt, as far as the deck, where, by bending, it ſhould be adapted to the ſurface of ſuch parts, over which it may moſt conveniently be placed, and, by continuing it down the ſide of the veſſel, it ſhould be always made to communicate with the water of the ſea.

In regard to perſonal ſecurity in caſe that a thunder-ſtorm were to happen while a perſon is in a houſe not furniſhed with a proper Conductor, it is adviſeable not to ſtand near places where there is any metal, as chimnies, gilt frames, iron caſements, or the like; but to go into the middle of a room, and endeavour to ſtand or ſit upon the beſt Non-conductor that can be found at hand, as an old chair, a ſtool, &c. "It is "ſtill ſafer (ſays Dr. FRANKLIN) to bring "two or three matraſſes or beds into the "middle of the room, and folding them up "double, put the chair upon them; for they

"not

"not being ſo good Conductors as the walls, "the lightning will not chooſe an interrupted courſe through the air of the room and "the bedding, when it can go through a "continued better Conductor, the wall. But "where it can be had, a hammock or "ſwinging bed, ſuſpended by ſilk cords, "equally diſtant from the walls on every "ſide, and from the ceiling and floor above "and below, affords the ſafeſt ſituation a "a perſon can have in any room whatever, and what indeed may be deemed "quite free from danger of any ſtroke by "lightning."

If a ſtorm was to happen whilſt a perſon is in the open fields, and far from any building, the beſt thing he can do is to retire within a ſmall diſtance of the higheſt tree or trees he can get at; he muſt by no means go quite near them, but ſhould ſtop at about fifteen or twenty feet from their outermoſt branches; for if the lightning ſhould fall thereabout, it will very probably ſtrike the trees; and in caſe a tree was to be ſplit, he is ſafe enough at that diſtance from it.

In regard to the other great uſe of Electricity, *i. e.* its application as a medicine, there have been ſo many opinions *pro,* and *contra*, and the event in general of the innumerable trials has been ſo precarious, that to give a juſt eſtimate of its power ſeems to me very difficult. The innumerable cures performed by the application of Electricity, that are related by ſeveral writers, ſeem to repreſent it as a panacea for every diſorder: on the other hand, the unſucceſsfulneſs of other attempts, and which (although ſeldom recorded) are the more numerous, ſhow its inefficacy, and inutility: if therefore a deciſion ſhould be given on the reſult of all thoſe caſes, Electricity ſhould be conſidered as the moſt uſeful, and uſeleſs remedy in the whole *materia medica.*

In order however to ſatisfy more fully the curioſity of the reader about this important ſubject, I ſhall here ſubjoin two caſes, in one of which, related by Dr. HART of Shrewſbury, the application of Electricity proved very pernicious, and the other is a moſt remarkable inſtance of its good effect. In regard to the firſt caſe it is thought by ſome, that Electricity was injudiciouſly applied; but of the veracity and juſt treatment of the ſecond the reader can have no doubt, for it was executed by the celebrated Dr. WATSON, a gentleman, who is both an excellent phyſician, and one of the greateſt Electricians.

CASE I.

"A young girl, about ſixteen, whoſe "right arm was paralytic, on being electri-"fied the ſecond time, became univerſally "paralytic, and remained ſo about a fort-"night, when the increaſed palſy was re-"moved by medicines, which her caſe indi-"cated; but the firſt diſeaſed arm remained "as before: I ſhould have mentioned too, "that this arm was greatly waſted, in com-"pariſon to the other. However, notwith-"ſtanding the former bad accident, I had a "mind to try the effect of Electricity on her "again, which we renewed; and, after "about three or four days uſe, ſhe became "the ſecond time univerſally paralytic, and "even loſt her voice, and with difficulty "could ſwallow. This confirmed me in my

" opinion, that the electrical ſhocks had oc-
" caſioned theſe ſymptoms.—We therefore
" omitted it, and the girl, though ſhe grew
" better of her additional palſy, for ſo I call
" it, remained as bad as before of her
" firſt*."

CASE II.

A girl belonging to the Foundling Hoſpital, aged about ſeven years, being firſt ſeiſed with a diſorder occaſioned by the worms, was at laſt, by a univerſal rigidity of the muſcles, reduced in ſuch a ſtate, that her body ſeemed rather dead than alive. After that other medicines had been ineffectually adminiſtered for about one month, ſhe was at laſt electrified intermittedly for about two months, after which time ſhe was ſo far recovered, that ſhe could, without pain, exerciſe every muſcle of her body, and perform every action as well as before ſhe had the diſtemper†.

* Phil. Tranſ. Vol. XLVIII.
† Phil. Tranſ. Vol. LIII.

When

When I aſk perſons that have tried Elec-city upon themſelves, or upon others, it is ten to one, but they inform me, that it affords ſome relief in ſome diſorders, but it is not a remedy to be depended on, or to be generally uſed; for patients, they ſay, do not like to ſubject themſelves to a long, uncertain, and (on account of the ſhocks) troubleſome treatment; beſides, the electrical machine will not always act well, and the turning of the wheel, for the ſpace of an hour or longer, is not a very pleaſing employment even for a ſervant.

To all theſe objections, a philoſopher would anſwer, that it is not every diſorder, nor every temperament that requires an equal, or perhaps any application of Electricity. That Electricity has been of great benefit in many caſes, where the application of other medicines has failed, is beyond doubt, and, if two or three equivocal caſes be excepted, there is no inſtance of its having ever done any harm: its inefficacy in ſeveral caſes is in a great meaſure to be attributed to the injudicious application of it, indeed more than to any other cauſe; for, in general, this remedy has been adminiſtered either by Electricians, who were not phyſicians, or by phyſicians, who were little if at all ſkilled in Electricity. In regard to the trouble, &c. attending its adminiſtration, it would be as ridiculous to alledge it in proof of its want of utility, as it would be to degrade the knowledge, and advancement of Electricity on account of the expences that attend the purchaſe of an electrical apparatus. For a few pence a man may be hired, who will work the machine as long as it is neceſſary, and be thankful for the employment; but, in order to obviate this inconvenience, an electrical machine, to work by wind, by water, or by a horſe, might be eaſily conſtructed, with an inſulated floor, or room; and with ſuch a machine a vaſt number of patients might be very conveniently electrified.

After all theſe diſquiſitions, that the reader may form a juſt idea of the medical uſes of Electricity, I ſhall in ſhort give the reſult of what ſeems well authenticated by facts and reaſoning under the following paragraphs, and reſerve the practical uſe for the third part.

The

The certain effects of Electricity, when communicated to the human body, are a promotion of the insensible perspiration, an increase of the circulation of the blood,* and an increase of glandular secretion.

These effects have been found always constant; they may be proved by several experiments independant of physical cases; and I think there is no body, who will deny that such promotions are not only beneficial, but absolutely necessary for many disorders.

In regard to the observations made by physicians in the application of this remedy, it must be acknowledged that among the different cases, there are several, which are related by persons of great veracity; they seem to be well authenticated, and therefore their result should be carefully considered. These facts show that Electricity, except it be administered to persons affected with the venereal disease, or to pregnant women, generally gives some relief at least, if it does not

* It has been found by very accurate experiments that Electricity, communicated to the human body, increases the circulation of the blood about one sixth.

not effect a total cure. For the apoplexy, the palsy, the dropsy, coldness in the feet, fistula lacrymalis, rheumatism, mortification, amaurosis or gutta serena, and in short for all other disorders occasioned by obstructions, or contractions, Electricity has been found beneficial*.

It has often been observed in paralytic cases, that the patients have in general received some relief after being electrified four or five days; but that afterwards, finding nothing further could be obtained, they discontinued the application of this remedy, and in short time relapsed.

In regard to this, it might be observed, that in some cases, there are two kinds of

* Abundance of physical cases, in which Electricity has been applied, may be met with in almost every writer on Electricity, but especially in JALLABERT's Experimenta Electrica, LOVETT's Subtil Medium proved, WESLEY's Desideratum, or Electricity made plain and useful, FERGUSON's Introduction to Electricity, and BECKET's Essay on Electricity. Some cases in which Electricity has been successfully applied for the amaurosis are also related in the 5th Vol. of the Medical Essays of the College of Physicians in London.

ob-

obſtruction, or diſorders to be conſidered; one that is the immediate occaſion of the diſtemper, and the other which is in conſequence of the firſt. When an obſtruction, howſoever originated, happens in any part of the body, and continues any conſiderable time, it cauſeth not only a bad habit in the functions depending on that part, but occaſions a deſtruction of ſeveral ducts, and even a disfiguration of the ſolids. Now as for the firſt kind of obſtruction, it is eaſy to ſuppoſe that Electricity, judiciouſly applied, will prove beneficial, but to expect that it ſhould cure the ſecond ſeems quite ridiculous. Therefore, from this conſideration as well as from the daily experience, we may deduce that Electricity can have very little effect in caſes of long ſtanding.

Laſtly, I muſt beg of my readers to excuſe me if in the preſent chapter I have been too long, and particular: this comprehending one of the moſt uſeful parts of the ſcience of Electricity, I imagined it could not be treated too fully. Sciences are ſo far intereſting as they are uſeful; and it is for the uſe, and benefit of human kind that Philoſophers labour.

CHAP-

CHAP. X.

Containing a compendious view of the principal properties of Electricity.

AFTER the laws hitherto eſtabliſhed in the ſcience of Electricity have been exhibited at large, and the particulars relating to each have been ſufficiently conſidered, it will not be amiſs to ſhow in how ſmall a compaſs thoſe laws may be reduced, and how narrow is the foundation of all what has hitherto been done.

I doubt not but this recapitulation will prove very ſerviceable to thoſe, who are novices in Electricity, as by getting in memory a few particulars, they will not only reconcile all that has been ſaid before, but alſo be enabled themſelves to explain moſt of the following experiments, and to underſtand the application of the hypotheſis, of which we ſhall next proceed to treat.

All the natural bodies are divided into two claſſes, *i. e.* Electrics and Conductors.

Electrics

Electrics are fuch as may by fome means be excited, fo as to produce Electrical appearances, but Conductors are fuch as cannot be excited by themfelves, *i. e.* without the interference of an Electric: further, electrical fubftances will not tranfmit Electricity, whereas the fubftance of Conductors is pervaded by it.

Electrics may be excited three ways, *i. e.* by friction, by heating and cooling, and by melting, or pouring one melted fubftance into another.

When two different bodies, except they are both Conductors, are rubbed together, they will both (provided that which is a Conductor be infulated) appear electrified, and poffeffed of different Electricities; fo when a piece of fmooth glafs is rubbed with an infulated piece of leather, it acquires one kind of Electricity, called the vitreous, pofitive or plus Electricity; and the infulated leather acquires the other, called the refinous, negative or minus Electricity.

The

The difference between theſe two Electricities conſiſts principally in the appearances of their light, and in the phenomena of attraction and repulſion.

When the poſitive Electricity is entering a pointed body, it cauſes the appearance of a lucid ſtar or globule on that point; but the negative Electricity ſhows a lucid pencil of rays ſeeming to iſſue from the extremity of the pointed body.

Bodies, poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity, repel each other; but bodies, poſſeſſed of different Electricities, attract each other.

Whenever bodies of any kind come within the ſphere of action of an electrified body, except they are very ſmall, and inſulated, they become actually poſſeſſed of the Electricity contrary to that of the electrified body, to which they are preſented.

No Electricity can be obſerved upon the ſurface of any electrified body, except that ſurface is contiguous to an Electric, which

Electric can fome how or other acquire a contrary Electricity at a little diftance. Otherwife,—no Electricity can appear upon the furface of any electrified body, except that furface is oppofite to another body, which has actually acquired the contrary Electricity, and thefe contrarily electrified bodies are feparated by an Electric *.

If

* On confidering this principle, it may be afked, why any Electricity can be obferved upon the furface of an electrified body, that is infulated at a confiderable diftance from other Conductors? Or, which is the Electric, that is contiguous to the furface of an electrified Conductor, or excited Electric, and which has actually acquired a contrary Electricity at a little diftance from the faid furface? To this queftion is anfwered, that the air is in general the Electric, which is oppofite to the furface of any electrified body, which being not a perfect Conductor, does eafily acquire a contrary Electricity on a ftratum of its fubftance, that is at a little diftance from the electrified body; and in confequence of this ftratum, it acquires another ftratum contrarily electrified, and at a little diftance from the former; to this, other ftrata fucceed alternately poffeffed of pofitive and negative Electricities, and decreafing in power until they vanifh. This affertion is eafily proved by feveral experiments, that are to be defcribed hereafter, but efpecially by the experiment of the glafs tube, mentioned in the VIth chapter, which fhows that, in general, when an Electric, fufficiently denfe,

If the repulſion exiſting between bodies poſſeſſed of the ſame kind of Electricity be excepted, all the other electrical phenomena are occaſioned by the paſſage of Electricity from one body to another.

A conſiderable quantity of Electricity exiſts in the atmoſphere, and it is certainly employed for ſome great actions of nature.

Hitherto Electricity has not been found concerned in any fermentation, evaporation, or coagulation, although the clouds, the rain, the hail, the ſnow and the fogs, are almoſt always electrified.

Theſe few laws, well conſidered, will be found to contain almoſt all that is known of the ſubject, and if properly applied, they may explain moſt of the experiments that follow.

Beſides what has been ſaid in this part of the preſent Treatiſe, there are ſeveral other

denſe, is preſented to an electrified body, it acquires ſucceſſive zones, or ſtrata of poſitive and negative Electricity.

maxims,

maxims, rules, &c. to be known in Electricity; but as these respect the real practice, so they will be occasionally inserted in other places, that seem better adapted to their reception.

PART II.

THEORY OF ELECTRICITY.

CHAP. I.

The Hypothesis of Positive and Negative Electricity.

IT is the business of Philosophy to collect the history of appearances, and from these to deduce such mechanical laws, as may either be themselves of immediate use, or lead to the discovery of other facts more interesting and necessary for the happiness of human kind. After a number of such constant appearances, which are called natural laws, have been established, and confirmed by a sufficient number of experiments, it is then proper to investigate the cause of those effects, which if it is once discovered, and its mode of acting is ascertained, puts an end to the trouble of experimental investigation, and renders the application of its effects certain, and determinate.

Causes

Caufes and effects are fo intimately connected and dependant on each other, that throughout the fyftem of nature we every where difcover a feries of energies, which whilft they are depending on, and derived from, their preceding terms, are at the fame time the caufes of their fucceeding ones. But what is the firft caufe of all the reft, which being not the effect of any preceding, may be called the fource of all, and the firft term in the feries? In contemplating this fource, the mind is loft in wonder, and, after we are advanced a few fteps, we find that a cloud obftructs our further progrefs, and, from continuing our inquiry and contemplation, nothing more can be derived but an argument to prove the imbecility and fhortnefs of our underftanding. It is certain that feries either finite or infinite, are not only poffible but evidently neceffary and exifting; and as far as we can difcern the works of nature are all depending; but is the feries of natural caufes finite or infinite? This however is not the fubject of the prefent Treatife, and all I meant to deduce is, that, after the laws of Electricity have been conſidered, it is neceſſary that we ſhould go a little further, and inveſtigate, if poſſible, the immediate cauſe of that property in nature, or conſider the moſt probable conjectures that have been offered on this ſubject, by the knowledge of which we may explain all the known electrical appearances, and adapt their effects to our purpoſes with ſomewhat more certainty and preciſion.

The vaſt number of hypotheſes that have been framed in explaining the electrical phenomena from the infancy of the Science to the preſent time may be eaſily imagined by conſidering the great number of labourers, and the diſcoveries that have been produced without intermiſſion in this field of wonders. It would be not only and endleſs work to relate all the hypotheſes hitherto offered, but alſo an uſeleſs one, when they have been evidently contradicted by ſeveral experiments, and after they have all given place to the hypotheſis of a ſingle electric fluid, which generally goes under the name of Dr. FRANKLIN's. That although this hypotheſis explains all the known electrical appearances, it is however not a demonſtrable truth,

truth, but the moſt probable ſuppoſition, I confeſs, and in order that a due diſtinction might be preſerved between the knowledge of facts, and the ſuppoſition of their immediate cauſe, I have ſeparated the former from the latter, and followed that method which ſeemed more philoſophical and inſtructive; but now to make further apologies for admitting this hypotheſis at a time when numberleſs experiments ſpeak clear in its favour, would be doing an injury to the philoſophical world in general, and eſpecially to the ingenious philoſophers that propoſed and improved it. I ſhall therefore, without further preamble, lay it down as it is now commonly and reaſonably admitted; and ſhall uſe it in the explanation of the following experiments.

All the phenomena called Electrical are ſuppoſed to be effected by an inviſible ſubtile fluid exiſting in all the bodies of the earth. It is ſuppoſed alſo that this fluid is very elaſtic, *i. e.* repulſive of its own particles, but attractive of the particles of other matter.

When a body does not ſhow any electrical appearances it is then ſuppoſed to contain its natural quantity of electric fluid (but whether that quantity bears any proportion to the quantity of matter in general, or not, is uncertain), and therefore that body is ſaid to be in its *natural*, or *non-electrified ſtate:* but if a body ſhows any electrical appearances, it is then ſaid to be electrified, and it is ſuppoſed that it has either acquired an additional quantity of electric fluid, or that it has loſt ſome of its natural ſhare. A body having received an additional quantity of electric fluid is ſaid to be *overcharged*, or *poſitively electrified*, and a body that has loſt part of its natural quantity of electric fluid is ſaid to be *undercharged*, or *negatively electrified.*

From hence it appears, why the terms poſitive and negative, or plus and minus, Electricity came to be uſed; for the firſt ſignifies a real plus, or ſuperfluity, and the ſecond a real minus, or deficiency of the quantity of electric fluid proper to a body.

By

By this hypothesis, which is analogous to the other phenomena of nature, the electrical appearances are easily explained, and there is not a single experiment that seems to contradict it. First it appears that when an electric and a conducting substance are rubbed together, the Electricity is not then produced, but by the action of rubbing one body, pumps, as it were, the electric fluid from the other*, hence if one becomes over-charged

* By what mechanism one body extracts the electric fluid from the other is not yet known. The celebrated Father BECCARIA supposes that the action of rubbing increaseth the capacity of the Electric, *i. e.* renders that part of the electric, which is actually under the rubber capable of containing a greater quantity of electric fluid; hence it receives from the rubber an additional share of fluid, which is manifested upon the surface of the Electric when that surface is come out of the rubber, in which state it loses, or, as it were, contacts its capacity. Signior BECCARIA's experiment to prove this supposition is the following. He caused a glass plate to be rubbed by a rubber applied on one side of the plate, while it was turning vertically, and holding at the same time a linen thread on the other side of the plate just opposite to the rubber, he observed, that the thread was not attracted by that part of the glass, which corresponded to the rubber, but by that which was opposite to the surface of the glass, that

charged with it, or poſitively electrified, the other muſt neceſſarily be undercharged, or electrified negatively, except its deficiency be ſupplied by other bodies communicating with it. From hence alſo appears the reaſon, why when an electric is rubbed with an inſulated rubber it can acquire but little electricity, becauſe in that caſe the rubber not communicating with other Conductors can ſupply the electric with only that ſmall quantity of fluid, which belongs to itſelf, or which it collects from the contiguous air.

Electric attraction is eaſily explained; for this does not exiſt, except between bodies differently electrified, which muſt certainly attract each other, on account of the attraction exiſting betwen the ſuperfluous electric fluid of the bodies electrified poſitively, and the undercharged matter of the bodies electrified negatively.

that had juſt come out of the rubber; which ſhows that the fluid, acquired by the glaſs plate, did not manifeſt its power until the ſurface of the glaſs was come out of the rubber. But, query, in what manner does the glaſs augment its capacity of holding the electric fluid by the action of the rubber?

As

As to the repulſion exiſting between bodies poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity; in order to underſtand its explanation thoroughly, the reader muſt be reminded of the principle mentioned in the preceding part, which is, that no Electricity, *i. e.* the electric fluid proper to a body can neither be augmented nor diminiſhed upon the ſurface of that body, except the ſaid ſurface is contiguous to an Electric, which can acquire a contrary Electricity at a little diſtance; from whence it follows that no Electricity can be diſplayed upon the facing ſurfaces of two bodies that are ſufficiently near one another, and both poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity; for the air that lays between thoſe contiguous ſurfaces has no liberty of acquiring any contrary Electricity. This being premiſed the explanation of electric repulſion becomes very eaſy. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that two ſmall bodies are freely ſuſpended by inſulated threads, ſo that when they are not electrified they may hang contiguous to one another. Now ſuppoſe thoſe bodies to be Electrified either poſitively or negatively, and then they muſt repel one another, for either the increaſed

or

or diminiſhed natural quantity of electric fluid in thoſe bodies, will endeavour to diffuſe itſelf equally over every part of the ſurfaces of thoſe bodies, and this endeavour will cauſe the ſaid bodies to recede from each other, ſo that a quantity of air may be interpoſed between their ſurfaces, ſufficient to acquire a contrary Electricity at a little diſtance from the ſaid ſurfaces.—Otherwiſe.—If the bodies, poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity, do not repel each other, ſo that a ſufficient quantity of air may be interpoſed between their ſurfaces, the increaſed quantity of electric fluid, when the bodies are electrified poſitively, or the remnant of it, when the bodies are electrified negatively, by the above principle, cannot be diffuſed equally throughout, or over the ſurfaces of thoſe bodies; for no Electricity can appear upon the ſurfaces of bodies in contact, or that are very near one another. But the electric fluid, by attracting the particles of matter, endeavours to diffuſe itſelf equally throughout, or over the ſurfaces of thoſe bodies; therefore the ſaid bodies are, by this endeavour, forced to repel one another.

I think

I think it is unneceſſary to inſiſt further upon the above explanation; for the principle, upon which it depends, ſeems univerſal and clear, ſo that it may be eaſily applied to explain electric repulſion in general, as well as the repulſion between the above-mentioned two bodies.

The charging of coated glaſs, and other Electrics, as well as the other phenomena of Electricity, may alſo be eaſily accounted for, by the above-mentioned hypotheſis of Electricity; but, I think it unneceſſary to enumerate, and account for all the particulars in this place, as we ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of them in the explanation of the experiments in the third part.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Nature of the electric Fluid.

THE human mind, never ſatisfied, after the cauſe of ſome effects has been diſcovered, or only gueſſed at, attempts to inveſtigate ſome more intimate quality, and even the origin of that ſuppoſed cauſe, making further ſuppoſitions, and framing other hypotheſes, which, by the courſe of things, muſt certainly be leſs probable than the former. This unlimited endeavour to acquire knowledge is often too ridiculous to be purſued on account of its abſtruſeneſs, and uncertainty, eſpecially when the ſteps immediately preceding the ſubject in hand have but a ſmall degree of probability. It is from hence that Philoſophers have frequently ſpent a great deal of time, and trouble in attempting to diſcover the properties and cauſes of what exiſted only in their own imaginations. Sometimes, however, when a ſuppoſed exiſtence comes ſo very near to truth, that the moſt ſceptic Philoſopher heſitates not to confeſs the probability of it, or when he can invent no argument to evince the

the contrary, then it is not only allowable, but neceſſary for the buſineſs of Philoſophy, to purſue the inquiry further, and if nothing elſe can be aſcertained, at leaſt to propoſe ſome further conjectures upon the former hypotheſis. This now is the caſe in the ſcience of Electricity, and after we have related the moſt plauſible hypotheſis as yet offered, *i. e.* that of a ſingle elaſtic fluid, we come in this place to conſider the eſſence of this fluid, in order, if poſſible, that we might attain to, at leaſt, ſome probable conjecture, reſpecting its materials.

When nothing more than electric attraction and repulſion had been obſerved, Electricians ſuppoſed that theſe were effected by a kind of unctuous effluvia proceeding immediately from the electrified body; but when the light, the burning quality, the phoſphoreal ſmell, &c. was perceived to be produced by excited Electrics, then it was naturally ſuppoſed, that the electric fluid was of the ſame nature with fire. This opinion has prevailed much among ſeveral Philoſophers, and it is from hence, that the electric fluid has been commonly called Elec-

tric

tric Fire. Befides this fuppofed identity of the electric fluid, and the element of fire, there have been two other opinions concerning the effence of this fluid; it having been thought by fome to be the ether of Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and by others (whofe opinion feems to be the moft probable) to be a fluid *fui generis*, *i. e.* different from all other known fluids.

In order the more regularly to examine thefe conjectures it will be neceffary to premife fomething in regard to the nature of fire, at leaft fo much as is fufficient for the prefent purpofe.

The element of fire may be confidered in regard to its fpring, to the different ftates of its exiftence, and to its effects. In regard to its origin it is commonly fpecified under the names of Celeftial, Subterraneous, and Culinary Fire; underftanding by the firft, that, which proceeds from the fun, and by being difperfed throughout the univerfe, gives life, and motion to almoft every thing that exifts; by the fecond, that, which is the caufe of volcanos, hot fprings, &c. and laftly, under the

the name of Culinary Fire, underſtanding that, which is commonly produced upon the earth, by burning ſeveral ſubſtances. Theſe diſtinctions however are little if at all uſeful, for whatever be the origin of fire, its effects are always the ſame.

In reſpect to the different ſtates of its exiſtence, the Chymiſts know only two; the firſt obvious one, and indeed that, to which only is given the name of Fire, is that actual agitation of the particles of that element, which produces the complex idea of lucid, hot, &c. that is commonly underſtood under the name *Fire*; and the other ſtate is the real principle of fire exiſting as a conſtituent principle in ſeveral, and perhaps all ſubſtances; or, that matter, whoſe particles, when agitated in a peculiar and violent manner, produce the common ſenſible fire.

This, which we may call fire in an unactive ſtate, is the *Phlogiſton* of the Chymiſts, and is that, which when united in a ſufficient quantity with other ſubſtances, renders them inflammable. That this principle does really exiſt, is beyond a doubt; we may transfer it from one body to another; we may render a body inflammable, which in its own nature is not ſo, by ſuperinducing on it the phlogiſton; and we may reduce a body, naturally inflammable, to a ſubſtance not inflammable by depriving it of its phlogiſton.

Now the electric fluid, as far as we can determine, bears but a very ſmall reſemblance to the above-mentioned two ſtates of fire; for although it exiſts in different bodies, as the phlogiſton, yet when we compare its other attributes with thoſe of fire, we then immediately perceive it to be not the ſame, but a different principle. In the firſt place if they were both the ſame thing, they ſhould be always together, and whenever ſuch a quantity of fire exiſts, there the ſame quantity of electric fluid ſhould be found, but this is contrary to experiments; for a piece of metal or other ſubſtance may acquire a great degree of heat without appearing at all electrified, and on the other hand may be ſtrongly electrified without acquiring by it any ſenſible degree of heat, or any addition to its phlogiſton. Secondly fire

fire penetrates every known ſubſtance, and an exceedingly ſmall quantity of it is diffuſed alike throughout bodies of every kind, whereas the electric fluid pervades only Conductors*. Thirdly the electric fluid goes through a very long Conductor in a ſpace of time almoſt inſtantaneous, but fire is very ſlowly propagated. I might enumerate ſeveral other improprieties attending this hypotheſis of the ſameneſs of fire, and the electric fluid, but thoſe already mentioned are, I think, ſufficient to induce my readers to ſuppoſe otherwiſe.

Dr. PRIESTLEY, on obſerving that the electric exploſion taken in different kinds of air, acts, in general, like other phlogiſtic proceſſes, ſuppoſes that the electric matter either is, or contains, phlogiſton†. In regard to this, I would obſerve that there is no neceſſity of ſuppoſing the electric mat-

* Here may be obſerved that heat pervades more eaſily the ſubſtance of ſome good Conductors of Electricity; but the rule however is far from being general.

† Obſervations on different Kinds of Air, vol. II. ſec. XIII.

ter either to be, or contain phlogifton, on that account; for the phlogifton, in this cafe, may, by the force of the Electric explofion, be extricated, either from the furface of the Conductors, between which the explofion is taken, or from particles of heterogeneous matter floating in that air, in which the explofion is made.

In regard to the fimilarity between the effects of fire, and the effects of the electric fluid, it will be very obvious to remark that although fire is in feveral inftances produced by the electric fluid, yet we fhould never confound the one with the other, and confider them both as the fame thing; for it is well known that friction produces fire, and it is by no means furprifing that the electric fluid, by the rapidity of its motion, through fubftances, that in fome manner obftruct its paffage, fhould generate light, heat, rarefaction, and the other effects of fire*.

* Here it is proper to obferve that the electric fluid fhows no effects of fire, except when it goes through fome medium that obftructs its free paffage.

Mr.

Mr. HENLY, in consequence of several very interesting experiments, that he has lately made, supposes, that, although the electric fluid may be neither phlogiston nor fire, yet that it is a modification of that element, which, while in a quiescent state, is called Phlogiston, and when violently agitated is called Fire. We constantly observe (says he) I. that if two bodies are rubbed together, which have an equal quantity of phlogiston (which is the case with bodies of the same kind, as glass and glass, metal and metal, &c.) they acquire either very little, or no Electricity at all. II. That as one of the bodies has a greater quantity of phlogiston than the the other, so they acquire a greater quantity of Electricity, as when glass is rubbed with metal. III. That a certain degree of friction produces Electricity, and that *a more violent friction produces fire*, but no Electricity, as may be observed by rubbing together two pieces of baked wood, of glass, &c. IV. And that in general bodies, possessed of a greater quantity of phlogiston, give the electric fluid to bodies that have less of it, *i. e.* they acquire the negative

Electricity, when rubbed with bodies that have a less quantity of phlogiston*.

From these observations we gather, that the electric fluid, and fire, are produced by similar operations, and are both extracted from bodies abounding with phlogiston: and hence, he concludes, that, the phlogiston, the electric fluid, and fire, are only different modifications of the very same element; the first being its quiescent state of existence; the second its first active, and the last its more violent state of agitation: like fermen-

* Mr Henly, in order to try what Electricity different substances will acquire, insulates them upon sticks of sealing, wax, and rubs them against his woollen coat, or waistcoat. In this manner he has tried a vast number of vegetable, animal, mineral, and artificial substances; and he has discovered a very remarkable circumstance, which is, that, such substances, which have a great quantity of phlogiston, as vegetable substances, and particularly the hot, aromatic plants and seeds, &c. *give* the electric fluid; that is, they acquire the negative Electricity when rubbed against woollen cloths; and, that such substances, which have but little phlogiston (as most animal substances) *acquire* the electric fluid from the said cloths, *i. e.* they are electrified positively.

tation producing firſt wine, ſecond vinegar, laſtly putrefaction.

I ſhall only obſerve further on this ingenious hypotheſis, in order to ſhow its great degree of probability, that it is ſo very analogous to the other operations of nature, and at the ſame time ſo clear, and ſimple, that I think it can hardly be diſregarded by the moſt prejudiced Philoſopher.

As to the identity of the Electric, and the ethereal fluid, it ſeems to me quite an improbable, or rather a futile, and inſignificant hypotheſis; for this ether is not a real, exiſting, but meerly an *hypothetical fluid*, ſuppoſed by different Philoſophers to be endued with different properties, and to be an element of ſeveral principles. Some ſuppoſe it to be the element of fire itſelf, others make it the cauſe of attraction, others again derive animal ſpirits from it, &c. but the truth is, that not only the eſſence, or properties, of this fluid, but even the reality of its exiſtence is abſolutely unknown.

According to Sir ISAAC NEWTON's ſuppoſition, this ether is an exceedingly ſubtle, and elaſtic fluid, diſperſed throughout all the univerſe, and whoſe particles repel the particles of other matter. But on this ſuppoſition the electric fluid is different from ether; for although the former is ſubtle, and elaſtic like the latter, yet (as Dr. PRIESTLEY obſerves) it is not repulſive like the ether, but attractive of all other matter.

CHAP-

CHAP. III.

Of the Nature of Electrics and Conductors.

THE remarkable difference exiſting between the two claſſes of bodies in regard to Electricity, *i. e.* Electrics, and Conductors, naturally induces an Electrician to inquire what is that principle in bodies, or by what mechaniſm ſome ſubſtances become capable of tranſmitting the electric fluid, whilſt others are impervious to it?

In regard to the explanation of theſe two remarkable properties, there have been, as might be expected, ſeveral conjectures offered, but except one probable hypotheſis, there is nothing as yet aſcertained. When the catalogue of Electrics and Conductors was very ſhort and imperfect, it was ſuppoſed that, the only two conducting principles were metals, and water; and that all ſubſtances were nearer, or further from the nature of a perfect Conductor, in proportion as they contained a greater or leſs quantity of the above principles in their compoſition.

Wood, for inftance, was fuppofed to be a Conductor only on account of the water it contained within its pores; accordingly, it was obferved, that the greater quantity of moifture the wood contained, the better Conductor it proved to be, and on the contrary, that it acted more like an Electric, in proportion as it was freed from its moifture. But when water itfelf was obferved to be a bad Conductor, and hot air, and charcoal to be good Conductors, efpecially the latter, which fubftances, it is well known, contain no water nor metal, at leaft not in fuch a quantity as is fufficient to change a non-conducting fubftance into a Conductor, then, the former fuppofition was laid afide, and another was offered by Dr. PRIESTLEY, in his fecond volume of Obfervations on the different Kinds of Air*, which feems to be well founded.

The Doctor, confidering what the principle is, which Conductors poffefs in common, and finding one of their common ingre-

* Sec. XIV.

dients

dients to be the phlogiſton, deduces from thence, that the conducting quality is abſolutely owing to the phlogiſton. "Had there "been (ſays he) any phlogiſton in water, I "ſhould have concluded, that there had "been no conducting power in nature; but "in conſequence of ſome union of this "principle with ſome baſe. In this, metals, "and charcoal exactly agree. While they "have the phlogiſton, they conduct; when "deprived of it they will not conduct."

And in a note to this paragraph he ſubjoins.

"Having ſince found, that long agitation "in the pureſt water injures air, ſo that a "candle will not burn in it afterwards, "which is preciſely the effect of all phlogiſtic proceſſes, I now conclude that the "maxim, ſuggeſted in this paragragh, is univerſally true."

This hypotheſis ſeems very ingenious and probable; and, till any other more plauſible be offered, or experiments contradict

dict it, I think we may ſafely make uſe of it in purſuing our electrical inveſtigations, and endeavour to reconcile to it the phenomena already diſcovered in Electricity.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Place occupied by the electric Fluid.

