

EGYPT

EGYPT is a country at the north-eastern extremity of Africa, bounded on the N. by the Mediterranean Sea, on the S. by Nubia, on the E. by Palestine, Arabia, and the Red Sea, and on the W. by the Great Desert.

The name of Egypt in hieroglyphics is Kem, which becomes Kemi in demotic, a form preserved in the Coptic KHALE (Sahidic), KHALLI (Bashmuric), and KHALLI (Memphitic), with unimportant variants. The sense is "the black (land)," Egypt being so called from the blackness of its cultivable soil.

In Hebrew Egypt is called Mizraim, מִצְרַיִם, a dual, sometimes used as a singular. It describes the country with reference to its two great natural divisions, Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt, or the Delta. In the prophets Mazar, מִצְרַיִם, occurs as the singular form, and means Lower Egypt, Pathros being used for Upper Egypt. Thus Mizraim may be compared to the two Sicilies, though sometimes we find Mizraim for the lower country where we should expect Mazar. (Gesen. Thes. s. v. Mizraim.) The meaning of Mazar is probably the "fortified," rather than the "border," referring to the natural strength of the country.

The Greek Αἴγυπτος first occurs in the Homeric writings. In the Odyssey it is the name of the Nile (masculine) as well as of the country (feminine). Afterwards it is not used for the river. No satisfactory Egyptian or Semitic origin has been proposed for it. The probable origin is the Sanskrit root gup, "to guard," whence may have been formed āgupta, "guarded about," a similar sense to Mazar.

The Hebrew Mazar is preserved in the Arabic Misr, مصر, pronounced Masr in the vulgar dialect of Egypt.

1 Cf. Plat. De Iside et Osiride, cap. 33. Dr Brugsch objects to the idea that Kem may be connected with the biblical patriarchal name Ham (forming part of poetic names of Egypt in the Psalms:—"the land of Ham," ev. 23, 27, evl. 22; "the tents of Ham," lxxviii. 51), on the ground that it is philologically difficult to connect the Egyptian K with Π (Geogr. Inschr., i. p. 74, note \*). This objection would be valid were the case one of a Semitic word transcribed in ancient Egyptian; it is not so where we have a root which is common, as this may be, to both (cf. Bunsen's Egypt's Place, v. 757, 758). The meaning of the Hebrew root מִצְרַיִם is "hot, warm." The Arabic root

signifies "it became hot," and describes blackness as a result of heat; and the word "black mud" also occurs.

2 The use of Mizraim as the proper name of an individual appears to be as early as the time of Ramses II. Mázrima occurs as the name of a Hittite, the brother of the king (Brugsch, Geogr. Inschr., ii. 25, pl. xviii. 77). The Hebrew dual form is similarly transcribed in Máhanemá, Mahanaim (ii. 61, pl. xxiv. 22), a word not actually dual, and the Aramaic dual also in Noharina, the Hebrew Naharaim (i. pl. ix. 333).

3 Pathros may take its name from the Pathyrite Nome, so called from its metropolis, P-hat-har (Brugsch, Geogr. Inschr., i. 183, 189, pl. xxvii. 339). As this nome contained Thebes, it might have a signification like Thebais. De Rougé prefers p-to-res, "the country of the south," or Upper Egypt. (Six Premières Dynasties, Mém. de l'Inst., xxv. ii. 231).

4 Dr Brugsch has conjecturally identified Αἴγυπτος with Ha-ke-ptah, the sacred name of Memphis, from which the westernmost branch of the Nile, the Canobic, with its two mouths, the Canobic and the Polbitine, those best known to the early Greeks, seem to have been called (Geogr. Inschr., i. 83).

5 The apparent relation of Αἴγυπτος to αἰγυπτός, a vulture, might seem to suggest a mythological origin for the proper name. M. Pictet has, however, most ingeniously traced both to gup, to guard, though his supposition that the name originally was connected with the Shepherd rule in Egypt must be regarded as hazardous (Origines Indo-Européennes, i. 459, seqq.). It is better to consider it a translation of Mazar, as Νεζαίος of Shihor.

It occurs in the Korán as the name of Egypt (xliii. 50), but has been applied to the country and to its chief capitals since the Arab conquest, El-Fustát, now called Masr-el-'Atekah, or Old Masr, and El-Káhireh, the Cairo of the Europeans.

By the Greeks and Romans Egypt was usually assigned to Asia, though some gave it to Libya, or Africa. This difference was owing to the adoption of the Nile as the division of the two continents, which would naturally have given half of the country to each continent.

In ancient times Egypt was the country watered by the Nile north of the First Cataract; the deserts on either side being assigned to Arabia and Libya. The Egyptian name, "the black land," is only applicable to the cultivable land. The Misr of the Arabs is distinctly restricted to the same territory, the adjoining deserts being called the deserts of Egypt. Physically, ethnographically, and politically, the two tracts are markedly different, but it is now usual to treat them as a single country.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY, PRODUCTIONS, AND INHABITANTS.

The political advantages of Egypt, in situation, natural strength, and resources, can hardly be overrated. It lies in the very route of the trade between Europe and Asia, and that between Africa and the other two continents. It is the gate of Africa, and the fort which commands the way from Europe to the East Indies. The natural ports on the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, selected and improved by the wisdom of Alexander and the Ptolemies, whose enterprises have been eclipsed by those of M. de Lesseps in our own days, have always been enough for its commerce, which the great inland water-way of the Nile has greatly aided. The inhabited country, guarded by deserts and intersected in Lower Egypt by branches of the Nile and canals, in Upper Egypt closely hemmed in by the mountains on either side, is difficult to reach and to traverse; at the same time its extreme fertility makes it independent of supplies from other lands, and thus easier to defend. The ancient wealth and power of Egypt should occasion us no wonder, nor even that the country still prospers in spite of centuries of Turkish misrule.

