

Every person almost has heard of the inundations of the Nile, which preserves the sweetness and whiteness of its waters, though extended over a vast tract of country, and into the sea. Strabo and other ancient authors have written that it had seven mouths, but there now remain only two which are navigable; there is a third canal which descends to Alexandria, and fills the cisterns there, and a fourth which is still smaller; but as they have for a long time neglected to clean their canals, they are nearly choaked up. The ancients employed a great number of workmen and soldiers, and every year, after the inundation, they carried away the mud and sand which was in these canals. The cause of the overflowing of the Nile proceeds from the rains which fall in Ethiopia. They begin in April and do not cease till September; during the first three months, the days are serene and fair, but as soon as the sun goes down the rains begin, nor stop till it rises again, and are generally accompanied with thunder and lightning. The inundation begins in Egypt about the 17th of June; it generally increases during 40 days, and diminishes in about the same time; all the flat country of Egypt is overflowed; but this inundation is much less

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