BEFORE we quit the hypothetical part of this Treatiſe it may be proper to ſay ſomething concerning the reſidence of the electric fluid either natural to a body, or ſuperinduced on it. That the electric fluid, proper to a body when in its natural ſtate, is equally diffuſed throughout all its ſubſtance, I think no one will deny; becauſe that fluid is attractive of the particles of all other matter, and the particles of other matter are attractive of the electric fluid; and as this attraction is in proportion to the quantity of homogeneous matter, any quantity of matter will certainly attract a quantity of electric fluid proportionable to itſelf; therefore, the electric fluid muſt be equally diffuſed throughout all the parts of that portion of matter. This propoſition, however, will take place only in ſpeaking of Conductors, for it is founded upon the ſuppoſition, that the electric fluid, proper to a body in its natural ſtate, does freely pervade that ſubſtance;

ſtance; but whether this is a fact reſpecting Electrics or not, hath not hitherto been aſcertained. As far as may be judged from experiments, I ſhould ſuppoſe this rule to hold good with Electrics alſo, and my ſuppoſition is founded upon the following reaſoning. All the Electrics, when made very hot, become Conductors*; in that ſtate, therefore, the above rule muſt hold good, *i. e.* the electric fluid, proper to their quantity of matter, muſt be equally diffuſed throughout their ſubſtance; and as all the Electrics in nature, before they became ſuch (we may ſuppoſe) were Conductors; in that ſtate they certainly had their proper ſhare of fluid. Now as they afterwards cool and become Electrics, it ſhould ſeem that the change of their nature could not affect the equal diffuſion of the electric fluid, which took place, whilſt they were in a conducting ſtate. In conſequence of this conſideration, the difference between a Conductor and a Non-con-

* As this propoſition has been found true in all the experiments hitherto made, I think it may be conſidered very properly, as a general law in the ſcience of Electricity.

ductor,

ductor, in regard to their natural quantity of electric fluid, is, that in the former, the fluid may eafily move, whereas in the latter, it is confined in its pores. But it may be afked, whether a quantity of electric matter contains as much electric fluid as an equal quantity of conducting matter; a piece of rofin, for inftance, when melted, does it contain more, lefs, or the fame quantity, of electric Fluid as when cold? To this queftion I can give no fatisfactory anfwer; for, by the experiments hitherto made, nothing certain has been determined. Dr. PRIESTLEY, in order to afcertain this matter, made the following experiment. He made a piece of glafs red-hot (in which ftate it is a Conductor) and placing it upon an infulated piece of copper, left it in that fituation till quite cold (*i. e.* till it became an Electric), but in all the time of its cooling no Electricity of any kind was perceived, either in the copper or glafs, which would have certainly been the cafe if the piece of glafs had contained either more or lefs fluid when in an Electric, than when in a conducting ftate*. This experi-

* Hiftory of Electricity p. 716.—Experiments of a fimilar nature are met with in BECCARIA's Electricifmo Artificiale.

ment ſeems to give a deciſive anſwer to the above queſtion; but when the experiments, mentioned in the firſt part, of melting an electric ſubſtance into another, and other facts of a ſimilar nature, are duly conſidered, they ſeem to make the anſwer again difficult*. It muſt therefore be confeſſed, that this matter remains as yet unſettled, and nothing but further experiments, and the diſcovery of other facts, can determine any thing ſatiſfactory about it.

In reſpect to the place occupied by the electric fluid ſuperinduced on a body, it has been thought, by ſeveral ingenious perſons, that, when a body is electrified, all the ſuperfluous fluid, or all the deficiency of it, in caſe the body is electrified negatively, reſides as a kind of atmoſphere all around the body; to this atmoſphere they attribute the phoſphoreal ſmell, and that tickling ſenſation

* The wax chandlers, in forming their maſs in ſticks, &c. find it ſo ſtrongly attractive of duſt, &c. that they are obliged to uſe great caution in keeping it at a ſufficient diſtance from the charcoal fire, over which they work, leſt it ſhould (as it ſometimes happens) cover itſelf with aſhes, and thus ſpoil the work.

produced

produced by an excited Electric, and they even ſuppoſe that theſe atmoſpheres may be made viſible. But to this aſſertion it is anſwered by others, that if the Electricity communicated to a body did reſide round it like an atmoſphere, it ſhould certainly repel the air contiguous to that body; but this is not the reſult of experiments; for it has been found that the electric atmoſphere, however denſe, if it does at all exiſt, has no effect upon the air contiguous to the electrified body, nor has the motion of the air, even a violent wind, any effect upon the atmoſphere. In regard to the above-mentioned ſenſations of phoſphoreal ſmell, &c. it is thought that they are only occaſioned by the electric fluid entering or going out of the ſkin in a very ſubdivided manner.

From what may be deduced from experiments, it appears that, although the electric fluid is tranſmitted through the ſubſtance of Conductors, yet no communicated Electricity can be obſerved within a ſufficiently narrow cavity of an electrified body; beſides if two bodies of the ſame ſize and figure, but of different denſities, are electrified together, and afterwards ſeparated, they will acquire each the ſame quantity of Electricity, *i. e.* the Electricity that they acquire will be proportional to their ſurfaces, and not to their reſpective quantities of matter.

We may laſtly conclude that the Electricity, communicated to a body, lies not diffuſed throughout the ſubſtance of that body, but on that ſurface of it, which is contiguous to a free Electric, *i. e.* to an Electric, that is not ſurrounded by an homolougous Electricity.

PART.

PART III.

PRACTICAL ELECTRICITY.

CHAP. I.

Of the electrical Apparatus in general.

HITHERTO we have treated of Electricity only theoritically, having noted what has been found uniformly certain relative to this ſubject, and having exhibited a view of the moſt probable conjectures offered in explanation of electrical appearances; but Electricity being a ſcience, that requires a more practical management, than perhaps any other branch of natural philoſophy, it is neceſſary, that we ſhould now treat of it practically, and give the beſt directions we are able, both in regard to the conſtruction of the neceſſary apparatus, and to the performance of the experiments, not only requiſite in proving the foregoing Propoſitions, but ſuch alſo, as are pleaſing and entertaining.

In this part of my work the reader will perhaps find more novelty, than he expects; for confidering the number of books that have been lately publifhed on this fubject, one would imagine that all the experiments poffible to be exhibited with an electrical machine, and its appendages, have already been defcribed. The cafe however is much the contrary, for not only the old experiments have been diverfified, but a variety of new ones have been invented, and even the principal part of the apparatus has undergone feveral changes, and improvements.

In order the more regularly to proceed in the defcription of the electrical apparatus, it will not be improper to divide its parts into three claffes, confidering in the firft, the inftruments neceffary to produce Electricity; in the fecond, thofe proper to accumulate, retain, and employ it; and laftly, thofe neceffary to meafure its quantity, and afcertain its quality.

The principal inftrument to produce Electricity, is the electrical Machine, *i. e.* a ma-

 chine

chine capable by any means of exciting an Electric, ſo as to produce electrical appearances. The conſtruction of thoſe machines from their firſt invention to the preſent time, has undergone ſo many changes, and their forms have been ſo much varied, that it would be very difficult, and even tedious to deſcribe thoſe only, which are moſt frequently in uſe. Every maker, and almoſt every Electrican conſtructs his own machines in a manner different from the reſt, and as new facts, or long practice points out ſome imperfections, the Electrician is ready to contrive a new method to correct the preceeding errors. Indeed the rapid advance of the ſcience is moſtly owing to this change, and variety of conſtructions; for whether caſual, or deſigned, a new conſtruction has generally either produced ſome diſcovery of importance, or expoſed ſome defect in the apparatus, and management of the ſame.

That the reader might be left at the liberty of chooſing the form of his machine, I ſhall in this chapter lay down the moſt neceſſary rules to conſtruct electrical machines in general, and ſhall reſerve for the next chapter the particular defcription of fome machines, that are the moft ufeful, and which contain all the improvements hitherto made.

The principal parts of the machine are the Electric, the moving Engine, the Rubber, and the prime Conductor, *i. e.* an infulated Conductor, which immediately receives the Electricity from the excited Electric.

The Electric was formerly ufed of different fubftances, as glafs, rofin, fulphur, fealing-wax, &c. and of different forms, as cylinders, globes, fpheroids, &c. This diverfity then obtained on two accounts, firft, becaufe it was not afcertained, which fubftance or form would anfwer beft, and fecondly, on account of producing a negative, or pofitive Electricity, at the pleafure of the operator; for before the Electricity of the infulated rubber was difcovered, fulphur, rough glafs, or fealing-wax, was generally ufed for the negative Electricity. At prefent, fmooth glafs only is ufed; for when the machine has an infulated rubber, the operator may produce pofitive or negative Electricity at his pleafure, without changing the Electric.

Electric. In regard to the form of the glafs thofe commonly ufed at prefent are globes, and cylinders. The moft convenient fize for a globe, is from nine to twelve inches diameter, they are made with one neck, which is cemented * to a ftrong brafs cap in order to adapt them to a proper frame. The cylinders are made with two necks, they are ufed to the greateft advantage without any axis, and their common fize is from four inches diameter and eight inches long, to twelve inches diameter and two feet long, which are perhaps as large as the workmen can conveniently make them. The glafs generally ufed is the beft flint, though it is not yet abfolutely determined, which kind of metal is the beft for electrical globes, or cylinders. The thicknefs of the glafs feems immaterial, but perhaps the thinneft is preferable. It has often happened that glafs

* The beft cement for electrical purpofes is made with two parts of rofin, two of bees-wax, and one of the powder of red okre. Thefe ingredients are melted, and mixed together in any veffel over the fire; and afterwards kept for ufe. This kind of cement fticks very faft, and is much preferable to rofin only, as it is not fo brittle, and at the fame time infulates equally well.

globes, and cylinders, in the act of whirling, have burst in innumerable pieces, with great violence, and with some danger to the by-standers. Those accidents are supposed to happen when the globes, or cylinders, after being blown, are suddenly cooled. It will therefore be necessary to enjoin the workman to let them pass gradually, from the heat of the glass-house, to the atmospherical temperature.

It has been long questioned whether a coating of some electric substance as rosin, turpentine, &c. on the inside surface of the glass, has any effect to increase its electrical power; but now it seems pretty well determined, that if it does not increase the power of a good glass globe or cylinder, at least it does considerably improve a bad one. I have several times put a coating of rosin on the inside surface of phials and tubes, and have constantly found, that the worst of them received some improvement by it.

The most approved composition for lining glass globes, or cylinders, is made with four parts of Venice turpentine, one part of rosin

rosin and one part of bees-wax. This composition must be boiled for about two hours over a gentle fire, and must be kept stirring very often: afterwards it is left to cool, and reserved for use. When a globe or cylinder is to be lined with this mixture, a sufficient quantity of it is to be broken into small pieces, and introduced into the glass; then, by holding the glass near the fire, the mixture is melted, and equally spread over all its internal surface, to about the thickness of a sixpence. In this operation care must be taken, that the glass be made hot gradually, and be continually turned, so as to be heated equally in all parts, otherwise, it is apt to break in the operation.

In respect to the Engine which is to give motion to the Electric; multiplying wheels have been generally used, which, properly adapted, might give the Electric a quick motion, while they are conveniently turned by a winch. The usual method is, to fix a wheel on one side of the frame of the machine, which is turned by a winch, and has a groove round its circumference. Upon the brass cap of the neck of the glass globe, or one of the necks of the cylinder, a pulley is fixed, whofe diameter is about the third or fourth part of the diameter of the wheel; then a ftring or ftrap, is put over the wheel and the pulley, and by thefe means, when the winch is turned, the globe or cylinder makes three, or four, revolutions, for one revolution of the wheel. There is an inconvenience generally attending this conftruction, which is, that the ftring is fometimes fo very flack, that the machine cannot work. To remedy this inconvenience, the wheel fhould be made moveable with refpect to the Electric, fo that by means of a fkrew it might be fixed at the proper diftance; or elfe the pulley fhould have feveral grooves of different radiufes on its circumference.

It has been cuftomary with fome, to turn the cylinder fimply with a winch, without any accelerated motion; but that feems not fufficient to produce the greateft Electric power, the glafs is capable of giving; for the globe or cylinder fhould properly make about fix revolutions in a fecond, which is more than can be conveniently done with the winch only. This method however, on account of its ſimplicity, and eaſy conſtruction, ſhould not be diſregarded, and it may be conveniently uſed, when no very great power is required.

Inſtead of the pulley and the ſtring as above deſcribed, a wheel and pinion, or a wheel, and an endleſs ſkrew, has been alſo uſed. This conſtruction anſwers perhaps as well as any other; but, it muſt be conſtructed with great nicety, otherwiſe, is apt to make a diſagreeable rattling, and without frequent oiling, ſoon wears away by the great friction of its own parts.

The next thing belonging to the Electrical machine neceſſary to be deſcribed is the rubber, which is to excite the Electric. The rubber, as it is now made, is nothing more than a ſilk cuſhion ſtuffed with hair; and over this cuſhion is put a piece of leather, on which ſome amalgam* has been rubbed

* This amalgam has been found to excite ſmooth glaſs the moſt powerfully of any thing yet tried. Any metal, diſſolved in quick-ſilver, will perhaps do equally well, but the amalgam generally uſed, is made with two parts of quick-ſilver and one of tin-foil, with a ſmall quantity of powdered chalk, mixed together until it become a maſs, like paſte.

ſo as to ſtick as faſt as poſſible to the leather. Sometime ago it was generally uſed, and it is now cuſtomary alſo, to make the rubber of red baſil ſkin ſtuffed with hair; but the ſilk one, as above deſcribed (which is an improvement of Dr. NOOTH) is much preferable. If this ſilk cuſhion, on account of adapting it to the ſurface of the glaſs, is to be fixed upon a metal plate, then care ſhould be taken to make the plate free from ſharp points, edges, or corners, and it ſhould be as much as poſſible concealed, or covered with ſilk. In ſhort to conſtruct the rubber properly, it muſt be made in ſuch a manner, that the ſide of it, which the ſurface of the glaſs enters in whirling, may be as perfect a Conductor, as it can be made, in order to ſupply Electricity as quick as poſſible, and the oppoſite part ſhould be as much a Non-conductor as poſſible, in order that none of the fluid accumulated upon the glaſs, may return back to the rubber, which has been found by experiment to be the caſe, when the rubber is not made in a proper manner.

The

The rubber ſhould be ſupported by a ſpring, by which means it may eaſily ſuit any inequalities, that may be found on the ſurface of the glaſs, and by a ſkrew it may be made to preſs harder or ſofter, as occaſion may require. It ſhould alſo be inſulated in whatever manner is moſt convenient, for whenever inſulation is not required, a chain or wire, &c. may be occaſionally hung upon it, and thus communicate with the earth or with any other body at pleaſure; whereas, when there is not a contrivance for inſulating the rubber, many of the moſt curious experiments in Electricity will never be performed with the machine.

We come now to conſider the prime Conductor, or firſt Conductor, which is nothing more than an inſulated conducting ſubſtance furniſhed with one, or more points at one end, in order to collect the Electricity immediately from the Electric. When the Conductor is of a moderate ſize, it is uſual to make it of hollow braſs, but when it is very large, then, on account of the price of the materials, it is made of paſte-board covered with tin-foil, or gilt paper. The

Conductor

Conductor is generally made cylindrical, but let the form be what it will, it ſhould always be made perfectly free from points, or ſharp edges; and if holes are to be made in it, which on many accounts are very convenient, they ſhould be well rounded, and made perfectly ſmooth. Further, that end of the prime Conductor, which is at the greateſt diſtance from the Electric, ought to be made larger than the reſt, as the ſtrongeſt exertion of the electric fluid in eſcaping from the Conductor is always at that end.

It has been conſtantly obſerved, that the larger the prime Conductor is, the longer, and denſer ſpark can be drawn from it, and the reaſon of this is, that the quantity of Electricity, diſcharged in a ſpark, is nearly proportional to the ſize of the Conductor; on this account the prime Conductor is now made much larger, than what was formerly uſed. Its ſize, however, may be ſo large, that the diſſipation of the Electricity from its ſurface, may be greater than what the Electric can ſupply; in which caſe ſo large a Conductor would be nothing more than an unweildy, and diſagreeable incumbrance.

Before

Before we quit the electrical machine it ſhould be obſerved, that, beſides the above-mentioned parts, it is neceſſary to have a ſtrong frame to ſupport the Electric, the rubber, and the wheel. The prime Conductor ſhould be ſupported by ſtands with pillars of glaſs, or baked wood, and not by ſilk ſtrings, which admit of continual motion. In ſhort, the machine, the prime Conductor, and any other apparatus actually uſed, ſhould be made to ſtand as ſteady as poſſible, otherwiſe many inconveniences will ariſe.

Beſides the Electrical machine, the Electrician ſhould be provided with glaſs tubes of different ſizes, a pretty large ſtick of ſealing-wax, or a glaſs tube covered with ſealing-wax, for the negative Electricity. He ſhould at leaſt, not be without a glaſs tube about three feet long, and one inch and a half in diameter. This tube ſhould be cloſed at one end, and at the other end ſhould have fixed a braſs cap with a ſtop cock, which is uſeful in caſe it ſhould be required to condenſe, or rarefy the air within the tube.

The

The beſt rubber for a tube of ſmooth glaſs is the rough ſide of black oiled ſilk, eſpecially when it has ſome amalgam rubbed upon it; but the beſt rubber for a rough glaſs tube, a ſtick of baked wood, ſealing-wax, or ſulphur, is ſoft new flannel.

The inſtruments neceſſary for the accumulation of Electricity, are coated Electrics, among which, glaſs coated with Conductors obtains the principal place; on account of its ſtrength it may be formed into any ſhape, and it will receive a very great charge. The form of the glaſs is immaterial with reſpect to the charge it will contain; its thickneſs only is to be conſidered, for the thinner it is the higher charge it is capable of receiving; but it is at the ſame time more ſubject to be roken by the force of electric attraction; for this reaſon therefore, a thin coated jar, or plate may be uſed very well by itſelf, and it is very convenient for many experiments; but when large batteries are to be conſtructed, then it is neceſſary to uſe glaſs a little thicker, and care ſhould be taken to have them perfectly well annealed. If a battery is required

quired of no very great power, as containing about eight or nine ſquare feet of coated glaſs, I ſhould recommend to make uſe of common pint, or half-pint phials, ſuch as apothecaries uſe. They may be eaſily coated with tin-foil, ſheet-lead, or gilt paper on the outſide, and braſs-filings on the inſide, they occupy a ſmall ſpace, and on account of their thinneſs, hold a very good charge. But when a large battery is required, then theſe phials cannot be uſed, for they break very eaſily, and for that purpoſe cylindrical glaſs jars of about fifteen inches high, and four or five inches in diameter are the moſt convenient.

When glaſs plates or jars, having a ſufficiently large opening, are to be coated, the beſt method is to coat them with tin-foil on both ſides, which may be fixed upon the glaſs with varniſh, gum-water, bees-wax, &c. but in caſe the jars have not an aperture large enough to admit the tin-foil, and an inſtrument to adapt it to the ſurface of the glaſs, then, braſs-filings, ſuch as are ſold by the pin-makers, may be advantageouſly uſed, and they may be ſtuck with gum-water, bees-

bees-wax, &c. but not with varniſh, for this is apt to be ſet on fire by the diſcharge, as will appear in the latter part of this work. Care muſt be taken that the coatings do not come very near the mouth of the jar, for that will cauſe the jar to diſcharge itſelf. If the coating is about two inches below the top, it will in general do very well; but there are ſome kinds of glaſs, eſpecially tinged glaſs, that, when coated and charged, have the property of diſcharging themſelves more eaſily than others, even when the coating is five or ſix inches below the edge. There is another ſort of glaſs like that, of which Florence flaſks are made, which, on account of ſome unvitrified particles in its ſubſtance, is not capable of holding the leaſt charge; on theſe accounts therefore, whenever a great number of jars are to be choſen for a large battery, it is adviſeable to try ſome of them firſt, ſo that their quality, and power may be aſcertained.

Electricians have often endeavoured to find ſome other Electric, which might anſwer better than glaſs for this purpoſe, at leaſt be cheaper; but except Father BECCARIA's method,

method, which may be ufed very well, I do not find that any remarkable difcovery has been made relating to this point.

Father BECCARIA took equal quantities of very pure colophonium, and powder of marble fifted exceedingly fine, and kept them in a hot place for a confiderable time, where they became perfectly free from moifture; he then mixed them, and melted the compofition in a proper veffel over the fire, and when melted poured it upon a table, upon which he had previoufly ftuck a piece of tin-foil, reaching within two or three inches of the edge of the table; this done, he endeavoured with a hot iron to fpread the mixture all over the table as equally as poffible, and to the thicknefs of one tenth of an inch; he afterwards coated it with another piece of tin-foil reaching within about two inches of the edge of the mixture; in fhort, he coated a plate of this mixture like a plate of glafs. This coated plate, from what he fays, feems to have had a greater power than a glafs plate of the fame dimenfions, even when the weather was not very dry: and if it is not fubject to break very eafily by a fpontaneous

 difcharge,

difcharge, I think it may be very conveniently ufed; for it doth not very readily attract moifture, and confequently may hold a charge of Electricity better, and longer than glafs; befides, if broken, it may be repaired by a hot iron; but glafs, when broke, can never be repaired.

When a jar, a battery, or in general a coated Electric, is to be difcharged, the operator fhould be provided with an inftrument called the difcharging Rod, which confifts of a metal rod fometimes ftraight, but more commonly bended in the form of a C: they are made alfo of two joints fo as to open like a kind of compaffes. This rod is furnifhed with metal knobs at its extremities, and has a non-conducting handle, generally of glafs or baked wood faftened to its middle. When the operator is to ufe this inftrument, he holds it by the handle, and touching one of the coated fides of the charged Electric with one knob, and approaching the other knob to the other coated fide, or fome conducting fubftance communicating with it, he completes the communication between the two fides, and difcharges the Electric.

The

The inſtruments to meaſure the quantity, and aſcertain the quality of Electricity are commonly called *Electrometers*, and they are of four ſorts, 1ſt. the ſingle Thread, 2d. the Cork, or Pith-balls, 3d. the Quadrant, and, 4th. the diſcharging Electrometer *. But a particular deſcription of the ſame will be found in the third chapter of this work.

Beſides the apparatus above deſcribed there are ſeveral other inſtruments uſeful for various experiments, but theſe will be deſcribed occaſionally. The Electrician, however, ought to have by him not only a ſingle coated jar, a ſingle diſcharging rod, or in ſhort, only what is neceſſary to perform the common experiments, but he ſhould provide himſelf with ſeveral plates of glaſs, with jars of different ſizes, with a variety of different

* The ſecond ſort of Electrometer, *i. e.* the cork-balls Electrometer was invented by Mr. CANTON; the diſcharging Electrometer was invented by Mr. LANE, and hath been improved by Mr. HENLY: another on a different principle by Mr. RINNERSLEY; and the quadrant Electrometer, which is of lateſt invention, is a contrivance of Mr. HENLY.

inſtruments of every kind, and even tools for conſtructing them; in order that he may readily make ſuch new experiments, as his curioſity may induce him to try, or that may be publiſhed by other ingenious perſons, who are purſuing their reſearches in this branch of philoſophy.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The defcription of fome particular electrical Machines.

IN this chapter I fhall prefent the reader with the particular defcription of three electrical machines, which, I think, will be very acceptable after the general account of their conftruction, which has already been given. The firft of thefe is that defcribed by Dr. PRIESTLEY, in his Hiftory of Electricity*; where a drawing of the fame may be feen, and which, on account of its extenfive ufe, may be defervedly called a univerfal electrical Machine.

The bafis of this machine confifts of two oblong boards, which are kept in a fituation parallel to one another, about four inches afunder, by two fmall pieces of board properly adapted to that purpofe. Thefe boards, when fet horizontally upon a table, and there fixed by faftening the lower of them

* Part V. fec. II.

with iron cranks, form the ſupport of two perpendicular pillars of baked wood, and of the rubber of the machine. One of the pillars, together with the ſpring ſupporting the rubber, ſlides in a groove, which reaches almoſt the whole length of the upper board, and, by means of ſcrews, may be placed at any required diſtance from the other pillar, which is fixed, being let through a mortice in the upper board, and ſtrongly faſtened to the lower. In theſe two pillars are ſeveral holes for the admittance of the ſpindles of different globes, and as they may be ſituated at any diſtance from one another, they may be adapted to receive not only globes, but alſo cylinders, or ſpheroids of different ſizes. In this machine, ſays Dr. PRIESTLEY, more than one globe or cylinder may be uſed at once, by fixing them one above the other in the different holes of the pillars, and by adapting to each a proper pulley, they may be whirled all at once, and their power united in order to increaſe the Electricity *; but in

* When ſeveral globes are uſed at once, and their power united, it has been found by experiment, that the Electricity

in this conſtruction I do not think that different rubbers can be conveniently applied to them all; which is a capital imperfection.

"The rubber conſiſts of a hollow piece "of copper, filled with horſe-hair, and "covered with a baſil ſkin. It is ſupport- "ed by a ſocket, which receives the cylin- "drical axis of a round and flat piece of "baked wood, the oppoſite part of which "is inſerted into the ſocket of a bent ſteel "ſpring. Theſe parts are eaſily ſeparated, ſo "that the rubber, or the piece of wood that "ſerves to inſulate it, may be changed at "pleaſure. The ſpring admits of a two- "fold alteration of poſition. It may be ei- "ther ſlipped along the groove, or moved "in the contrary direction (the groove being wider than the ſcrew which faſtens the ſpring), "ſo as to give it every deſirable "poſition with reſpect to the globe or cy-

tricity does not increaſe in proportion to their number, although it is more, than what may be produced by a ſingle globe. However, as the friction, and the difficulty of working the machine increaſes in proportion to the number of globes or cylinders, ſo I think that one good large cylinder is preferable to many of them.

 "linder

" linder; and it is, beſides, furniſhed with " a ſcrew, which makes it preſs harder or " lighter, as the operator chooſes."

The wheel of this machine is fixed to the table; it has ſeveral grooves, for admitting more ſtrings than one, in caſe that two or three globes, or cylinders are uſed at a time; and as it is diſſengaged from the frame of the machine, the latter may be ſkrewed at different diſtances from the former, and thus ſuited to the variable length of the ſtring.

The prime Conductor is of hollow copper, made in the ſhape of a pear, ſituated with its neck upwards, and with its bottom or rounder part upon a ſtand of baked wood; and an arched wire proceeds from its neck, having an open ring at its end, in which ſome ſmall pointed wires are hung, that by playing lightly upon the electric collect the electric fluid from it.

This machine notwithſtanding that it has ſeveral imperfections, is yet a very good invention; but except different globes, or cylinders, or ſeveral of thoſe at once are required to be uſed, I think a great deal of the work may be ſpared, and the machine might be made more ſimple, and conciſe.

Next to Dr. PRIESTLEY's machine I ſhall deſcribe another, which was invented by Dr. INGENHOUSZ, and which for its ſimplicity, and conciſeneſs, makes a fine contraſt with the former.

This machine conſiſts of a circular glaſs plate about one foot diameter, which is turned vertically by a winch fixed to the iron axis that paſſes through its middle, and it is rubbed by four cuſhions, each about two inches long, ſituated at the oppoſite ends of the vertical diameter.

The frame conſiſts of a bottom board, about a foot ſquare, or a foot long and ſix inches broad, which, when the machine is to be uſed, may be faſtened by an iron crank to the table. Upon this board two other ſlender, and ſmaller ones are raiſed, which lie parallel to one another, and are faſtened together at their top by a ſmall piece of wood.

wood. Thefe upright boards fupport in their middle the axis of the plate, and to them the rubbers are faftened.

The Conductor is of hollow brafs, and from its extremities branches are extended, which coming very near the extremity of the glafs, collect the Electricity from it.

The power of this machine is perhaps more than a perfon would judge by looking at it. It may be objected that this conftruction will not eafily admit of the rubbers being infulated, nor confequently be adapted to a great variety of experiments; but at the fame time it muft be allowed, that it is very portable, that it is not very liable to be out of order, and that it has a power fufficiently ftrong for phyfical purpofes; on which account it may be conveniently ufed.

The laft machine, that I am to defcribe, is that reprefented in fig. 1 of plate 2 which has all the improvements hitherto made, except that it is not capable of admitting different kinds, or more than one Electric, but which,

which, indeed, it ſeems not to ſtand in need of. The electric power of ſuch a machine I think is equal to what may be obtained by any other conſtruction, and at the ſame time its ſize being neither remarkably large, nor at all inconvenient, renders it, I think, the *completeſt machine* hitherto contrived*.

The frame of this machine conſiſts of the bottom board A B C, which, when the machine is to be uſed, is faſtened to the table by two iron cranks, one of which appears in the figure near C. Upon the bottom board are perpendicularly raiſed two ſtrong wooden pillars K L, and A H, which ſupport the cylinder, and the wheel. From one of the braſs caps of the cylinder F F, an axle of ſteel proceeds, which paſſes quite through a hole in the pillar K L, and has on this ſide of the pillar a pulley I fixed upon its ſquare extremity. Upon the circumference of this pulley there are three or four grooves, in order to ſuit the variable length of the ſtring

* Theſe machines are made, and ſold, by Mr. GEORGE ADAMS, in Fleet-ſtreet, London, philoſophical inſtrument-maker to his Majeſty.

a b, which goes round one of them, and round the groove of the wheel D. The other cap of the cylinder has a ſmall cavity, which fits the conical extremity of a ſtrong ſkrew, that proceeds from the pillar H. The wheel D, which is moved by the handle E, turns round a ſtrong axle, proceeding from almoſt the middle of the pillar K L.

The rubber G of this machine is on each end two inches ſhorter than the cylinder (*i. e.* the cylinder excluſive of the necks), and it is made to rub about one fourth part of the cylinder's circumference; it conſiſts of a thin quilted cuſhion of ſilk, ſtuffed with hair, and faſtened by ſilk ſtrings upon a piece of wood, which is properly adapted to the ſurface of the cylinder. From the upper extremity of the cuſhion proceeds a piece of oiled ſilk, that covers almoſt all the upper part of the cylinder; and to the lower extremity of the cuſhion, or rather of the piece of wood, to which the cuſhion is tied, a piece of leather is faſtened, which is turned over the cuſhion, *i. e.* ſtands between it and the ſurface of the cylinder. Upon this leather, which reaches from the lower to almoſt the upper extremity of of the cuſhion, ſome of the above-deſcribed amalgam is to be worked, ſo as to be forced as much as poſſible into its ſubſtance. This rubber is ſupported by two ſprings, ſkrewed to its back, and from which it may be eaſily unſkrewed, when occaſion requires it. The two ſprings proceed from the wooden cap of a ſtrong glaſs pillar*, perpendicular to the bottom board of the machine. This pillar has a ſquare wooden baſis, that ſlides in two grooves in the bottom board A B C, upon which it is faſtened by a ſkrew. In this manner the glaſs pillar may be faſtened at any required diſtance, and in conſequence the rubber may be made to preſs harder or lighter upon the cylinder. The rubber in this manner is perfectly inſulated, and when inſulation is not required, a chain with a ſmall hook may be hanged to it, ſo as to have a regular communication with the piece

* This glaſs pillar as well as the glaſs feet of inſulating ſtools in general, ſhould be covered with varniſh, or rather with ſealing-wax, otherwiſe they inſulate very imperfectly, on account of the moiſture, that they attract from the air, in damp weather.

of

of leather, the chain then falling upon the table, renders the rubber uninſulated.

Fig. 2 repreſents the prime Conductor AB belonging to this machine. This is of hollow braſs, and is ſupported by two glaſs pillars varniſhed, that by two braſs ſockets are fixed in the board C C. This Conductor receives the electric fluid through the points of the collector L, which are ſet at about half an inch diſtance from the ſurface of the cylinder of the machine.

If the handle E fig. 1 of the wheel, be turned (and on account of the rubber it ſhould be turned always in the direction of the letters a b c) this machine, ſtanding in the ſituation, that is repreſented in the figure, will give poſitive Electricity, *i. e.* the prime Conductor will be electrified poſitively, or overcharged with electric fluid; for by the action of rubbing, the cylinder pumps as it were the fluid from the rubber, and every other body properly connected with it, and gives it to the prime Conductor. But if a negative Electricity is required, then, the chain muſt be removed from the rubber

 and

and hung to the prime Conductor; for in this caſe the Electricity of the prime Conductor will be communicated to the ground, and the rubber remaining inſulated, will appear ſtrongly negative. Another Conductor equal to the Conductor A B fig. 2. may be connected with the inſulated rubber, and then, the operator may obtain as ſtrong negative Electricity from this, as he can poſitive from the Conductor A B fig. 2.

CHAP-

CHAP. III.

The particular Deſcription of ſome other neceſſary Parts of the electrical Apparatus.

FIG. 4. repreſents a ſtand ſupporting the electrometers D D C C. B is the baſis of it made of common wood. A is a pillar of wax, glaſs, or baked wood. To the top of the pillar, if it be of wax or glaſs, a circular piece of wood is fixed, but if the pillar be of baked wood, that may conſtitute the whole. From this circular piece of wood proceed four arms of glaſs, or baked wood, ſuſpending at their ends, four electrometers, two of which D D are ſilk threads about eight inches long, ſuſpending each a ſmall downy feather at its end. The other two electrometers C C are thoſe with very ſmall balls of cork, or of the pith of elder, and they are conſtructed in the following manner. *a b* is a ſtick of glaſs about ſix inches long, covered with ſealing-wax, and ſhaped at top in a ring: from the lower extremity of this ſtick of glaſs proceed

ceed two fine linen threads * *c c* about five inches long, each ſuſpending a cork, or pith ball *d* about one-eight of an inch in diameter. When this electrometer is not electrified, the threads *c c* hang parallel to each other, and the cork balls are in contact; but when electrified, they repel one another, as repreſented in the figure. The glaſs ſtick *a b* ſerves for an inſulating handle, by which the electrometer may be ſupported, when it is uſed without the ſtand A B.

Another ſpecies of the above electrometer is repreſented in fig 3d, which conſiſts of a linen thread, having at each end a ſmall cork ball. This electrometer is ſuſpended by the middle of the thread on any Conductor proper for the purpoſe, and ſerves to ſhew the kind, and quantity of its Electricity.

Fig 7th. repreſents Mr. HENLY's quadrant electrometer fixed upon a ſmall ſtand, from which it may be occaſionally ſeparated and fixed upon the prime Conductor, or in

* Theſe threads ſhould be wetted in a weak ſolution of ſalt.

any other place at pleaſure. This electrometer conſiſts of a perpendicular ſtem formed at the top like a ball, and furniſhed at its lower end with a braſs ferrule, by which it may be fixed in one of the holes of the prime Conductor, or in its proper ſtand, as occaſion requires. To the upper part of the ſtem, or pillar, a graduated ivory ſemicircle is fixed, about the middle of which is a braſs arm, which contains a pin, or the ſmall axis of the index. The index conſiſts of a very ſlender ſtick, which reaches from the center of the graduated ſemicircle to the braſs ferrule, and at its lower extremity, is faſtened, a ſmall cork ball, nicely turned in a lathe.

The propereſt wood, for the purpoſe of making the pillar and index of this electrometer, is box, and this pillar and index ſhould be well rounded, and made as ſmooth as poſſible. When this electrometer is not electrified, the index hangs parallel to the pillar, as in fig. 7; but when it is electrified, the index recedes more or leſs, according to the quantity of Electricity, from the ſtem;

ſtem; as repreſented on the prime Conductor E fig. 2.

The main of Mr. LANE's diſcharging Electrometer, conſiſts in a braſs ball about one inch and a half in diameter, ſcrewed to a braſs graduated rod, and adapted to a proper frame, ſo that it may be ſet at any required diſtance from the prime Conductor, or the knob of an electric jar. The principal uſe of this electrometer is to let a jar diſcharge by itſelf through any proper circuit, without uſing any diſcharging-rod, or removing any part of the apparatus; and to give ſhocks nearly of the ſame ſtrength. Suppoſe for inſtance, that the above-mentioned braſs ball be ſet at half an inch diſtance from the prime Conductor, and that a coated jar be ſituated ſo as to touch the prime Conductor with its knob, and to have its outſide coating communicating with the above-mentioned braſs ball. Now it is evident that the circuit, from the outſide to the inſide of the jar, is interrupted only between the prime Conductor and the braſs ball, which lie half an inch aſunder; therefore when the jar is charging, and the charge is become ſo high as to ſtrike through half an inch of air, the jar will difcharge itfelf, and by keeping the brafs ball at the fame diftance from the prime Conductor, and charging the jar fucceffively, the fhocks will be of the fame ftrength.

This electrometer is, however, fubject to a great inconvenience, which is, that the furface of the brafs ball is often deprived of its fmoothnefs by the force of the explofion, in which cafe it becomes unfit for ufe. The principal ufe for which this electrometer is intended, *i. e.* to give fhocks of the fame ftrength, may be more elegantly obtained by the above-defcribed quadrant electrometer, which fuffers no damage by the difcharges; hence, I think, that a delineation, and a more particular defcription of the difcharging electrometer is unneceffary.

