

several places, as off the Mosambique Coast, where it is salter than elsewhere.* It is also asserted not to be so saline under the Arctic Circle, which may proceed from the amazing quantities of snow, and the great rivers which fall into those seas, and because the heat of the sun produces but little evaporation in hot climates.

Be this as it may, I conceive that the saltness of the sea is not only caused by the banks of salt at the bottom of the sea, and along the coasts, but also by the salts of the earth, which the rivers continually convey therein; and that Halley had some reason to presume that in the beginning of the world the sea had but little or no saltness; that it is become so by degrees, and in proportion as the rivers have brought salts therein; that this saltness is every day increasing, and that consequently, by computing the whole quantity of salt brought by all the rivers, we might attain the knowledge of the age of the world by the degrees of the saltness of the sea.

Divers and pearl fishers assert, according to Boyle, that the deeper they descend into the sea, the colder is the water; and that the cold is so intense at considerable depths, that they cannot remain there so long under water, but
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* See Boyle, vol. iii. page 217.