"The extent of the cultivated land in Egypt [Mr. Lane calculates] to be equal to rather more than one square degree and a half; in other words, 5500 square geographical miles. This is less than half the extent of the land which is comprised within the confines of the desert; for many parts within the limits of the cultivable land are too high to be inundated, and consequently are not cultivated; and other parts, particularly in Lower Egypt, are occupied by lakes, or marshes, or drifted sand. Allowance also must be made for the space which is occupied by towns and villages, the river, canals, &c. Lower Egypt comprises about the same extent of cultivated land as the whole of Upper Egypt." Since the date when this was written,

\* In the Arabic lexicons مصر is placed under the root م-ص-ر which in the second conjugation has the sense "he built cities," "he

commanded a city should be a capital;" but we also find مصر "red mud," the term used meaning both red and reddish brown. Probably the oldest southern boundary was at Silsilis, near Gebel-es-Silsileh.

† Mrs Poole, Englishwoman in Egypt, i. 85, 86. Mr Lane "made his calculation from a list of all the towns and villages in Egypt, and the extent of cultivated land belonging to each. This list is appended to De

1844, the extent of cultivated land has increased. This has been chiefly due to works of irrigation in Lower Egypt, the increased cultivation of cotton, and the greater facility of transport. The increase cannot, however, be very large.

Divisions.—The ancient like the modern Egyptians followed the natural division of the country into two tracts, the valley of Upper Egypt and the plain of Lower Egypt. The names in hieroglyphics are to-res, the "south land" (compared, with the article prefixed, p-to-res, to Pathros by M. de Rougé), and to-mehit, the "north land." The two were divided by the southern boundaries of the highest nomes of Lower Egypt, the Memphite and Heliopolite, and thus the political boundary was somewhat south of the position where the valley extends into the plain. The most southern nome of Upper Egypt was called that of Nubia, and began at Silsilis. The Greek and Roman division excludes the Memphite Nome from Lower Egypt.

It is not known at what date Egypt was first divided into the provinces called Nomes. They are noticed in inscriptions of Dynasty IV. (Brugsch, Geogr. Inschr., i. 93), and their symbol occurs in the name of Hesp-ti, "the two nomes," fifth king of Dynasty I, Manetho's Usaphaidos. The hieroglyphic name is hesp. In late inscriptions the term (p-)tesh occurs, which is also the demotic form, and the origin of the Coptic (Id. i. 94, 95). The number of nomes is somewhat different in the various, ancient Egyptian lists, all of which, except fragments, are of the Græco-Roman age. Probably the number varied at different times. Dr Brugsch conjectures the true number to be forty-two, considering the forty-two judges of the dead (Ritual, ch. 125) as called from the chief towns of the kingdom to a great tribunal (Geogr. Inschr., i. 99), which he thinks represents the earthly court described by Diodorus Siculus (i. 75.)—(Geogr. Inschr., i. 124.)

There was a double system of names for the nomes,—the sacred, usual in hieroglyphics, and the vulgar, taken from the capitals, and preserved in Greek in transcriptions or translations. In consequence of this double system the identification of the hieroglyphic names with those of the Greeks and Romans is not always certain. This is the case in Lower Egypt, where the form of the country makes it hard to determine the exact geographical relation intended by any order. On account of this difficulty, and because the hieroglyphic names are of inferior importance in the geography of Egypt, they are not here given. (See Brugsch, Geogr. Inschr., i. 93, seqq.)

By the Greeks and Romans Egypt was divided into the Delta or lower country, and the Thebais or upper country. The third division, the so-called Middle Egypt, first occurs in Ptolemy as the Seven Nomes, ἑπτὰ νομοί, or Hepta-

Sacy's Abd-Allah. It was made in the year of the Flight 777 (A.D. 1375-6), [recording the census of 715, A.D. 1315-6], and may be rather underrated than the reverse. The estimate of M. Mengin (Histoire de l'Égypte, ii. 342-344) shows that in 1821 the extent of the cultivated land was much less; but since that period considerable tracts of waste land had been rendered fertile (Englishwoman in Egypt, i. 85, note). In the Description de l'Égypte there is an excellent memoir on the superficies of that country by Col. Jacotin, who computes the space which the Nile does or can water or fertilize, including its bed, north of the first cataract, at 9582.39 square geographical miles, of which but 5626.59 were in a state of cultivation or fit for cultivation. The space actually under cultivation was found by M. Estève to be 5469.86 square miles, but it is stated that 2735.07 more may have been anciently cultivable, of which much might be reclaimed. Description de l'Égypte, xviii. ii. 101, seqq. The close agreement of Mr Lane's estimate with Col. Jacotin's shows that the bases of both were accurate, and the difference from M. Mengin's may be explained by the disasters which preceded the establishment of Mehemet Ali as pasha.

† M. de Rougé has already noticed the possibly commemorative character of two other not much later royal names, Takau and Bi-n-uter (Six Prem. Dyn., 243, 244), and this may therefore perhaps have been of the same kind.

nomis, ἑπτανομίς. This new division, and the transfer of the Memphite Nome from Lower Egypt to the Heptanomis, are the chief innovations, for the fanciful divisions of Lower Egypt in Ptolemy are no doubt theoretical.