Fig. 5th reprefents Mr. HENLY's univerfal difcharger, which is of a very extenfive ufe, and is compofed of the following parts, A is a flat board fifteen inches long, four inches broad, and one thick, or thereabous, which forms the bafis of the inftrument. B B are two glafs pillars cemented in two holes upon the

the board A, and furniſhed at their top with braſs caps, each of which has a turning joint, and ſupports a ſpring tube, through which, the wire D C ſlides: each of theſe caps is compoſed of three pieces of braſs, connected ſo, that the wire D C, beſides its ſliding through the ſocket, has two other motions, *viz.* an horizontal and a vertical one. Each of the wires D C, D C is furniſhed with an open ring at one end, and at the other end has a braſs ball D, which, by a ſhort ſpring ſocket, is ſlipt upon its pointed extremity, and it may be removed from it at pleaſure. E is a ſtrong circular piece of wood five inches in diameter, having, on its ſurface, a ſlip of ivory inlaid, and furniſhed with a ſtrong cylindrical foot, which fits the cavity of the ſocket F, which is faſtened in the middle of the bottom board, and has a ſcrew G, which ſerves to faſten the foot of the circular board E at any required height. H is a ſmall preſs belonging to this inſtrument; it conſiſts of two oblong pieces of board, which may be preſſed againſt each other by means of two ſcrews *a a*: the lower of theſe boards has a cylindrical foot equal to the foot of the circular board E. When this preſs is to be uſed, it is fixed into the ſocket F, in the place of the circular board E, which muſt, in that caſe, be removed.

Fig. 11th is an electric jar coated with tin-foil on the inſide and outſide, within three inches of the top of the cylindrical part of the glaſs, having a wire with a round braſs knob A at its extremity. This wire paſſes through the cork * D, that ſtops the mouth of the jar, and at its lower end, is bended ſo as to touch the inſide coating in ſeveral places.

Fig. 10th repreſents a battery compoſed of ſixteen jars coated in the inſide and outſide with tin-foil, which all together contain about twelve feet of coated glaſs. About the middle of each of theſe jars is a cork that ſuſtains a wire, which at the top is faſtened round, or ſoldered to the wire E knobed at each end, which connects the inſide coatings of four jars; and by the wires F F F the inſide coat-

* When corks are uſed to ſtop electric jars, they ſhould be made very dry, and dipped in melted bees-wax or varniſhed.

ings

ings of all the ſixteen jars are connected together. Each of the wires F has a ring at one end, through which, one of the wires E paſſes, and the other end has a braſs knob. If the whole force of the battery is not required, one, two or three rows of jars may be uſed at pleaſure; for as each of the wires F F F is moveable round the wire E, which paſſes through its ring, and reſts upon the next wire E, it may be eaſily removed from that, and turned upon the contrary wire E; and thus the communication between one row of jars and another may be diſcontinued at pleaſure. See the figure.

The ſquare box that contains theſe jars is of wood lined at the bottom with ſheet-lead or tin, and has two handles on two oppoſite ſides, by which it may be eaſily removed. In one ſide of the box is a hole, through which, an iron hook B paſſes, which communicates with the metallic lining of the box, and conſequently with the outſide coating of all the jars. To this hook is faſtened a wire, the other end of which is connected with the diſcharging rod.

The difcharging rod confifts of a glafs handle A, and two curved wires B B, which move by a joint C, fixed to the brafs cap of the glafs handle A. The wires B B are pointed, and the points enter the knobs D D, to which they are fcrewed, and may be unfcrewed from them at pleafure. By this conftruction we have the opportunity of ufing the balls or the points, as occafion requires; and as the wires are moveable by the joint C, they may be adapted to fmaller or larger jars at pleafure.

The battery, reprefented in the plate, is a fmall one in comparifon to thofe now frequently ufed, and much too weak for the purpofe of fome experiments, hereafter to be defcribed. But I thought it fufficient to give an idea of its conftruction; and, when a large battery is to be conftructed, I would recommend rather to make two, three, or more fmall ones as reprefented in the plate, than a fingle large battery, which is heavy, and, on feveral accounts, inconvenient. The force of feveral fmall batteries may be eafily united by a wire or a chain, and thus they may be

made

made to act in every respect like a large one.

F in fig. 2. is a circular brafs plate hung on the prime Conductor by a chain, and resting in an horizontal position. Underneath this, there is another plate P parallel, and equal to the former (but it would be better if it was a little larger), which is supported by a ftand H of brafs, having alfo a foket to receive the foot of the plate, and a fcrew G to fix it at different diftances.

D in fig. 2. is a fly made of fmall brafs wires fixed in a cap of brafs alfo, which is to be put upon the pointed wire K, that is fcrewed to the prime Conductor, upon which it muft ftand in equilibrio, like the needle of a compafs. The other ends *a*, *b*, *c*, *d* of the wires are pointed and bent all one way.

N. B. whenever hereafter I mention the prime Conductor, I mean the prime Conductor naked, that is, without the parallel brafs plates F P, without the fly D and its fupporting pin K, without the electrometers E, and even without the knobed rod I B, which is is ſcrewed to it occaſionally; except the contrary is expreſſed.

It is highly requiſite for an Electrician to have by him ſeveral inſulating ſtools, or ſtands, they being very neceſſary for ſeveral experiments. The beſt materials to conſtruct theſe are glaſs covered with ſealing-wax, and baked wood *. A large ſtool, proper to inſulate a chair upon, or two, three perſons ſtanding, may be made with a ſtrong board, about two feet and a half ſquare, and may be ſupported by four feet of glaſs, or baked wood, about eight inches long. But ſmall ſtands are better made with one foot or pillar, and all of baked wood or glaſs, without any conducting ſubſtance in their conſtruction. Drinking-glaſſes, either varniſhed, or in part covered with ſealing-wax, anſwer this purpoſe very well.

* The wood ſhould be baked very well, even till it becomes quite brown, it then being in the beſt ſtate for inſulation; and to make it ſtill better, *i. e.* to defend it from moſture, it may be ſlightly varniſhed as ſoon as it comes out of the oven, or elſe boiled in linſeed oil; but in this caſe, after boiling, it ſhould be made hot again, and then it is fit for uſe.

CHAP.

CHA

Practical Rules concer: trical Apparatus, an periments.

IT often happens are at a loſs to aſſign

experiments do not ſucceed with them as deſcribed in the Treatiſes on Electricity. Sometimes they are in poſſeſſion of very good inſtruments, but, by reaſon of ſome circumſtance or other, unattended to, they are quite uſeleſs in their hands. This indeed can be remedied by nothing but practice, and it is by long uſe, that the Electrician, as well as the Practitioner in any art or ſcience, becomes ſo good an Operator, as to uſe his inſtruments to the beſt advantage. A few rules are however very neceſſary to guide him in his operations; and although theſe alone are inſufficient to make a perſon a complete practical Electrician, yet, when accompanied with the actual management of the apparatus, they facilitate the uſe of it, and render the performance of the experiments more accurate and expeditious.

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trThe firſt thing that the young Electrician ſhould obſerve, is, the preſervation, and care, of his inſtruments. The electrical machine, the coated jars, and in ſhort every part of the electrical apparatus, ſhould be kept clean, and as free as poſſible from duſt, and moiſture.

When the weather is clear, and the air dry, eſpecially in clear and froſty weather, the electrical machine will always work well. But when the weather is very hot, the electrical machine is not ſo powerful: nor in damp weather, except it be brought into a warm room; and the cylinder, the ſtands, the jars, &c. be made thoroughly dry.

Before the machine be uſed, the cylinder ſhould be firſt wiped very clean with a ſoft linen cloth, that is dry, clean, and warm; and afterwards with a clean hot flannel, or an old ſilk handkerchief; this done, if the winch be turned, when the prime Conductor, and other inſtruments, are removed from the electrical machine, and the knuckle be held at a little diſtance from the ſurface of the

2 cylinder,

cylinder, it will be ſoon perceived that the electric fluid comes like a wind from the cylinder to the knuckle, and, if the motion be a little continued, ſparks, and crackling will ſoon follow. This indicates that the machine is in good order, and the Electrician may proceed to perform his experiments. But, if, when the winch is turned for ſome time, no wind is felt upon the knuckle, then the fault is, very likely, in the rubber, and to remedy that, uſe the following directions: By unſcrewing the ſcrews on the back of the rubber, remove it from its glaſs pillar, and keep it a little near the fire, ſo that its ſilk part may by dried; take now a dry piece of mutton ſuet, or a little tallow from a candle, and juſt paſs it over the leather of the rubber, then ſpread a ſmall quantity of the above-deſcribed amalgam over it, and force it as much as poſſible into the leather. This done, replace the rubber upon the glaſs pillar; let the glaſs cylinder be wiped once more, and then the machine is fit for uſe.

Sometimes the machine will not work well becauſe the rubber is not ſufficiently ſupplied with electric fluid; which happens when

when the table, upon which the machine ſtands, and to which the chain of the rubber is connected, is very dry, and conſequently in a bad conducting ſtate. Even the floor and the walls of the room are, in very dry weather, bad Conductors, and they cannot ſupply the rubber ſufficiently. In this caſe the beſt expedient is, to connect the chain of the rubber, by means of a long wire, with ſome moiſt ground, a piece of water, or with the iron work of the water-pump; by which means the rubber will be ſupplied with as much electric fluid as is required.

When a ſufficient quantity of amalgam has been accumulated upon the leather of the rubber, and the machine does not work very well, then, inſtead of putting more amalgam, it will be ſufficient to take the rubber off, and to ſcrape a little, that, which is already upon the leather.

It will be often obſerved, that, the cylinder, after being uſed ſome time, contracts ſome black ſpots, occaſioned by the amalgam, or ſome foulneſs of the rubber, which grow continually larger, and greatly obſtruct its electric power. These spots must be carefully taken off, and the cylinder must be frequently wiped in order to prevent its contracting them.

In charging electric jars in general, it must be observed, that not every machine will charge them equally high. That machine, whose electric power is the strongest, will always charge the jars highest. If the coated jars, before they are used, be made a little warm, they will receive, and hold the charge the better.

If several jars are connected together, among which there is one, that is apt to discharge itself very soon, then the other jars will also soon be discharged with that; although they may be capable of holding a very great charge by themselves. When electric jars are to be discharged, the Electrician must be cautious lest, by some circumstance not adverted to, the shock should pass through any part of his body; for an unexpected shock, though not very strong, may occasion several disagreeable accidents.

In

In making the difcharge, care muft be taken that the difcharging rod be not placed on the thinneft part of the glafs, for that may caufe the burfting of the jar.

When large batteries are difcharged, jars will be often found broken in it, which burft at the time of the difcharge. To remedy this inconvenience Mr. NAIRNE fays he has found a very effectual method, which is, never to difcharge the battery through a good Conductor, except the circuit be at leaft five feet long. Mr. NAIRNE fays that, ever fince he made ufe of this precaution, he has difcharged a very large battery near a hundred times without ever breaking a fingle jar, whereas before he was continually breaking them. But here it muft be confidered that the length of the circuit weakens the force of the fhock proportionably; the higheft degree of which is in many experiments required.

It is advifeable when a jar, and efpecially a battery has been difcharged, not to touch its wires with the hand, before the difcharging rod be applied to its fides a fecond, and

and even a third time; as there generally remains a refiduum of the charge*, which is fometimes very confiderable.

When any experiment is to be performed, which requires but a fmall part of the apparatus, the remaining part of it fhould be placed at a diftance from the machine, the prime Conductor, and even from the table, if that is not very large. Candles, particularly, fhould be placed at a confiderable diftance from the prime Conductor, for the effluvia of their flames carry off much of the electric fluid.

Laftly the young Electrician fhould be cautioned not to depend on firft appearances in Electricity. A new phenomenon may juftly excite his curiofity; it is laudable to remark it, and to purfue the hint; but at the fame time even the doubtful affertion of

* This refiduum is occafioned by the Electricity, that, when the jar is charging, fpreads itfelf over the uncoated part of the glafs near the coating, which will not be difcharged at firft, but gradually returns to the coating after the firft difcharge.

a new fact ſhould never be made, till after a number of ſimilar and concurring experiments. Electricity is a ſcience that often deceives the ſenſes, and the moſt experienced Electrician frequently finds himſelf miſtaken in things, which perhaps he may have before conſidered as the moſt certain.

CHAP. V.

Experiments concerning electric Attraction, and Repulsion.

EXPERIMENT I.

The electrified Cork ball Electrometer.

WHEN the electrical machine is put in order, and the prime Conductor is set so, that the points of the collector are about half an inch from the surface of the cylinder, fix at the end of the prime Conductor the knobed rod I B fig. 2. and hang on it the electrometer with the cork balls fig. 3. The balls will now touch one another, the threads hanging perpendicularly, and parallel to each other. But if the cylinder of the machine be whirled by turning the winch E, then the cork balls will repel one another, and more, or less, according as the Electricity is more, or less powerful.

In this experiment the glaſs cylinder extracting the electric fluid from the rubber, throws it upon the pointed wires of the collector, and in conſequence upon the prime Conductor, and the electrometer; which are all connected together: and as bodies overcharged with electric fluid will always repel each other, ſo the cork balls muſt repel each other.

If the electrometer be hung to a prime Conductor negatively electrified, *i. e.* connected with the inſulated rubber of the machine, the cork balls will alſo repel each other; for bodies, undercharged, will repel each other, as well as bodies overcharged with electric fluid.

If, in this ſtate of repulſion, the prime Conductor is touched with ſome conducting ſubſtance not inſulated, the cork balls will immediately come together; for the electric fluid ſuperinduced upon the prime Conductor, and the electrometer communicating with it, will be carried away to the ground by that conducting body; ſo that in this

caſe

case the prime Conductor can never be overcharged, nor can it be undercharged, if connected with the rubber; for its deficiency of fluid is supplied through that conducting body, with which it has been touched. But if instead of the conducting substance, the prime Conductor is touched with an electric, as for instance a stick of sealing-wax, a piece of glass, &c. then the cork balls will continue to repel each other; because the electric fluid cannot be conducted through that electric; hence we have an easy method of determining what bodies are Conductors, and what electrics.*

This electrical repulsion is also shewn by the quadrant electrometer, with a large downy feather, or the like; for if these be connected with the prime Conductor, and the winch be turned, the electrometer will raise its index, and the feather by the divergency of its down, will appear swelled in a beautiful manner.

* This method in gross will do very well; but when the conducting power of fluids or other like bodies, and the degree of that power is to be ascertained, then recourse must be had to other means more nice, and accurate.

Experiment II.

Attraction and Repulsion of light Bodies.

Connect with the prime Conductor the two parallel brass plates F, P, as represented in fig. 2. at about three inches distance from one another, and upon the lower plate put any kind of light bodies, as bran, bits of paper, bits of leaf-gold, &c. then work the machine, and the light bodies will soon move between the two plates, leaping alternately from one to the other with great velocity. If, instead of bran or irregular pieces of other matter, small figures of men or other things cut in paper, and painted, be put upon the plate, they will generally move in an erect position, but will sometimes leap one upon another, or exhibit different postures, so as to afford a pleasing spectacle to an observing company.

In this experiment both the attraction, and repulsion of Electricity are observed at the same time: for when the upper plate F, which communicates with the prime Con-

Conductor, is electrified, the small bodies placed upon the lower plate, together with that plate, by being within the sphere of action of the electrified upper plate, become actually possessed of a contrary Electricity, leaving their proper quantity of fluid in the lower plate, or the other conducting bodies, that communicate with it. But bodies differently electrified attract each other; therefore the plate F, attracts those light bodies. Now as soon as these bodies touch the plate F, they become instantly possessed of the same Electricity with the plate, and will therefore be immediately repelled to the lower plate, which is actually electrified with the contrary Electricity, and by touching the light bodies, assists in repelling them again to the upper plate; and thus the plates continue to act upon the light bodies alternately.

That the light bodies cannot be attracted by the upper plate, except they become first possessed of a contrary Electricity, may be observed as follows. Put the said light bodies upon a clean, and dry pane of glass; then take off the brass plate P, with its stand

G, and in its ſtead put the pane of glaſs, holding it by one corner; this done let the wheel of the machine be turned, and you will ſee that the light bodies are not attracted by the braſs plate F; for in this caſe they have no opportunity of parting with their proper quantity of fluid, and conſequently can not acquire the contrary Electricity. But if to the under ſide of the pane of glaſs, on which the light bodies are placed, a finger or any other conductor be preſented, then, the light bodies will be inſtantly attracted by the plate F, and will leap between the glaſs and plate, in the ſame manner as between the two plates; for theſe bodies now depoſit their fluid upon the upper ſurface of the glaſs plate, whilſt the under ſurface depoſits its fluid upon the finger, or other conductor, that has been brought near it *. If this experiment be continued the glaſs will ſoon be charged.

* If the above experiment be made with a prime Conductor negatively electrified, the effect will be the ſame, only the Electricities of the plates are reverſed; *i. e.* the upper plate is electrified negatively, and the under plate, by being in the atmoſphere of the upper one, is poſitively electrified.

EXPE-

Experiment III.

The Flying-feather, or Shuttle-cork.

The phenomena of electric attraction and repulsion may be represented also with a glass tube, or a charged bottle, and some of them in a manner more satisfactory, than with the machine.

Take a glass tube (whether smooth, or rough, is not material), and after having rubbed it, let a small light feather be let out of your fingers at the distance of about eight or nine inches from it. This feather will be immediately attracted by the tube, and will stick very close to its surface for about two or three seconds, and sometimes longer; after which time it will be repelled, and if the tube be kept under it, the feather will continue floating in the air at a considerable distance from the tube, without coming near it again, except it first touches some conducting substance; and if you manage the tube dexterously you may drive the

the feather through the air of a room at your pleaſure.

The reaſon of this experiment is obvious; for when the feather is electrified, it cannot approach the tube again, except it firſt touches ſome conducting body, becauſe it cannot part with its Electricity when floating in the air, and therefore cannot acquire a contrary Electricity: conſequently it muſt remain in a ſtate incapable of being again attracted by the excited tube.

If it be aſked, why, when the feather is at firſt attracted by the tube, it ſticks for ſo conſiderable a time to its ſurface before it is repelled, the anſwer is, that the feather being an electric, requireth ſome time before it acquires any conſiderable quantity of Electricity.

There is a remarkable circumſtance attending this experiment, which is, that if the feather be kept at a diſtance from the tube by the force of electric repulſion, it always preſents the ſame part towards the tube:—You may move the excited tube about the feather very ſwiftly, and yet the ſame ſide of the feather will always be preſented to the tube. The reaſon of this phenomenon is, that the equilibrium of the electric fluid in the parts of the feather, being once diſturbed, cannot eaſily be reſtored; becauſe the feather is an electric, or at leaſt a very bad Conductor. When the feather has acquired a quantity of Electricity from the tube, it is plain that by the action of the excited tube, that ſuperinduced electricity will be in the greateſt part forced on that ſide of the feather, which happens to be at firſt the fartheſt from the tube; hence that part will always afterward be repelled the fartheſt.

This experiment may be agreeably varied in the following manner: A perſon may hold in his hand an excited tube of ſmooth glaſs, and another perſon may hold an excited rough glaſs tube, a ſtick of ſealing-wax, or in ſhort another electric negatively electrified, at about one foot and a half diſtance from the ſmooth glaſs tube: a feather now may be let go between theſe two differently excited electrics, and it will leap alter-

alternately from one electric to the other; and the two perſons will ſeem to drive a ſhuttle-cork from one to the other, by the force of Electricity.

Experiment IV.

The ſmall inſulated Body.

Tie a ſmall body, as for inſtance a light piece of cork, to a ſilk thread about eight inches long, and holding the thread by its end, let the ſmall body hang at the diſtance of about eight inches from the ſide of the prime Conductor electrified. This ſmall body, if the electrification of the Conductor is not ſtrong, will not be attracted; for, being inſulated, it cannot, by depoſiting its fluid upon, or receiving it from another body (when the prime Conductor is electrified negatively), become contrarily electrified. But if a finger or any conducting ſubſtance be preſented to the ſide of the ſmall body which is fartheſt from the prime Conductor, then the ſmall body will immediately move toward the prime Conductor; for it has depoſited its own fluid upon, or acquired ſome (in caſe the conductor is negatively electrified) from the body preſented to it; and when this body has touched the prime Conductor it will be inſtantly repelled from it, on account of the repulſion exiſting between bodies poſſeſſed of the ſame kind of Electricity.

Indeed, if this inſulated body be very near to the prime Conductor, or the prime Conductor ſtrongly electrified, then the ſmall body will be attracted without preſenting to it any conducting ſubſtance; but in this caſe its natural quantity of electric fluid will be either repelled into the contiguous air, or crouded on the part of the body, which is fartheſt from the prime Conductor, if the Conductor is electrified *poſitively*; but if it is electrified *negatively*, then the additional quantity of fluid, neceſſary to render the ſmall body overcharged, will be acquired from the air, or the natural fluid belonging to that body will be all crouded on that ſide of it, which is neareſt to the prime Conductor.

If

If this ſmall body, inſtead of the ſilk, be ſuſpended by a linen thread it will be attracted at a much greater diſtance, than in the other caſe; for now the electric fluid will eaſily be conducted by the thread, paſſing upwards, or downwards according as the prime Conductor is electrified, *viz.* negatively, or poſitively.

Experiment V.

The electric Well.

Place upon an electric ſtool a metal quart mug, or ſome other conducting body nearly of the ſame form and dimenſion; then tie a ſhort cork ball electrometer of the kind repreſented fig. 3.* at the end of a ſilk thread proceeding from the ceiling of the room, or from any other proper ſupport, ſo that the electrometer may be ſuſpended within the mug, and no part of it may be above the mouth; this done electrify the mug by

* Inſtead of the electrometer there may be uſed any other kind of ſmall conducting body; but that ſeems beſt adapted to ſuch experiments.

giving

giving it a ſpark with an excited electric or otherwiſe, and you will ſee that the electrometer, whilſt it remains in that inſulated ſituation, even if it be made to touch the ſides of the mug, is not attracted by it, nor does it acquire any Electricity; but, if whilſt it ſtands ſuſpended within the mug, a Conductor, ſtanding out of the mug, be made to communicate with, or only preſented to, it, then, the electrometer acquires an Electricity contrary to that of the mug, and a quantity of it, which is proportionable to the body, with which it has been made to communicate; and it is then immediately attracted by the mug.

The reaſon why in this experiment the electrometer contracts no Electricity whilſt ſuſpended intirely within the cavity of the mug, is, becauſe the Electricity of the mug acts upon the electrometer on all ſides, and this has no opportunity of parting with its fluid, when the mug is electrified poſitively; nor of receiving any, when the mug is electrified negatively. But, as ſoon as any Conductor communicates with it, the electrometer becomes immediately poſſeſſed of the

the Electricity contrary to that of the mug; for if the mug be electrified positively, the fluid belonging to the electrometer will be repelled to that body, which communicates with it; and which, being out of the mug, cannot be affected by its Electricity; and if the mug is electrified negatively, it will attract the fluid of the electrometer, which actually receives an additional quantity of it from that conducting body, with which it communicates. The electrometer therefore, becoming always possessed of a contrary Electricity, must necessarily be attracted.

If, by raising the silk thread a little, part of the electrometer, *i. e.* of its linen threads, are lifted just above the mouth of the mug, the balls will be immediately attracted; for then, by the action of the Electricity of the mug, it will acquire a contrary Electricity by giving to, or receiving the electric fluid from, the air above the cavity of the mug.

It has been supposed by some, that the electrometer in the above experiment (or any other small insulated body), hanging in the cavity of an electrified vessel, or the like,

like, is not attracted by the ſides of the veſſel, becauſe the attraction of Electricity, being as the ſquares of the diſtances inverſely, cannot affect the electrometer one way more than another; it being demonſtrable that, if to every point of a ſpherical concave ſurface, equal centripetal forces are directed, decreaſing as the ſquares of the diſtances from thoſe points, a ſmall body ſituated any where within that ſurface, would remain there, without being attracted one way more than another*.

But to this it may be replied, that, the demonſtration of the above-mentioned propoſition, if it is applicable to ſpherical, or cylindrical concave ſurfaces, cannot, however, be applied to every kind of irregular cavities, with which (if they exceed not a certain ſize) the above experiment ſucceeds as well, as with the cylindrical cavity of the mug.

In ſhort, in this experiment, when the mug is electrified poſitively, it is ſuppoſed,

* NEWTON's Principia book I. prop. LXX.

I. That the ſuperinduced fluid, taking place upon the external ſurface, occaſions the contiguous air to depoſit its fluid upon a ſubſequent quantity of air, and this overcharged air occaſions a contiguous circle, or quantity of air, to depoſit its fluid upon its ſubſequent or next adjacent circle, and ſo on. II. That none of the ſuperinduced fluid can exiſt upon the internal ſurface of the mug, and therefore, inſulated bodies intirely ſuſpended therein, can acquire no electricity, becauſe the internal air has no opportunity of parting with its own fluid, except a ſmall quantity about the mouth of the mug, where, accordingly, a little Electricity is obſervable. When the mug is electrified negatively, then it is ſuppoſed I. That the deficiency of fluid in the mug is only on its external ſurface; for the air, contiguous to this ſurface, by acquiring an additional quantity of electric fluid from the next ſtratum of air, may become electrified poſitively. II. That the internal ſurface of the mug is not undercharged, becauſe its contiguous air, being ſurrounded by the mug, cannot become overcharged, by acquiring an additional quantity of fluid, except a ſmall quantity

 towards

towards the mouth of the mug, where, accordingly, a little Electricity is obſervable.

Experiment VI.

To diſtinguiſh the Quality of Electricity in electrified Bodies.

Before we proceed further, it is neceſſary, that we ſhould deſcribe ſome practical method of diſtinguiſhing the quality of the Electricity in an electrified body, which is abſolutely neceſſary for the right performance of the enſuing experiments. To do this, different methods may be followed, which however are all founded, either upon the electric attraction, and repulſion, or upon the different appearances of the electric light. To find out the quality of Electricity by the different appearances of its light, is a very convenient, and ſure method; but the phenomena of attraction and repulſion, afford one much more general, and eaſy; for ſometimes the quantity of Electricity to be obſerved is ſo very ſmall, that it will give no light, though it may be ſtill capable of attracting or repelling.

The general method to prove whether the Electricity of a body, electrified either by excitation, or communication, is negative, or positive, is, to bring it pretty near to an electrified electrometer D or C fig. 4, and obſerve whether the body attracts or repels it; for if the electrometer is electrified poſitively, and the electrified body repels it, then you may conclude that the body is alſo electrified poſitively; becauſe bodies, poſſeſſed of the ſame kind of Electricity, repel each other; but if the body preſented attracts the Electrometer, then it muſt be electrified negatively, becauſe there is no electric attraction between bodies, unleſs they are differently electrified; and as the electrometer is known to be electrified poſitively, the body is conſequently electrified negatively.

This may be alſo done by electrifying the electrometer negatively; but then the effects are juſt the contrary, *i. e.* the electrified body, if negative, will repel the electrometer, and if poſitive, will attract it.

In

In this experiment, however, it muſt be obſerved, that, if the Electricity of the electrified body is much ſtronger, than that of the electrometer, or the Electricity of the latter ſtronger, than that of the former, and the electrified body be brought very near the electrometer, then, they will attract one another, notwithſtanding they are poſſeſſed of the ſame kind of Electricity. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that one of the electrometers C is poſitively electrified, ſo that its cork balls may diverge about half an inch, and a glaſs tube ſtrongly excited be brought near it; when this tube is a foot diſtant, or more, the electrometer will be a little repelled by it; but if the tube be brought nearer, the cork balls, that before diverged half an inch, will now converge till they are in contact, and appear, as they actually are, unelectrified; becauſe the action of the excited tube has repelled their ſuperfluous fluid through the threads up to the remoteſt part of the electrometer. If the tube be preſented ſtill nearer, the balls will then be attracted by it, becauſe the ſtronger Electricity of the tube repels not only their ſuperin-

 duced,

duced, but alſo their natural quantity of fluid up the threads, &c. and therefore the balls, becoming negatively electrified, muſt neceſſarily be attracted by the tube.

But ſhould a more preciſe method than the above be required to determine the quality of the Electricity of an electrified body, the following may be uſed. Firſt electrify one of the electrometers C, placed upon the ſtand fig. 4, either poſitively, or negatively, at pleaſure: touch it, for inſtance, with an excited glaſs tube, ſo that its balls may repel, and ſtand about two inches diſtant from one another; then touch the other electrometer C with the electrified body, that you deſire to examine, ſo that it may be poſſeſſed of the ſame degree of Electricity: Laſtly, take either of the two electrometers by the top of the glaſs handle *a*, diſengage it from the arm of the ſtand, and bring it near the other electrometer; if then, the balls of one electrometer repel thoſe of the other, you may conclude that they are poſſeſſed of the ſame kind of Electricity; but if they attract each other, you may conclude that they were electrified with contrary

trary Electricities; and as you know the Electricity of that electrometer, which was firſt electrified, you will alſo know the Electricity of the other electrometer, *i. e.* of the electrified body, with which it was touched.

The above experiment may be alſo made with the ſingle-thread electrometers; for if they are brought near to one another, when their feathers are electrified, they will, if poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity, repel, or if poſſeſſed of contrary Electricities, attract each other.

Experiment VII.

The inſulated metallic Rod.

Inſulate in an horizontal poſition a metallic rod about two feet long, having blunt ends, and to one of its ends ſuſpend an Electrometer, like that repreſented fig. 3, then bring within three or four inches diſtance of its other end an excited glaſs tube. On the approach of the tube, the balls of the electrometer will open, and if you preſent towards them a body poſitively electrified, you will perceive, that they diverge with poſitive Electricity. If the tube is removed, the balls come together again, and no Electricity remains in them, or in the metallic rod. But if while the tube is near one end of the rod and the balls diverge with poſitive Electricity, the other end of the rod, *viz.* that, from which the electrometer hangs be touched with ſome conductor, the cork balls will come immediately together, and they will remain ſo when the Conductor has been removed;—remove now the excited glaſs tube, and the balls will immediately diverge with negative Electricity, which ſhows that the rod remains undercharged, *i. e.* electrified negatively.

The reaſon of this experiment is, that the repelling power of the excited tube driving the fluid of one end of the rod to its other end, *i. e.* to that, with which the electrometer is connected, renders this end electrified poſitively; but in fact the tube communicates no Electricity to the rod, it only diſturbs the equable diffuſion of its fluid; in conſe-

quence

quence of this, the electrometer, hanging to the overcharged end of the rod, must necessarily appear to be electrified positively; but when the tube is removed, then the electrometer appears again unelectrified: for the fluid, which had by the action of the tube been driven to one end of the rod, now retires to its former situation, and leaves the rod with the electrometer unelectrified.

In the second case, when the balls of the electrometer diverge with positive Electricity, if that end of the rod is touched with some conductor, all its superfluous fluid, which is no other, than that belonging to the opposite end of the rod, will be communicated to that body, with which the rod is touched, and therefore the electrometer remains unelectrified; but now in fact the rod has lost some of its natural quantity of fluid; for if the end of it, that is farthest from the excited tube, remains in its natural state, the other end is undercharged; consequently, when the tube is removed, the small quantity of fluid, that remains in the rod will diffuse itself uniformly through it; but this

this quantity of fluid is leſs than that, naturally inherent in the rod; the rod will therefore remain undercharged, and hence the balls of the electrometer diverge with negative Electricity.

As this experiment is the baſis, or key, of ſeveral other, I ſhall inſiſt on it a little longer, and to render its explanation more intelligible, and clear, I ſhall make uſe of the following diagram.

A ——————— B.

Let the above-mentioned inſulated rod be repreſented by the line A B. When this rod is in its natural ſtate (in reſpect to Electricity), then the electric fluid belonging to it, is equally diffuſed throughout the rod. But when the excited tube is brought within three or four inches diſtance of one of the ends, for inſtance B, then the fluid, belonging to that end, will be driven to the end A, which end therefore becomes overcharged, and the end B undercharged, yet the rod has no more electric fluid now, than it had before; and when the tube is re-

removed to some distance from the rod, the superfluous fluid, repelled to the end A, returns to its former place, *i. e.* to the end B, and the equilibrium in the rod is restored. But if when the fluid in the rod is repelled to the end A, this end be touched, the fluid repelled thither will immediately be conducted away by the body, that touched it, and will leave the end A of the rod, in a natural state; but at the same time the end B, is undercharged; therefore, when the tube is removed, part of the natural fluid, belonging to the end A, will go to the end B, and thus the whole rod will remain undercharged, *i. e.* negatively electrified.

If the above experiment be made with an electric negatively electrified, for instance a rod of sealing-wax, instead of the excited glass tube, then the apparent Electricities in the rod will be just the reverse of what they were before; for in this case, that end of the rod, to which the electric has been presented, will be overcharged, and the opposite end undercharged, which opposite end, if touched in this state with some conducting substance, will acquire some of the electric fluid from that

that ſubſtance, and when, after that ſubſtance has been removed, the excited electric is alſo removed, the rod will remain overcharged.

In making this experiment, care muſt be taken that the end of the rod be very blunt, and that the electric be not very powerfully excited, otherwiſe a ſpark may paſs from this to the rod, which renders the experiment precarious.

EXPERIMENT VIII.

The two inſulated metallic Rods.

Take two rods of metal each about a foot long, furniſhed with knobs at both ends, and, either by ſilk lines, or by inſulating ſtools, inſulate them, ſo that they may ſtand horizontally in one direction, and at about half an inch diſtance from one another. To the middle of each of theſe rods hang an electrometer like that repreſented fig. 3.— This done, take an excited glaſs tube and bring it to about three inches diſtance from the knob of one of the rods; on doing which the electrometers of both rods will appear electrified: keep the tube in that ſituation for about two ſeconds, then remove it. The rods now will remain electrified, as appears by the electrometers, the firſt, *viz.* that to which the excited tube had been preſented remaining negative, and the other poſitive.

The reaſon of this phenomenon is, that when the tube was near the end of one of the rods, the action of its fluid, repelling the fluid of that rod, cauſed it to paſs in a ſpark to the other contiguous rod, on which account, when the tube was removed, the firſt rod, having loſt ſome of its natural fluid, remained undercharged, and the other rod, acquiring the fluid loſt by the former, became overcharged.

In this experiment if inſtead of the glaſs tube, an electric negatively excited be brought near the end of one rod, then that rod will be electrified poſitively, and the other negatively; for the action of this electric, producing juſt the contrary effect of the glaſs tube, inſtead of repelling the fluid of the firſt rod into the ſecond, attracts that of the ſecond into the firſt.

In this experiment, the electric does not communicate any Electricity of its own; but only disturbs the equilibrium between the fluid of the rods.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Experiments on electric Light.

THE following experiments require to be made in the dark; for although the electric light in ſeveral circumſtances may be ſeen in the day-light, yet its appearance in this manner is very confuſed, and that the Electrician might form a better idea of its different appearances, it is abſolutely neceſſary to perform ſuch experiments in a darkened room.

EXPERIMENT I.

The Star and Pencil of electric Light.

When the electrical machine is in good order, and the prime Conductor is ſituated with the collector ſufficiently near the glaſs cylinder (which ſituation I ſhall call hereafter its proper place), turn the winch, and you will ſee a lucid ſtar at each of the points of the collector. This ſtar is the conſtant appearance of the electric fluid that is entering a point. At the ſame time you will ſee a ſtrong light proceeding from the rubber, and ſpreading

ſpreading itſelf over the ſurface of the cy-linder; and if the excitation of the cylinder is very powerful, denſe ſtreams of fire will proceed from the rubber, and darting round almoſt half the circumference of the cylinder, will reach the points of the collector *.

