

higher up the valley. All are merged together; but we are sure the water and the mud from our own village—our own farms—are there with the rest. The stream moves on—it never rests—and it grows as it moves. It courses across a State; it marks a boundary between States. Men have made it a vehicle for floating logs; a highway for skiffs and barges. Now, the more pompous stream styles itself a river. It hastens to join the Ohio and share in the dignity of floating steamboats and carrying on the commerce of a populous valley. The Ohio has even surpassed the tributary by which we have been led, in taking on its cargo of mud. We stand in the middle of the suspension bridge at Cincinnati and look down on the yellow surface of the great stream. There go the contributions from half a dozen States. There goes the soil filched from our garden, or torn from our new-made road, two hundred miles away. We know it is there.

Look on the map and notice how many rivers are bringing their sediments to the Ohio. Trace these tributaries to their sources. From how wide a territory is the mud gathered which thus rushes down with the main river? Notice that the Ohio carries its burden to the Mississippi. Look again upon the map and see how many other great rivers bring the mud from other far-off regions to concentrate it all in the mighty Father of Waters. Here float sediments from western New York, from West Virginia, from the Ozark Mountains, from the Cumberland Table Land, from Minnesota, and the Indian Territory. Here in this resistless tide floats the identical soil which was washed from Farmer Jones's potato field.

In this view, consider the great Missouri. It pours its yellow stream into the clearer tide of the Mississippi a few miles above St. Louis. I have stood on the deck of a steamer between Alton and St. Louis and looked down on the Missouri's turbid volume pushing far into the Mississippi, and retaining for miles a distinct boundary between the waters of the two rivers. It appears that the contributions from the far northwest exceed all those from the east. Follow the whirling tide of the Missouri upward toward its sources.