The following list of the nomes is taken from Parthey's Vocabularium Coptico-Latinum, compared with the same author's Erdkunde des alten Aegyptens, Berl. Akad., 1858. The authorities are Herodotus, Agatharchides, Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy, the coins of the nomes struck under Trajan, Hadrian, and Antoninus Pius, the last indicated by the abbreviation Nu., and other sources. The letters L, H., and T. indicate Lower Egypt, the Heptanomis, and the Thebais, as the divisions to which nomes thus designated are known to belong.

- L. Alexandria, Ἀλεξανδρίων χώρας νομός, Ptol. Nu.
- L. Andropolis, Ἀνδροπολίτης, Ptol., formerly Gynæcopolites.
- H. Antæopolites, Ἀνταϊοπολίτης, Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- H. Antinoites, Ἀντινοίτης, Ptol.
- L. Anysius, Ἀνίσσιος, Her.
- H. Aphroditopolites Hept., Ἀφροδιτοπολίτης τῶν ἑπτὰ Νομῶν, Strab. Ptol. Nu.
- T. Aphroditopolites Theb., Ἀφροδιτοπολίτης τῆς Θεβαίδος, Plin. Ptol.
- L. Aphthites, Ἀφθίτης, Her.
- T. Apollopolites, Πλιν., Ἀπολλωνοπολίτης, Nu.
- L. Arabicus, Πλιν., Ἀραβίας νομός, Ptol. Nu.
- L. Arsinoites duo, Ἀρσινοίται δύο, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Arsinoites Eg. inf., Πλιν., the same as Heroopolites, Plin.
- H. Arsinoites Hept., Ἀρσινοίτης, Strab. Nu., the same as Crocodilopolites, Plin.
- L. Athribites, Ἀθριβίτης, Her. Strab. Ptol. Nu.; Atharrabites, Plin.
- L. Bubastites, Βουβαστίτης, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Busirites, Βουσιρίτης, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Cabasites, Καβασίτης, Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- T. Chemmites, Χεμίτης, Her., later Panopolites, Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- T. Coptites, Κοπίτης, Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- H. Crocodilopolites, Πλιν., the same as Arsinoites Hept., Strab. Nu.
- H. Cynopolites, Κυνοπολίτης, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- T. Diospolis Magna, Διοπολίτης Μέγας, Nu.
- T. Diospolis, Πλιν., Διοπολίτης, Ptol. Nu.
- L. Gynæcopolites, Γυναικοπολίτης, Strab. Plin. Nu. later Andropolites!
- Hammoniacus, Πλιν., the same as Oasis?
- L. Heliopolites, Ἡλιοπολίτης, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- Heptacometis (I), ἑπτακομ—, Nu.
- II. Heraclæopolites, Πλιν., Ἡρακλεοπολίτης, Agatharch. Ptol. Nu., Ἡρακλεώτης, Ἡρακλεωτικός, Strab.
- T. Hermouthis, Ἑρμοῦθίτης, Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- H. Hermapolites, Ἑρμοπολίτης, Πλιν. Ptol. Nu., Ἑρμοπολίτης, Agatharch.
- L. Heroopolites, Πλιν., the same as Arsinoites Eg. inf.
- T. Hypselites, Ἵψηλιτης, Ptol. Nu.
- T. Latopolites, Λατοπολίτης, Πλιν. Nu.
- L. Leontopolites, Λεοντοπολίτης, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Letopolites, Λητοπολίτης, Strab. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Libyæ, Λιβύης νομός, Ptol.
- T. Lycopolites, Λυκοπολίτης, Agatharch. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Mareotis, Πλιν., Μαρειώτου νομός, Ptol. Nu.
- Marmarica, Μαρμαρικής νομός, Ptol.
- H. Memphites, Μεμφίτης, Πλιν. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Mendesian, Μενδήσιος, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Menelaites, Μενελαίτης, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Metelites, Μετηλίτης, Πλιν. Ptol. Nu.
- L. Momemphites, Μομεμφίτης, Strab.
- L. Myecphorites, Μυεκφορίτης, Her.
- L. Natho, Ναθῶ, Her., the same as Neut, Ptol. Nu.!
- L. Naucratis, Πλιν. Nu.
- L. Neut, Νεούτ, Ptol. Nu., the same as Natho, Her.!
- Nitriotes, Νιτριώτης, Strab.
- Oasites duo, Ὀασίται δύο, Πλιν. Ptol. See Hammoniacus, Plin.
- T. Ombites, Πλιν., Ὀμβίτης, Nu.
- L. Onuphites, Ὀνουφίτης, Her. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- H. Oxyrynchites, Ὀξυρυγχίτης, Agatharch. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.
- T. Panopolites, Πανοπολίτης, Πλιν. Ptol. Nu., the same as Chemmites, Her.
- L. Papremites, Παπρημίτης, Her.
- T. Pathyrites, Παθυρίτης τῆς Θεβαίδος, Papyr. Anast., the same as Phaturites, Plin.!
- L. Pelusiacus? Nu.
- Pemptites, Πεμπτίτης, Steph. Byz., the same as Pthempu?
- T. Perithæbe, Περιθηβαί, the same as Thebarum nomus, or its eastern part (Peyron, Pap. Taurin. i. 51).
- L. Phagroriopoles, Φαγγοριοπολίτης, Strab.