If the chain of the rubber is taken off, and a pointed body, as for inſtance, the point of a needle or a pin, is preſented to the back of the rubber, at the diſtance of about two inches, a lucid pencil of rays will appear to proceed from the point preſented, and di-verge towards the rubber. This pencil is the conſtant appearance of the electric fluid iſſuing from a point; and in fact it now comes out of the point, in order to ſupply the rubber, which is conſtantly exhauſted by the cylinder in motion.

If another pointed body be preſented to the prime Conductor, it will appear illuminated with a ſtar; but if a pointed wire or other

* If the prime Conductor is removed, the denſe ſtreams of fire will go quite round the cylinder; reaching from one ſide of the rubber to the other.

pointed

pointed conducting body be connected with the prime Conductor, it will throw out a pencil of rays; for the prime Conductor being overcharged, the fluid departing from it muſt, agreeably to the law, form a pencil on that point from which it flies off, and a ſtar, on that point, which it enters *.

From this experiment may be learned the method of diſtinguiſhing the quality of the Electricity of an electrified body, by the appearance of the electric light; for if a needle, or any other pointed body be preſented in

* It may be aſked, why the electric fluid entering a point, cauſeth the appearance of a ſtar, and when going out of the point cauſeth the appearance of a bruſh of rays? In anſwer to this queſtion, F. BECCARIA ſuppoſes, that the ſtar is occaſioned by the difficulty, with which the electric fluid is extricated from the air, which is an electric; ſuppoſe, for inſtance, that a pointed wire is preſented to a body poſitively electrified, the electric fluid is firſt from that body communicated to the air between it and the wire, and then the wire muſt extricate it from that air. The bruſh, he ſuppoſes, to be occaſioned by the force, with which the electric fluid, going out of a point, runs through the contiguous air, to that which is more remote from it, *i. e.* by dividing the contiguous air, and not by affixing itſelf to it.

the dark with the point towards a body ſtrongly electrified, it will appear illuminated with a ſtar, when that body is electrified poſitively, and with a pencil or bruſh, when it is electrified negatively.

Experiment II.

Drawing Sparks.

Let the prime Conductor be ſituated in its proper place, and electrify it by working the machine; then bring a metallic rod with a round knob at each end, or the knuckle of a finger, within a proper diſtance of the prime Conductor, and a ſpark will be ſeen between that, and the knuckle, or knobed wire. The longer, and ſtronger ſpark is drawn from that end of the prime Conductor, which is fartheſt from the cylinder, or rather from the end of the knobed rod I B, fixed at its end B, fig. 2.; for the electric fluid ſeems to acquire an impetus by going through a long Conductor, when electrified by a powerful machine *.

* The reaſon of this, I think, is, becauſe that end of the prime Conductor is leſs influenced by the atmoſphere of the excited cylinder.

This

This ſpark (which has the ſame appearance whether drawn from a prime Conductor poſitively, or negatively electrified) appears like a long line * of fire, reaching from the Conductor to the oppoſed body, and often (particularly when the ſpark is long, and different conducting ſubſtances are near the line of its direction) it will have the appearance of being bended to ſharp angles in different places, exactly reſembling a flaſh of lightning. Notwithſtanding, however, this extended appearance, which is imputed to the quick paſſage of the luminous matter, the electric fluid, paſſing from one body to another in a ſpark, is reaſonably thought to proceed in a ſeparate, and nearly globular body.

The direction of the ſpark often deceives the moſt experienced Electrician, it ſeeming ſometimes to proceed from one place, and at other times under the ſame circumſtances to proceed from the oppoſite. When the prime Conductor is electrified poſitively, the ſpark

* It often darts bruſhes of light ſide-ways in every direction.

muſt certainly proceed from it, and go to the body preſented; and when the prime Conductor is electrified negatively, the ſpark muſt proceed from the body preſented, and go to the Conductor. This, however, we learn by reaſoning from other experiments; for the real direction of the ſpark in the above experiment, is much more rapid in its motion, than to admit its form, much leſs its direction to be perceived by our eyes.

EXPERIMENT III.

The electric Light flaſhing between two metallic Plates.

Let two perſons, one ſtanding upon an inſulated ſtool, and communicating with the prime Conductor, and another ſtanding upon the floor, each hold in one of his hands a metal plate in ſuch a manner, that the plates may ſtand back to back in a parallel ſituation, and about two inches aſunder. Let the winch of the machine be turned, and you will ſee the flaſhes of light between the two plates ſo denſe and frequent, that you may eaſily diſtinguiſh any thing in the room. By this experiment the electric light is exhibited in a very copious, and beautiful manner, and it bears a ſtriking reſemblance to lightning.

Experiment IV.

To fire inflammable Spirits.

The power of the electric ſpark to ſet fire to inflammable ſpirits, may be exhibited by ſeveral different methods, but more eaſily thus: Hang to the prime Conductor a ſhort rod having a ſmall knob at its end, then pour ſome ſpirits of wine, a little warmed, into a ſpoon of metal *; hold the ſpoon by the handle, and place it in ſuch manner, that the ſmall knob on the rod, may be about one inch above the ſurface of the ſpirits. In this ſituation if, by turning the winch, a ſpark be made to come from the knob, it will ſet the ſpirits on fire.

This experiment happens in the very ſame manner whether the Conductor is electrified

* The readieſt way to warm the ſpirits for this experiment, is to ſet it on fire with a candle when it is in the ſpoon, and after it has burned for about two ſeconds, to blow it out with your breath. In this ſtate it will be found very ready to take fire, even by a ſmall ſpark.

pofitively or negatively, *i. e.* whether the fpark be made to come from the Conductor, or from the fpoon; it being only in confequence of the rapid motion of the fpark that the fpirits are kindled.

It will be perhaps fcarce neceffary to remark, that the more inflammable the fpirits are, the more proper they will be for this experiment, as a fmaller fpark will be fufficient to inflame them; therefore rectified fpirit of wine is better than common proof fpirit, and æther better than either.

This experiment may be varied different ways, and may be rendered very agreeable to a company of fpectators; a perfon, for inftance, ftanding upon an electric ftool, and communicating with the prime Conductor, may hold the fpoon with the fpirits in his hand, and another perfon, ftanding upon the floor, may fet the fpirits on fire by bringing his finger within a fmall diftance of it. Inftead of his finger, he may fire the fpirits with a piece of ice, when the experiment will feem much more furprifing. If the fpoon is held by the perfon ftanding upon the

the floor, and the insulated person brings some conducting substance over the surface of the spirits, the experiment succeeds as well.

Experiment V.

The artificial Bolonian Stone illuminated by the electric Light.

The most curious experiment to shew the penetrability of the electric light, is made with the real, or more easily, with the artificial Bolonian stone, invented by the late Mr. J. Canton. This phosphorus is a calcareous substance generally used in the form of a powder, which has the property of absorbing light, when exposed to it, and afterwards to appear lucid when brought into the dark *.

Take

* The method of making this phosphorus is as follows. " Calcine some common oyster shells" (if they are old, and half calcined by time, such as are commonly found upon the sea shore, they are, as Mr. W. Canton observes, so much the better), " by keeping them in a good coal " fire for half an hour; let the purest part of the calx be " pulverized, and sifted; mix with three parts of this " powder one part of the flowers of sulphur; let this

 " mixture

Take ſome of this powder, and, by means of ſpirits of wine, or æther, ſtick it all over the inſide of a clear glaſs phial, and ſtop it with a glaſs ſtopper, or a cork and ſealing-wax. If this phial be kept in a darkned room (which for this experiment muſt be very dark) it will give no light, but let two or three ſtrong ſparks be drawn from the prime Conductor, when the phial is kept at about two inches diſtance from the ſparks, ſo that it may be expoſed to that light, and this phial will receive that light, and after-

"mixture be rammed into a crucible of about an inch "and a half in depth, till it be almoſt full; and let it be "placed in the middle of the fire, where it muſt be kept "red-hot for one hour at leaſt, and then ſet it by to "cool: when cold, turn it out of the crucible, and cut-"ting or breaking it to pieces, ſcrape off, upon trial, the "brighteſt parts; which, if good phoſphorus, will be a "white powder, and may be preſerved by keeping it in "a dry phial with a ground ſtopple."

If this phoſphorus, whether in the phial or not, be kept in the dark, it will give no light, but if expoſed to the light either of the day, or of any thing elſe, and afterwards brought into a dark place, it will then appear lucid for a conſiderable time. For farther properties of this phoſphorus, ſee the Phil. Tranſ. Vol. LVIII.

wards

wards will appear illuminated for a confiderable time.

This powder may be ftuck upon a board by means of the white of an egg, fo as to reprefent figures of planets, letters, or any thing elfe at the pleafure of the operator, and thefe figures may be illuminated in the dark, in the fame manner as the above-defcribed phial.

A beautiful method to exprefs geometrical figures with the above phofphorus, is to bend fmall glafs tubes of about the tenth part of an inch diameter, in the fhape of the figure defired, and then fill them with the phofphorus powder. Thefe may be illuminated in the manner defcribed, and they are not fo fubject to be fpoiled, as the figures reprefented upon the board frequently are.

The beft method of illuminating this phofphorus, and was that Mr. W. CANTON generally ufed, is to difcharge a fmall electric jar near it.

EXPERI-

Experiment VI.

The luminous Conductor.

Fig. 6. Plate I. reprefents a prime Conductor invented by Mr. Henly, which fhews clearly the direction of the electric fluid paffing through it, from whence it is called *the luminous Conductor.* The middle part E F of this Conductor is a glafs tube about eighteen inches long, and three or four inches in diameter. To both ends of this tube the hollow brafs pieces F D, B E, are cemented air-tight, one of which has a point C, by which it receives the electric fluid, when fet near the excited cylinder of the electrical machine, and the other has a knobed wire G, from which a ftrong fpark may be drawn; and from each of the pieces F D, B E, a knobed wire proceeds within the cavity of the glafs tube. The brafs piece F D, or B E, is compofed of two parts, *i. e.* a cap F cemented to the glafs tube, and having a hole with a valve, by which the cavity of the glafs tube may be exhaufted of air; and the ball D, which

is

is ſkrewed upon the cap F. The ſupporters of this inſtrument are two glaſs pillars faſtened in the bottom board H, like the prime Conductor repreſented fig. 2. When the glaſs tube of this Conductor is exhauſted of air by means of an air pump, and the braſs ball is ſkrewed on, as repreſented in the figure, then it is fit for uſe, and may ſerve for a prime Conductor to an electrical machine.

If the point C of this Conductor is ſet near the excited cylinder of the machine, it will appear illuminated with a ſtar; at the ſame time the glaſs tube will appear all illuminated with a weak light; but from the knobed wire, that proceeds within the glaſs from the piece F D, a lucid pencil will iſſue out, and the oppoſite knob will appear illuminated with a ſtar, which, as well as the pencil of rays, is very clear, and diſcernible among the other light, that occupies the greateſt part of the cavity of the tube.

If the point C, inſtead of being preſented to the cylinder, be connected with the rubber of the machine, the appearance of light within

within the tube will be reverſed; the knob which communicates with the piece F D appearing illuminated with a ſtar, and the oppoſite with a pencil of rays; becauſe in this caſe the direction of the electric fluid is juſt the contrary of what it was before; it then going from D to B, and now coming from B and going to D.

If the wires within the tube E F, inſtead of being furniſhed with knobs, be pointed, the appearance of light is the ſame, but it ſeems not ſo ſtrong in this, as in the other caſe.

Experiment VII.

The conducting Glaſs Tube.

Take a glaſs tube of about two inches diameter, and about two feet long; fix to one of its ends a braſs cap, and to the other a ſtop-cock, or a valve; then by means of an air-pump exhauſt it of air. If this tube be held by one end, and its other end be brought near the electrified prime Conductor, it will appear to be full of light, whenever

ever a ſpark is taken by it from the prime Conductor; and much more ſo, if an electric jar be diſcharged through it.

This experiment may alſo be made with the receiver of an air-pump; take, for inſtance, a tall receiver clean and dry, and through a hole at its top inſert a wire, which muſt be cemented air tight. The end of the wire, that is within the tube, muſt be pointed, but not very ſharp; and the other end muſt be furniſhed with a knob. Put this receiver upon the plate of the air pump, and exhauſt it. If now the knob of the wire at the top of the receiver be touched with the prime Conductor *, every ſpark will paſs through the receiver in a denſe and large body of light, from the wire, to the plate of the air-pump.

* When any thing is to be touched with the prime Conductor, that is not very portable, as the air-pump above mentioned, the communication between the former and the latter, may be made by means of a rod furniſhed with an electric handle, or the like.

EXPE-

Experiment VIII.

The Aurora Borealis.

Take a phial nearly of the ſhape and ſize of a Florence flaſk; fix a ſtop-cock or a valve to its neck, and exhauſt it of air as much as it is poſſible with a good air-pump. If this glaſs is rubbed in the common manner uſed to excite electrics, it will appear luminous within, being full of a flaſhing light, which plainly reſembles the aurora borealis, or northern light. This phial may alſo be made luminous by holding it by either end, and bringing the other end to the prime Conductor; in this caſe all the cavity of the glaſs will inſtantly appear full of flaſhing light, which remains in it for a conſiderable time after it has been removed from the prime Conductor.

Inſtead of the above-deſcribed glaſs veſſel, a glaſs tube, exhauſted of air and hermetically ſealed, may be uſed, and perhaps with better advantage. The moſt remarkable circumſtance of this experiment is, that if the

 phial,

phial, or tube after it has been removed from the prime Conductor (and even ſeveral hours after its flaſhing light hath ceaſed to appear), be graſped with the hand, ſtrong flaſhes of light will immediately appear within the glaſs, which often reach from one of its ends to the other.

The cauſes on which this experiment depends are two; firſt the conducting nature of the vacuum, and ſecond the charging of the glaſs: for when one ſide of the glaſs phial is touched with the prime Conductor, the electric fluid, communicated to the outſide ſurface of one ſide of the phial, cauſeth the natural fluid belonging to the inſide ſurface to depart from its place, and go to the oppoſite ſide of the phial; and this fluid, paſſing through the vacuum, cauſes the light within the phial, which light is more or leſs ſubdivided, according as the vacuum is leſs or more perfect. Now, that part of the phial, which has touched the prime Conductor, is actually charged; for its outſide ſurface has acquired an additional quantity of electric fluid, and the inſide ſurface has loſt part of its own; but as the outſide of of the phial has no coating, therefore, when it is removed from the prime Conductor, and it is not grafped with the hand, or other Conductor, the charged part of the glafs can be difcharged only gradually; that is, whilft its outfide furface is communicating its fuperfluous fluid to the contiguous air, the infide furface acquires the electric fluid from the other end of the phial, which fluid paffing through the vacuum, caufes that flafhing, which is obferved for fo confiderable a time. If the phial is grafped with the hand, its difcharge is accelerated, hence the flafhes within the phial appear more denfe and copious, yet it cannot be difcharged all at once by this operation, becaufe the hand cannot touch every part of the glafs at once.

Experiment IX.

The vifible electric Atmofphere.

G I fig. 2. Plate II. reprefents the receiver with the plate of an air-pump. In the middle of the plate I F, a fhort rod is fixed, having at its top a metal ball B nicely polifhed, whofe diameter is nearly two inches.

inches. From the top of the receiver, another rod A D with a like ball A proceeds, and is cemented air-tight in the neck C; the diſtance of the balls from one another being about four inches, or rather more. If, when the receiver is exhauſted of air, the ball A be electrified poſitively, by touching the top D of the rod A D with the prime Conductor or an excited glaſs tube, a lucid atmoſphere appears about it, which although it conſiſts of a feeble light, is yet very conſpicuous, and very well defined; at the ſame time the ball B has not the leaſt light. This atmoſphere does not exiſt all round the ball A, but reaches from about the middle of it, to a ſmall diſtance beyond that ſide of its ſurface, which is towards the oppoſite ball B. If the rod with the ball A be electrified negatively, then a lucid atmoſphere, like the above deſcribed, will appear upon the ball B, reaching from its middle to a ſmall diſtance beyond that ſide of it, that is towards the ball A; at the ſame time the negatively electrified ball A remains without any light.

The Operator in this experiment, muſt be careful not to electrify the ball A too much, for then the electric fluid will paſs in a ſpark from one ball to the other, and the experiment will not have the deſired effect. A little practice, however, will render the operation very eaſy and familiar.

By this elegant experiment, which is of the celebrated F. BECCARIA, we have an ocular demonſtration of the theory of a ſingle electric fluid; we ſee that Electricity conſiſts of one uniform, homogeneous fluid, and not two, *viz.* the vitreous, and reſinous, as ſome have ſuppoſed; for if the poſitive, and negative Electricity were two diſtinct fluids attractive of one another, there ſhould, in the above experiment, always appear two atmoſpheres, *i. e.* one about the ball A, and another about the ball B; for when the ball A is overcharged with either fluid, it ſhould ſhew that ſuperfluous fluid on its ſurface, and this fluid ſhould attract towards the ball A, an atmoſphere of the contrary fluid from the ball B. But this, as we obſerved before, is not the caſe; for the

the appearance of the lucid atmofphere is always on one ball, namely, that which is overcharged with the electric fluid; thus when the ball A is electrified pofitively, the fuperfluous fluid is vifible on that part of it, which is neareft to the ball B, becaufe B being in a contrary ftate of Electricity, endeavours to attract it; but, when the ball A is electrified negatively, it will attract the fluid proper to the ball B, which fluid on that account appears upon the furface of B, juft in the act of leaping to the ball A.

In order to remove an error, that has been adopted by feveral writers on Electricity, it will be not amifs in this chapter to mention, that the electric light has all the prifmatic colours, as well as the light of the fun. This may be eafily experienced by viewing an electric fpark through a glafs prifm*.

* See Dr. PRIESTLEY's Hiftory of Electricity, part VIII. fec. XIII. n. XII.

CHAP. VII.

Experiments with the Leyden Phial.

EXPERIMENT I.

Of charging, and diſcharging a Phial in general.

Take a coated jar, as D E fig. 1, Plate I, and place it upon the table near the prime Conductor, ſo that the knob of its wire, and that only, may be in contact with it: fix the quadrant electrometer E fig 2, upon the prime Conductor, and then turn the winch of the machine. You will obſerve, that as the jar is charging, the index of the electrometer will riſe gradually as far as 90°, or thereabouts, and then reſt: when this happens you may conclude, that the jar has received its full charge. If now you take a diſcharging rod, and holding it by the glaſs handle, apply firſt one of its knobs to the outſide coating of the jar, and then bring the other knob near the knob of the wire of the jar, or near the prime Conductor, that communicates with it, you will hear a report, and fee very vivid fparks between the difcharging rod, and the conducting fubftances, communicating with the fides of the jar. This operation difcharges the jar. If, inftead of ufing the difcharging rod, you touch the outfide of the jar with one hand, and bring the other hand near the wire of the jar, the fame fpark and report will follow, but now you will feel a fhock, which affects your wrifts, elbows, and, if ftrong, your breaft alfo *. If a number of perfons join hands, and the firft of them touches the outfide of the jar, and the laft touches the wire communicating with the infide, they will all feel the fhock, and precifely at the fame perceivable time. This fhock bearing no refemblance to any fenfation otherwife felt, cannot confequently be defcribed, and in order that a perfon may form a juft idea of it, he muft abfolutely feel it.

* A fhock may be given to any fingle part of the body, if that part only be brought into the circuit.

The reafon of the charging of the phial, or jar in this experiment, is, that when a fuperfluous quantity of electric fluid is forced upon the infide furface of the glafs, it caufeth an equal quantity of fluid, naturally inherent in the glafs, to depart from the oppofite furface, in confequence of the repulfion natural to the particles of the electric fluid, which repulfion is exerted even through the glafs; one fide therefore of the glafs remains overcharged, and the other undercharged; as foon therefore as the communication between the two fides of the jar is compleated, the fuperfluous fluid on one fide of the glafs flies violently to the other fide, and the rapidity of its motion occafions the fpark, the report, &c.

If the coated jar be held by the wire communicating with its infide, and the outfide coating be prefented to the prime Conductor, it will be charged as readily as in the other method, but with this difference, that in this cafe the outfide will be pofitive, and the infide negative.

We

We have ſuppoſed above, that the prime Conductor was electrified poſitively; but if the experiment be repeated, when the Conductor, by being connected with the rubber of the machine, is electrified negatively, the jar would in the ſame manner be charged, except that in this caſe the ſide that touches the prime Conductor, would be electrified negatively, and the oppoſite ſide, poſitively.

Experiment II.

To ſhew that an inſulated Jar cannot be charged.

Set a coated jar upon an electric ſtool; connect its wire, or its outſide coating with the prime Conductor, and turn the winch of the machine. You will then obſerve, that the index of the quadrant electrometer, placed upon the prime Conductor, ſoon riſes to 90°, ſeemingly ſhewing that the jar is charged. Then remove the electric ſtool with the jar from the prime Conductor, and either with a diſcharging rod, or with your hands, endeavour to difcharge the jar, and you will find, that it is not charged; for no fpark, no fhock, nor any other phenomenon of charged glafs, will appear.

The reafon why in this experiment the infide of the jar could acquire no additional electric fluid, and therefore the jar could acquire no charge, is becaufe the outfide could not at the fame time part with its own fluid, its communication with the earth being cut off by the electric ftool. But repeat this experiment with only this variation, that, by means of a chain or otherwife, the outfide of the jar be made to communicate with the table, and you will then find, that the jar will be charged; for in this cafe the fluid, naturally inherent in the outer furface of the jar, can readily be repelled through the chain, &c. into the table.

If a jar be infulated, and one fide of it, inftead of being connected with the earth, be connected with the infulated rubber, whilft the other fide communicates with the prime Conductor, the jar will be alfo charged, and perhaps in a more expeditious manner; for

for whilſt the rubber exhauſts one ſide, the other ſide is ſupplied by the prime Conductor. In this manner it is ſhown, that the jar is charged with its own fluid, *i. e.* the natural electric fluid of one of its ſides, is, by the action of the machine, thrown on the other ſide.

EXPERIMENT III.

The preceding Experiment diverſified.

To make the above experiment in a clearer, and more ſatisfactory manner, place the jar upon the ſtool as before, and with its wire, not in contact, but at about half an inch diſtance from the prime Conductor, hold the knob of another wire at ſuch a diſtance from the outſide coating of the jar, as the knob of the jar is from the prime Conductor, then let the winch of the machine be turned, and you will obſerve, that whenever a ſpark comes from the prime Conductor to the wire of the jar, another ſpark paſſes from the outſide coating of the jar to the knob of the wire preſented towards it; which ſhews, that as a quantity of electric fluid is entering the inſide of the jar, an equal quantity of it is leaving

leaving the outſide. In this manner the jar becomes charged.

If inſtead of the knobed wire, a pointed one be preſented to the outſide of the jar, it will appear illuminated with a ſtar; and if inſtead of preſenting any wire to the jar, a pointed wire be connected with its coating, it will appear illuminated with a bruſh of rays (*i. e.* by throwing the electric fluid into the air), which will laſt as long as the jar is charging.

If the knob of another jar be preſented to the outſide coating of the inſulated jar in the above experiment, it will alſo be charged; for the fluid, going out of the outſide coating of the firſt jar, *i. e.* that ſtanding upon the ſtool, will go in the inſide of the other jar, and cauſe the fluid, inherent to the outſide of that jar, to depart from its place *.

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* It is eaſy to underſtand from this experiment, how ſeveral phials may be connected together, ſo that they may be charged all at once, with nearly the ſame trouble as one is charged. It muſt, however, be obſerved, that when ſeveral jars are ſo connected, that the inſide of one com-

EXPERIMENT IV.

To show that the Charge of a Jar, or Glass in general does not reside in the coating.

Take a naked phial, and for a coating on the outside stick a piece of tin-foil with a little tallow, or bees-wax, so that it can just adhere to the glass; and for an inside coating use small leaden shot, or quicksilver; lastly, insert through its neck a knobed wire communicating with the shot, or quicksilver.— This done hold the phial thus coated by its outside coating, and charge it, by presenting its knobed wire to the prime Conductor. When it is charged turn it upside down, and let its wire, and quicksilver, or shot fall in a glass receiver; then remove its outside coating also. In this operation the phial does not lose its charge, and if you examine the quicksilver or shot, you will find that it contains no more Electricity, than any other like conducting insulated body, which has

communicates with the outside of another, &c. they cannot be charged so high, nor so easily, as otherwise; the difficulty increasing nearly in proportion to the number of the jars.

been

been in contact with the prime Conductor, would contain. Replace the outſide coating again upon the phial, pour the ſhot or quickſilver again into it, or any other conducting ſubſtance, then touch with one hand the outſide coating, and with the other, by introducing a finger or a wire, touch the inſide non-electric, and you will feel a ſhock, which will convince you, that the glaſs has loſt very little of its charge by the operation above mentioned.

The ſame experiment may be more conveniently made by laying a pane of glaſs upon a metal plate, and covering an equal part of the upper ſurface with tin-foil, having a ſilk thread faſtened to one of its ſides, by which it may be eaſily taken off, when the glaſs is charged, and as eaſily replaced, when required.

EXPERIMENT V.

To prove that the electric Fluid does not expel the Air contained in a Phial.

Through a hole made in the cork that ſtops a coated phial, introduce a ſmall glaſs tube

tube open at both ends, and of about one thirtieth part of an inch in diameter; bend that part of the tube, that is out of the phial in an horizontal ſituation, and with bees-wax faſten the cork ſo, that no air can get in or out of the phial, except it paſſes through the glaſs tube; laſtly, put a ſmall drop of red wine, or ink, in the horizontal part of the tube, ſo that it may be eaſily moved through it by the leaſt rarefaction, or condenſation of the air within the phial. If this phial thus furniſhed be charged, by connecting the prime Conductor with its wire, the drop of liquor in the glaſs tube will not be ſtirred from its ſituation, which ſhows that the electric fluid, immitted into the phial, does not exclude any of the air, that the phial contains. If the phial be diſcharged, the drop of liquor in the tube will be often puſhed a little out of its place, and afterwards return to its former ſituation, which ſhows, that on making the diſcharge, the air within the phial was a little diſplaced, or rarefied. This however is to be imputed to ſome ſpark, that generally happens within the cavity of the phial, on account that the wire is not

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in perfect contact with the infide coating *.

Experiment VI.

The courfe of the electric Fluid in the Difcharge rendered vifible by the Star, and Pencil.

When a jar is charged, take a difcharging rod having its ends pointed, *i. e.* the difcharging rod reprefented in fig. 10. Plate I, without its knobs, and keep it as reprefented, fig. 11. that is, in fuch a fituation, that one of its points C may be at about one inch diftance from the knob A, and the other point B, at an equal diftance from the outfide coating of the jar; by thefe means the jar will be difcharged filently, and if its infide be electrified pofitively, you will fee, that the point C of the difcharging rod, is illuminated with a ftar, and the point B with a pencil; becaufe,

* Having repeated this experiment with a fmall phial, whofe charging piece (as we may call it) was a production of the infide coating, which was of one piece of tinfoil, ftuck to the glafs with bees-wax, in confequence of which no fpark could happen within the phial, I found that the drop of liquor in the glafs tube, was not ftirred either in charging, or difcharging the phial.

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in this cafe, the electric fluid, going from the infide to the outfide of the jar, enters the point C, and iffues from the point B. But if the jar is electrified negatively on the infide, and confequently pofitive on the outfide, then the pencil of rays will appear upon the point C, and the ftar upon the point B; for in this cafe the electric fluid paffes from the outfide to the infide of the jar.

N. B. This experiment, as well as any other, in which the electric light is to be obferved, requires to be made in the dark.

Experiment VII.

The Courfe of the electric Fluid in the Difcharge fhown by the Flame of a Wax-taper.

Remove the circular piece of wood E from the univerfal difcharger, reprefented fig. 5. Plate I. Fix the wires D B, D C, fo that their knobs D D may be about two inches diftance of one another; and upon the focket F fix a piece of wax taper lighted, fo that its flame may be juft in the middle between the knobs D D. Having difpofed the apparatus in this manner, if you connect, by means of a chain or otherwiſe, the outſide of a charged jar with one of the wires C, and bring the knob of the jar to the other wire C, you will obſerve, that on making the diſcharge, which muſt paſs between the knobs D D, the flame of the wax taper is always driven in the direction of the electric fluid, that is, it will be blown upon the knob of that wire, which communicates with that ſide of the jar, which is negatively electrified.

In this experiment the jar muſt have an exceeding ſmall charge, juſt ſufficient to paſs through the interval in the circuit; which experience will preſently determine: otherwiſe the experiment will not ſucceed, or be perhaps rendered equivocal *.

* If it be aſked, why this experiment does not ſucceed with a great exploſion as well as with a very ſmall one, the anſwer is, that when a jar highly charged, is brought near one of the wires of the univerſal diſcharger, it creates an atmoſphere about the knob of the ſaid wire, which atmoſphere diſturbs the flame of the wax taper, before the actual diſcharge; beſides the electric fluid in a great exploſion, by its elaſtic nature, paſſes through the flame of the wax taper too ſwiftly, for to communicate to it any viſible motion; in the ſame manner as a bullet, diſcharged by a piſtol againſt an open door, makes a hole through the door, without ſhutting it.

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EXPERIMENT VIII.

The Course of the electric Fluid in the Discharge, rendered conspicuous by the Motion communicated to a pith ball.

Bend a card length-ways, over a round ruler, so as to form a channel, or semicircular groove*. Lay this card upon the circular board E of the universal discharger represented fig. 5, of Plate I. and in the middle of it put a pith ball of about half an inch diameter; then at equal distances, about half or three quarters of an inch from the cork ball, lay the two brass knobs D D. The card being perfectly dry, and rather hot, if you connect, by means of a chain or otherwise, the outside of a charged jar, with one of the wires C, and bring the knob of the jar to the other wire C, you will observe, that on making the discharge, which must pass between the knobs DD, and over the card, &c. the pith

* Instead of the card, a piece of baked wood may be cut in that shape, and painted over with lamp-black and oil; which will answer better than the card, it being much more steady, and not so liable to attract moisture.

ball is always driven in the direction of the electric fluid, *i. e.* it is pushed towards that knob, which communicates with the negative side of the jar.

It must be observed that in this experiment the charge of the jar must be just sufficient to pass through the interval in the circuit; the card, or piece of baked wood, must be very dry and clean; and in short the disposition of the apparatus, and the performance of this curious experiment, require a degree of nicety, that can only be obtained by practice. Without great precaution, it sometimes fails; but when the Operator has once got it to succed, and follows exactly the same method of operation, he may be sure, that the event of the experiment will be constantly as above described.

Experiment IX.

The Leyden Vacuum.

Fig. 8 and 9. of Plate I. represent a small phial coated on the outside about three inches puthe sides with tin-foil; at the top of the neck of this phial, a brass cap is cemented, having

having a hole with a valve, and from the cap a wire proceeds a few inches within the phial, terminating in a blunt point. When this phial is exhausted of air, a brass ball is screwed upon the brass cap, which is cemented into its neck, so as to defend the valve, and prevent any air from getting into the exhausted glass *. This phial exhibits clearly the direction of the electric fluid, both in charging and discharging; for if it be held by its bottom, and its brass knob be presented to the prime Conductor positively electrified, you will see that the electric fluid causeth the pencil of rays to proceed from the wire within the phial, as represented fig. 9. and if it is discharged, a star will appear in the place of the pencil, as represented in fig. 8. But if the phial is held by the brass cap, and its bottom be touched with the prime Conductor, then the point of the wire on its inside, will appear illuminated with a star, when charging, and with a pencil, when discharging. If it be presented to a prime

* The inside of this phial requires no coating, because as the electric fluid pervades vacuum, it can pass freely from the wire to the surface of the exhausted glass, without the help of a non-electric coating.

Conductor electrified negatively, all these appearances, both in charging, and discharging, will be reversed.

This experiment of the Leyden vacuum, together with the two preceding ones, namely the seventh and eighth of this chapter, are inventions of Mr. HENLY, and they exhibit an ocular demonstration of the hypothesis of a single electric fluid.

EXPERIMENT X.

To pierce a Card, and other Substances with the electric Explosion.

Take a card, a quire of paper, or the cover of a book, and keep it close to the outside coating of a charged jar; put one knob of the discharging rod upon the card, quire of paper, &c. so that between the knob, and coating of the jar, the thickness of that card, or quire of paper, only is interposed; lastly by bringing the other knob of the discharging rod near the knob of the jar, make the discharge, and the electric matter, rushing through the circuit from the posi-

poſitive, to the negative ſurface of the jar, will pierce a hole (or perhaps ſeveral) quite through the card, or quire of paper *. This hole has a bur raiſed on each ſide, except the card, &c. be preſſed hard between the diſcharging rod and the jar; which ſhows that the hole is not made in the direction of the paſſage of the fluid, but in every direction from the center of the reſiſting body.

If this experiment be made with two cards, inſtead of one, which however muſt be kept very little diſtant from one another †, each of the cards, after the exploſion, will be found pierced with one or more holes, and each hole will have burs on both ſurfaces of each card.

* The hole, or holes, are larger or ſmaller, according as the card, &c. is more damp, or more dry. It is remarkable that if the noſtrils are preſented to it, they will be affected with a ſulphureous, or rather a phoſphoreal ſmell, juſt like that produced by an excited Electric.

† This may be eaſily effected by bending a little one of the cards.

If inſtead of paper, a very thin plate of glaſs, roſin, ſealing-wax, or the like, be interpoſed between the knob of the diſcharging rod, and the outſide coating of the jar, on making the diſcharge, this will be broken in ſeveral pieces.

Small inſects may alſo be killed in this manner; they may be held between the outſide coating of the jar, and the knob of the diſcharging rod, like the above card; and a ſhock of a common phial ſent through them, will inſtantly deprive them of life, if they are pretty ſmall; but if larger, they will be affected in ſuch a manner, as to appear quite dead on firſt receiving the ſtroke, but will, after ſome time, recover: this, however, depends on the quantity of the charge ſent through them.

Expe-

Experiment XI.

To ſhew the Effect of the Shock ſent over the Surface of a Card or other Subſtances.

Put the extremities of two wires upon the ſurface of a card, or other body of an electric nature, ſo that they may be in one direction, and about one inch diſtance from one another; then, by connecting one of the wires with the outſide of a charged jar, and the other wire with the knob of the jar, the ſhock will be made to paſs over the card or other body.

If the card be made very dry, the lucid track between the wires will be viſible upon the card for a conſiderable time after the exploſion. If a piece of common writing paper be uſed inſtead of the card, it will be torn by the exploſion into very ſmall bits.

If inſtead of the card, the exploſion is ſent over the ſurface of a piece of glaſs, this will be marked with an indelible track, which generally reaches from the extremity of one of the wires to the extremity of the other. In this manner the piece of glaſs is very ſeldom broken by the exploſion. But Mr. HENLY has diſcovered a very remarkable method to increaſe the effect of the exploſion upon the glaſs; which is by preſſing with weights that part of the glaſs, which lies between the two wires, (*i. e.* that part, over which the ſhock is to paſs). He puts firſt a thick piece of ivory upon the glaſs, and places upon that ivory a weight at pleaſure, from one quarter of an ounce, to ſix pounds: The glaſs in this manner is generally broken by the exploſion into innumerable fragments, and ſome of it is abſolutely reduced into an inpalpable powder. If the glaſs is very thick and reſiſts the force of the exploſion, ſo as not to be broken by it, it will be found marked with the moſt lively priſmatic colours, which are occaſioned by very thin laminæ of the glaſs, in part ſeparated from it by the ſhock. The weight laid upon the glaſs is always ſhook by the exploſion, and ſometimes it is thrown quite

off

off from the ivory *. This experiment may be moſt conveniently made with the univerſal diſcharger. Fig. 5. of Plate I.

Experiment XII.

To ſhew the Direction of the electric Fluid in the Diſcharge, by cauſing the Shock to go over the Surface of a Card.

