



Introduction

The general impression of Albert Einstein is perhaps that of a Super-scientist (which he was, of course!) whose mind was forever wandering about the universe, away from the mundane surroundings, trying to understand the laws which govern the universe. But one of the chief characteristics of any scientist are curiosity just about anything. We reproduce here an article by a 'down to earth' Einstein in which he discusses why rivers tend to erode mostly on one side, right or left depending on whether they are in the northern or southern hemisphere.

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The Cause of the Formation of Meanders in the Courses of Rivers and of the So-Called Baer's Law

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It is common knowledge that streams tend to curve in serpentine shapes instead of following the line of the maximum declivity of the ground. It is also well known to geographers that the rivers of the northern hemisphere tend to erode chiefly on the right side. The rivers of the southern hemisphere behave in the opposite manner (Baer's law). Many attempts have been made to explain this phenomenon, and I am not sure whether anything I say in the following pages will be new to the expert; some of my considerations are certainly known. Nevertheless, having found nobody who was thoroughly familiar with the causal relations involved, I think it is appropriate to give a short qualitative exposition of them.

First of all, it is clear that the erosion must be stronger the greater the velocity of the current where it touches the bank in question, or rather the more steeply it falls to zero at