- L. Pharbathites, *Φαρβαθίτης*, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu. Phaturites, Plin., the same as Pathyrites.  
 L. Phthemphu, *Φθεμφοῦσι*, Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 L. Phtheneu, Nu., Ptenethu, Plin., *Φθενότου*, Ptol.  
 L. Phylace vel Schedia, *Φυλακή, Σχεδία*, Agatharch. See Mene-laïtes.  
 L. Prosopites, *Προσωπίτης*, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 L. Ptenethu, Plin. See Phtheneu. ab.  
 L. Saites, *Σαίτης, Σαϊτικός*, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 L. Schedia, Agatharch. See Phylace.  
 L. Sebennytæ duo, *Σεβεννύτης ἄνω τόπων, Σεβεννύτης κάτω τόπων*. Ptol.; Sebennytæ, Her. Strab. Plin. Nu.  
 L. Sethroites, *Σεθρωίτης*, Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 L. Tanites, *Τανίτης*, Her. Strab. Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 T. Tentyrites, Tentyrites, *Τεντυρίτης*. Agatharch. Plin. Ptol. *Τεντυρίτης*, Nu.  
 L. Thebanus, *Θηβαίος*, Her.  
 T. Thebarum, *Θηβῶν νομός*, Ptol., *Θηβαϊκός*, Her. See Perithebe.  
 T. Thinites, *Θινίτης*, Plin. Ptol. Nu.  
 L. Thmuites, *Θμουίτης*, Her.  
 L. Xoites, *Ξοίτης*, Plin. Ptol. Nu.

It is very remarkable that the Arsinoite Nome of the Heptanomis does not appear in the hieroglyphic lists, because Sebek, the crocodile-headed divinity there worshipped was, at least in later times, disliked in most parts of Egypt (Brugsch, *Hist.*, 2 ed., 109, 107).

The *Notitia Dignitatum*, composed under Theodosius II., A.D. 408-450, gives a new division of Egypt into four provinces—Egyptus, Augustamnica, Arcadia, and Thebais. Roughly the first comprised all Lower Egypt except the part east of the Delta, which was assigned to the second, and Arcadia appears to have succeeded the Heptanomis (Parthey, *Erdkunde*, 518, taf. vii.).

About the time of Justinian I. this division is found to be further developed, according to the statements of Hierocles. Egypt contained six eparchies:—1. Egypt Proper, *Αἴγυπτιακή*, the west of Lower Egypt to the Sebennytic branch of the Nile; 2. The First Augusta, *Αἰγυπτοῦ α'*, the north-eastern part of Lower Egypt to the Syrian border; 3. The Second Augusta, *Αἰγυπτοῦ β'*, the territory southward of the First Augusta; 4. Arcadia, *Ἀρκαδία*, the earlier Heptanomis; 5. The Nearer Thebais, *Θηβαίς ἡ ἔγγιστα*, extending to Panos, or Panopolis, and including the Great Oasis; 6. The Upper Thebais, *Θηβαίς ἡ ἄνω*, as far as Philæ. The division into nomes had evidently been almost effaced at this time (*Id.* 520, taf. ix.).

The Copts preserved the oldest division of the country, and called Lower Egypt, the Northern Region, *ⲘⲉⲗⲓⲦ* (Mem.), *ⲘⲉⲗⲓⲦ*, &c. (Sah.), Upper Egypt, the Southern Region, *ⲢⲏⲤ* (Mem.), *ⲘⲁⲣⲏⲤ* (Sah.) The names of the nomes were also known to them, and are given by Champollion in *L'Égypte sous les Pharaons*.

Like the Copts, the Arabs generally know of but two divisions, the names of which are such as the people of the desert would naturally give to the country watered by the Nile. Lower Egypt is called Er-Reef, the cultivated, or fertile, and Upper Egypt, Es-Sa'eed, the happy, or fortunate.

Under the Memlook sultans of the Báhree dynasty, as we learn from the list appended to De Saey's *Abd-Allatif*, referring to A.H. 715 (A.D. 1315-6), the provinces of Egypt were less numerous than the ancient nomes. They are for Lower Egypt—the territory of Cairo and the provinces of Kalyoob, the Sharkeeyeh, the Dakahleeyeh, Ed-Dimyát, the Gharbeeyeh, Menoof, Abyar and Benee-Nasr, the Boheyreh, Fooweh, Nesterawiyeh, Alexandria, and El-Geezeh; and for Upper Egypt—the provinces of Atfeeh, the Feiyoom, Behnesé, Ashmooneyn, Manfaloot, Asyoot, Akhmeem, and Koos. At the time of the French occupation the provinces had been reduced in number to sixteen, and the division of the Middle Provinces introduced, thus reviving the Heptanomis. The Northern Provinces, El-

Akaleem el-Bahreeyeh, were the Gharbeeyeh, that of Er-Rasheed, the Boheyreh, that of El-Mansooreh, the Manoo-feeyeh, that of Ed-Dimyát, the Sharkeeyeh, the Kalyoobeeyeh, and that of El-Geezeh. The Middle Provinces, El-Akaleem el-Wustaneeyeh, were that of Atfeeh, the Feiyoom, and those of Benee-Suweyf or Behnesé, and of El-Minyeh or Ashmooneyn.<sup>1</sup> The Southern Provinces, El-Akaleem el-Kibleeyeh, were those of Asyoot, Girgà, and Kinè. There is no doubt that these provinces sometimes correspond to the ancient nomes, though generally composed of the territories of more than one. (Cf. Jomard in *Descr. de l'Égypte*, 2d ed. ix. 594, 595.) By Mehemet Ali a new division was formed into districts governed by a mudeer, of which Lower Egypt, including a small portion of the Middle Provinces, contained four, and the rest of Egypt three. At the present time Egypt is divided into fifteen provinces, each governed by a mudeer.