Diſpoſe the apparatus in the manner deſcribed in the preceding experiment, but with this difference, that inſtead of laying the extremities of both wires upon the ſame ſide of the card, one of them be placed under the card; then ſend a ſhock through the ſaid wires, as in the preceding experiment, and you will obſerve, that the electric fluid will run over that ſurface of the card, upon which lies the extremity of that wire, which is connected with the poſitive ſide of the jar; and in order to paſs

* If ſmall repreſentations of houſes, &c. be laid upon a board, placed on the piece of ivory; that, being ſhook by the exploſion, will give a very natural idea of an earthquake

to

to the extremity of the other wire, it will break a hole through the card juſt over the extremity of that wire, which is connected with the negative ſide of the jar.

This excellent experiment, which ſhows the direction of the electric fluid in the diſcharge of a jar, is a diſcovery of Mr. LULLIN of Geneva.

N. B. With very large jars, this experiment has been obſerved to pierce ſeveral holes, and in ſuch manner as to render the experiment not ſatisfactory.

EXPERIMENT XIII.

To ſwell the Clay, and break ſmall Tubes with the electric Exploſion.

Roll up a piece of ſoft tobacco-pipe clay in a ſmall cylinder C D fig. 4. Plate II. and inſert in it two wires A, B, ſo that their ends within the clay may be about a fifth part of an inch from one another. If a ſhock be ſent through this clay, by connecting

necting one of the wires A, or B with the outſide of a charged jar, and the other with the inſide, it will be inflated by the ſhock, *i. e.* by the ſpark, that paſſes between the two wires, and after the exploſion will appear as repreſented fig. 5. If the ſhock ſent through it is too ſtrong, and the clay not very moiſt, it will be broken by the exploſion, and its fragment ſcattered in every direction.

To make this experiment with a little variation, take a piece of the tube of a tobacco-pipe, about one inch long, and fill its bore with moiſt clay, then inſert in it two wires, as in the above rolled clay, and ſend a ſhock through it. This tube will not fail to burſt by the force of the exploſion, and its fragments will be ſcattered about to a great diſtance.

If inſtead of clay, the above-mentioned tube of the tobacco-pipe, or a glaſs tube, (which will anſwer as well) be filled with any other ſubſtance either electric, or non-electric inferior to metal, on making the diſ-

charge,

charge, it will be broken in pieces with nearly the ſame force.

This experiment is the invention of Mr. Lane, F. R. S.

Experiment XIV.

To ſhow the Courſe of the electric Fluid by the ſpontaneous Diſcharge.

Take a coated phial of a ſmall ſize, and if the naked part of it, *i. e.* from its outſide coating to the cork, is very dry, breathe upon it once or twice, ſo as to render it ſlightly damp; then holding the phial by its outſide coating, preſent its knob to the prime Conductor, while the machine is in action, and you will ſee, that after the phial has received a ſmall charge, a beautiful bruſh of rays will proceed from the cork, which, after going a little way into the air, turns its courſe towards the outſide coating of the phial. If the phial, inſtead of the prime Conductor, be preſented to the inſulated rubber, then the bruſh, inſtead of proceeding from the cork, will iſſue from the outſide

outſide coating, and direct its courſe towards the cork or wire of the phial; ſhowing beyond a doubt the truth of the hypotheſis of a ſingle electric fluid.

This experiment, which is of Mr. HENLY, requires a nicety of operation, without which it will not ſucceed as above deſcribed. The quantity of moiſture upon the phial, and the quantity of Electricity communicated by the machine, muſt be of a degree, which nothing but practice can determine.

EXPERIMENT XV.

To make the electric Spark viſible in Water.

Fill a glaſs tube of about half an inch diameter, and ſix inches long, with water, and to each extremity of the tube adapt a cork, which may confine the water; through each cork inſert a blunt wire, ſo that the extremities of the wires within the tube may be very near one another; laſtly connect one of theſe wires with the coating of a ſmall charged phial, and touch the other

other wire with the knob of it; by which means the ſhock will paſs through the wires, and cauſe a vivid ſpark to appear between their extremities within the tube. In performing this experiment care muſt be taken, that the charge be exceedingly weak, otherwiſe the tube will burſt.

C fig. 14. Plate II. repreſents a common drinking glaſs almoſt full of water. A B are two knobed wires ſo bent, that their knobs may be within a little diſtance of one another in the water. If one of theſe wires be connected with the outſide coating of a pretty large jar, and the other wire be touched with the knob of it; the exploſion which muſt paſs through the water from the knob of one of the wires to that of the other, will diſperſe the water, and break the glaſs with a ſurpriſing violence. This experiment is very dangerous if not conducted with great caution.

Experiment XVI.

To prove that the electric Spark displaces, and rarifies the Air.

Fig. 3. Plate II. repreſents an inſtrument, which the inventor, Mr. Kinnersley, calls the *electrical Air Thermometer*, it being very uſeful to obſerve the effects of the electric exploſion upon air. The body of this thermometer conſiſts of a glaſs tube A B, about ten inches long, and nearly two inches diameter; and cloſed air-tight at both ends by two braſs caps. Through a hole in the upper cap, a ſmall tube H A, open at both ends, is introduced in ſome water at the bottom B of the large tube. Through the middle of each of the braſs caps, a wire F G, E I is introduced, having a braſs knob within the glaſs tube, and by ſliding through the caps, they may be ſet at any diſtance from one another. This inſtrument is, by a braſs ring C, faſtened to the pillar of the wooden ſtand C D, that ſupports it. When the air within the tube A B is rarefied, it will preſs upon the water at the bottom of the

the tube, which will confequently rife in the cavity of the fmall tube; and as this water rifes higher or lower, fo it fhows the greater or lefs rarefaction of the air within the tube A B, which has no communication with the external air.

If the water, when this inftrument is to be ufed, is all at the bottom of the large tube, *i. e.* none of it is in the cavity of the fmall tube; it will be proper to blow with the mouth into the fmall tube, and thus caufe the water to raife a little in it, where, for better regulation, a mark may be fixed.

Bring the knobs G I of the wires I E, F G into contact with one another, then connect the ring E, or F with one fide of a charged jar, and the other ring with the other fide, by which operation a fhock will be made to pafs through the wires F G, I E, *i. e.* between the knobs E I. In this cafe you will obferve, that the water in the fmall tube, is not at all moved from the mark; which fhows, that the paffage of the electric fluid through Conductors fufficiently large, occaſions no rarefaction, nor diſplaces the air about them.

Put the knobs G, I a little diſtant from one another, and ſend a ſhock through them as before, and you will ſee that the ſpark between the two knobs, not only diſplaces, but rarefies conſiderably the air; for the water will be ſuddenly puſhed almoſt at the top of the ſmall tube, and immediately it will ſubſide a little, as for inſtance as far as H, which is occaſioned by the ſudden diſplacing and replacing of the air about the place, where the ſpark appeared within the tube A B. After that the water has ſubſided ſuddenly from the firſt riſing, it will then gradually, and ſlowly come down to the mark, at which it ſtood before the exploſion; which is the effect of the air that was rarefied, and which gradually returns to its former temperature.

If this experiment be made in a room, where the degree of heat is variable, then proper allowance muſt be made for this circumſtance, in eſtimating the event of the experiment; for the electrical air thermometer is affected by heat, or cold in general, as well as by that caused by an electric spark.

Experiment XVII.

To fire Gun-powder.

Make a small cartridge of paper, and fill it with gun-powder, or else fill the tube of a quill with it; insert two wires, one at each extremity, so that their ends within the quill, or cartridge, may be about one fifth of an inch from one another; this done, send the charge of a phial through the wires, and the spark between their extremities, that are within the cartridge, or quill, will set fire to the gun-powder. If the gun-powder be mixed with steel filings it will take fire more readily, and with a very small shock.

Experiment XVIII.

To strike Metals into Glass.

Take two slips of common window-glass about three inches long, and half an inch wide; put a small slip of gold, silver, or brass leaf, between them, and tie them together, or else press them together between the boards of the press H, belonging to the universal discharger fig. 5, Plate I, leaving a little of the metallic leaf out between the glasses at each end; then send a shock through this metallic leaf, and the force of the explosion will drive part of the metal into so close a contact with the glass, that it cannot be wiped off, or even be affected by the common menstrua, which otherwise would dissolve it.

In this experiment the glasses are often shattered to pieces, but whether they are broken or not, the indelible metallic tinge will always be found in several places, and sometimes through the whole length of both glasses.

Experiment XIX.

To ſtain the Paper, or Glaſs.

Lay a chain, which forms a part of the circuit between the two ſides of a charged jar, upon a ſheet of white paper, and if a ſhock be ſent through it, the paper will be found ſtained with a blackiſh tinge at every juncture of the links. If the charge be very large, the paper, inſtead of being ſtained with ſpots, is burnt through. If the chain be laid upon a pane of glaſs, inſtead of paper, the glaſs will often be found ſtained with ſpots in ſeveral places, but (as might be expected) not ſo deep as the paper.

If this experiment be made in the dark, a ſpark will be ſeen at every juncture of the links; and if the links are ſmall, and the ſhock pretty ſtrong, the chain will appear illuminated like a line of fire; which ſhows that the electrical fluid meets with ſome reſiſtance in paſſing from one link of the chain to another.

Expe-

Experiment XX.

The lateral Explosion.

If a jar be discharged with a discharging rod, that has no electric handle, the hand that holds it, in making the discharge, feels some kind of shock, especially when the charge is considerable.—In other words. A person or any conducting substance, that is connected with one side of a jar, but forms no part of the circuit, will feel a kind of shock, *i. e.* some effect of the discharge. This may be rendered visible in the following manner. Connect with the outside of a charged jar a piece of chain; then discharge the jar through another circuit, as for instance with a discharging rod in the common way, and the chain that communicates with the outside of the jar, and which makes no part of the circuit, will appear lucid in the dark, *i. e.* sparks will appear between the links; which shows that the electric fluid, natural to that chain, must by some means have been disturbed. This chain will also appear luminous, if it is not in contact with the outside of the jar, but only very near it; and on making the discharge, a spark will be seen between the jar, and the end of the chain near it. This electrical appearance out of the circuit of a discharging jar, is that, which we call the *lateral Explosion*, and to make it appear in the most conspicuous manner observe the following method, which is of Dr. PRIESTLEY.

When a jar is charged and stands upon the table as usual, insulate a thick metallic rod, and place it so that one of its ends may be contiguous to the outside coating of the jar; and within about half an inch of its other end, place a body of about six or seven feet in length; and a few inches in breadth; then put a chain upon the table, so that one of its ends may be about one inch and a half distant from the coating of the jar; at the other end of the chain apply one knob of the discharging rod, and bring the other knob to the wire of the jar in order to make the explosion. On making the discharge in this manner, a strong spark will be seen between the

insu-

insulated rod, which communicates with the coating of the jar, and the body near its extremity, which spark does not alter the state of that body in respect to Electricity; hence it is imagined that this lateral spark flies from the coating of the jar, and returns to it at the same instant, allowing no perceptible space of time, in which an electrometer can be affected. Whether this lateral explosion is received on flat and smooth surfaces, or upon sharp points, the spark is always equally long and vivid.

The cause of this phenomenon seems to be the interruption in the circuit, made by introducing bad Conductors into it; for, as this interruption is greater or less, so the lateral explosion is more or less considerable.

CHAP. VIII.

Experiments with other charged Electrics.

THAT the experiments made with other charged electrics, are fimilar to thofe made with charged glafs, is very evident: fince it has been obferved above in the Firft Part, and alfo in the experiments already defcribed, that the property of being charged, of exploding, &c. is not inherent in glafs, as glafs, but, as being impervious to the electric fluid; and in confequence, it muft be common to all fuch fubftances, which like glafs, are impervious to that fluid: therefore, under the title of experiments with other electrics, I mean to defcribe experiments, not of a different nature from the above mentioned, but only the manner of coating, and ufing, other electrics, which are not fo manageable as glafs; but at the fame time, have fome peculiar advantages. Thefe methods I fhall reduce to three, *i. e.* firft, that of making the noble experiment of charging a plate of air; fecondly, the method of coating refinous fubftances; and laftly, a method of trying other electrics, that are in a fluid ftate.

Ex-

Experiment I.

To charge a Plate of Air.

Take two ſmooth circular boards, quite plain, and each about three or four feet in diameter; coat one ſide of each with tin-foil, which ſhould be paſted down, and burniſhed, and turned over the edge of the board. Theſe boards muſt be both inſulated, parallel to one another, in an horizontal poſition; they muſt be turned with their coated ſides towards each other, and ſhould be placed in ſuch a manner as to be eaſily removed to, or from each other; to do which, it will be proper to fix to one of the boards, a ſtrong ſupporter of glaſs, or baked wood, and to ſuſpend the other by ſilk ſtrings from the ceiling of the room; from which, by a proper pulley, it may be lowered or raiſed, ſo as to be at any diſtance required from the lower board, which may be placed upon the table.

When theſe boards are placed in the manner above deſcribed, and at about one inch diſtance from one another, they may be uſed exactly

exactly as the two coatings of a pane of glaſs. If one of the boards is connected with the electrified prime Conductor, and the other be left inſulated, they will receive no charge, agreeable to the ſecond experiment of the preceding chapter, and if after ſome time you touch them, you will receive only a ſpark from the upper board, in conſequence of its being connected with the electrified prime Conductor. If, whilſt one of the boards is receiving Electricity, the other communicates with the earth, then, the plate of air between them will be charged, like a coated plate of glaſs; for that board, which communicates with the earth, will acquire an Electricity contrary to that of the other board; and if you touch them, *i. e.* make a communication between them, they will explode, give the ſhock, &c. ſimilar to a charged jar.

In this experiment it cannot be expected, that ſuch an exploſion, and with ſuch a force will be produced, as by an equal ſurface of coated glaſs; for here the coatings cannot be brought ſo near one another as to render them capable of a high charge, becauſe the plate

plate of air being much lefs compact than glafs, may be eafily broken by the force of the charge, *i. e.* it may eafily difcharge itfelf. Notwithftanding, however, that a plate of air is not capable of receiving a very high charge, yet this experiment has a great advantage, which is, that here we may fee what preffes between the two coatings either in charging, or difcharging the plate of air, and we may introduce feveral things into the fubftance of this coated electric, which produce feveral remarkable appearances. By this experiment the true ftate of the earth, when covered by electrified clouds, may be reprefented exceedingly well; and feveral meteors, that happen in that ftate, and which are thought to be effects of Electricity, may be imitated; fuch as water-fpouts *, and whirlwinds, befides

* It was fome time ago doubted whether the caufe of water-fpouts could be attributed to Electricity, or not; but at prefent it feems pretty well afcertained that they are electrical phenomena; it having been lately obferved (befides other reafons) that a flafh of lightening was feen at the time that a water-fpout was broken, and difappeared. See Captain COOK's Voyage round the World during the Years 1772—3—4—5, by Mr. G. FORSTER, F. R. S. vol. I. p. 190.

the

the well-known electrical phenomena, thunder and lightening.

In order to reprefent a water-fpout, as it is often obferved at fea, place the two boards at about two inches diftance from one another; put a large drop of water about the middle of the loweft of them, and fix a metallic ball, or any other piece of metal, that is fomewhat fpherical *, to the upper board, juft oppofite to, and at about half an inch diftance from the furface of the water. If in this fituation the upper board be electrified, whilft the lower communicates with the earth, the water, which reprefents the fea, will be attracted by the metallic ball, which reprefents a cloud, and rifing nearly in a conical body, will afford a pretty good reprefentation of the water-fpout †.

The

* The metallic covering of fome kind of coat buttons anfwers exceedingly well, and may be pafted on the tin-foil coating of the board.

† The knob of a charged bottle being brought near the water in a metal plate, or common earthen ware fawcer, fhows this experiment in a fimple, and beautiful manner. If a large drop of water be placed upon the knob of an infulated charged bottle, and the knob of another

The appearance of a whirlwind is but ſeldom, and by chance to be obſerved. The bran between the two plates F, P fig. 2, Plate I, is often whirled like the duſt in a whirlwind; but there is no certain rule, that I know, for producing this phenomenon.

In order to ſucceed in this experiment, Mr. BECKET directs to place the boards above mentioned, about four or five inches aſunder, and to put ſome bran, and very ſmall bits of paper about the center of the lower board. If in this ſituation the upper board be connected with the electrified prime Conductor, and the lower be either connected with the ground, or with the rubber of the machine, the bran, and bits of paper will be attracted, and repelled, alternately, by the boards. " But (ſays Mr. BECKET *) the moſt ſurpriz-" ing appearance in this experiment, and " what gives it the moſt exact reſemblance

ther bottle charged with the contrary Electricity be brought near the drop of water, it will be ſquirted away in a curious manner, particularly if the coating of the inſulated bottle be touched at the ſame time.

* In his Eſſay on Electricity, p. 141.

4 " of

"of a whirlwind, is that ſometimes, when "the Electricity is very ſtrong, a quantity of "the paper and bran will accumulate in one "place, forming a kind of column between "the boards, and ſuddenly acquire a ſwift "horizontal motion, moving like a whirling "pillar to the edge of the boards, and from "thence fly off and be ſcattered about the "room to a conſiderable diſtance. I own "I am entirely at a loſs to account for this "extraordinary appearance—I call it extra-"ordinary, becauſe it but ſeldom occurs, and "ſeems to depend either on a certain degree "of attraction, quantity of the bran, or diſ-"tance between the boards; and I could "ſeldom get it to ſucceed perfectly but by "accident."

The phenomena of thunder and lightening are exhibited at the ſame time by a ſpontaneous diſcharge of the plate of air, which may be eaſily produced by ſetting the boards at about an inch diſtance from each other, and electrifying them ſtrongly.

Expe-

EXPERIMENT II.

To coat resinous Electrics.

The best method to coat such electrics, as rosin, sealing-wax, &c. that can easily be melted, is first to put a circular piece of tin-foil, about two inches less in diameter than the plate you intend to make, upon a marble table; then, to pour over it the electric just melted. This may be spread and flattened by pressing it with a pane of glass, or any thing, that is even, and smooth; afterwards, another piece of tin-foil equal to the former is to be stuck upon the electric, which may be done by pressing it gently with a hot iron; and then the plate, which may be easily separated from the marble table, will be fit for use.

EXPERIMENT III.

To insulate fluid Electrics.

Take a large earthen dish, flat at the bottom, and stick within it a piece of tin-foil about an inch shorter than the flat part of the dish all around, and through a small hole made in the bottom of the diſh, introduce a ſlender wire, which muſt communicate with the tin-foil; then pour into the diſh ſome melted tallow, or other electric ſubſtances, that you deſire to try; laſtly, let a round braſs plate *, equal to the tin-foil, ſtuck in the diſh, and either proceeding from a glaſs arm, or from the prime Conductor, juſt touch the ſurface of the electric in the diſh, and let it ſtand parallel, and oppoſite to the tin-foil ſtuck in its bottom. In this manner the plate of liquid electric is coated, and may be eaſily ſubjected to experiments.

Plates of other conſiſtent electrics, that cannot eaſily be melted, may be coated in the ſame manner as a plate of glaſs; and ſome of them will be found to anſwer as well, if not better than glaſs.

* The braſs plate F fig. 2 of Plate I may be very uſeful for this purpoſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Experiments on the influence of Points, and the uſefulneſs of pointed metallic Conductors, to defend Buildings from the effects of Lightening.

MY reader in the courſe of this work muſt have obſerved in ſeveral of the experiments already deſcribed, the remarkable property, that points have, both of throwing off, and receiving *ſilently* the electric fluid; but in this chapter I ſhall deſcribe ſome more curious experiments of this kind, by which the influence of points, in reſpect to Electricity, may be better underſtood, and which may, in a more particular manner, demonſtrate the utility of metallic Conductors to houſes, or piles of building, in order to preſerve them from the damage often occaſioned by a ſtroke of lightening, which is one of the greateſt benefits that mankind has received from the ſcience of Electricity.

EXPERIMENT I.

To difcharge a Jar filently.

When a large jar is fully charged, which would give a terrible fhock, put one of your hands in contact with its outfide coating; with the other hold a fharp-pointed needle, and keeping the point directed towards the knob of the jar, proceed gradually near it, until the point of the needle touches the knob. This operation difcharges the jar intirely, and you will either receive no fhock at all, or fo fmall a one, as can hardly be perceived. The point of the needle therefore has filently, and gradually drawn all the fuperfluous fluid from the infide furface of the electric jar.

EXPERIMENT II.

Drawing the Electricity from the prime Conductor by a Point.

Let a perfon hold the knob of a brafs rod at fuch a diftance from the prime Conductor, that fparks may eafily fly from the latter to the former, when the machine is in motion. Then

Then let the winch be turned, and while the ſparks are following one another, preſent the ſharp point of a needle at nearly twice the diſtance from the prime Conductor, that the knobed rod is held; and you will obſerve that no more ſparks will go to the rod;—remove the needle intirely, and the ſparks will be ſeen again;—preſent the needle, and the ſparks diſappear; which evidently ſhows that, the point of the needle draws off *ſilently* almoſt all the fluid, that the cylinder throws upon the prime Conductor.

If the needle be fixed upon the prime Conductor with the point outward, and the knob of a diſcharging rod, or the knuckle of a finger be brought very near the prime Conductor, though the excitation of the cylinder may be very ſtrong, yet you will perceive that no ſpark, or an exceeding ſmall one can be obtained from the prime Conductor.

Experiment III.

The electric Fly.

Fix the fly deſcribed in the third chapter, upon the prime Conductor, as repreſented by

D fig. 2 of Plate I, then turn the winch of the machine, and the fly will immediately begin to move round, in an horizontal position, and in the direction of the letters *abcd*, *i. e.* contrary to the direction of the points of the wires. If the experiment is repeated with a Conductor negatively electrified, the fly will turn the same way as before, *viz.* in the direction of the letters *a b c d.* The reason of this experiment depends upon the repulsion existing between bodies possessed of the same Electricity; for whether the fly is electrified positively or negatively, the air opposite to the points of the wires (on account of the points easily transmitting Electricity) acquireth a strong Electricity, analogous to that of the points, and therefore, the air and the points must repel each other. This explanation is confirmed by observing that the above fly not only does not move in vacuo; and even if placed under a close receiver, it will turn but for a little while, and then stop; for the quantity of air contained in the receiver, may become readily, and equally electrified *.

EXPE-

* If, when the fly under the close receiver is stopped, you put the end of a finger on the outside of the glass, opposite to

EXPERIMENT IV.

The electrified Cotton.

Take a ſmall lock of cotton, extended in every direction as much as conveniently can be done, and by a linen thread about five, or ſix inches long, or by a thread drawn out of the ſame cotton, tie it to the end of the prime Conductor; then let the winch of the machine be turned, and the lock of cotton, on being electrified, will immediately ſwell, by repelling its filaments from one another, and will ſtretch itſelf towards the neareſt Conductor. In this ſituation let the winch be kept turning, and preſent the end of your finger, or the knob of a wire towards the

to one of the points of the fly, this will move again briſkly: and by altering the poſition of your finger occaſionally round the glaſs, you may continue its action a conſiderable time, *viz.* till moſt of that part of the glaſs is charged. In this caſe, when the finger is applied on the outſide of the receiver, the glaſs loſing part of its natural electric fluid from the outſide (*i. e.* if the fly is electrified poſitively, or *vice verſa*, if negatively) receives the fluid of the electrified air on its inſide ſurface; hence this air is put in a ſtate of being again electrified by the point of the fly, which renews the motion of the fly.

lock of cotton, which will then immediately move towards the finger, and endeavour to touch it; but take with the other hand a pointed needle, and prefent its point towards the cotton, a little above the end of the finger, and you will obferve the cotton immediately to fhrink upward, and move towards the prime Conductor.—Remove the needle, and the cotton will come again towards the finger.—Prefent the needle, and the cotton will fhrink again; which clearly fhows, that the needle, being fharp pointed, draws off the electric fluid from the cotton, and puts it in a ftate of being attracted by the prime Conductor, which could not be effected by a wire having a blunted end, or a round ball for its termination.

Experiment V.

The electrified Bladder.

Take a large bladder well blown, and cover it with gold, filver, or brafs leaf, fticking it with gum-water; fufpend this bladder at the end of a filk thread, at leaft fix or feven feet long hanging from the ceiling of the room, and electrify the bladder, by giving it a

ftrong

ſtrong ſpark with the knob of a charged bottle; this done, take a knobed wire, and preſent it to the bladder when motionleſs; and you will perceive, that as the knob approaches the bladder, the bladder alſo moves towards the knob, and when nearly touching it, gives it the ſpark, which it received from the charged phial, and thus it becomes unelectrified. Give it another ſpark, and, inſtead of the knobed wire, preſent the point of a needle towards it, and you will perceive that the bladder will not be attracted by, but rather recede from the point, eſpecially if the needle be very ſuddenly preſented towards it. This is one of Mr. HENLY's experiments.

Before we proceed to the practical uſe of pointed Conductors to buildings, in order to defend them from lightening, which is nothing more than the proper application of the preceding experiments, it will be proper to ſay ſomething in explanation of the above property of points, the cauſe of which has occaſioned ſeveral controverſies. In order to this, it ſhould be remembered, that the electric fluid, ſuperinduced upon an inſulated

 body,

body, is confined upon that body by the air, which surrounds it; further, that Electricity, by being continually communicated to the air, which is never a perfect electric, is gradually dissipated, from whence follows this very evident principle, *i. e.* that as a greater or less quantity of air is contiguous to a given quantity of electrified surface, so that surface loseth its Electricity sooner or later. Suppose for instance, that a pointed needle is fixed upon the prime Conductor; mark a dot upon any part of the prime Conductor, which may be nearly equal to the point of the needle, and then electrify the prime Conductor. Now it is evident to bare inspection, that although the point of the needle, and the dot, &c. are of equal surfaces, yet the former is exposed to a quantity of air, which almost entirely surrounds it, and which is vastly greater, than the air contiguous to the latter; hence, the Electricity, communicated to the prime Conductor, is dissipated more easily from the point of the needle, than from the dot, or any other part of the prime Conductor. Besides, the air about the point may more easily be moved, in consequence of the electrical repulsion, than at any other part of of the ſurface of the prime Conductor, and new air, *i. e.* unelectrified air, paſſes more frequently by it, which taking always part of the Electricity of that body promotes alſo its diſſipation.

In the ſame manner may be underſtood, why the Electricity is more eaſily diſſipated at ſharp edges and corners, than at flat ones; for as the ſurfaces of bodies in general are more or leſs plain, ſo they are expoſed to a leſs or greater quantity of air, and participate more or leſs of the nature, and properties of points.

When the pointed body is negatively electrified, it is for the ſame reaſon, that it acquires the electric fluid through the point, eaſier, than through any other part of its ſurface; *i. e.* becauſe the point exhibiting the leaſt ſurface to the greateſt quantity of free air, has the greateſt number of particles of air, from which it can extract the electric fluid *.

* For a more particular explanation of the the abovementioned property of points, ſee BECCARIA's Artificial Electricity.

EXPE-

EXPERIMENT VI.

The Thunder-houſe.

Fig. 1 of Plate II is an inſtrument repreſenting the ſide of a houſe, either furniſhed with a metallic Conductor, or not; by which both the bad effects of lightening ſtriking upon a houſe not properly ſecured, and the uſefulneſs of metallic Conductors, may be clearly repreſented. A is a board about three quarters of an inch thick, and ſhaped like the gable-end of a houſe. This board is fixed perpendicularly upon the bottom board B, upon which the perpendicular glaſs pillar C D is alſo fixed in a hole about eight inches diſtant from the baſis of the board A. A ſquare hole I L M K about a quarter of an inch deep, and nearly one inch wide, is made in the board A, and is filled with a ſquare piece of wood, nearly of the ſame dimenſions.—I mention, nearly of the ſame dimenſions, becauſe it muſt go ſo eaſily into the hole, that it may drop off, by the leaſt ſhaking of the inſtrument. A wire L K is faſtened diagonally to this ſquare piece of wood.

wood. Another wire I H of the ſame thickneſs, having a braſs ball H, ſcrewed on its pointed extremity, is faſtened upon the board A; ſo alſo is the wire M N, which is ſhaped in a ring at O. From the upper extremity of the glaſs pillar C D, a crooked wire proceeds, having a ſpring ſocket F, through which a double knobed wire ſlips perpendicularly, the lower knob G of which falls juſt above the knob H. The glaſs pillar D C muſt not be made very faſt into the bottom board; but it muſt be fixed ſo as it may be pretty eaſily moved round its own axis, by which means the braſs ball G may be brought nearer or farther from the ball H, without touching the part E F G. Now when the ſquare piece of wood L M I K (which may repreſent the ſhutter of a window or the like) is fixed into the hole ſo, that the wire L K ſtands in the dotted repreſentation I M, then the metallic communication from H to O, is complete, and the inſtrument repreſents a houſe furniſhed with a proper metallic Conductor; but if the ſquare piece of wood L M I K is fixed ſo, that the wire L K ſtands in the direction L K, as repreſented in the figure,

figure, then the metallic Conductor H O, from the top of the houſe to its bottom, is interrupted at I M, in which caſe the houſe is not properly ſecured.

Fix the piece of wood L M I K, ſo that its wire may be as repreſented in the figure, in which caſe the metallic Conductor H O is diſcontinued. Let the ball G be fixed at about half an inch perpendicular diſtance from the ball H, then, by turning the glaſs pillar D C, remove the former ball from the latter; by a wire or chain connect the wire E F with the wire Q of the jar P, and let another wire or chain, faſtened to the hook O, touch the outſide coating of the jar. Connect the wire Q with the prime Conductor, and charge the jar; then, by turning the glaſs pillar D C, let the ball G come gradually near the ball H, and when they are arrived ſufficiently near one another, you will obſerve, that the jar explodes, and the piece of wood L M I K is puſhed out of the hole to a conſiderable diſtance from the thunder-houſe. Now the ball G, in this experiment, repreſents an electrified cloud, which when it is is arrived ſufficiently near the top of the houſe A, the Electricity ſtrikes it, and as this houſe is not ſecured with a proper Conductor, the exploſion breaks part of it, *i. e.* knocks off the piece of wood I M.

Repeat the experiment with only this variation, *viz.* that this piece of wood I M is ſutated ſo, that the wire L K may ſtand in the ſituation I M; in which caſe the Conductor H O is not diſcontinued; and you will obſerve, that the exploſion will have no effect upon the piece of wood L M; this remaining in the hole, unmoved; which ſhows the uſefulneſs of the metallic Conductor.

Further; unſcrew the braſs ball H from the wire H I, ſo that this may remain pointed, and with this difference only in the apparatus repeat both the above experiments; and you will find that the piece of wood I M is in neither caſe moved from its place, nor any exploſion will be heard, which not only demonſtrates the preference of Conductors with pointed terminations to thoſe with blunted ones, but alſo ſhows that a houſe, furniſhed with ſharp terminations, although not fur-

niſhed

niſhed with a regular Conductor, is almoſt ſufficiently guarded againſt the effects of lightening.

To prove farther the preference of pointed Conductors to blunt ones, the experiment of the electrified cotton (*viz.* the fourth experiment of this chapter) may be eaſily repeated with this apparatus, by which it may be ſhown, that a pointed Conductor, ſilently drawing off the electric fluid from the ſmall clouds near it, which are repreſented by the cotton tied to the wire of the ball G, repels them, and may thus in ſome caſes, perhaps, actually prevent a ſtroke of lightening, whereas the blunted Conductor facilitates it. Small feathers may alſo be tied near the knob G, which, by repelling one another, may exhibit a better repreſentation of an electrified cloud; and in ſhort, with a little contrivance, the above-deſcribed apparatus, commonly called the *Thunder-houſe*, may be adapted to repreſent the principal phenomena of lightening, together with ſeveral circumſtances preceding, or following it.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Medical Electricity.

WHEN we mentioned the uſes of Electricity in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, we obſerved that Electricity had been found beneficial in many diſorders, occaſioned by obſtructions, in which a promotion of the inſenſible perſpiration, and of glandular ſecretion was neceſſary, or an additional impetus required to be given to the common courſe of the fluids in the human body. We alſo conſidered the different opinions relating to this ſubject; in this chapter therefore, nothing remains but to deſcribe a practical method of applying Electricity to the human body, when affected with different diſtempers.

The promotion of the inſenſible perſpiration is produced by ſimple electrification; a patient therefore, on whom this effect is to be produced by Electricity, ſhould be inſulated in the moſt convenient ſituation, and by being connected with the prime Conductor of the machine, he ſhould be kept electrified as long, and often, as his phyſician may think proper. Shocks in this caſe, and even ſparks, ſhould be avoided; for though they may not be actually injurious, yet they are by no means pleaſing ſenſations; eſpecially to a ſick perſon.

In caſes of partial obſtructions, as rheumatiſm in the knees, ſhoulders, &c. ſtrong ſparks may be drawn from the affected part, and ſometimes ſmall ſhocks may be very proper.

In ſome caſes, where ſhocks may be thought neceſſary, they ſhould be confined to that part only, which is affected with the diſorder, and ſhould never be too ſtrong; a number of ſmall ſhocks (as for inſtance, from a half-pint phial fully charged) having been found to be more beneficial, than large ones. In order to confine the ſhock to one part of the body only, as for inſtance to the knee, tie a wire or a chain round the leg, a little below the knee, and put another chain round or in contact with the thigh, a little above the knee; laſtly connect one of theſe chains with the outſide coating of the jar, and tie the other to one of the wires of the diſcharging rod. Now, when the jar is charged, if you bring one knob of the diſcharging rod, near the knob of the jar, the ſhock will be ſent through the knee, as deſired. The wires may alſo be faſtened on each ſide the knee, by ſilk ſtrings, and the ſhock ſent from one ſide of it to the other, if needful. If the quadrant electrometer is fixed upon the prime Conductor, and the Operator obſerves to diſcharge the jar always when the index is arrived to a given degree, the ſhocks will be preciſely of the ſame ſtrength.

A very uſeful inſtrument to cure the tooth-ach, is repreſented fig. 6, Plate II. It conſiſts of two wires A E, B E, fixed in two holes in the piece of baked wood H. Theſe wires from C to D, and G to F are bended in a plane inclined to the reſt of the wires; their extremities D E, F E, being again bended towards one another, and in the plane of C A G B. The extremities A B of the wires are bended in a ring. When this inſtrument is to be uſed, it muſt be applied in ſuch a manner, that the affected tooth may be embraced pretty firmly by the two wires at E, which being flexible, may be adjuſted ſo as to receive teeth of different ſizes; then the end A, or B of one of the wires, by means of a chain or a wire, muſt be connected with the outſide of a charged jar, and the end of the other wire with the knob of the jar, ſo as to make the ſhock paſs through the wires of the inſtrument, and in conſequence through the tooth. A ſingle ſhock, ſent through an affected tooth in this manner, will often cure it inſtantaneouſly; it is however proper to ſend always two or three ſhocks through it.

CHAP. XI.

Experiments with the electrical Battery.

The force of accumulated Electricity, great as it appears by the experiments performed with a single coated jar, is very small when compared with that, which is produced by a number of jars connected together; and if the effects of a single jar are surprising, the prodigious force of a large battery is certainly astonishing. To observe that the metals, even the most purified platina, which resists the greatest efforts of chemic fire, are actually, and almost instantaneously rendered red-hot, and fused: to see animals destroyed, and to hear the loud report of a large electric battery, are things that always produce a kind of terror in the mind of an attentive observer. Experiments of this kind should be conducted with great caution, and the Operator ought to be attentive, not only to the business in hand, but also to the persons, who may happen to be near him, prohibiting their touching, or even coming too near any part of the apparatus; for if a

 mistake

miſtake in performing other experiments may be diſagreeable, thoſe in the diſcharge of a large battery may be attended with worſe conſequences.

