

R I V E R,

Is a current of fresh water, flowing in a **BED** or **CHANNEL**, from its source to the sea.

1. The term is appropriated to a *considerable* collection of waters, formed by the conflux of two or more **BROOKS**, which deliver into its channel the united streams of several **RIVULETS**, which have collected the supplies of many **RILLS** trickling down from numberless springs, and the torrents which carry off from the sloping grounds the surplus of every shower.

2. Rivers form one of the chief features of the surface of this globe, serving as voiders of all that is immediately redundant in our rains and springs, and also as boundaries and barriers, and even as highways, and in many countries, as plentiful storehouses. They also fertilize our soil by laying upon our warm fields the richest mould, brought from the high mountains, where it would have remained useless for want of genial heat.

3. Being such interesting objects of attention, every branch acquires a proper name, and the whole acquires a sort of personal identity, of which it is frequently difficult to find the principle; for the name of the great body of waters which discharges itself into the sea is traced backwards to one of the sources, while all the contributing streams are lost, although their waters form the chief part of the collection. And sometimes the feeder in which the name is preserved is smaller than others which are united to the current, and which, like a rich but ignoble alliance, lose their name in that of the more illustrious family. Some rivers indeed are respectable even at their birth, coming at