#### I. LOWER EGYPT—

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Boheyreh.....     | chief town, Demenhoor. |
| 2. El-Geezeh.....    | El-Geezeh.             |
| 3. Kalyoobeeyeh..... | Kalyoob.               |
| 4. Sharkeeyeh.....   | Zagazeeg.              |
| 5. Menoofeeyeh.....  | Sheybeen.              |
| 6. Gharbeeyeh.....   | Tantah.                |
| 7. Dakahleeyeh.....  | Mansoorah.             |

#### II. MIDDLE EGYPT—

- |                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Benee-Suweyf and Feiyoom..... | Benee-Suweyf. |
| 2. El-Minyeh and Benee-Mazar.... | El-Minyeh.    |
| (double province)                |               |

#### III. UPPER EGYPT—

- |                        |         |
|------------------------|---------|
| 1. Asyoot.....         | Asyoot. |
| 2. Girgà.....          | Soohág. |
| 3. Kinè and Kuseyr.... | Kinè.   |
| (double province)      |         |
| 4. Isnè.....           | Isnè.   |

—Edmond (*L'Égypte*, 269, 270).

It will be readily understood that much confusion prevails as to the divisions of the country, more especially at times when an arbitrary administrative division has been used side by side with a popular one, depending upon what nature and artificial aids, such as canals and dikes, have done to map out the country.

The general appearance of Egypt is remarkably uniform. The Delta is a level plain richly cultivated, and varied alone by the lofty dark-brown mounds of ancient cities, and the villages in groves of palm-trees, standing on mounds often if not always ancient. We sometimes see groves of palm-trees besides those around the villages, but other trees are, except in some parts, rare. In Upper Egypt the valley is in as rich a state of cultivation, but very narrow and bounded by mountains of no great height, which hem it in. They form the edge of the desert on either side of the valley, which has been cut through a rocky table-land by the river. They rarely take the form of peaks. Sometimes they approach the river in bold promontories, and at others are divided by valleys with the beds of torrents which flow only at very long intervals. The bright green of the fields, the reddish-brown or dull green of the great river, and the tender tints of the bare yellow rocks, beneath the deep blue sky, always form a beautiful view. In form the landscape varies little and is not remarkable; in colour its qualities are always splendid, and under a general uniformity show continual variety.

*Climate.*—The climate of Egypt, being remarkably equable, is healthy to those who can bear great heat, and who avoid the unwholesome tracts of the country, such as the

<sup>1</sup> M. Jomard states that the older appellations were used for the two provinces of Benee-Suweyf and El-Minyeh, though these towns had succeeded the earlier chief places after which the provinces were named.—*Descr. de l'Égypte*, ix. 594.

northern coast, where there are extensive salt-marshes. Upper Egypt is healthier than Lower Egypt. The least healthy time of the year is the latter part of autumn, when the inundated soil is drying. In the desert, at a very short distance from the cultivable land, the climate is uniformly dry and unvaryingly healthy. Egypt, however, is unsuitable as a permanent residence to Europeans who do not greatly modify their mode of life;<sup>1</sup> and it is almost impossible to rear European children there; but if they arrive after the age of ten or a little more they do not usually feel its ill effects.<sup>2</sup> As a resort for invalids Egypt cannot be recommended without caution. Persons suffering from asthma and bronchitis are likely to gain benefit from a Nile-voyage, unless the season is unusually cold. The climate of the desert does not in all cases suit them, the small particles of sand which are inhaled increasing the irritation. The desert air is undoubtedly good for consumption, and a wise plan is to encamp near Cairo, or still better to find some kind of house within the limits of the desert; and there are ancient sepulchral grottoes at Thebes and other sites which afford excellent quarters for any one who will take the pains to build a court and a few rooms in front of them. A Nile-voyage cannot be so safely recommended. The climate on the river itself is more changeable than elsewhere, and often in winter far colder than is good for delicacy of the lungs. No one should visit Egypt in the winter without heavy as well as light clothing.

The atmosphere is remarkably dry and clear, except on the sea-coast; and even the humidity which is the consequence of the spreading of the inundation is scarcely felt but by its rendering the heat more oppressive. Sometimes a white fog, very dense and cold, rises from the river in the morning, but it is of rare occurrence and short duration. The heat is extreme during a great part of the year, but it is chiefly felt when accompanied by the hot winds of spring and the sultry calm of the season of the inundation. The winter is often comparatively severe in its cold, especially as the domestic architecture is intended to protect rather from heat than cold. "The general height of the thermometer in the depth of winter in Lower Egypt, in the afternoon and in the shade is from 50° to 60°; in the hottest season it is from 90° to 100°, and about 10° higher in the southern parts of Upper Egypt" (*Mod. Eg.*, Introd.)

On the coast of the Mediterranean rain is frequent, but in other parts of Egypt very unusual. At Cairo there is generally one heavy storm in the winter, and a shower or two besides, the frequency of rain having increased since the growth of Ibrahim Pasha's plantations between the city and the river. At Thebes a storm occurs but once in about four years, and light rain almost as rarely. The wind most frequently blows from the N.W., N., or N.E., but particularly from the first direction. The proportionate prevalence of these winds to those from all the other quarters, in the year, is about 8 to 3; but to those from the S., S.E., and S.W., about 6 to 1. (Clot-Bey, *Aperçu Général sur l'Égypte*, i. p. 30.) The northerly winds are the famous Etesian winds of Herodotus (ii. 20), which enable boats constantly to ascend the Nile against its strong and rapid current, whereas in descending the river they depend on the force of the stream, the main-yard being lowered. These winds also cool the temperature during the summer months. The southerly winds are often very violent, and in the spring and summer, especially in April and May, hot sand-winds sometimes blow from the south, greatly raising the temperature, and causing especial suffering to Europeans. The famous Simoom, properly