When a battery is to be charged, inſtead of a large prime Conductor, a ſmall one is much more convenient; for, in this caſe, the diſſipation of the Electricity is not ſo conſiderable. The quadrant electrometer, which ſhows the height of the charge in the battery, may be fixed either upon the prime Conductor, or upon the battery, in which latter caſe, it ſhould be placed upon a rod proceeding from the wires of the jars, and if the battery be very large, it ſhould be elevated two or three feet above them.

The index of the electrometer in charging a large battery will ſeldom riſe ſo high as 90°, becauſe the machine cannot charge a battery ſo high in proportion, as a ſingle jar. Its limit is often about 60° or 70°, more or leſs in proportion to the ſize of the battery, and the force of the machine.

EXPE-

Experiment I.

The melt Wires.

Connect with the hook, communicating with the outside coating of a battery, containing at least thirty square feet of coated surface, a wire, that is about one fiftieth part of an inch thick, and about two feet long; the other end of it must be fastened to one end of the discharging rod; this done, charge the battery, and then by bringing the discharging rod near its wires, send the explosion through the small wire, which, by this means, will be made red-hot, and melted, so as to fall upon the floor in different glowing pieces. When a wire is melted in this manner, sparks are frequently seen at a considerable distance from it, which are red-hot particles of the metal, that by the violence of the explosion are scattered in all directions. If the force of the battery is very great, the wire will be intirely dispersed by the explosion, so that none of it can be afterwards found.

By repeating this experiment with wires of different metals, and the ſame force of exploſion, it will be found that ſome metals are more readily fuſed than others, and ſome not at all effected; which ſhows the difference of their conducting power. If it be required to melt ſuch particles of metals, that cannot eaſily be drawn in wires, as ores, grain gold, &c. they may be ſet in a train upon a piece of wax; this train may be inſerted in the circuit, and an exploſion may be ſent through it, which, if it is ſufficiently ſtrong, will melt the metallic particles, as well as the wires: or, if the quantity to be tried be large enough, it may be confined in a ſmall tube of glaſs.

In melting wires of a conſiderable length, it is often obſerved that when the force of the exploſion is juſt ſufficient to render the wire red-hot, the redneſs begins firſt from one end of it, namely that which communicates with the poſitive ſide of the battery, and from thence gradually proceeds to the other end. This is another ocular demonſtration of the theory of a ſingle electric fluid.

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If

If a wire is ſtretched by weights, and a ſhock is ſent through it, which renders it juſt red-hot, the wire, after the exploſion, will be found conſiderably lengthened. If a wire is melted upon a piece of glaſs, the glaſs, after the exploſion, will be found marked with all the priſmatic colours.

Experiment II.

To ſhow that the electric Fluid prefers a ſhort Paſſage through the Air, to a long one through good Conductors.

Bend a wire about five feet long in the form repreſented by fig. 11, Plate II, ſo that the parts A, B may come within half an inch of one another; then connect the extremities of the wire with the hook of the battery, and the diſcharging-rod, as directed in the preceding experiment, and ſend the charge of a battery through it. On making the exploſion a ſpark will be ſeen between A and B, which ſhows that the electric fluid chooſes rather a ſhort paſſage through the air, than the long one through the wire. The charge however, does not paſs intirely through A and B, but part of it goes alſo through the wire, which may be proved by putting a ſlender wire between A and B; for on making the diſcharge with only this addition in the apparatus, the ſmall wire will be hardly made red-hot, whereas if the large wire A D B be cut in D, ſo as to diſcontinue the circuit A D B, the ſmall wire will be melted, and even exploded by the ſame ſhock, that before made it ſcarcely red-hot. In this manner (ſays Dr. PRIESTLEY, who is the inventor of this experiment) may the conducting power of different metals be tried, uſing metallic circuits of the ſame length and thickneſs, and obſerving the difference of the paſſage through the air in each.

EXPERIMENT III.

To make Globules of Metals.

Take a very ſlender wire, and put it in a glaſs tube, about one quarter of an inch in diameter; then ſend the charge of a battery through it, and the wire will be melted, and reduced in globules of different ſizes, which are found ſticking on the inſide ſurface of the glaſs tube, and they may be eaſily ſeparated

rated from it at pleaſure: theſe, upon examination, will all be found hollow, and are little more than a mere ſcoria of metal.

It muſt be obſerved in making this experiment, that the charge of the battery muſt neither be too high, nor too weak; for in the former caſe the wire will be reduced in pieces exceedingly ſmall, or rather exploded in ſmoak, and in the latter caſe it will be imperfectly fuſed, ſo that its pieces will be large, and irregular.

Experiment IV.

The Fairy Circles.

Fix upon each of the knobs D D of the univerſal diſcharger, fig. 5, Plate I, or upon the wires that ſupport the knobs, if the knobs are removed, a flattiſh, and ſmooth piece of metal, or ſemi-metal (watch-caſes are very fit for this purpoſe), ſo that their ſurfaces may come ſo near each other, that the battery may be diſcharged through them; then connect one wire of the diſcharger with the outſide of the battery, and the other wire, by the help of the diſcharging rod, with the inſide of it, ſo ſo as to make the diſcharge, which will occaſion the ſpot, and circles deſcribed in the Firſt Part of this Treatiſe, upon the ſurface of each of the pieces of metal fixed upon the diſcharger.

Theſe circles have hitherto been exhibited upon the ſurface of no other ſubſtances but metals, and they are found to be marked more diſtinctly upon ſuch metals, as melt with the leaſt heat. The moſt beautiful of theſe rings are produced by a number of diſcharges from a large battery, every part of the apparatus remaining exactly in the ſame ſituation. If the pieces of metal receive the exploſion in vacuo, the ſpot formed on them is very irregular, and confuſed.

I have given theſe ſpots the appellation of *Fairy Circles*, on account that they bear ſome reſemblance to the ſpots ſo called, which are often obſerved upon the graſs in the fields. Theſe, which we may call natural Fairy Circles in the fields, it has been thought to be effected by lightening, on account of their bearing ſome reſemblance to the above-mentioned circles produced by Electricity; the ſuppoſition,

ſuppoſition, however, ſeems not very probable; for the ſpots in the fields, called Fairy Circles, have no central ſpot, no concentric circles, neither are they always of a circular figure; and, as I am informed, they ſeem to be rather beds of muſhrooms, than the effects of lightening.

Experiment V.

To mark coloured Rings on Metals.

In order to exhibit coloured rings upon the ſurface of metals, place a plain piece of any of the metals upon one of the wires of the univerſal diſcharger, and upon the other wire fix a ſharp-pointed needle with the point juſt oppoſite to the ſurface of the metal; then connect one wire of the diſcharger with the outſide of a battery, and the other with the diſcharging-rod, &c. In this manner, if exploſions are repeatedly ſent either from the point to the piece of metal, or from the latter to the former, they will gradually mark the ſurface of the piece of metal, oppoſite to the point, with circles conſiſting of all the priſmatic colours; which are evidently occaſion-

ed

ed by laminæ of the metal, raiſed by the force of the exploſions.

Theſe colours appear ſooner, and the rings are cloſer to one another, when the point is nearer to the ſurface of the metal. The number of rings is greater or leſs, according as the point of the needle is more ſharp or more blunt; and they are repreſented equally well upon any of the metals.

The point of the needle is alſo coloured to a conſiderable diſtance, the colours upon it returning in circles, though not very diſtinctly. This is an experiment of Dr. PRIESTLEY.

EXPERIMENT VI.

The Earthquake.

The appearanee of the earthquake, as repreſented with the exploſion of a battery, is occaſioned by the concuſſion given to ſeveral ſubſtances by the exploſion paſſing over their ſurfaces. To give a repreſentation of the impreſſion made upon houſes by the earthquake, ſmall ſticks, cards, or the like may be placed upon the ſurface of the body, over which the exploſion is to be tranſmitted, ſo as to ſtand very light. Theſe ſticks, &c. will never fail to be ſhook; and often be thrown down by the exploſion.

It is remarkable that an exploſion will not paſs over the ſame length of ſurface of all bodies, though they are equally good Conductors. Water, ice, wet wood, raw fleſh, and moſt of the animal fluids, are the beſt to make this remarkable experiment; to do which nothing more is required, than to inſert part of the ſurface of the ſaid ſubſtances into the circuit of the two ſides of a battery; a chain for inſtance communicating with the outſide, may be placed ſo as nearly to touch the ſurface of a quantity of water, and at about eight or nine inches diſtant * from another chain, ſituated alſo very near the ſurface of the water, and communicating with one end of the diſcharging-rod. If the ends of the chains touch the water, the experiment will happen in the ſame manner.

* The diſtance, at which an exploſion will ſtrike over the ſurface of the above-mentioned ſubſtances is much greater, than that it can ſtrike through in air only.

The

The report, in this experiment, is much louder than when the explofion paffes through the air only. The concuffion given to the water by the explofion paffing over its furface, is not only fuperficial, but affects its whole body; and if the hand is kept deep under its furface, whilft the explofion paffes over it, the concuffion may be very fenfibly felt.

The fpark, that in this experiment paffes over the furface of the water, feems to bear a great refemblance to the balls of fire, that have fometimes been feen over the furface of the fea, or land, in time of an earthquake; and hence it feems very probable, that thofe balls of fire are electrical phenomena.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Promiscuous Experiments.

EXPERIMENT I.

To show that Smoak, and the Vapour of hot Water are Conductors.

LET a cork ball electrometer be suspended about four or five feet above the prime Conductor, then turn the winch of the machine very gently, and you will find, that the balls of the electrometer will not diverge. Put upon the prime Conductor a wax taper * just blown out, so that its smoak may ascend to the electrometer; then turn the winch again, and the balls of the electrometer will immediately separate a little with the same force of Electricity from the prime Conductor: which shows that smoak is a Conductor in a small degree.

* A green wax taper is the best for this experiment.

In

In the ſame manner, by placing a ſmall veſſel with hot water upon the prime Conductor, inſtead of the wax taper, it may be proved, that its vapour is alſo a Conductor; but inferior in its conducting power, to the ſmoak. This experiment is an invention of Mr. HENLY.

EXPERIMENT II.

To prove that Glaſs and other Electrics become Conductors, when they are made very hot.

Take a ſmall glaſs tube of about one twentieth of an inch in diameter, and above a foot long; cloſe it at one end, and introduce a wire into it, ſo that it may be extended through its whole length: let two or three inches of this wire project above the open end of the tube, and there faſten it with a bit of cork; tie round the cloſed end of the tube, another wire, which will be ſeparated from the wire within the tube only by the glaſs interpoſed between them. In theſe circumſtances endeavour to ſend a ſhock through the two wires, *i. e.* the wire in-

inserted in the glaſs tube, and that tied on its outſide, by connecting one of them with the outſide, and touching the other with the knob of a charged jar, and you will find that the diſcharge cannot be made, unleſs the tube be broken; becauſe the circuit is interrupted by the glaſs at the end of the tube, which is interpoſed between the two wires. But put that end of the tube, to which the wire is tied, into the fire, ſo that it may become juſt red-hot, then endeavour to diſcharge the jar again through the wires, and you will find that the exploſion will be eaſily tranſmitted from wire to wire, through the ſubſtance of the glaſs, which, by being made red-hot, is become a Conductor.

In order to aſcertain the conducting quality of hot reſinous ſubſtances, oils, &c. bend a glaſs tube in the form of an arch C E F D fig. 7, Plate II; and tie a ſilk ſtring G C D to it, which ſerves to hold it by, when it is to be ſet near the fire; fill the middle part of this tube with roſin, ſealing-wax, &c. then introduce two wires A E, B F through its ends, ſo that they may touch the rosin, or penetrate a little way in it. This done, let a person hold the tube over a clear fire, so as to melt the rosin within it; at the same time, by connecting one of the wires A, or B with the outside of a charged jar, and touching the other with the knob of the jar, endeavour to make the discharge through the rosin, and you will observe that, while the rosin is cold, no shocks can be transmitted through it; but it becomes a Conductor, according as it melts, and when totally melted, then the shocks will pass through it very freely.

Experiment III.

To show that hot Air is a Conductor.

Electrify one of the cork-ball electrometers, suspended upon the stand fig. 4 of Plate I, or electrify the prime Conductor with the quadrant electrometer; then bring a red-hot iron within a sufficient distance of the electrometer or prime Conductor, and you will find that they soon lose their Electricity, which is certainly conducted by the hot air contiguous to the iron; for if the experiment

riment be repeated with the ſame iron, when cold, *i. e.* by bringing it within the ſame diſtance of the electrified Electrometer or prime Conductor, their Electricity will not be conducted away as before.*

The above experiments may reaſonably induce us to ſuſpect, that ſeveral ſubſtances, which are ranged among Conductors, would become electrics if they were brought into a colder temperature; and that all the electrics become Conductors, when they are heated in a very high degree.

* It has been often obſerved, that a battery may be diſcharged by introducing a red-hot iron between two knobs interpoſed, and ſtanding at ſome diſtance from each other in the circuit: but if, inſtead of iron, there be introduced a piece of red-hot glaſs between the knobs, (the diſtance between them remaining as at firſt) the battery cannot be diſcharged: whence we may infer that either hot air is not ſo good a Conductor as has been imagined, or elſe, that air heated by iron (perhaps from its ignited particles) is ſtronger with reſpect to its conducting power, than when heated by the red-hot glaſs.

Experiment IV.

To electrify the Air of a Room.

The air ſurrounding the electrical machine when in uſe, and contiguous to every highly electrified body, always acquires a portion of Electricity, which it retains for a conſiderable time. A very expeditious method, however, to electrify the air, is to fix two or three needles upon the prime Conductor, and to keep it ſtrongly electrified for about ten minutes. If afterwards an electrometer be brought into the air ſurrounding the apparatus, it will plainly ſhow that the air has acquired a conſiderable quantity of Electricity, which it will retain even after the apparatus has been removed into another room. To electrify the air negatively, connect the pointed needles with the rubber when inſulated; and make a communication by a chain or wire, from the prime Conductor to the table.

Another method of electrifying the air, is to charge a large jar, and inſulate it: then

then connect a ſharp-pointed wire, or a number of them, with the knob of the jar; and make a communication from the outſide coating to the table. If the jar be charged poſitively, the air of the room will ſoon become ſtrongly electrified poſitively likewiſe: but if the jar be charged negatively, the air will become alſo negative. A charged jar being held in one hand, and the flame of a candle inſulated, and held in the other, being brought near the knob of the jar, will alſo ſoon produce the ſame effect.

Experiment V.

The Atmoſphere of Smoak.

Take a braſs ball or any piece of metal that is free from points or edges, of about three or four inches diameter, and inſulate it upon a narrow electric ſtand; then give it a ſpark with the knob of a charged phial, and immediately preſent to it a wax taper juſt blown out and ſmoaking, The ſmoak in this caſe will be attracted by the electrified body, and by encompaſſing that body, will form a kind of atmoſphere about it. This atmoſphere will remain for a few ſeconds, and afterwards, beginning from the bottom, will gradually vaniſh, until at laſt, intirely departing from the electrified body, it goes off in a ſlender column, that ſoon rarefies, and diffuſes itſelf into a conſiderable ſpace.

This experiment will not ſucceed unleſs it be made in very dry weather, and in a room, where the air is not agitated: care muſt alſo be taken, that in blowing out the taper, and preſenting it to the electrified body, the air be diſturbed as little as poſſible.

This phenomenon has induced ſome philoſophers to ſuppoſe, that the Electricity of an electrified body, reſided about it, *i. e.* reſted upon its ſurface like an atmoſphere, which, they thought, was made very evident by the ſmoak. But this appearance, when duly conſidered, is far from proving any ſuch electric atmoſphere, and the cauſe of it may be very eaſily explained in the following manner. The ſmoak is attracted by the

the electrified body in the ſame manner, and for the ſame reaſon, that other bodies are attracted by it. It remains ſuſpended about that body, and cannot all come into contact with its ſurface, on account of the elaſticity of its particles. It remains ſo long ſuſpended about the electrified body, and is not immediately repelled, becauſe it is a bad Conductor, and acquires Electricity very ſlowly; but having acquired a ſufficient quantity of Electricity, it begins to quit the electrified body, and aſcending in the air, extends itſelf into a large ſpace, in conſequence of the repulſion exiſting between its own electrified particles.

Experiment VI.

To ſhew that Metals conduct the electric Fluid through their Subſtance.

Take a wire of any kind of metal, and cover part of it with ſome electric ſubſtance, as roſin, ſealing-wax, &c. then diſcharge a iar through it, and it will be found, that it conducts as well with, as without the electric coating. This proves that the electric fluid paffes through the fubftance of the metal, and not over its furface. A wire continued through a vacuum is alfo a convincing proof of the truth of this obfervation.

EXPERIMENT VII.

The electrified Cup and Chain.

Infulate a metallic cup, or any other concave piece of metal; and place within it a pretty long metallic chain, having a filk thread tied to one of its ends. To the handle of the cup, or to a wire proceeding from it, fufpend a cork-ball electrometer; then electrify the cup by giving it a fpark with the knob of a charged phial, and the balls of the electrometer will immediately diverge. If, in this fituation, one end of the chain be gradually raifed up above the top of the cup, &c. by the filk thread, while the lower end of the chain remains in it, the balls of the electrometer will converge a little; and more or lefs in proportion to the elevation of the chain above the top of the veffel; which proves that the Electricity of the cup and chain together is more denfe, when

when theſe bodies are in a compact, than when they are in a more extended form. A more eaſy method to ſhew this property of Electricity, is that uſed by T. Ronayne, Eſq. which is as follows: He excites a long ſlip of white flannel, or a ſilk ribband, by rubbing it with his fingers; then by applying his hand to it, takes off as many ſparks as the excited electric will give; but when the flannel, &c. has loſt the power of giving any more ſparks in this manner, he doubles, or rolls it up; by which operation the contracted flannel, &c. appears ſo ſtrongly electrical, that, it not only gives ſparks to the hand brought near, but it throws out ſpontaneous bruſhes of light, which appear very beautiful in the dark.

EXPERIMENT VIII.

To ſhow the Courſe of the electric Fluid by the Flame of a Wax-taper.

Fix at that extremity of the prime Conductor, which is the remoteſt from the machine, a braſs rod ſix inches long, having on its extremity a braſs ball about three-

fourths

fourths of an inch in diameter, and let the winch of the machine be moved. If in this ſituation the flame of a wax-taper be preſented to the above-mentioned braſs ball, it will be blown almoſt horizontally, and in a direction from the ball, that is, in the direction of the electric fluid. If a wire with a like ball be fixed to the inſulated rubber, the flame of a wax-taper, preſented to this ball, will be blown alſo in the direction of the electric fluid, that is, it will be blown upon the ball, ſhowing the true courſe of the electric fluid in a very ſimple and convincing manner.

Experiment IX.

To ſhow the electric Attraction, and Repulſion by the electric Light.

Fix a pointed wire upon the prime Conductor, with the point outward, and another like wire upon the inſulated rubber; then let the winch of the machine be turned, and the points of both wires will appear illuminated, *viz.* the former with a bruſh, and the latter with a ſtar. In this ſituation, take

take an excited glaſs tube, and bring it ſide-way of the point of the wire fixed upon the prime Conductor, and you will ſee, that the bruſh of rays iſſuing from the point, is turned ſideway, *i. e.* is repelled by the atmoſphere of the tube; and if the excited tube be held juſt oppoſite to the point, the bruſh will intirely vaniſh, becauſe both the tube and the point are electrified poſitively. If the excited tube be brought near the point of the wire fixed upon the rubber, the ſtar upon it will turn itſelf towards the tube; for this wire, being electrified negatively, will attract the electric fluid of the excited tube.

If this experiment be repeated with an excited ſtick of ſealing-wax, or any other electric, negatively electrified, inſtead of the glaſs tube, it will be found, that the bruſh proceeding from the wire fixed upon the prime Conductor, will turn itſelf towards the excited wax, &c. and the ſtar upon the point of the wire negatively electrified, will be diverted from it, or intirely ſuppreſſed, if the excited ſtick of ſealing-wax be brought juſt oppoſite to the point.

EXPE-

Experiment X.

The electrified Capillary Syphon.

Let a ſmall bucket of metal, full of water, be ſuſpended from the prime Conductor, and put in it a glaſs ſyphon of ſo narrow extremity, as the water will juſt drop from it. If in this diſpoſition of the apparatus the winch of the machine be turned, the water, which, when not electrified, only dropt from the extremity of the ſyphon, will now run in a full ſtream, which will even be ſubdivided into other ſmaller ſtreams; and if the experiment be made in the dark, it will appear beautifully illuminated.

Experiment XI.

The electrified Bells.

Fig. 10 of Plate II, repreſents an inſtrument having three bells, which are cauſed to ring by the power of electric attraction and repulſion. B is a braſs piece furniſhed with a hook, by which it may be ſuſpended from the rod proceeding from the extremity of the prime Conductor A. The two bells C, and E are ſuſpended by braſs chains, but the middle bell D, and the two ſmall braſs clappers between C D, and D E, are ſuſpended by ſilk threads. From the concave part of the bell D a braſs chain proceeds, which falls upon the table, and has a ſilk thread F at its extremity. The apparatus being diſpoſed as in the figure, if the cylinder of the machine be turned, the clappers will fly from bell to bell with a very quick motion, and the bells will ring as long as they are kept electrified.

The two bells C and E, being ſuſpended by braſs chains, are firſt electrified, hence they attract the clappers, communicate to them a little Electricity, and repel them to the unelectrified bell D, upon which the clappers depoſit their Electricity, and then run again to the bells C, E, from which they acquire more Electricity, &c. If by holding the ſilk thread F, the chain of the middle bell be raiſed from the table; the bells, after ringing a little while, will ſtop, becauſe the bell

bell D remaining inſulated, will ſoon become as ſtrongly electrified as either of the other two bells, in which caſe the clappers, having no opportunity to depoſit the Electricity that they acquire from the bells C, E, muſt conſequently ſtop.

If this experiment be made in the dark, ſparks will be ſeen between the clappers and the bells.

Experiment XII.

The Spider ſeemingly animated by Electricity.

Fig. 9 of Plate II, repreſents an electric jar, having a wire C D E faſtened on its outſide, which is bended ſo as to have its knob E, as high as the knob A. B is a ſpider made of cork with a few ſhort threads run through it, to repreſent its legs. This ſpider is faſtened at the end of a ſilk thread, proceeding from the ceiling of the room, or from any other ſupport, ſo that the ſpider may hang mid-way between the two knobs A, E, when the jar is not charged. Let the place of the jar upon the table be marked; then charge the jar by bringing its knob A in contact with the prime Conductor, and replace it in its marked place. The ſpider will now begin to move from knob to knob, and continue this motion for a conſiderable time, ſometimes for ſeveral hours.

The inſide of the jar being charged poſitively the ſpider is attracted by the knob A, which communicates to it a ſmall quantity of Electricity; the ſpider then becoming poſſeſſed of the ſame Electricity with the knob A, is repelled by it, and runs to the knob E, where it diſcharges its Electricity, and is then again attracted by the knob A, and ſo on. In this manner the jar is gradually diſcharged; and when the diſcharge is nearly compleated, the ſpider finiſhes its motion.

Experiment XIII.

The Spiral Tube.

Fig. 13 of Plate II, repreſents an inſtrument compoſed of two glaſs tubes C D, one within

within another, and clofed with two knobed brafs caps A, and B. The innermoft of thefe tubes has a fpiral row of fmall round pieces of tin-foil, ftuck upon its outfide furface, and laying at about one thirtieth of an inch from each other. If this inftrument be held by one of its extremities, and its other extremity be prefented to the prime Conductor, every fpark that it receives from the prime Conductor, will caufe fmall fpark to appear between all the round pieces of tin-foil ftuck upon the innermoft tube, which in the dark affords a pleafing fpectacle; the inftrument appearing encompaffed by a fpiral line of fire.

The fmall round pieces of tin-foil are fometimes ftuck upon a flat piece of glafs A B C D fig. 12, fo as to reprefent curve lines, flowers, letters, &c. and they are illuminated after the fame manner as the fpiral tube; *i. e.* by holding the extremity C, or B in the hand, and prefenting the other extremity to the prime Conductor, when the machine is in motion.

EXPE-

Experiment XIV.

The dancing Balls.

Fix a pointed wire upon the prime Conductor, with the point outward; then take a glaſs tumbler, graſp it with your hands, and preſent its inſide ſurface to the point of the wire upon the prime Conductor, while the machine is in motion; the glaſs in this manner will ſoon become charged; for its inſide ſurface acquires the Electricity from the point, and its outſide loſes its natural quantity of electric fluid through the hands, which ſerve as a coating.—This done put a few pith balls upon the table and cover them with this charged glaſs tumbler. The balls will immediately begin to leap up along the ſides of the glaſs, as repreſented fig. 15, Plate II, and will continue their motion for a conſiderable time.

In this experiment the pith balls are attracted and repelled by the electric fluid ſuperinduced upon the inſide ſurface of the glaſs, which they gradually conduct to the table or other conducting body upon which the glaſs is ſet; at the ſame time that the outward ſurface of the glaſs acquires the electric fluid from the contiguous air.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Further Properties of the Leyden Phial, or charged Electrics.

THE properties of charged electrics, plain as they may appear at firſt ſight, and conformable to the commonly eſtabliſhed theory of Electricity, are yet, when attentively conſidered, far from being intirely underſtood, ſo as to require no further experiments, or leave no doubt in the mind of the ſpeculative Electrician. The firſt queſtion, that naturally occurs, in conſidering a charged phial, is where does the ſuperinduced electric fluid reſide?—Is it lodged in the ſubſtance of the glaſs, or in the air contiguous to the ſurface of the phial? In the firſt caſe, if the electric fluid penetrates a certain quantity of the ſubſtance of the glaſs, it follows that a glaſs plate may be given ſo thin, that the electric fluid may freely pervade its ſubſtance*. If ſuch a plate

* I have often blown glaſs balls, ſo thin that their thickneſs was leſs than one-ſix hundredth part of an inch, and

plate can be made, it will be eaſy, from thence, to determine how far can the electric fluid penetrate the ſubſtance of the glaſs, when charged in the uſual manner. In the ſecond caſe, if the electric fluid reſides in the air contiguous to the glaſs, it muſt repel that air, *i. e.* a glaſs bottle ſhould contain leſs air when charged, than when in its natural ſtate; but this is contrary to experience.

The late Mr. CANTON charged ſome thin glaſs balls of about an inch and a half in diameter, having tubes of about nine inches in length, and afterwards ſealed them hermetically. If theſe balls, when they were cold, were preſented to an electrometer, they ſhewed no ſign of Electricity; but if they were kept a little while near the fire, they then appeared ſtrongly electrical, and poſſeſſed of that kind of Electricity, with which their inſide had been charged. Mr. CANTON diſcovered farther, that if theſe balls are kept under water, they retain their virtue

and have always obſerved, that they were capable of receiving a charge, which they retained for a conſiderable time; if they were not made very hot.

for

for a confiderable time, even for feveral years; but if they are often ufed, their power is foon exhaufted. It is obvious to remark, that the Electricity, which appears upon the outfide of thefe balls, when they are rendered hot, *i. e.* when the glafs is rendered a Conductor by the heat, is not that Electricity, which properly conftitutes the charge, but the fuperfluous Electricity of their infide*.

As for the Electricity, which conftitutes the charge, it being juft fufficient to balance the contrary Electricity of the oppofite furface of the glafs, it will lofe its power, as foon as it is arrived to that furface, which in the cafe of the above-mentioned

* If a charged jar be infulated, and difcharged with an infulated difcharging rod, after the difcharge both the fides of the jar, together with the difcharging rod, will be found poffeffed of the Electricity contrary to the Electricity of that fide of the jar, which was touched laft before the difcharge; which fhows that one fide of a charged electric may contain a greater quantity of Electricity than that, which is fufficient to balance the contrary Electricity of the oppofite fide. This redundant Electricity fhould be carefully confidered in performing experiments of a delicate nature.

balls, it actually reaches, before it can act upon the electrometer.

The moſt remarkable phenomena produced by charged electrics, are exhibited with flat plates of glaſs, jointly charged, like a ſingle coated plate. If two glaſs plates, having plain ſurfaces, be placed one upon the other, and their outward ſurfaces be coated with tin-foil, in the uſual manner of coating a ſingle plate for the Leyden experiment, and then be charged, by preſenting one coating to the prime Conductor, and communicating the other with the earth, the plates (which we ſhall call A, and B) after having been charged, will adhere very firmly to one another, and if ſeparated, A, *viz.* that, whoſe coating was preſented to the prime Conductor, will appear poſitive on both ſides, and B negative on both ſides. If theſe plates are laid in contact as before they were charged, and are diſcharged by making a communication between the two coated ſides, they will be found ſtill to adhere to one another after the diſcharge, and if ſeparated, they will appear ſtill electrified, but with this remarkable difference,

viz.

viz. that now A is negative on both ſides, and B poſitive on both ſides. If theſe plates, after being diſcharged, be ſeparated in the dark, flaſhes of light are perceivable between their internal ſurfaces. By laying the plates together, touching their coatings and ſeparating them ſucceſſively, the flaſhes may be obſerved for a conſiderable number of times, diminiſhing by degrees, until they quite vaniſh.

Father BECCARIA explains theſe and other ſimilar phenomena of charged, as well as of excited electrics by the following principle, which he diſtinguiſhes by the name of *vindicating Electricity*. When two bodies, either a Conductor, and an electrified electric, or two contrarily and equally electrified electrics are joined together, they adhere to each other, and their Electricities diſappear; but as ſoon as they are ſeparated, the electrics recover their Electricities*. How far this principle can be of uſe to explain the phenomena of charged glaſs, &c. I will not take upon me to determine. It would exceed

* See BECCARIA's Artificial Electricity, Part. II. ſec. VI.

too

too far the limits of my work, if I were to enumerate, and account for all the particulars. When the principle is expreſſed, the ingenious reader may eaſily apply it to explain the effects. I ſhall only mention an obſervation of Mr. HENLY relative to this ſubject, which ſeems not conformable to Father BECCARIA's theory, and with that I ſhall conclude this part of my work. Says Mr. HENLY in one of his papers preſented to the Royal Society, in which he deſcribes the above-mentioned experiments of the two glaſs plates, "Crown-glaſs, that is, "the glaſs commonly uſed for ſaſh win-"dows, though ſo much thinner, ſucceeds "in this experiment as well as the plate-"glaſs; but what is very remarkable, the "Dutch plates, when treated in the ſame "manner, have each a poſitive and nega-"tive ſurface, and the Electricity of both ſur-"faces, of both plates, is exchanged for the "contrary Electricity in the diſcharge. If a "clean, dry, uncoated plate of looking-glaſs "be placed between the coated looking-glaſs "plates, or between the plates of crown-"glaſs, it appears, after charging, to be ne-"gatively electrified on both ſides; but if it

"be

"be placed between the Dutch plates, it ac-
"quires, like them, a positive Electricity on
"one surface, and a negative Electricity on
"the other."

In another paper, Mr. HENLY further observes, that if the Dutch plates are separated immediately after being charged, they will then act like two plates of looking-glass, *i. e.* one of them will be positive, and the other negative on both sides; but if a little time be allowed before the plates be separated, the experiment will constantly succeed as above.

PART.

PART IV.

New Experiments in Electricity.

THE laws of Electricity, together with the experiments neceſſary for their demonſtration, having already been deſcribed, in as compendious a manner as could be done, without obſcurity, I ſhall in the laſt Part of this work relate ſuch new experiments, and obſervations, as I have made during the courſe of about two years, in which time I have purſued the Science of Electricity with a particular view to diſcover, if poſſible, the unknown cauſe of ſeveral electrical phenomena, eſpecially thoſe relative to atmoſpherical Electricity.

The firſt inſtrument that I made uſe of, to obſerve the Electricity of the atmoſphere, was an electrical kite, which I had conſtructed, not with a view to obſerve the Electricity of the air, for this, I thought, was very weak and ſeldom to be obſerved; but as an inſtrument, which could be occaſionally uſed in time

time of a thunder-ſtorm, in order to obſerve the Electricity of the clouds. The kite however being juſt finiſhed, together with its ſtring, which contained a braſs wire through its whole length, I raiſed it the 31ſt of Auguſt 1775, at ſeven of the clock in the afternoon, the weather being a little cloudy, and the wind juſt ſufficient for the purpoſe. The extremity of the ſtring being inſulated, I applied my fingers to it, which, contrary to my expectation, drew very vivid, and pungent ſparks: I charged a coated phial at the ſtring ſeveral times; but I did not then obſerve the quality of the Electricity. This ſucceſsful experiment induced me to raiſe the kite very often, and to keep it up, for ſeveral hours together, thinking that if any periodical Electricity, or any change of its quality took place in the atmoſphere, it might very probably be diſcovered by this inſtrument. In the following two Chapters I ſhall deſcribe the conſtruction of the electrical kite with its appurtenances, and ſhall tranſcribe the moſt remarkable part of my journal, relative to the kite, *i. e.* deſcribing ſuch experiments only, which are more remarkable, and do not happen very commonly; for although I have uſed ufed my kite, fometimes ten, and more times in a week, and at any hour of the day or night, yet as the greateft part of thofe experiments are only of ufe to confirm a few laws of atmofpherical Electricity, I fhall leave their particular detail, and fhall only fubjoin thofe laws at the end of the fecond chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

The conſtruction of the electrical Kite, and other Inſtruments uſed with it.

THE firſt electrical kite, that I conſtructed, was ſeven feet high, and it was made of paper with a ſtick or ſtraiter, and a cane bow, like the kites commonly uſed by ſchool-boys. On the upper part of the ſtraiter I fixed an iron ſpike, projecting about a foot above the kite, which, I then thought, was abſolutely neceſſary to collect the Electricity, and I covered the paper of the kite with turpentine, in order to defend it from the rain. This kite, perfect as I thought it to be, in its conſtruction, and fit for the experiments, for which it was intended, ſoon manifeſted its imperfections, and after being raiſed a few times, it became quite unfit for farther uſe; it being ſo large, and conſequently heavy, that it could not be uſed, except when the wind was ſtrong, and then after much trouble in raiſing and drawing it in, it often received ſome damage, which ſoon obliged me to conſtruct other kites upon a different plan, in order to aſcertain which

 method

method would anſwer the beſt for my purpoſe. I gradually leſſened their ſize, and varied their form, till I obſerved upon trial, that a common ſchool-boy's kite, was as good an electrical kite as mine. In conſequence of which I conſtructed my kites in the moſt ſimple manner, and in nothing different from the childrens kites, except that I covered them with varniſh, or with well boiled linſeed oil, in order to defend them from the rain, and I covered the back part of the ſtraiter with tin-foil, which however has not the leaſt power to increaſe its Electricity. I alſo furniſh the upper extremity of the ſtraiter with a ſlender wire pointed, which, in time of a thunder-ſtorm, may perhaps draw the Electricity from the clouds, ſomewhat more effectually; but in general, I find, as it will appear in the account of the experiments, that it does not in the leaſt affect the Electricity at the ſtring. The kites, that I generally have uſed, are about four feet high, and little above two feet wide. This ſize, I find, is the moſt convenient, becauſe it renders them eaſy to be managed, and at the ſame time they can draw a ſufficient quantity of ſtring. As for ſilk or linen kites, they require a good deal of wind to be raiſed, and then they are not ſo cheap nor ſo eaſy to be made, as paper kites are. The ſtring ſometimes breaks, and the kite is loſt, or broken, for which reaſon, theſe kites ſhould be made as cheap and as ſimple as poſſible.

