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The True Boundaries of the Continents

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Source: *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 6 (Jun., 1910), p. 728

Published by: geographicalj

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1777252>

Accessed: 31-05-2016 07:30 UTC

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through many editions. After his return to England Dr. Cheadle devoted himself to the medical profession, and, besides carrying on an extensive private practice, he held various appointments—at St. Mary's Hospital, the Royal College of Physicians, and elsewhere—and was one of the earliest champions of medical employment for women. In his younger days he won some distinction as an athlete.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The True Boundaries of the Continents.

I believe I may assume that all will agree that continents are purely physical entities, and that consequently the boundaries separating them are, and must needs be, physical, and as such entirely independent of politics, and therefore of political and administrative boundaries, as shown by the fact that, though Algeria is a part of the French dominions, it is not still a part of Europe any more than is South Africa through being an integral portion of the British Empire.

Such being the incontrovertible fact, it must needs terribly jar on a lover of geography to see any other boundary followed than the best physical line of demarcation which nature herself has set between the several continents, be that boundary ocean, river, lake, or mountain range. From this it follows that the boundary between Africa and Europe on the one hand, and Asia on the other, when they are treated of as three distinct continents, should be a line drawn through the Red sea, the deepest depression across the isthmus of Suez, the Mediterranean, the sea of Marmora, the Black sea, the Caucasus mountains, the Caspian sea, the Ural river, and the Ural mountains, as these are without question the nearest approach to a perfect continuous physical boundary which we find between these continents, and that the fact that Egypt owns as a *political* possession the Sinai region in Asia, and that Russia also is the *political* owner of lands south of the Caucasus, and has, for purely administrative purposes, formed provinces partly in Europe and partly in Asia—typical of her whole empire, which is partly European and partly Asiatic—can no more make the former African and the latter European than could the political arrangements mentioned at the opening of this paper make Algeria and South Africa parts of Europe. For, let me repeat, the continents are purely physical, and as such entirely independent of political divisions and ownerships.

There can be no comparison between one set of physical, and consequently immutable, inter-continental boundaries accepted by all and for all time, and the present artificial, arbitrary, and therefore ever-changing boundaries, which shift with every administrative rearrangement.

All present-day maps are not wrong, as very many cartographers even now give the true inter-continental boundaries.

E. FENNELL.