called Samoom,<sup>3</sup> is a much more violent hot sand-wind, which is more usual in the desert than in the cultivated tracts, but in either occurring only at long intervals. It is a kind of hurricane, most painful to experience, and injurious in its effects. (*Englishwoman in Egypt*, i. 96, 97.) The zóba'ah is a common but remarkable phenomenon. It is a very lofty whirlwind of sand, resembling a pillar, which moves with great velocity. Mr Lane measured some with a sextant, and found them to be between 500 and 700 feet in height, and one to have an altitude of 750 feet. When crossing the Nile a zóba'ah frequently capsizes any boat which may be in its way, and of which the main-sheet is tied by the carelessness of the boatmen instead of being held. (*Id.*, loc. cit.; *Modern Egyptians*, chap. x.) It may be mentioned that a sudden gust of wind from a valley in the mountains is equally dangerous when the sheet is tied, and a third danger is the attempt to move during a southerly gale, when the long shallow Nile-boat is easily caught broadside and capsized.

One of the most interesting phenomena of Egypt is the mirage, which is frequently seen both in the desert and in the waste tracts of uncultivated land near the Mediterranean; and it is often so truthful in its appearance that one finds it difficult to admit the illusion.

*Diseases.*—Notwithstanding the fineness of the climate, the stranger who visits Egypt is struck by the signs which he sees everywhere of the prevalence of many serious diseases, and in the first half of this century he might have witnessed the effects of a great epidemic of the plague or the cholera. Yet he should remember the poverty of the great mass of the inhabitants and the insufficiency of their food (both due to the selfish rapacity of the Government), the insufficient training of the native medical practitioners, the false system of many of the foreigners established in the country, and the reluctance of the natives to take medical advice. Ophthalmia when neglected is frequently followed by blindness, and dysentery in the same circumstances is very often fatal.

The plague has been the greatest scourge of Egypt. We cannot tell whether the pestilences mentioned by Manetho as having occurred in the reign of one of the most ancient kings were the same as the modern plague; it seems, however, to be alluded to in the Bible as peculiarly Egyptian (Zech. xiv. 18). In 1835 there was an epidemic of plague of extreme severity, during which there died in Cairo a number of the inhabitants equal to the whole adult male population (*Modern Egyptians*, Introduction). The last occurrence of the disease was in 1843, when the mortality was comparatively insignificant. The immunity which Egypt has enjoyed for more than thirty years, in which interval there would ordinarily have been several plagues, has been attributed to the sanitary measures of the Egyptian Government, and no doubt these may have somewhat contributed to this result. It should, however, be remembered that the plague is always imported into Egypt, and that there have been no severe epidemics of undoubted plague elsewhere in the period.

This disease has usually first appeared in the east and south coasts of the Mediterranean, and part of the north coast, and when epidemic seems to pursue a similar course to the cholera in advancing steadily from place to place. In Egypt it usually appears first at Alexandria in the winter

<sup>3</sup> Of the term samoom Mr Lane writes, "In the present day it is commonly applied to a violent and intensely-hot wind, generally occurring in the spring or summer, in Egypt and the Egyptian deserts usually proceeding from the south-east or south-south-east, gradually darkening the air to a deep purple hue, whether or not (according to the nature of the tract over which it blows) accompanied by clouds of dust or sand, and at length entirely concealing the sun; but seldom lasting more than about a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes."—*Arabic Lexicon*, s.v., pt. iv. 1423.



or spring, and if the earliest cases occur towards the close of the year, one may be sure of a plague of great severity and long continuance. At first the cases are generally few, but they gradually increase, and in the hottest weather attain their maximum. The disease is not long in travelling from Alexandria to Cairo, but it rarely ascends much higher up the river, and has seldom been known at Thebes in modern times. Many medical writers have denied the contagious character of the plague, in particular Clot-Bey, a French physician, who was long chief medical officer of the Egyptian Government, and who published a treatise on the subject (Clot-Bey, *De la Peste*); yet the evidence on the other side is too strong to be rebutted. An epidemic of plague is greatly to be dreaded in the present circumstances of Egypt. Rapid communications would readily bring the disease to Europe, and the interests of commerce would stand in the way of the reasonable precaution of quarantine. It is stated that the plague is endemic in the marshes of Chaldæa. Surely it would be well if the European Governments were to appoint a commission for the investigation of the disease and to ascertain what, if any, is the value of the sanitary measures of the Turkish Government.

Dysentery is an extremely common malady, and causes very large mortality. It may usually be traced to a careless course of diet, and especially to eating uncooked vegetables, unripe fruit, or other unwholesome food, and to drinking brackish water. Mr Lane has published a mode of treatment which has been attended with extraordinary success (*Modern Egyptians*, App. E. of all later editions). Asiatic cholera visited Egypt in its westward course on the first two occasions of its appearance in Europe. According to the Government returns, which were probably below the truth, nearly 200,000 persons perished from the disease in all Egypt during the great cholera of 1848. It is remarkable that after each of these great epidemics the disease appeared a second time, but with far less destructive results. Among the diseases most dreaded by the European residents is liver-complaint. These who abstain from alcoholic drinks, or use them with extreme moderation, escape the complaint altogether, or suffer from it in a comparatively mild form. Hemorrhoids and herniæ are among the commonest maladies. Skin diseases have been at all times very prevalent in Egypt. Leprosy is now well known, but not common, unlike elephantiasis, which in more than one form has numerous victims. Small-pox was formerly very severe, but it has been checked in its virulence by vaccination. The so-called guinea-worm occurs, but it is perhaps not indigenous.