The ſtring is the moſt material part of this apparatus; for the Electricity produced is more or leſs, according as the ſtring is a better, or a worſe Conductor. The ſtring, which I made for my large kite, conſiſted of two threads of common twine twiſted together with a braſs wire between the ſtrands. This ſtring ſerved very well for two, or three trials, but on examination, I ſoon found that the wire in it was broken in many places, and it was continually ſnapping; the metallic continuation therefore being ſo often interrupted, the ſtring became ſoon ſo bad, that it acted nothing better than common twine without a wire. I attempted to mend it, by joining the broken pieces of wire, and working into the twine, another wire, which proved a very laborious work; but the remedy had very little effect; the wire breaking again after the firſt trial, which determined me to adopt

adopt other methods; and after ſeveral experiments, I found that the beſt ſtring was one, which I made by twiſting a copper thread * with two very thin threads of twine. Strings like this I have uſed for the greateſt part of my experiments with the kite, and I find them to be exceedingly uſeful, and fit for the purpoſe. Silver or gold thread would do much better, to twiſt with the twine, becauſe they are much thinner than copper thread, and in conſequence the ſtring would be much lighter; but at the ſame time it is to be conſidered, that gold or ſilver thread is much dearer than copper thread.

I have attempted to render the twine a good Conductor of Electricity, by covering it with conducting ſubſtances, as lamp-black, powder of charcoal, very fine emery, and other ſubſtances, mixing them with diluted gum-water; but this method improves the ſtring very little, and for a very ſhort time; for the ſaid conducting ſubſtances are ſoon

* I mean ſuch a thread of copper as is uſed for trimmings, &c. in imitation of gold threads, which are nothing more than ſilk or linen threads covered with a thin lamina of copper.

rubbed

rubbed off of the twine. Mr. NAIRNE inform-ed me, that he had ufed to foak the ftring of his electrical kite in a ftrong folution of falt, which rendered it a good Conductor, fo far as it attracted the moifture of the air. In confequence of this information I foaked in falt water a long piece of twine, and by raif-ing a kite with it, I found that it conducted the Electricity pretty well, but I thought it much inferior to the above-defcribed ftring with the copper thread: befides, the falted ftring in wet weather not only leaves part of the falt upon the hands of the Operator, and in confequence renders them unfit to manage the reft of the apparatus, but it marks a white fpot wherever it touches the clothes.

In raifing the kite when the weather is very cloudy and rainy, in which time there is fear of meeting with great quantity of Electricity, I generally ufe to hang upon the ftring A B fig. 8, Plate II, the hook of a chain C, the other extremity of which falls upon the ground. Sometimes I ufe another caution befides, which is to ftand upon an infulating ftool; in which fituation, I think, that if any great quantity of Electricity, fuddenly difcharged by the clouds, ſtrikes the kite, it cannot affect much my perſon. As to inſulated reels, and ſuch like inſtruments, that ſome gentlemen have uſed for to raiſe the kite, without danger of receiving any ſhock; fit for the purpoſe as they may appear to be in theory, they are yet very inconvenient to be managed. Except the kite be raiſed in time of a thunder-ſtorm, there is no great danger for the Operator to receive any ſhock. Although I have raiſed my electrical kite hundreds of times without any caution whatever, I have very ſeldom received a few exceedingly ſlight ſhocks in my arms. In time of a thunder-ſtorm, if the kite has not been raiſed before, I would not adviſe a perſon to raiſe it while the ſtormy clouds are juſt overhead; the danger in ſuch time being very great, even with the precautions above mentioned: at that time, without raiſing the kite, the Electricity of the clouds may be obſerved by a cork ball Electrometer held in the hand in an open place, or if it rains, by my electrometer for the rain, which will be deſcribed hereafter.

When the kite has been raifed, I generally introduce the ftring through a window in a room of the houfe, and faften it to a ftrong filk lace, the extremity of which is generally tied to a heavy chair in the room. In fig. 8, of Plate III, A B reprefents part of the ftring of the kite, which comes within the room; C reprefents the filk lace; D E, a fmall prime Conductor, which, by means of a fmall wire, is connected with the ftring of the kite; and F reprefents the quadrant electrometer fixed upon a ftand of glafs, covered with fealing-wax, which I ufed to put near the prime Conductor, rather than to fix it in a hole upon the Conductor, becaufe the ftring A B fometimes fhakes fo as to pull the prime Conductor down, in which cafe the quadrant electrometer remains fafe upon the table, otherwife it would be broken, as I have often experienced before I thought of this method. G reprefents a glafs tube about eighteen inches long, with a knobed wire cemented to its extremity, which inftrument I ufe for to obferve the quality of the Electricity, when the Electricity of the kite is fo ftrong, that I think it not fafe to come very near the ftring. The method is as follows I hold the inſtrument by that extremity of the glaſs tube, which is the fartheſt from the wire, and touch the ſtring of the kite with the knob of its wire, which being inſulated, acquires a ſmall quantity of Electricity from it, which is ſufficient to aſcertain its quality when the knob of the inſtrument is brought near an electrified electrometer. Sometimes, when I raiſe the kite in the night time, out of the houſe, and where I have not the convenience of obſerving the quality of its Electricity by the attraction and repulſion, or even by the appearance of the electric light, I make uſe of a coated phial, which I can charge at the ſtring, and when charged, put into my pocket, wherein it will keep charged even for ſeveral hours *. By making uſe of this inſtrument, I am

* The conſtruction of this phial is as follows. Beſides the coating on the inſide and outſide that this phial has, like any other of the ſame kind, a glaſs tube open at both ends is cemented into its neck, and proceeds within the phial, having a ſmall wire faſtened to its lower extremity, which touches the inſide non-electric coating. The wire with the knob of this phial is cemented into another glaſs tube, which is nearly twice as long, and ſmaller than the tube

I am obliged to keep the kite up no longer than it is neceſſary to charge the phial, in order to obſerve the quality of the Electricity in the atmoſphere; for after that the kite has been drawn in, and brought home, I can then examine the Electricity of the inſide of the phial, which is the ſame as that of the kite.

When the Electricity of the kite is very ſtrong, I fix a chain, communicating with the ground, at about ſix inches diſtance from the ſtring, which may carry off its Electricity, in caſe, that this ſhould increaſe ſo much, as to put the byſtanders in danger.

tube cemented into the neck of the phial. The wire is cemented ſo, that only its knob projects out of one end, and a ſmall length of it out of the other end of the tube. If this piece with the wire be held by the middle of the glaſs tube, it may be put in or out of the tube, which is in the neck of the phial, ſo as to touch the ſmall wire at the lower extremity of it, and that without diſcharging the phial, if it is charged. I have kept ſuch a phial charged for ſix weeks together, and probably it would keep much longer, if it were to be tried. The ingenious young Electrician may make uſe of ſuch a phial for ſeveral diverting purpoſes.

Besides the above-described apparatus, I have occasionally used some other instruments, which I have often varied, according as some particular experiments required; but as they are of no great consequence, I shall omit to describe them. It is only necessary, before I enter into the narration of the principal experiments performed with the kite, to give an idea of the standard of my quadrant electrometer, which may, very probably, shew the same intensity of Electricity under a number of degrees different from the other instrument of the same kind. When the kite is flying, and the apparatus is disposed as in fig. 8, of Plate III, I bring, under the extremity E of the prime Conductor, a little bran, held upon a tin plate, and observe, that when the index of the electrometer is at ten degrees, the prime Conductor begins to attract the bran at the distance of about three fifths of an inch, when the index is at twenty degrees, the prime Conductor attracts the bran at the distance of about one inch and a quarter, when the index is at thirty degrees, the bran begins to be attract at the distance of two inches

and

and one fifth. These distances vary as the weather changes its degree of dryness, but in frosty weather, I observe them constantly as above.

CHAP. II.

Experiments performed with the electrical Kite.

SEptember the 2d, 1775. The weather being very cloudy, and actually raining, the kite was raiſed at eight o'clock P. M. with two hundred yards of ſtring, which had a braſs wire through its whole length. The wind was from the ſouth and very ſtrong. The Electricity at the ſtring was negative, and juſt ſufficient to charge a half-pint phial ſo as to give a ſhock ſenſible to the elbows. The kite, after being up for about one hour, fell to the ground, having its paper, which was not properly varniſhed, almoſt intirely torn off by the violence of the wind and the rain.

September the 14th. The kite was raiſed with a ſtrong north wind at half paſt three P. M. The Electricity was poſitive, and pretty ſtrong, the index of the electrometer being generally about 20°*. The weather was rather cold, and very thick clouds were gradually approaching the zenith. The kite was pulled down at half paſt four P. M.

N. B. At night the aurora borealis was very ſtrong, and ſeveral flaſhes of lightening were ſeen near the horizon towards the north.

September the 23d. A ſmall kite was raiſed at half paſt ten o'clock in the morning, and it was kept up for eleven hours ſucceſſively, *viz.* till half paſt nine P. M. The ſtring, which was only a common twine without a wire, was conſtantly electrified poſitively although in a very ſmall degree. About nine o'clock the Electricity appeared ſtronger, ſo that a ſmall phial, charged at the ſtring, gave a pretty ſenſible ſhock. The weather was very clear, and

* The index of the electrometer in general raiſes higher or falls lower, according as the kite comes nearer to, or goes farther from the zenith; the length of the ſtring remaining the ſame.

warm;

warm; but in the night no aurora borealis, or any other electrical appearance was perceived. The wind was eaſt by ſouth, and ſo weak that the kite was kept up with great difficulty.

October the 10th, 1775. The weather being clear, and the wind blowing ſtrong from the ſouth weſt, the kite was raiſed at eleven o'clock A. M. with ninety yards of ſtring, which had a copper thread twiſted in*. The wind, during the experiment, increaſed and decreaſed ſeveral times, and the Electricity, which was poſitive, as it appeared by the index of the Electrometer, alſo increaſed and decreaſed. At noon the violence of the wind cauſed the kite to fall. At half paſt four o'clock, the wind being a little more moderate, the kite was raiſed again. The Electricity was alſo poſitive, and ſeemed rather ſtronger than it had been in the morning. The weather at this time was cloudy; the clouds appearing much thicker near the horizon, than about the zenith. The kite

* Such ſtring as this was uſed in all the following experiments.

was pulled down at half paſt five o'clock, and at half after ſeven was raiſed again; every phenomenon continuing the ſame. At eight o'clock, while I was pulling the kite in, I inſulated the ſtring when only thirty-five yards of it were out, and was ſurpriſed to find that now the Electricity was as ſtrong as it had been, when all the ſtring was out, which was ninety yards long. It muſt however be remarked that at this time a few flaſhes of lightening were ſeen among the clouds, which were pretty thick about the horizon. At a quarter paſt eleven o'clock, the kite was raiſed again, which was the fourth time of raiſing it that day; the weather then being very clear, and the wind the ſame as in the afternoon. The Electricity was very weak, but conſtantly poſitive. The kite was pulled down after having being up a few minutes only.

October the 16th. At about two P. M. a thick fog being juſt cleared up, the weather became clear, and the wind began to blow from the ſouth ſouth weſt. The kite was raiſed with one hundred and twenty yards of ſtring, and it was kept up no longer

longer than a quarter of an hour. The Electricity was positive and pretty strong; the index of the electrometer being about 15°. At half past three o'clock the kite was raised again, the weather being very little cloudy. At half past four o'clock the clouds became very thick, and in a short time began to rain, which increased the Electricity of the kite without changing its quality; the index of the electrometer arriving to 20°. The kite was pulled down at five o'clock.

October the 18th. After having rained a great deal in the morning and night before, the weather became a little clear in the afternoon, the clouds appearing separated, and pretty well defined. The wind was west, and rather strong, and the atmosphere in a temperate degree of heat. In these circumstances at three P. M. I raised my electrical kite with three hundred and sixty feet of string. After that the end of the string had been insulated, and a leather ball, covered with tin-foil, had been hanged to it, I tried the power, and quality of the Electricity, which appeared to be positive and pretty

pretty ſtrong. In a ſhort time a ſmall cloud paſſing over, the Electricity increaſed a little; but the cloud being gone, it decreaſed again to its former degree. The ſtring of the kite was now faſtened by the ſilk lace to a poſt in the yard of the houſe, wherein I live, which is ſituated near Iſlington, and I was repeatedly charging two coated phials, and giving ſhocks with them:—while I was ſo doing, the Electricity, which was ſtill poſitive, began to decreaſe, and in two or three minutes time it became ſo weak, that it could be hardly perceived with a very ſenſible cork ball electrometer. Obſerving at the ſame time that a large and black cloud was approaching the zenith (which, no doubt, cauſed the decreaſe of the Electricity) indicating imminent rain, I introduced the end of the ſtring through a window, in a firſt floor room, wherein I faſtened it by the ſilk lace to an old chair. The quadrant electrometer was ſet upon the ſame window, and was, by means of a wire, connected with the ſtring of the kite. Being now three quarters of an hour after three o'clock, the Electricity was abſolutely unperceivable; however in about three minutes time it be-

came

came again perceivable, but now upon trial was found to be negative; it is therefore plain that its ſtopping was nothing more than a change from poſitive to negative, which was evidently occaſioned by the approach of the cloud, part of which by this time, had reached the zenith of the kite, and the rain alſo had began to fall in large drops.—The cloud came farther on;—the rain increaſed, and the Electricity keeping pace with it, the electrometer ſoon arrived to 15°. Seeing now, that the Electricity was pretty ſtrong, I began again to charge the two coated phials, and to give ſhocks with them; but the phials had not been charged above three or four times, before I perceived that the index of the electrometer was arrived to 35°, and was keeping ſtill increaſing. The ſhocks now being very ſmart, I deſiſted from charging the phials any longer, and conſidering the rapid advance of the Electricity, thought to take off the inſulation of the ſtring, in caſe that if it ſhould increaſe farther, it might be ſilently conducted to the earth, without cauſing any bad accident by being accumulated in the inſulated ſtring. To effect this, as I had

I no

no proper apparatus near me, I thought to remove the ſilk lace, and faſten the ſtring itſelf to the chair; accordingly I diſengaged the wire that connected the electrometer with the ſtring; laid hold of the ſtring; untied it from the ſilk lace, and faſtened it to the chair; but while I effected this, which took up leſs than half a minute of time, I received about a dozen, or fifteen very ſtrong ſhocks, which I felt all along my arms, in my breaſt, and legs; ſhaking me in ſuch a manner, that I had hardly power enough to effect my purpoſe, and to warn the people in the room to keep their diſtance. As ſoon as I took my hands off the ſtring, the Electricity (in conſequence of the chair being a bad Conductor) began to ſnap between the ſtring and the ſhutter of the window, which was the neareſt body to it. The ſnappings which were audible at a good diſtance out of the room, ſeemed firſt iſochronus with the ſhocks, which I had received, but in about a minute's time, oftner, ſo that the people of the houſe compared their ſound to the ratling noiſe of a jack going when the fly is off. The cloud now was juſt over the kite; it was black, and well

well defined, of almoſt a circular form, its diameter appearing to be about 40°; the rain was copious but not remarkably heavy. As the cloud was going off, the electrical ſnapping began to weaken, and in a ſhort time, became unaudiable. I went then near the ſtring, and finding the Electricity weak, but ſtill negative, I inſulated it again, thinking to keep the kite up ſome time longer; but obſerving that another larger, and denſer cloud was approaching apace towards the zenith, and I had then no proper apparatus at hand, to prevent every poſſible bad accident, reſolved to pull the kite in; accordingly a gentleman, who was by me, began pulling it in, while I was winding up the ſtring. The cloud was now very nearly over the kite, and the gentleman, who was pulling in the ſtring, told me, that he had received one or two ſlight ſhocks in his arms, and that if he were to feel one more, he would certainly let the ſtring go, upon which I laid hold of the ſtring and pulled the kite in as faſt as I could, without any farther obſervation; being then ten minutes after four o'clock.

N. B.

N. B. There was neither thunder or lightening perceived that day, nor indeed for ſome days before or afterwards.

November the 8th, 1775. The wind being north weſt, and juſt ſufficient, the kite was raiſed at three quarters paſt eleven A. M. with one hundred and twenty yards of ſtring. The Electricity was poſitive and weak; the weather being cloudy. At noon the clouds grew thicker, and the Electricity quite vaniſhed; however in a few ſeconds it returned, and from this time it evidently kept increaſing and decreaſing, according as the clouds became thinner or thicker. At forty minutes after one o'clock the Electricity vaniſhed again; a thick cloud then covering almoſt the whole hemiſphere; but as a little rain began to fall, the Electricity returned, and it was ſtill poſitive. At three quarters paſt three o'clock the clouds began to grow thin, and the Electricity increaſed a little; but at this time I was obliged to pull the kite in. The index of the electrometer in this experiment ſeldom arrived to 6°.

November the 16th. The weather being very clear and frofty, the kite was raifed at a quarter paft ten A. M. with one hundred and twenty yards of ftring. The Electricity was pofitive and pretty ftrong, the index of the electrometer going from 9° to 15°, raifing as the wind blew ftronger, and the kite was more elevated, and *vife verfa.* At a quarter paft three o'clock the wind, which was north north weft, intirely failing, the kite fell.

November the 17th. The weather being exceedingly damp, and the fog fo denfe, that the houfes at about a quarter of a mile diftance could not be diftinguifhed, the kite was raifed at two P. M. with one hundred and ten yards of ftring, while it was raining, but very little. The Electricity was pofitive, and fo weak that the cork balls of an electrometer diverged about three quarters of an inch. The wind being very violent I was obliged to pull the kite in, after having been up for about five minutes.

De-

December the 5th. 1775. The weather being equally cloudy, and the wind weft by north, and hardly fufficient, the kite was raifed at a quarter paft three P. M. with one hundred and twenty yards of ftring. The Electricity was pofitive and fo weak, as to caufe the cork balls of an electrometer to diverge about an inch. At a little after four o'clock the kite was pulled in; and at eight o'clock in the evening it was raifed again. At this time the Electricity was much ftronger than in the afternoon, but conftantly pofitive. The weather clearing up, the clouds were driven away by the wind, which was now a little ftronger than in the afternoon. At forty minutes after eight o'clock the fky was clear, the moon and ftars appearing very bright; except that a few thin clouds were yet to be feen near the horizon. The index of the electrometer was now going from 15° to 20°. At ten minutes after nine o'clock the kite was drawn in.

N. B. No aurora borealis was to be ſeen.

December the 20th. The weather being cloudy and hazy, the kite was raiſed at three quarters after ten o'clock A. M. with one hundred and forty yards of ſtring. The Electricity was poſitive and pretty ſtrong, the index of the electrometer going from 16° to 21°. At half paſt one, P. M. the weather growing a little clearer, I pulled the kite down, and after having interpoſed a ſilk ribband between its loop and the extremity of the ſtring, ſo as to inſulate the kite, I raiſed it again with the ſame length of ſtring, and after I had inſulated the lower extremity of the ſtring, I obſerved that the intenſity of the Electricity, as it appeared by the index of the electrometer, was, as nearly as could be determined, the ſame as before, *i. e.* when the kite was not inſulated with reſpect to the ſtring.

At two o'clock P. M. I pulled the kite down, and found upon obſervation, that the ſilk ribband had contracted no moiſture, ſo that the kite was perfectly insulated by it. This experiment of insulating the kite I have often repeated at other times, and have always met with the same success; hence it appears, that it is the string and not the kite, which in general collects the Electricity from the air. The kite therefore in general is only useful to extend the string high into the open air.

January the 4th, 1776. The frost having been very hard during the day and night before; the wind began to blow very strong from the south at two o'clock A. M. which occasioned a sudden thaw and a copious rain. At eight o'clock A. M. in which time the kite was raised, the hemisphere appeared like a uniform dark canopy, under which several small, irregular, and darker clouds were running very fast; the rain was constant, but not remarkably heavy. As soon as the string of the kite was insulated, the Electricity, which was negative, began to snap from it, to the shutter of the window and other bodies near; the index of the electrometer arrived to 40°. and it would have certainly gone farther, if the apparatus had been drier; but the air was ſo damp, that it was almoſt impoſſible to keep any part of the apparatus ſufficiently free from moiſture. The Electricity however, gradually decreaſed, ſo that at ten o'clock A. M. at which time the kite was pulled in, the index of the electrometer was at a little above 12°. The coated phials in this experiment were charged ſurpriſingly quick; three or four ſeconds of time being ſufficient to charge two half-pint phials completely.

January the 11th. The ground was covered with ice and ſnow, and the atmoſphere was ſo hazy, that the houſes at a mile diſtance could not be perceived. The wind was ſouth eaſt by ſouth, and juſt ſufficient to raiſe the kite, which was raiſed at three o'clock P. M. with one hundred and twenty-four yards of ſtring, and kept up till half an hour after midnight. When the kite was firſt raiſed it began to thaw, but as ſoon as it was dark it began to freeze again very hard. The Electricity was poſitive, and pretty ſtrong, the index of the electrometer being about 13°. At half paſt four o'clock

4 I let

I let out thirty-four yards more of ſtring, ſo that all the ſtring the kite now had, was one hundred and fifty-eight yards. With this addition of ſtring the Electricity increaſed, ſo that the index of the electrometer arrived to 17°. At half after five o'clock the wind began to increaſe, and the Electricity to decreaſe, until the index of the electrometer arrived to 6°. At three quarters paſt ſix o'clock the index of the electrometer was about 13°, and at ſeven o'clock it arrived to 20°; the wind being now quite eaſt. At one quarter paſt ſeven o'clock the index of the electrometer was about 25°. From this time the wind and the Electricity began both to decreaſe, ſo that at nine o'clock the index of the electrometer was about 10°. At eleven o'clock the wind increaſed. At twelve o'clock the wind was very ſtrong, and the index of the electrometer was about 6°. At half paſt twelve o'clock the index of the electrometer was between 3°, and 4°; but the wind being grown very violent, the ſtring broke very near the window, and was loſt with the kite.

N. B. A few minutes after the kite was loſt, it began to ſnow copiouſly.

January the 26th. The froſt being very intenſe as it had been for about three weeks, and actually ſnowing, I raiſed the kite with ſeventy yards of ſtring; but before the ſtring was inſulated it ceaſed to ſnow and the weather began to clear up, and ſoon became very ſerene. The Electricity was poſitive, and very ſtrong, the index of the electrometer being about 32°. At eleven o'clock the ſtring broke, and the kite fell, after having been up for above three quarters of an hour.

February the 17th, 1776. The weather being cloudy, rainy, and ſo hazy, that the houſes at half a mile diſtance could not be diſcerned, the kite was raiſed at three quarters paſt eleven o'clock A. M. with one hundred and ſeventy-five yards of ſtring. The wind was pretty ſtrong; the Electricity was negative, and alſo ſtrong, the index of the electrometer being about 20°. In about five minutes time the rain ceaſed, the wind weakened,

weakened, and ſhifted a little towards the ſouth, and the Electricity changed from negative to poſitive. The index of the electrometer was now about 15°. In two or three minutes time it began to rain again, and continued ſo for the greateſt part of that day; the wind became very weak, and the Electricity changed again from poſitive to negative, and continued ſo till half an hour after noon, at which time the wind became ſo weak, that I was obliged to pull the kite in.

February the 19th. The ſky being full of pretty well defined clouds, and the wind weſt north weſt, the kite was raiſed at half paſt three o'clock P. M. with one hundred and ſeventy-five yards of ſtring. The Electricity was poſitive and ſtrong, the index of the electrometer going from 10° to 20°. At three quarters paſt three o'clock a denſe cloud paſſed over the kite, which occaſioned the index of the electrometer to deſcend to 4°. As the cloud went away, the electrometer elevated its index. At four o'clock the kite was pulled down.

April

April the 8th, 1776. The weather was clear and the northern light very ſtrong. The kite was raiſed for a few minutes at nine o'clock P. M. with one hundred and ſeventy-five yards of ſtring; the wind being north north weſt and pretty ſtrong. The Electricity was poſitive, and, as I could judge, the index of the electrometer would have arrived to 15°.

May the 15th, 1776. The weather being cloudy, and the wind north; the kite was raiſed at three o'clock P. M. with one hundred and ſeventy yards of ſtring. The Electricity was at firſt exceedingly weak, and, as I imagine, (for I had not time to examine it) poſitive. But a denſe cloud paſſing over the kite, the Electricity vaniſhed, and as a few drops of rain fell, a very weak negative Electricity appeared, which ſoon increaſed, ſo as to cauſe the index of the electrometer to arrive to 15°. The rain however, in a few minutes, ceaſed, and the Electricity gradually decreaſed and vaniſhed. A very weak poſitive Electricity immediately took place; but as another denſer cloud

cloud paſſed over, and a few very ſmall drops of rain fell, the poſitive Electricity vaniſhed, and the negative took place. The cloud and rain ſoon went off, and the Electricity became again poſitive, and continued ſo till the kite was pulled down. According as the clouds, which paſſed continually over the kite, were thinner or thicker, ſo the Electricity was more or leſs intenſe, ſometimes cauſing the index of the electrometer to arrive to 5°, and at other times being ſcarce perceiveable with the cork ball electrometer. At five o'clock the kite was pulled in; the weather being then pretty clear, and the index of the electrometer at 3°. The wind, during this experiment, was ſtronger or weaker according as the clouds which paſſed over were thicker or thinner. At half paſt ſeven o'clock in the evening of the ſame day, the kite was raiſed again, with the ſame length of ſtring, the wind being then rather ſtrong, and the weather pretty clear. The Electricity was poſitive, and the index of the electrometer ſtood at 10°; but as ſome clouds came from the north, the Electricity began to decreaſe, and by eight o'clock, it juſt ſeparated the balls of an electro-

electrometer, the hemifphere being then intirely covered by clouds. At half paft eight o'clock the kite was pulled down, the clouds over the kite being then very thin, and the index of the electrometer at 5°.

June the 4th, 1776. The weather being cloudy and the wind on the fouth fouth weft, the kite was raifed at one o'clock P. M. with one hundred and feventy yards of ftring. The Electricity was pofitive, and the index went from 1° to 7°. At three quarters paft one o'clock the clouds began to be diffipated, and the Electricity increafed a little. At two o'clock the kite was pulled in.

June the 17th. The weather being cloudy, and the wind fouth weft, the kite was raifed at five o'clock P. M. with one hundred and feventy yards of ftring. The Electricity was pofitive, and the index of the electrometer went from 10° to 16°. In this experiment the clouds, whether thicker or thinner, feemed to have no effect upon the Electricity of the kite. At a quarter paft fix o'clock the kite was pulled in.

June

June the 20th. The weather being cloudy and the wind eaſt, and juſt ſufficient, the kite was raiſed at three quarters paſt three P. M. with one hundred and ſeventy yards of ſtring. The Electricity was poſitive, and the index of the electrometer ſtood about 8°. At five o'clock the weather began to clear up, and the Electricity to increaſe, ſo that in half an hour's time the index of the electrometer arrived to 17°; and at ſix o'clock it ſtood at 25°. But the wind ſuddenly failing about this time, the kite fell.

January the 8th, 1777. The weather being froſty and clear, and the wind north, and pretty ſtrong, the kite was raiſed at four o'clock P. M. with one hundred and ſeventy yards of ſtring. The Electricity was poſitive and ſtrong, the index of the electrometer being at 36°. The ſpark taken from the ſmall prime Conductor, was remarkably pungent in this experiment; although it was hardly a quarter of an inch long. At a quarter paſt five o'clock the kite was pulled in.

General

General Laws, deduced from the Experiments performed with the electrical Kites.

I. The air appears to be electrified at all times; its Electricity is conftantly pofitive, and much ftronger in frofty, than in warm weather *; but it is by no means lefs in the night, than in the day-time †.

II. The prefence of the clouds generally leffens the Electricity of the kite; fometimes it has no effect upon it; and it is very feldom that it increafes it a little.

* My obfervations upon the Electricity of the atmofphere, have been made in almoft every degree of temperature, from 15° to 80° of FARENHEIT'S Thermometer.

† In all my experiments it happened only once, that the ftring of the kite gave no figns of Electricity; it was one afternoon, when the weather was warm, and the wind fo weak that the kite was raifed with difficulty, and could hardly be kept up for a few minutes; in the evening however, the wind, which in the day-time had been north weft, fhifted to the north eaft, blowing a little ftronger, I then raifed the kite again, being half paft ten o'clock, and obtained, as ufual, a pretty ftrong pofitive Electricity.

III. When

III. When it rains, the Electricity of the kite is generally negative, and very seldom positive.

IV. The aurora borealis seems not to affect the Electricity of the kite.

V. The electrical spark taken from the string of the kite, or from any insulated Conductor connected with it, especially when it does not rain, is very seldom longer than a quarter of an inch, but it is exceedingly pungent. When the index of the electrometer is not higher than 20°, the person that takes the spark, will feel the effect of it in his legs; it appearing more like the discharge of an electric jar, than the spark taken from the prime Conductor of an electrical machine.

VI. The Electricity of the kite is in general stronger or weaker, according as the string is longer or shorter, but it does not keep any exact proportion to it; the Electricity, for instance, brought down by a string of a hundred yards, may raise the index of the electrometer to 20°, when with double

double that length of ſtring, the index of the electrometer will not go higher than 25°.

VII. When the weather is damp, and the Electricity is pretty ſtrong, the index of the electrometer, after taking a ſpark from the ſtring, or preſenting the knob of a coated phial to it, riſes ſurpriſingly quick to its uſual place; but in dry and warm weather, it riſes exceedingly ſlow.

Theſe few laws are in ſhort the deduction of all my experiments performed with the kites, during the courſe of about two years. How far they may be of uſe, or may coincide with the obſervations of other experimentators, I will not pretend to ſay. My experiments have been performed at Iſlington, and perhaps the reſult of ſimilar ones may be different at other places, eſpecially under different climates; I wiſh, therefore, that they may be accurately repeated in other places, and their reſult may be compared together, in order to determine, if poſſible, ſomething ſatisfactory, relative to the cauſe of of that perpetual Electricity, which exifts in the atmofphere, and which, very probably, occafions the Electricity of the clouds.

CHAP. III.

Experiments performed with the Atmoſpherical Electrometer, and the Electrometer for the Rain.

FIG. 1, of Plate III, repreſents a very ſimple inſtrument, which I have contrived for the purpoſe of making obſervations on the Electricity of the atmoſphere, and which on ſeveral accounts ſeems to be the moſt uſeful for that purpoſe. A B is a common jointed fiſhing-rod without the laſt, or ſmalleſt joint. From the extremity of this rod proceeds a ſlender glaſs tube C, covered with ſealing-wax, and having a cork D, at its end, from which a pith ball electrometer is ſuſpended. H G I is a piece of twine faſtened to the other extremity of the rod, and ſupported at G by a ſmall ſtring F G. At the end I of the twine, a pin is faſtened, which, when puſhed into the cork D, renders the electrometer E uninſulated.

When

When I would obſerve the Electricity of the atmoſphere with this inſtrument, I thruſt the pin I, into the cork D, and holding the rod by its lower end A, project it out from a window in the upper part of the houſe, into the air, raiſing the end of the rod with the electrometer, ſo as to make an angle of about 50° or 60° with the horizon. In this ſituation I keep the inſtrument for a few ſeconds, and then pulling the twine at H, I diſengage the pin from the cork D, which operation cauſes the ſtring to drop in the dotted ſituation K L, and leaves the electrometer inſulated, and electrified, with an Electricity contrary to that of the atmoſphere.—This done I draw the inſtrument into the room, and examine the quality of the Electricity, without obſtruction either from wind, or darkneſs.

With this inſtrument I have made obſervations on the Electricity of the atmoſphere, ſeveral times in a day for ſeveral months, and from them I have deduced the following general obſervations, which feem to coincide with thofe made with the electrical kites.

I. That there is in the atmofphere at all times a quantity of Electricity; for, whenever I ufe the above-defcribed inftrument, it always acquires fome Electricity.

II. That the Electricity of the atmofphere, or fogs, is always of the fame kind; namely, pofitive; for the electrometer is always negative, except when it is evidently influenced by heavy clouds near the zenith; as it appears by the obfervations made the 19th of October in the following fpecimen of the journal.

III. That in general the ftrongeft Electricity is obfervable in thick fogs, and alfo in frofty weather; and the weakeft, when it is cloudy, warm, and very near raining: but it does not feem to be lefs by night, than in the day.

IV. That in a more elevated place the Electricity is ftronger than in a lower one; for having tried the atmofpherical electrometer

ter both in the ſtone, and iron gallery on the cupula of St. Paul's Cathedral, I found that the balls diverged much more in the latter, than in the former leſs elevated place; hence it appears, that, if this rule takes place at any diſtance from the earth, the Electricity in the upper regions of the atmoſphere muſt be exceedingly ſtrong.

The following is the moſt remarkable part of the journal of the obſervations made with the above-deſcribed atmoſpherical electrometer, in which I have noted the Electricity of the electrometer, *i. e.* the contrary of that in the atmoſphere.

N. B. The ſtroke ——— ſignifies *as above.*

Time of obſervation.	Clouds.	Fog.	Wind.	Opening of the electrometer in inches.	Quality of the Electricity.
October the 19th, 1776, $\frac{1}{2}$ paſt 10 o'clock	Cloudy	Very little at a diſtance	Very ſtrong	$\frac{1}{10}$	Negative
11	———	———	———	———	———
2	Heavy clouds	———	Violent	$\frac{3}{4}$	Poſitive
$\frac{1}{4}$ paſt 2	Leſs clouds	———	Little	1	———
3	Few at a diſtance	———	———	$\frac{1}{2}$	Negative
November the 6th, 11 o'clock, P. M.		Exceedingly thick	0	1	———
November the 8th, 12 at noon	0	Hardly any	———	$\frac{3}{4}$	———
11	———	Very little	———	———	———
November the 13th, 10 o'clock, A. M.	Cloudy	Little at a diſtance	Pretty ſtrong	Very little	———
10 P. M.	———	0	———	$\frac{1}{3}$	———
November the 17th, 11 o'clock, P. M.	0	———	Violent	$\frac{1}{4}$	———
12	———	———	Very little	———	———
November the 28th, 10 o'clock, A. M.	———	———	Little	$\frac{3}{4}$	———
2	———	———	Hardly any	———	———
December the 20th, $\frac{1}{2}$ paſt 9 o'clock, P. M.	Cloudy	Little	Very little	$\frac{1}{2}$	———
February the 6th, 1777, 2 o'clock, P. M.	———	0	———	$\frac{1}{4}$	———
February the 7th, 12 at noon	———	Little	———	$\frac{3}{4}$	———
8	0	Very little	Hardly any	$\frac{1}{4}$	———
February the 27th, 12 o'clock, P. M.	Few on the north	0	0	Very little	———
March the 26th, 11 o'clock, P. M.	0	———	———	$\frac{1}{10}$	———

The electrometer for the rain, in principle, is nothing more than an inſulated inſtrument to catch the rain, and by a pith ball electrometer to ſhew the quantity and quality of its Electricity.

Fig. 2, of Plate III, repreſents an inſtrument of this kind, which I have frequently uſed, and after ſeveral obſervations, have found to anſwer very well. A B C I is a ſtrong glaſs tube about two feet and a half long, having a tin funnel D E cemented to its extremity, which funnel defends part of the tube from the rain. The outſide ſurface of the tube from A to B is covered with ſealing-wax; ſo alſo is the part of it which is covered by the funnel. F D is a piece of cane, round which ſeveral braſs wires are twiſted in different directions, ſo as to catch the rain eaſily, and at the ſame time to make no reſiſtance to the wind. This piece of cane is fixed into the tube, and a ſlender wire proceeding from it, goes through the bore of the tube, and communicates with the ſtrong wire A G, which is thruſt into a piece of cork faſtened to the

 end

end A of the tube. The end G of the wire A G, is formed in a ring, from which I fufpend a more or lefs fenfible pith ball electrometer, as occafion requires.

