

**A PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL
GEOGRAPHY, WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
BOTANY, DENDROLOGY, ZOOLOGY,
ORNITHOLOGY, ETC., OF EACH COUNTRY**

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A Physical and Political Geography, with a Short Account of the Botany, Dendrology, Zoology, Ornithology, Etc., of Each Country by G. M. Sterne

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G. M. STERNE


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A
PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL
SCHOOL GEOGRAPHY,

WITH A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE
BOTANY, DENDROLOGY, ZOOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY, ETC.,
OF EACH COUNTRY.

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"TALES FOR AN ENGLISH HOME;" "DRAW-DROPS FOR
EARLY FLORENTS," &c., &c.



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G E O G R A P H Y.

INTRODUCTION.

THE word *geography* implies a description of the earth, being formed from two *Greek* words,—*ge*, the earth, and *grapho*, to describe. Geography is a science, and has its peculiar terms, such as cardinal points, constituent parts of the earth, divisions, hemispheres, continents, islands, peninsulas, isthmuses, promontories or capes, oceans, seas, lakes, straits, gulfs, rivers, &c. The cardinal points are—*north*, *south*, *east*, and *west*; with the map opposite to you, the top is the north; bottom, south; to your right hand east; left, west. Geography may be divided into five parts: mathematical, physical, descriptive, civil, and progressive; the definitions of which are—1st. Mathematical—the figure and magnitude of the earth, its latitude and longitude, the mode by which it is illumined by the sun, its description by globes and maps, &c. 2nd. Physical—the natural history and phenomena relative to its rocks, land, water, and the various changes which have taken place on its surface, from volcanic agency, inroads of the sea, &c. 3rd. Descriptive—the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, and the animals and plants which live and grow on it; a knowledge of all portions of land and water, with their relative situations on the globe. 4th. Civil geography, which explains to us the distribution of mankind, the forms of society, the classes, habits, manners, and languages of the inhabitants of the earth. 5th. Pro-

gressive geography includes the history of the changes which have taken place in the various nations which at different ages have peopled the earth in regard to their local distributions.

The earth is a spherical or globular body; its *constituent* parts are land and water; its *circumference*, or *length round*, is about 25,000 miles; and its *diameter*, or *size through*, 7,930 miles.

That the earth is round, there can be no doubt, from the appearance of vessels as they approach or leave the shore; the circumnavigation of the globe; the circular shadow which it casts on the moon when that body is eclipsed: also in holy writ, is it not spoken of as "The *round* world, and they that dwell therein?"

The primary divisions of the earth are Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, to which are now added Polynesia and Australasia.

Hemisphere means half a sphere, or globe, and is composed of the Greek words, *hemisos*, half, and *sphæra*, a sphere or globe: there are two, *eastern* and *western*; the former contains Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australasia; the latter, America and Polynesia. Australasia includes Australia or New Holland, Tasmania or Van Diemen's Land, and the neighbouring islands; whilst Polynesia (meaning many) comprises the numerous islands in the Pacific Ocean.

The land is divided into continents, islands, peninsulas, isthmuses, promontories or capes, coasts, mountains, rocks, &c.

A Continent is a large portion of land containing many countries, or kingdoms, without either being entirely separated by water, as Europe.

An Island is a smaller tract of land, and is entirely surrounded by water, as Great Britain and Ireland.

A Peninsula is a tract of land everywhere sur-

rounded by water, except at one narrow neck, which joins it to the neighbouring continent, as Spain and Portugal, or the Morea, in Greece.

An Isthmus is a neck of land which joins the peninsula to the continent, as the isthmus of Suez, which joins Africa to Asia.

A Promontory is a hill or point of land stretching out into the sea, the end of which is styled a cape, as the Cape of Good Hope, in Africa; Cape Horn, in America.

A Coast, or Shore, borders on the sea.

Mountains, valleys, woods, deserts, plains, rocks, &c., are well known.

Water is divided into oceans, seas, lakes, straits, gulfs, bays, rivers, canals, and streams.

An Ocean is an immense collection of water, without any part being entirely separated by land, as the Atlantic Ocean.

A Sea is a smaller collection of water, communicating with the ocean, but having the land on each side, as the Mediterranean Sea.

A Gulf runs far into the land; if it be large, it is styled an inland Sea; and, according to its size, it is a bay, haven, creek, or road.

A Strait is a narrow passage which connects two seas, or an ocean and sea, such as the Straits of Gibraltar, connecting the North Atlantic Ocean with the Mediterranean Sea.