Of the diseases of the eye, ophthalmia is the most formidable, from its prevalence and malignant character; yet perhaps no malady more readily yields to treatment if promptly used. Where the predisposition exists, a slight cause, such as the irritation occasioned by a grain of dust or sand, is enough to produce an inflammation, which, if not checked, inflicts a lasting injury if it does not produce blindness. For this disease Mr Lane has published a very efficacious mode of treatment (*Mod. Eg.*, App. E).

Clot-Bey affirms that pulmonary consumption is extremely rare among the native inhabitants (*Aperçu*, ii. 372), yet another physician asserted (but not in print) that he had met with not a few cases in a short practice. Asthma and bronchitis are among the common disorders. The occurrence of *coup-de-soleil* is not unusual, but it is rarely attended with fatal results, probably on account of the sobriety of the people. Madness is common, generally in the form of idiocy. Maniacs alone are confined; idiots are regarded with much respect as saints, and it is probable that some persons feign idiocy to become objects of popular veneration, supported by alms. One of the Memlook

sultans, Kafáoon, following the example of Saladin (*Abulfeda Annales*, ed. Reiske, iv. 30, 31) founded a madhouse, or *máristán*, at Cairo, which was still used thirty years ago (*Englishwoman in Egypt*, i. 166). Its inmates were subsequently transferred to a modern hospital. Nervous affections are uncommon, probably owing to the calm life which the inhabitants lead. Rheumatism is of more usual occurrence; but, according to Clot-Bey, gout is unknown (*Aperçu*, ii. 377). It is well worthy of notice that, although ownerless dogs are very common in Cairo and the other towns, and watch-dogs are kept by the villagers, canine madness and hydrophobia are unknown; but Clot-Bey is probably in error when he says that rabies has never been observed in Egypt (*id.* ii. 78), for the Coptic prayer-books contain a prayer to be used for a person suffering from hydrophobia,<sup>1</sup> and this is not likely to have been derived from a foreign source. (For an account of the diseases of Egypt, see Clot-Bey's *Aperçu Général* and *De la Peste*, and *Descr. de l'Égypte*, xiii. 29).

*Geology.*—In considering the geology of Egypt, its deserts claim our first notice. By a desert is generally understood a wide plain of shifting sand; but this is usually an erroneous description of such a tract, and especially inapplicable to the deserts which border the valley of the Nile. These are raised mountain regions, the surface of which is often covered with sand, debris, and pebbles, intersected by valleys, and diversified, in the case of the western desert, by some oases.

On both sides of the Nile the mountains are limestone, until a little above Thebes, where the sandstone commences. At the First Cataract red granite and other primitive rocks burst through the sandstone beneath the bed of the Nile, and for a considerable space on the east, obstructing the course of the river by numerous small islands and rocks, and thus forming the rapids. In several places, chiefly on the eastern side, the mountains approach the river, and sometimes reach it. They are always utterly devoid of vegetation, and, except the granite, generally of a yellowish or reddish colour, though in some places they are greyish. Near the Cataract the sandstone mountains are partially covered with bright yellow sand in drifts. The mountains on both sides near the river are usually about 300 feet in height, and rarely much loftier. The highest point on the western bank at Thebes is four times that altitude. If one leaves the river and ascends the mountains, he finds a great rocky tract before him, the only easy paths through which are along valleys often very winding. The eastern desert gradually rises until about midway between the Nile and the Red Sea, where primitive rocks burst through the later formation, and the loftiest of them, a granite mountain called Gebel-Gháreb (about lat. 28°), attains the height of about 6000 feet. In this portion of the desert are porphyry, breccia, and basalt rocks, which were anciently much prized for purposes of architecture and sculpture. The western desert is of a lower elevation, and is principally remarkable for its oases, which are deep valleys containing alluvial soil, but they are little productive except in dates. Their beauty and fertility have been naturally much exaggerated. Notwithstanding the inequalities of their surface, it is evident that the deserts rise towards the Red Sea, attaining their greatest height in the peninsula of Sinai, which is but a continuation of the same tract.

The most remarkable geological change which has been observed to have taken place in Egypt is one still in operation, the depression of the northern shore notwithstanding

<sup>1</sup> This is stated on the authority of the late Rev. J. R. T. Leder of Cairo.







the constant deposit of the Nile, and the corresponding elevation of the southern part of the isthmus of Suez. The consequence of this change of level has been the ruin of places on the shore of the Mediterranean, the extension of the salt-marshes, and the drying up of a considerable part of the northernmost portion of the Gulf of Suez. The bed of the Red Sea may be traced for several miles north of Suez, which now stands at the head of the western gulf; and places far north of that town were on the coast in historic times.

The form of the plain and valley inclosed by the deserts is remarkably regular. In Lower Egypt the cultivable land little exceeds the limits of the ancient Delta, but greatly exceeds those of the space between the two remaining branches of the Nile. The northern coast is protected by shoals and a low range of sand-hills. To the south of these are extensive salt marshes and lakes, or waste tracts, and beyond, the cultivated land. The deserts on either side are of low elevation. To the east of the ancient Delta, a valley, the Wádee-et-Tumeylát, is in course of being reclaimed by the Sweet-Water Canal.

The form of the valley, or Upper Egypt, may be best seen on the map; its leading peculiarities may here be noticed. Its course is nearly north and south until just within the border of the Thebais, when it takes a south-easterly direction as far as the town of Girgá, and then turns due east as far as Kiné, from which town it resumes its former direction. The mountains and desert on the western side throughout Upper Egypt, that is, above Cairo, are generally further from the river than those on the eastern side, which frequently reach to the water's edge. The difference is most remarkable as far as the town of Farshoot, by the course of the river about 350 miles above Cairo, and about 70 miles below Thebes. Near Farshoot begins a continuous series of canals, which flow parallel to the Nile, and near the Libyan chain, until they terminate in Lower Egypt, not far north of Cairo. Above Farshoot, the eastern mountains recede as far as a little above Thebes, and the western mountains gradually approach the Nile. Halfway between Thebes and the First Cataract, the cultivable soil is equally narrow on each bank. The greatest breadth of the cultivable land, all of which is not now cultivated, on the western bank seldom exceeds about 8 or 10 miles, and on the eastern bank, about 3 miles, but it is usually much narrower.