This inftrument is faftened to the fide of the window frame, where it is fupported by ftrong brafs hooks at C B, which part of the tube is covered with a filk lace, in order to adapt it better to the hooks. The part F C is out of the window, with the end F a little elevated above the horizon. The remaining part of the inftrument comes through a hole in one of the lights of the fafh, within the room, and no more of it touches the fide of the window, than the part C B.

When it rains, efpecially in paffing fhowers, this inftrument, ftanding in the fituation above defcribed, is frequently electrified, and by the diverging of the electrometer, the quantity and quality of the Electricity of the rain may be obferved, without any danger of a miftake. With this inftrument I have obferved that the rain is generally, though not always, electrified negatively, and fometimes fo ftrongly, that I have been

able

able to charge a ſmall coated phial at the wire A G.

This inſtrument ſhould be fixed in ſuch a manner, that it may be eaſily taken off from the window, and replaced again, as occaſion requires; for it will be neceſſary to clean it very often, particularly when a ſhower of rain is approaching.

I ſhall conclude this chapter with the deſcription of a pocket electrometer fig. 5 and 6, of Plate III, that I have lately conſtructed, and which on ſeveral accounts ſeems preferable to thoſe of the moſt ſenſible ſort now in uſe. The caſe, or handle, of this electrometer is formed by a glaſs tube about three inches long, and three tenths of an inch in diameter, half of which is covered with ſealing-wax. From one extremity of this tube, *i. e.* that, without ſealing-wax, a ſmall loop of ſilk proceeds, which ſerves occaſionally to hang the electrometer on a pin, &c. To the other extremity of the tube, a cork is adapted, which, being cut tapering on both ends, can fit the mouth of the tube with either end. From one extremity of this cork, two linen threads proceed, a little ſhorter than the length of the tube, ſuſpending each a little *cone* of pith of elder. When this electrometer is to be uſed, that end of the cork, which is oppoſite to the threads, is puſhed into the mouth of the tube; then the tube forms the inſulated handle of the pith electrometer as repreſented fig. 6, Plate III. But when the electrometer is to be carried in the pocket, then the threads are put into the tube, and the cork ſtops it, as repreſented fig. 5. The peculiar advantages of this electrometer, are, its convenient ſmall ſize, its great ſenſibility, and its continuing longer in good order than any other I have yet ſeen.

Fig. 4, of Plate III, repreſents a caſe to carry the above-deſcribed electrometer in. This caſe is like a common tooth-pick caſe, except that it has a piece of amber fixed on one extremity A, which may occaſionally ſerve to electrify the electrometer negatively, and on the other extremity it has a piece of ivory faſtened upon a piece of amber B C. This amber B C ſerves only to inſulate the ivory,

ivory, which, when insulated, and rubbed against woollen cloths, acquires a positive Electricity, and it is therefore useful to electrify the electrometer positively.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Experiments made with the Electrophorus, commonly called a Machine for exhibiting perpetual Electricity.

IN fig. 9, of Plate III, there are represented some Plates, commonly called, the Machine for exhibiting perpetual Electricity, or the *Electrophorus.* This machine consists of two plates, one of which B, is a circular glass plate covered on one side with some sulphureous or resinous electric, most commonly with a composition made of equal parts of rosin, shell-lac, and sulphur; the other plate A, is a brass plate, or a board covered with tin-foil, which is nearly of the same dimensions as the electric plate, and it is furnished with a glass handle I, which, by means of a brass or wooden socket, is screwed into its center. This machine is the invention of an Italian philosopher (Mr. VOLTA of Como), and its use is the following.

First,

First, the plate B is excited, by rubbing its coated ſide with a piece of new white flannel, and when excited as much as poſſible, is ſet upon the table with the coated ſide uppermoſt; ſecondly, the metal plate is laid upon the excited electric, as repreſented in the figure; thirdly, the metal plate is touched with the finger or any other Conductor, which, on touching the plate, receives a ſpark from it. Laſtly, the metal plate A, being held by the extremity of its glaſs handle I, is ſeparated from the electric plate, and, after it is elevated above that plate, it will be found ſtrongly electrified with an Electricity contrary to that of the electric plate, in which caſe it will give a very ſtrong ſpark to any Conductor brought near it. By ſetting the metal upon the electric plate, touching it with the finger, and ſeparating it ſucceſſively, a great number of ſparks may be obtained apparently of the ſame ſtrength, and that without exciting again the electric plate. If theſe ſparks are repeatedly given to the knob of a coated phial, this will preſently become charged.

The

The action of these plates depends upon a principle long ago discovered, *viz.* the power that an excited electric has to induce a contrary Electricity in a body brought within its sphere of action; the metal plate therefore, when set upon the excited electric, acquires a contrary Electricity by giving its electric fluid to the hand, or other Conductor that touches it, when set upon a plate positively electrified, or acquiring an additional quantity of fluid from the hand, &c. when set upon a plate electrified negatively.

As to the continuance of the virtue of this electric plate, when once excited without repeating the excitation, I think, there is not the least foundation for believing it perpetual, as some gentlemen have supposed; it being nothing more than an excited electric, it must gradually lose its power by imparting continually some of its Electricity to the air, or other substances contiguous to it. Indeed its Electricity, although it could never be proved to be perpetual by experiments, lasts a very long time, it having been observed to be pretty strong several days, and even weeks

4 after

after excitation. The great duration of the Electricity of this plate, I think, depends upon two caufes: firft, becaufe it does not lofe any Electricity by the operation of putting the metal plate upon it, &c. and fecondly, becaufe of its flat figure, which expofes it to a lefs quantity of air in comparifon with a ftick of fealing-wax, or the like, which being cylindrical, expofes its furface to a greater quantity of air, which is continually robbing the excited electrics of their virtue.

The firft experiments that I made, relative to this machine, were with a view to difcover which fubftance would anfwer beft for coating the glafs plate, in order to produce the greateft effect. I tried feveral fubftances either fimple or mixed, and at laft I obferved, that the ftrongeft in power, as well as the eafieft, I could conftruct, were thofe made with the fecond fort of fealing-wax *, fpread

* It is remarkable that fometimes they will not act well at firft, but they may be rendered very good by fcraping with the edge of a knife the fhining, or gloffy furface of the wax. This feems analogous to the well-known property of glafs, which is, that new cylinders or globes, made

ſpread upon a thick plate of glaſs *. A plate that I made after this manner, and no more than ſix inches in diameter, when once excited, could charge a coated phial ſeveral times ſucceſſively, ſo ſtrong as to pierce a hole through a card with the diſcharge. Sometimes the metal plate, when ſeparated from it, was ſo ſtrongly electrified, that it darted ſtrong flaſhes to the table, upon which the electric plate was laid, and even into the air, beſides cauſing the ſenſation of the ſpider's web upon the face brought near it, like an electric ſtrongly excited. The power of ſome of my plates is ſo ſtrong that ſometimes the electric plate adheres to the metal, when this is lifted up, nor will they ſeparate even if the metal plate is touched with the finger, or other Conductor.

made for electrical purpoſes, are often very bad electrics at firſt, but that they improve by being worked, *i. e.* by having their ſurface a little worn. Paper alſo has this property.

* I have lately ſeen ſome of thoſe plates conſtructed by Mr. G. ADAMS, which acted exceedingly well; and they were made with a compoſition of two parts of ſhell-lac, and one part of Venice turpentine, without any glaſs plate.

If, after having excited the ſealing-wax, I lay the plate with the wax upon the table, and the glaſs uppermoſt, *i. e.* contrary to the common method, then, on making the uſual experiment of putting the metal plate on it, and taking the ſpark, &c. I obſerve it to be attended with the contrary Electricity, that is, if I lay the metal plate upon the electric one, and while in that ſituation, touch it with an inſulated body, that body acquires the poſitive Electricity, and the metallic, removed from the electric plate, appears to be negative; whereas it would become poſitive, if laid upon the excited wax. This experiment, I find, anſwers in the ſame manner, if an electric plate is uſed, which has the ſealing-wax coating on both ſides, or one of Mr. ADAMS's, which has no glaſs plate.

If the braſs plate after being ſeparated from, be preſented with the edge toward the wax, lightly touching it, and thus be drawn over its ſurface, I find that the Electricity of the metal is abſorbed by the ſealing-wax, and thus the electric plate loſes part of its power; and if this operation is repeated five or ſix times, the electric plate loſes its power intirely, ſo that a new excitation is neceſſary in order to revive it.

If, inſtead of laying the electric plate upon the table, it is placed upon an electric ſtand, ſo as to be accurately inſulated, then the metal plate ſet on it, acquires ſo little Electricity, that it can only be diſcovered with an electrometer; which ſhows, that the Electricity of this plate will not be conſpicuous on one ſide of it, if the oppoſite ſide is not at liberty either to part with, or acquire more of the electric fluid. In conſequence of this experiment, and in order to aſcertain how the oppoſite ſides of the electric plate would be affected in different circumſtances, I made the following experiments.

Upon an electric ſtand E fig. 9, Plate III, I placed a circular tin plate, nearly ſix inches in diameter, which by a ſlender wire H communicated with an electrometer of pith balls G, which was alſo inſulated upon the electric ſtand F. I then placed the excited electric plate D of ſix inches and a quarter in diameter, upon the tin plate, with the wax uppermoſt,

moſt, and on removing my hand from it, the electrometer G, which communicated with the tin plate, *i. e.* with the under ſide of the electric plate, immediately opened with negative Electricity. If, by touching the electrometer, I took that Electricity off, the electrometer did not afterwards diverge. But if now, or when the electrometer diverged, I preſented my hand open, or any other uninſulated Conductor at the diſtance of about one or two inches, over the electric plate, without touching it, then the pith balls diverged, or if they diverged before, came together, and immediately diverged again with poſitive Electricity;—I removed the hand, and the balls came together;—approached the hand, and they diverged; and ſo on.

If while the pith balls diverged with negative Electricity, I laid the metal plate, holding it by the extremity K of its glaſs handle, upon the wax, the balls came, for a little time, towards one another, but ſoon opened again with the ſame, *i. e.* negative Electricity;

If whilſt the metallic reſted upon the electric plate, I touched the former, the electrometer immediately diverged with poſitive Electricity, which if, by touching the electrometer, I took off, the electrometer continued without divergence.—I touched the metal plate again, and the electrometer opened again; and ſo on for a conſiderable number of times; until the metal plate had acquired its full charge. On taking now the metal plate up, the electrometer G inſtantly diverged with ſtrong negative Electricity.

I repeated the above-deſcribed experiments with this only difference in the diſpoſition of the apparatus, *i. e.* I laid the electric plate D with the excited ſealing-wax upon the circular tin plate, and the glaſs uppermoſt; and the difference in their reſult was, that where the Electricity had been poſitive in the former diſpoſition of the apparatus, it now became negative, and *vice verſa*; except that, when I firſt laid the electric plate upon the tin, the electrometer G diverged with negative Electricity as well in this, as in the other diſpoſition of the apparatus.

I re-

I repeated all the above experiments with an electric plate, which besides the sealing-wax coating on one side, had a strong coat of varnish on the other side, and their result was similar to that of those made with the above-described plate.

As to the explanation of these experiments, they seem to depend upon these two well known principles, *viz.* that a body brought within the sphere of action of an electrified body, does actually acquire the contrary Electricity; and that the existence of one kind of Electricity upon the surface of a substance whatever, causes the existence of the contrary Electricity upon some other substance near it.

CHAP. V.

Experiments on Colours.

HAVING accidentally obferved than an electric fhock fent over the furface of a card, marked a black ftroke upon a red fpot of the card, I was from this induced to try what would be the effect of fending fhocks over cards painted with different water colours; accordingly, I painted feveral cards with almoft every colour I had, and fent fhocks * over them, when they were very dry; making ufe of the univerfal difcharger fig. 5, Plate I. The effects were as follow.

Vermillion was marked with a ftrong black track, about one tenth of an inch wide. This ftroke is generally fingle as reprefented by A B fig. 7, of Plate III; fometimes it is divided in two towards the mid-

* The force generally employed was the full charge of one foot and a half of coated glafs.

middle, like E F; and ſometimes, particularly when the wires are ſet very diſtant from one another, the ſtroke is not continued, but interrupted in the middle, like G H. It often, although not always, happens, that the impreſſion is marked ſtronger at the extremity of that wire, from which the electric fluid iſſues, as it appears at E, ſuppoſing that the wire C communicates with the poſitive ſide of the jar; whereas the extremity of the ſtroke, contiguous to the point of the wire D, is neither ſo ſtrongly marked, nor ſurrounds the wire ſo much as the other extremity E.

Carmine received a faint and ſlender impreſſion of a purple colour.

Verdigriſe was ſhook off from the ſurface of the card, except when it had been mixed with ſtrong gum-water, in which caſe it received a very faint impreſſion.

White lead was marked with a ſtrong black track, not ſo broad as that on vermillion.

Red lead was marked with a faint mark much like carmine.

The other colours, I tried, were orpiment, gambodge, ſap-green, red-ink, ultramarine, Pruſſian blue, and a few others, which were compounds of the above; but they received no impreſſion.

It having been inſinuated that the ſtrong black mark, which vermillion receives from the electric ſhock, might poſſibly be owing to the great quantity of ſulphur contained in that mineral, I was induced to make the following experiment. I mixed together equal quantities of orpiment, and flower of ſulphur, and with this mixture, by the help, as uſual, of very diluted gum-water, I painted a card; but the electric ſhock ſent over it, left not the leaſt impreſſion.

Deſirous of carrying this inveſtigation on colours a little further, with a particular view to determine ſomething relative to the proper-

properties of lamp-black and oil *, I procured ſome pieces of paper painted on both ſides with oil colours, and ſending the charge of two feet of coated glaſs over each of them, by making the interruption of the circuit upon their ſurfaces; I obſerved that the pieces of paper painted with lamp-black, Pruſſian blue, vermillion, and purple brown, were torn by the exploſion, but white lead, Naples yellow, Engliſh ochre, and verdigriſe remained unhurt.

The ſame ſhock ſent over a piece of paper painted very thickly with lamp-black and oil left not the leaſt impreſſion. I ſent the ſhock alſo over a piece of paper unequally painted with purple brown, and the paper was torn where the paint laid very thin, but remained unhurt where the paint

* It has often been obſerved, that when the lightening has ſtruck the maſts of ſhips, it has paſſed over ſuch parts of the maſts, which were covered with lamp-black and tar, or painted with lamp-black and oil, without the leaſt injury, at the ſame time that it has ſhivered the uncoated parts, in ſuch a manner as to render the maſts uſeleſs. For a particular account of ſuch facts, ſee the Phil. Tranſ. Vol. XLVIII and LXVII.

was

was evidently thicker. Theſe experiments I repeated ſeveral times and with ſome little variation, which naturally produced different effects; however, they all ſeem to point out the following propoſition.

I. A coat of oil paint, over any ſubſtance, defends it from the effects of ſuch an electric ſhock, as would otherwiſe injure it; but by no means defends it from any electric ſhock whatever. II. No one colour ſeems preferable to the others, if they are equal in ſubſtance, and equally well mixed with oil; but a thick coating does certainly afford a better defence, than a thinner one.

By rubbing the above-mentioned pieces of paper, I find that the paper painted with *lamp-black and oil* is more eaſily excited, and acquires a ſtronger Electricity, than the papers painted with the other colours; and perhaps on this account it may be, that lamp-black and oil might reſiſt the ſhock ſomewhat better than the other paints.

It is remarkable, that vermillion receives the black impreſſion, when painted with lin-

ſeed

ſeed oil, nearly as well as when painted with water. The paper, painted with white lead and oil, receives alſo a black mark; but its nature is very ſingular. The track, when firſt made, is almoſt as dark as that marked on white lead, painted with water, but it gradually loſes its blackneſs, and in about one hour's time (or longer, if the paint is not freſh), it appears without any darkneſs, and when the painted paper is laid in a proper light, appears only marked with a colourleſs track, as if made by a finger-nail. I ſent the ſhock alſo over a piece of board, which had been painted with white lead and oil about four years before, and the exploſion marked the black track upon this alſo; this track however was not ſo ſtrong, nor vaniſhed ſo ſoon as that marked upon the painted paper, but in about two days time it alſo vaniſhed intirely.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Promiscuous Experiments.

OBserving that a ſtrong ſpark may be obtained from the metal plate belonging to Mr. VOLTA's machine, deſcribed in the fourth chapter of this Part, when not the leaſt ſpark can be obtained from the electric plate itſelf, I was naturally induced to make uſe of the above-mentioned metallic plate, to diſcover the Electricity of very weak electrics; which otherwiſe would be either inobſervable, or ſo ſmall as not to permit its quality to be aſcertained. Accordingly I conſtructed ſeveral ſuch plates of different ſizes, beginning from that of a common metal button faſtened upon a ſtick of ſealing-wax, and by uſing them, I obtain a very ſenſible Electricity from the hairs of my legs, when ſtroked, and of my head, or any part, that I have tried of my body, or the head of almoſt any other perſon.

In this manner I obtain ſo ſtrong ſparks from the back of a cat, a hare's ſkin, a rabbit's ſkin, a piece of flannel, or of paper, that I can preſently charge a coated phial with either of thoſe, and ſo ſtrongly, as to pierce a hole through a card with its diſcharge.

I have often obſerved that, when ſtroking a cat with one hand, and holding it with the other, I feel frequent ſmart pricklings on different parts of that hand, which holds the animal. In theſe circumſtances, very pungent ſparks may be drawn from the tips of the ears of the cat.

Smooth glaſs rubbed with a rabbit's ſkin, dry and warm, acquires, I find, the *negative* Electricity; but if the ſkin is cold, the glaſs is excited poſitively. Sometimes ſmooth glaſs may be excited negatively with new white flannel, clean and dry, and alſo with a hare's ſkin.

Obſerving the ſtrong electric power of new white flannel, I thought that a piece of it, rolled round the globe of an electrical ma-

machine, would perhaps give a ſtronger Electricity to the prime Conductor, than the glaſs itſelf. In order to try the truth of my ſuppoſition, I tied a large piece of flannel, dry and warm, round the globe of the machine, and for a rubber, I applied the palm of my hand, then turned the winch, firſt ſlowly, and afterwards briſkly; but contrary to my expectation, the Electricity at the prime Conductor, although poſitive, was ſo weak, that the index of the quadrant electrometer was not moved from its perpendicular ſituation. Surpriſed at this event, I reſolved to take off the apparatus; but I was more ſurpriſed, when, on removing the flannel from the globe, the former appeared ſo ſtrongly poſitive, that it darted ſeveral ſparks to my arm, and other contiguous bodies, and the latter remained ſo ſtrongly negative, that the electrometer upon the prime Conductor inſtantly elevated its index to about 45°. This experiment being ſeveral times repeated, produced always the ſame effect.

Having had occaſion to coat a ten ounce phial, for the Leyden experiment, I ſtuck the

the braſs filings on the inſide of it, with varniſh, agreeable to the directions given by ſome writers on Electricity. This phial remained about a week unuſed, but it happened that whilſt I was charging and diſcharging it for ſome experiments, on making a diſcharge, it exploded with a greater noiſe than uſual, the cork with the wire being at the ſame time blown out of the neck of it. Being intent upon the main experiments in hand I omitted to examine this phenomenon;—I replaced the cork into the neck of the phial, and went on charging and diſcharging it again; but it had not been charged above three or four times more, when, on making a diſcharge, the varniſh that ſtuck the braſs filings, was in a flame, which burnt the under ſide of the cork, and occaſioned a good deal of ſmoke and flame to come out of the phial. Some days after, this experiment was repeated in the preſence of three gentlemen, well verſed in Electricity, when the cork with the wire, was alſo puſhed out of the neck of the phial; but the varniſh was this laſt time ſo far burnt, that the braſs filings were almoſt all dropped to the bottom of the phial, and they had their colour changed by the combuſtion.

In making ſome experiments, of a nature rather different from Electricity, I accidentally obſerved, that when I agitated ſome quickſilver in a glaſs tube hermetically ſealed, and in whoſe cavity the air was very much rarefied, the outſide of the tube appeared ſenſibly electrified; its Electricity however was not conſtant, nor, as I firſt thought, in proportion to the agitation of the quickſilver. Being deſirous of aſcertaining the properties of ſuch tubes, I conſtructed ſeveral of them, and by means of two cork ball electrometers, obſerved their properties; but as they all agree in regard to the chief points, I ſhall only deſcribe one, which is the beſt of them. This tube is repreſented by fig. 3, of Plate III. Its length is thirty-one inches, and its diameter is little leſs than half an inch. The quickſilver in it may be about three fourths of an ounce, and in order to exhauſt it of air, I cloſed it while the quickſilver was boiling in its oppoſite end.

Before

Before this tube is used, I make it a little warm and clean it; then holding it nearly horizontal, I let the quickfilver in it, run from one end of the tube to the other, by gently, and alternately elevating and depreffing its extremities. This operation immediately renders the outfide of the tube electrical, but with the following remarkable property, *viz.* that end of the tube, where the quickfilver actually ftands, is pofitive, and all the remaining part is negative. If by elevating this pofitive end of the tube a little, I let the quickfilver run to the oppofite end, which was negative, then the former inftantly becomes negative; and the latter pofitive. The pofitive end has always a ftronger Electricity than the negative. If when one end of the tube, for inftance A, is pofitive, *i. e.* when the quickfilver is in it, I do not take off that Electricity, by touching it; then on elevating this end A, fo as to let the quickfilver run to the oppofite end B, it appears negatively electrified in a very fmall degree. If by depreffing it again it be rendered pofitive a fecond time, and that pofitive Electricity is neither taken off,

 then

then on elevating this end A again, it appears to be poſitive in a ſmall degree: but if whilſt it is poſitive, its Electricity be taken off, then on being elevated, it appears ſtrongly negative.

When about two inches of each extremity of this tube is coated with tin-foil as it appears in the figure, that coating aſſiſts to render the Electricities at the extremities of the tube more conſpicuous, ſo that ſometimes they give ſparks to a Conductor brought near.

In regard to the conſtruction of ſuch tubes (which I have made of ſeveral lengths, from nine to thirty-one inches) it is obſervable that ſome will act very well, while others will hardly acquire any Electricity at all, even when they are made very hot. I am not yet thoroughly ſatisfied in reſpect to this difference, but ſuſpect that the thickneſs of the glaſs is more concerned, than any thing elſe, it appearing that a tube, whoſe glaſs is about one twentieth of an inch thick, anſwers better than either a thicker or a thinner one.

I ſhall

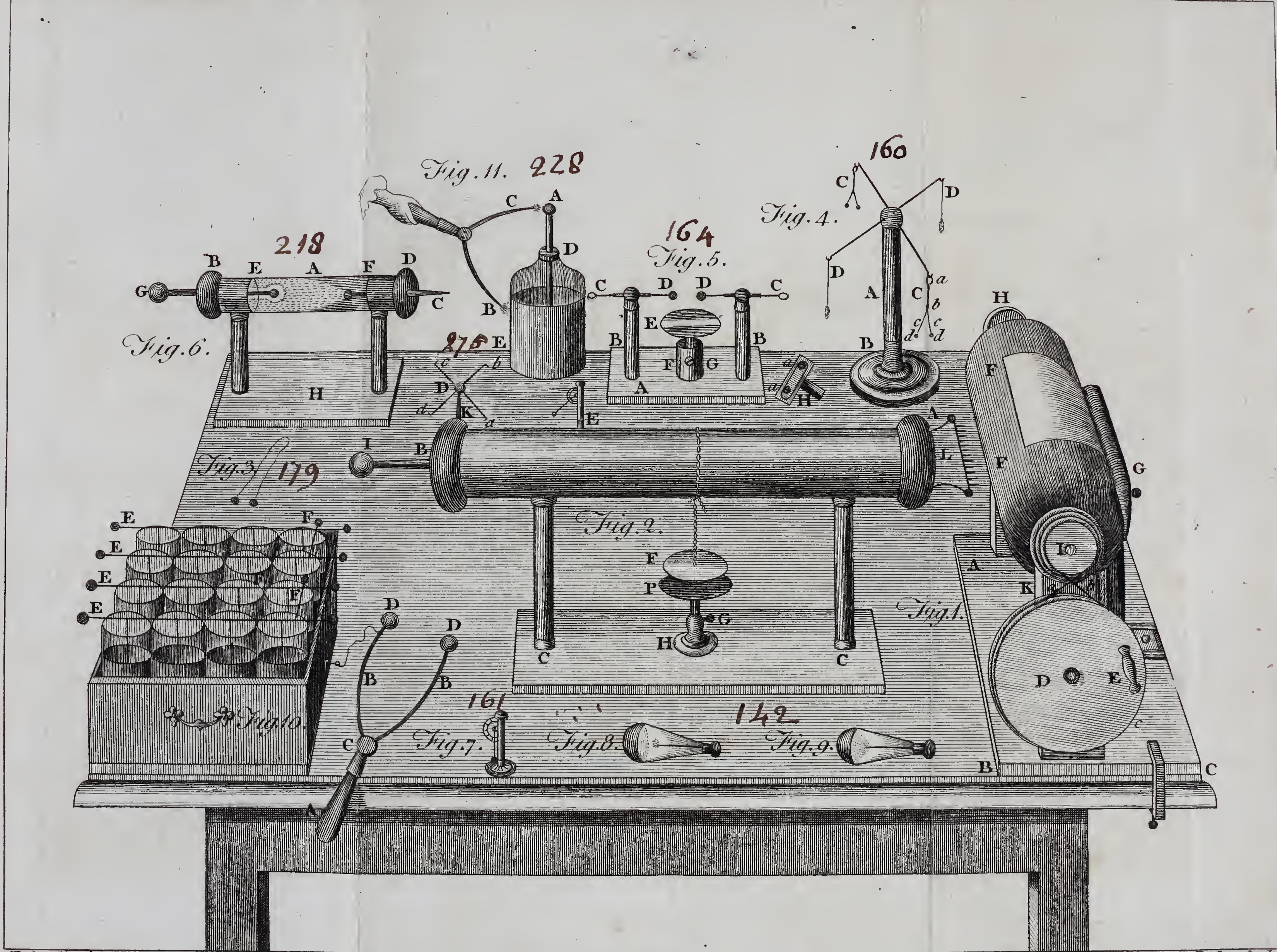
I ſhall laſtly finiſh this Treatiſe with mentioning two remarkable diſcoveries lately made in Electricity, which, as they came to my notice after a great part of this work had already been printed, could not be conveniently inſerted in any other place. The firſt of theſe diſcoveries is of Mr. KOESTLIN, who (as he ſays in his Latin Diſſertation of the Effects of Electricity upon ſome organic Bodies) has found that both animal and vegetable life is retarded by negative electrification. The other diſcovery is of Mr. ACHARD, at Berlin, who, in the month of January 1776, obſerved, that water froze, to the twentieth degree below the freezing point of REAUMUR's thermometer (which anſwers to the thirteenth degree below o of FARENHEIT's ſcale) was an electric. He tried his experiments in the open air where he found that a rod of ice two feet long and two inches thick, was a very imperfect Conductor when REAUMUR's thermometer was at ſix degrees below o, and that it would not in the leaſt conduct, when the thermometer was at 20°. By whirling a ſpheroid of ice in a proper machine, he even electrified the prime Conductor ſo as to

 attract

attract, repel, give ſparks, &c. The ice, that this gentleman made uſe of, was free from bubbles of air, and quite tranſparent; to produce which, he uſed to ſet a veſſel, containing diſtilled water to be frozen, upon the window of a room, which was rather warm with reſpect to the ambient air, where the water began to freeze on one ſide of the veſſel, while on the other ſide it was ſtill liquid.

THE

PLATE . I.



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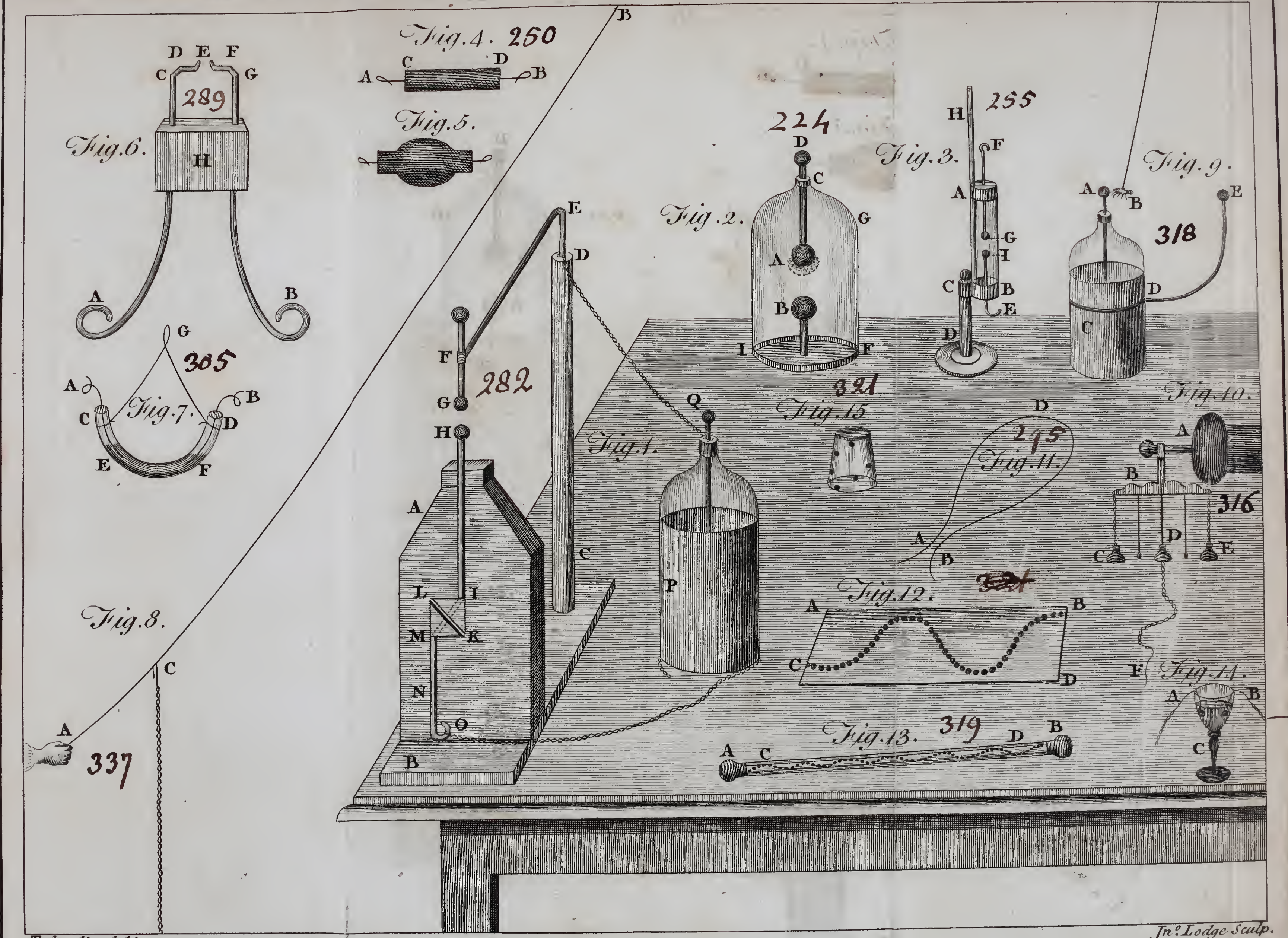

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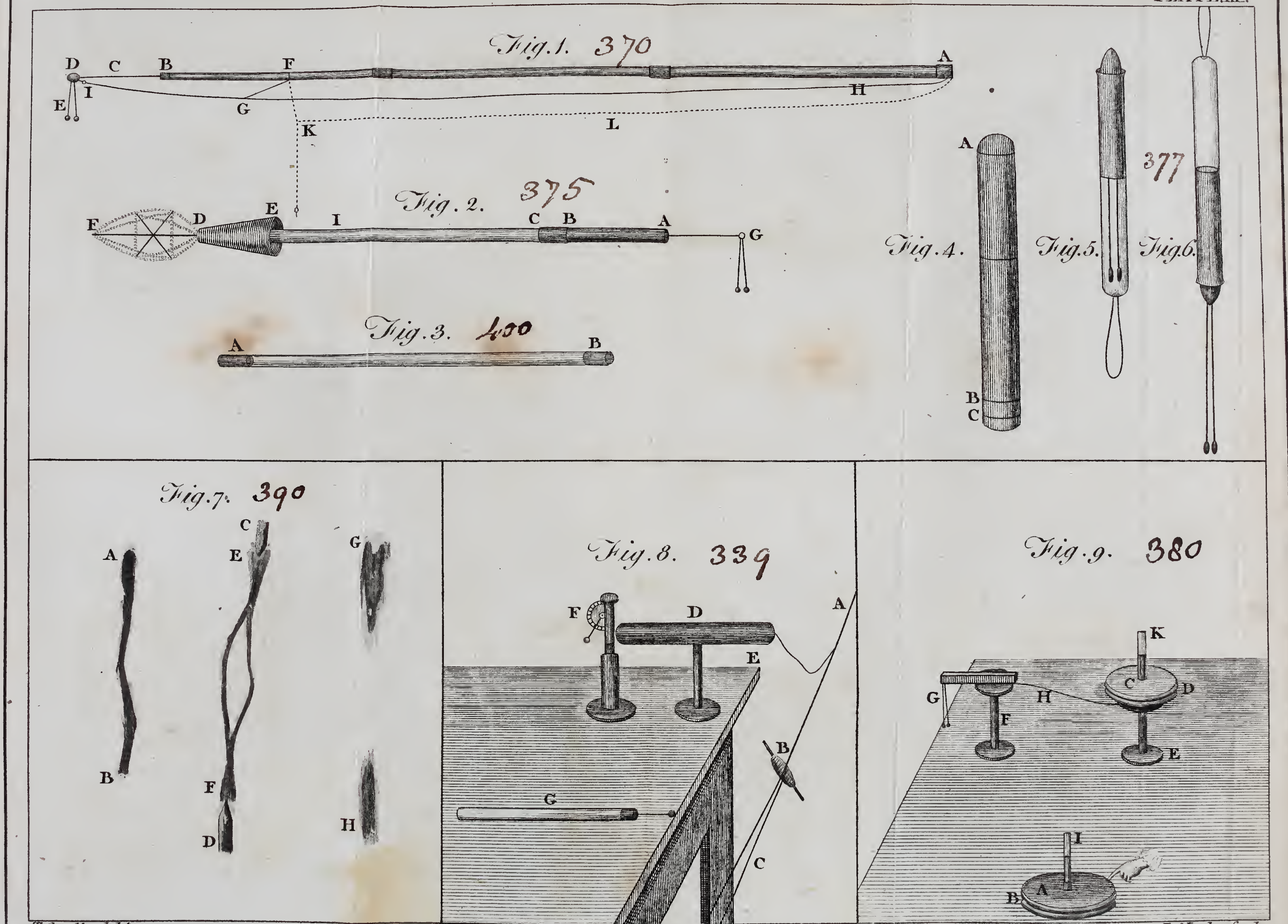

T. Cavallo del.

Jn.o Lodge Sculp.

THE

INDEX.

Earth

E

H

I

K

L

M

Magnetism

N

P

Prime

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 18. l. 20. *for* the different *read* different

152. l. 9. *for* ſkrewed *read* ſcrewed

154. l. 21. *for* plate 2. *read* Plate II.

184. l. 1. *for* G *read* H.

242. l. 23. *for* puthe *read* up the

257. l. 10. *for* as for inſtance *read* for inſtance

264. l. 14. *for* other electrics *read* other charged electrics

267. l. 7. *for* preſſes *read* paſſes

271. l. 19. *for* to inſulate fluid electrics *read* to coat fluid electrics

276. l. 21. *for* and even *read* but even

341. l. 18. *for* the *read* that

366. l. 8. *for* clouds generally *read* clouds, if it does rain, not generally