A River is a stream of fresh water rising in the land and flowing into the sea or some other river, as the Thames or the Nile. If small, it is called a rivulet; where it rises from the earth is termed its *source*; where it empties itself, its *mouth*. Should it meet with any obstacle in its course, it is called a cascade or cataract, according to the height from which it falls.

The earth turns round on its own axis once in twenty-four hours, making the change of day and night. The ends of the axis (or imaginary lines) are termed the poles, *north* and *south*. This axis is 7,912 miles in extent.

Geography and the globes were introduced in the reign of Edward the First. There are two artificial globes—the terrestrial and celestial; the former represents the earth, the latter the heavenly bodies. On the artificial globe are represented the axis, the poles, the equinoctial points, the solstitial points, the cardinal points, the zenith and nadir points, and various circles.

Latitude is the distance between the equator and the poles; thus it is termed north latitude or south latitude, according on which side of the equator it is situated.

Longitude is the distance from any given place; thus, counting from Greenwich, one-half of the world is east of Greenwich, the other west. All places to the right of Greenwich are in east longitude; to the left, in west longitude.

Upon an artificial globe will be found the ten following circles:—1, the equator; 2, the horizon; 3, the meridians; 4, the zodiac; 5, the ecliptic; 6, the tropics; 7, the polar circles; 8, the colures; 9, the azimuth circles; 10, parallels of latitude.

The Equator is an imaginary circle passing round the world, midway between the poles, which divide it into the northern and southern hemispheres; by seamen this circle is called the line, and is divided into 360 degrees; a degree is sixty geographical miles, or sixty and a half English miles. The ancients made each circle to contain 360 degrees, supposing the sun to make the circuit of our earth in 360 days, advancing one degree every day.

The *Horizon* is that circular line in which the sky and earth, or sky and water, appear to meet. It marks the rising and setting of the sun, moon, and stars, which are said to *rise* when they appear above the horizon, and to *set* when they descend below it.

The *Meridians* are circles supposed to pass through the poles, crossing the equator at right angles.

The *Zodiac* is a great circle dividing the globe into two equal parts, having on it twelve signs, with the names of the months on which the sun passes through them:—

1. *Aries*, the Ram, in March and April . . . ♈
2. *Taurus*, the Bull, in April and May . . . ♉
3. *Gemini*, the Twins, in May and June . . . ♊
4. *Cancer*, the Crab, in June and July . . . ♋
5. *Leo*, the Lion, in July and August . . . ♌
6. *Virgo*, the Virgin, in August and September . . . ♍
7. *Libra*, the Balance, in September and October . . . ♎
8. *Scorpio*, the Scorpion, in October and November . . . ♏
9. *Sagittarius*, the Archer, in November and December . . . ♐
10. *Capricorn*, the Goat, in December and January . . . ♑
11. *Aquarius*, the Waterman, in January and February . . . ♒
12. *Pisces*, the Fishes, in February and March . . . ♓

The *Ecliptic* is a circle supposed to lie in the middle of the zodiac, and to represent the course of the sun in its annual motion through the twelve signs.

The *Tropics* are two circles parallel to the equator: on the north is the tropic of *Cancer*; on the south, the tropic of *Capricorn*.

The *Polar Circles* are each twenty-three and a half degrees distant from their respective poles. The

northern polar circle is named the *arctic circle*, and the southern the *antarctic circle*.

The Colures are two meridians, one named the *equinoctial colure*, the other the *solstitial colure*.

The Azimuth Circles are described round the globe, crossing the horizon at right angles, and meeting together at the zenith and nadir.

Parallels of Latitude are circles parallel to the equator, from which they are numbered, each way towards the poles, to ninety degrees; thus, latitude is north or south, as reckoned north or south of the equator.

The difference of climate is owing to the difference of heat and moisture contained in the atmosphere, and the nature of the prevailing winds.

EXERCISES.

What does the word geography imply?—From whence taken?

Is it a science?—What peculiar terms has it in use?

How may it be divided?—Explain the terms?

Of what shape is the earth?—What are the proofs?

—What is its circumference?—Diameter?

How is the earth divided?

What is the meaning of the word hemisphere?—And what countries lie in the eastern, and what in the western?

How is the land divided?

How the water?

Describe the different terms?

How is an artificial globe marked?

Name and describe the points, circles, &c.

What makes the difference of climate in various countries?