There is in Upper Egypt one striking deviation from the uniform character of the country. About 70 miles above Cairo, by the course of the Nile, an opening in the Libyan range leads to a kind of oasis, the Feiyoom, a fertile tract, lying in a hollow of the desert, and having at its further extremity a great lake of brackish water.

*The Nile.*—The chief natural feature of Egypt is the Nile, and the great phenomenon of the country the yearly inundation. With the ancient inhabitants the river had, according to their usage with such names, its two appellations, sacred and common. The sacred name was Hapi, the same as that of one of the four genii of Amenti (Hádes) and of the bull Apis. The probable meaning is "the concealed" (Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschr.*, i. 77). The profane name was Atur, or Aur, usually with the epithet áá, the great. The two forms, of which the first appears to be the older, the second the younger, mean "river," as is equally the case with the demotic and Coptic forms of Aur (*Id.* p. 78). There are at least three names of the Nile in the Bible,—Yeór (יְאוֹר, יָאוֹר), the same as the Egyptian name last mentioned, and probably of Egyptian derivation; Shichôr (שִׁיחֹר, שִׁיחֹר), "the black;" and "the river of Egypt." נַחַל קַיְרוֹת. The "torrent," or "brook of Egypt" (נַחַל קַיְרוֹת), spoken of as the western limit of Palestine, and so the eastern limit of Egypt, is either a desert stream

at Rhinocorura, now El-Areesh, or the Pelusiac or easternmost branch of the Nile.<sup>1</sup>

The Greek and Roman name Νεῖλος, Nilus, is certainly not traceable to either of the Egyptian names of the river, nor does it seem to be philologically connected with the Hebrew ones. It may be, like Shichôr, indicative of the colour of the river, for we find in Sanskrit, Níla, "blue," probably especially "dark blue," also even black, as Nilapan'ka, "black mud." The two great confluent of the Nile are now called the Bahr-el-Abyad, or "White River," and the Bahr-el-Azrak, or "Blue River," and the latter most nearly resembles the Nile in Egypt. As already noticed, Ἀἴγυπτος, in the *Odyssey*, is the name of the Nile (masc.) as well as of the country (fem.).

The Arabs preserved the classical name of the Nile in the proper name En-Neel النيل, or Neel-Misr مِصْرَ نَيْلِ, the Nile of Misr (Egypt). The same word signifies indigo.<sup>2</sup>

The modern Egyptians commonly call the river El-Bahr, "the sea," a term also applied to the largest rivers, and the inundation "the Nile," En-Neel; and the modern Arabs call the river Bahr-en-Neel, "the river Nile."

The course of the Nile has already been noticed in speaking of the form of the Nile valley. In ancient times the Delta was watered by seven branches; now there are but two, the other ancient branches being canals not always navigable. The ancient branches were, beginning at the west, the Canobic, Bolbitine, Sebennyitic, Pathmitic, Mendesian, Tanitic, and Pelusiac, of which the modern Rosetta and Damietta branches represent the Bolbitine and Pathmitic.

The mean breadth of the river in Upper Egypt may be put at from half a mile to three-quarters, except where large islands increase the distance. In the Delta the branches are generally narrower.

A remarkable change has been ascertained to have occurred in the level of the Nile above Gebel-es-Silsileh, (near the ancient Silsilis, more than 80 miles south of Thebes), and throughout part of Nubia. Indications of this change were first observed by Professor Lepsius, who discovered hieroglyphic inscriptions on rocks at the Cataract of Semneh, not far above the Second Cataract, showing that the river attained a much higher level in the time of Dynasties XII. and XIII. before B.C. 2000. He gives the difference of the mean water-level at Semneh as 7.30 metres, or 23.94 feet English. He observes that the whole level of Upper Nubia was anciently greater, and similarly that of Lower Nubia between the First and Second Cataracts, but that in this second tract the present level was attained since the time of Thothmes III. of Dynasty XVIII. (*Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Hrn. Lepsius an Hrn. Ehrenberg*, Philæ, 10th Sept. 1844.) Sir Gardner Wilkinson pursued the inquiry in a paper in which he argued that the cause of the change of level which he traced in the Upper Thebais was the breaking of a rocky barrier at Gebel-es-Silsileh, where the low mountains on either side confine the river to a narrow channel (*Trans. R. Soc. Lit.*, n.s., iv.).

The water of the Nile differs considerably in appearance and purity at various seasons of the year. A little after midsummer it becomes very turbid, and not long afterwards

<sup>1</sup> The manner in which this term is used (Num. xxxiv. 5; Josh. xv. 4, 47; 1 K. viii. 65; 2 K. xxiv. 7; Is. xxvii. 12), to designate the boundary of Egypt and Palestine, precisely as Shichôr is employed (Josh. xiii. 3; 1 Chr. xiii. 5), would be conclusive as to their identity, were it not that the country between the Pelusiac branch and Rhinocorura is a waste region, which may have been wholly considered as boundary.

<sup>2</sup> "En-Neel is the river (lit. the inundation) of Egypt: Es-Saghaneé says—'But as to the neel [indigo] with which one dyes, it is an Indian word Arabicized'" (*The Misbah of El-Feiyoomee*).