

that at a distant epoch the waters of the gulf poured far into the interior of Arabia, leaving only an isthmus between that country and Asia Minor. In the latitude of Bagdad the two rivers approach so closely, that the intervening land measures only 27 miles across. Anciently, in the palmy days of Nineveh and Babylon, a communication was maintained between the two rivers by means of canals. Near Dongly the Tigris flows for some distance underground; on the course of the Euphrates one cataract occurs, that of Nuchar.

The next branch of our subject is the rivers of AFRICA.

[The *Nile* is the great river of Africa, and from the mystery which long enshrouded its sources, one of the most interesting of the rivers of the world. Until solved by the labours of Speke, Grant, and Sir Samuel Baker, their actual position was a problem which stimulated the curiosity, and foiled the ingenuity of geographers.

The actual basin of the Nile, says Sir Samuel Baker,† is included between the 22nd and 39th degrees of east longitude, and the 3rd and 18th parallels of north latitude. The drainage of this vast area is monopolized by the Egyptian river. The Victoria and Albert Lakes, the two great reservoirs of the equatorial waters, are the recipients of all affluents south of the Equator; the Albert Lake being the grand reservoir in which are concentrated the entire waters from the south, in addition to tributaries from the Blue Mountains, from the north of the Equator. The Albert N'yanza is the great basin of the Nile: the distinction between that and the Victoria N'yanza (discovered by Speke and Grant) is, that the Victoria is a reservoir receiving the eastern affluents, and it becomes a starting-point, or the most elevated *source* at the point where the river issues from it at the Ripon Falls; the Albert is a reservoir, not only receiving the western and southern affluents direct from the Blue Mountains, but it also receives the supply from the Victoria and from the entire equatorial Nile basin. The Nile, as it issues from the Albert N'yanza, is the *entire* Nile; prior to its birth from the Albert Lake it is *not* the entire Nile.

The true Nile would seem to be the river which flows out of the lake discovered by Sir Samuel Baker, and named the Albert N'yanza, at a point called Mayungu. Thence, under the name of the Bahr-el-Abiad, or White Nile, it flows in a north-westerly direction, through a comparatively unknown country, to Gondokoro, which is 200 miles from Mayungu, and about 1900 feet above the sea-level (lat. 4° 55' N., long. 31° 50' E.) Across a level plain, with a comparatively inconsiderable descent, but with a remarkable sinuous course, it proceeds first north-west, and then north-east, for some four or five hundred miles, until in lat. 9° 15', and long. 30° E., it receives

* [See Carl Ritter's "Erdkunde," vol. x., pp. 5, *et seq.*; Kinneir's "Memoir," pp. 59, *et seq.*; and Col. Chesney's "Expedition up the Euphrates," *passim*.]

† [Sir S. Baker, "The Albert N'yanza," &c., i. 304, 305.]