

he divined in the northern hemisphere, between Theria and the coasts of Thine.*

As we have already remarked, one hemisphere of the earth (whether we divide the sphere through the equator or through the meridian of Teneriffe) has a much greater expansion of elevated land than the opposite one: these two vast ocean-girt tracts of land, which we term the eastern and western, or the Old and New Continents, present, however, conjointly with the most striking contrasts of configuration and position of their axes, some similarities of form, especially with reference to the mutual relations of their opposite coasts. In the eastern continent, the predominating direction—the position of the major axis—inclines from east to west (or, more correctly speaking, from southwest to northeast), while in the western continent it inclines from south to north (or, rather, from south-southeast to north-northwest). Both terminate to the north at a parallel coinciding nearly with that of 70° , while they extend to the south in pyramidal points, having submarine prolongations of islands and shoals. Such, for instance, are the Archipelago of Tierra del Fuego, the Lagullas Bank south of the Cape of Good Hope, and Van Diemen's Land, separated from New Holland by Bass's Straits. Northern Asia extends to the above parallel at Cape Taimura, which, according to Krusenstern, is $78^{\circ} 16'$, while it falls below it from the mouth of the Great Tschukotschja River eastward to Behring's Straits, in the eastern extremity of Asia—Cook's East Cape—which, according to Beechey, is only $66^{\circ} 3'$.† The northern shore of the New Continent follows with tolerable exactness the parallel of 70° , since the lands to the north and south of Barrow's Strait, from Boothia Felix and Victoria Land, are merely detached islands.

The pyramidal configuration of all the southern extremities of continents belongs to the *similitudines physicæ in configuratione mundi*, to which Bacon already called attention in his *Novum Organon*, and with which Reinhold Foster, one of Cook's companions in his second voyage of circumnavigation, connected some ingenious considerations. On looking eastward from the meridian of Teneriffe, we perceive that the southern extremities of the three continents, viz., Africa as the extreme

* Strabo, lib. i., p. 65, Casaub. See Humboldt, *Examen Crit.*, t. i., p. 152.

† On the mean latitude of the Northern Asiatic shores, and the true name of Cape Taimura (Cape Siewero-Wostotschnoi), and Cape North-east (Schalagskoi Mys), see Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, t. iii., p. 35, 37.