

of the Old World, Australia, and South America, successively approach nearer toward the south pole. New Zealand, whose length extends fully 12° of latitude, forms an intermediate link between Australia and South America, likewise terminating in an island, New Leinster. It is also a remarkable circumstance that the greatest extension toward the south falls in the Old Continent, under the same meridian in which the extremest projection toward the north pole is manifested. This will be perceived on comparing the Cape of Good Hope and the Lagullas Bank with the North Cape of Europe, and the peninsula of Malacca with Cape Taimura in Siberia.* We know not whether the poles of the earth are surrounded by land or by a sea of ice. Toward the north pole the parallel of $82^{\circ} 55'$ has been reached, but toward the south pole only that of $78^{\circ} 10'$.

The pyramidal terminations of the great continents are variously repeated on a smaller scale, not only in the Indian Ocean, and in the peninsulas of Arabia, Hindostan, and Malacca, but also, as was remarked by Eratosthenes and Polybius, in the Mediterranean, where these writers had ingeniously compared together the forms of the Iberian, Italian, and Hellenic peninsulas.† Europe, whose area is five times smaller than that of Asia, may almost be regarded as a multifariously articulated western peninsula of the more compact mass of the continent of Asia, the climatic relations of the former being to those of the latter as the peninsula of Brittany is to the rest of France.‡ The influence exercised by the articulation and higher development of the form of a continent on the moral and intellectual condition of nations was remarked by Strabo,§ who extols

* Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, t. i., p. 198-200. The southern point of America, and the Archipelago which we call Terra del Fuego, lie in the meridian of the northwestern part of Baffin's Bay, and of the great polar land, whose limits have not as yet been ascertained, and which, perhaps, belongs to West Greenland.

† Strabo, lib. ii., p. 92, 108, Casaub.

‡ Humboldt, *Asie Centrale*, t. iii., p. 25. As early as the year 1817, in my work *De distributione Geographicâ Plantarum, secundum cæli temperiem, et altitudinem Montium*, I directed attention to the important influence of compact and of deeply-articulated continents on climate and human civilization, "Regiones vel per sinus lunatos in longa cornua porrectæ, angulosis littorum recessibus quasi membratim discerptæ, vel spatia patentia in immensum, quorum littora nullis incisa angulis ambit sine anfractu oceanus" (p. 81, 182). On the relations of the extent of coast to the area of a continent (considered in some degree as a measure of the accessibility of the interior), see the inquiries in Berghaus, *Annalen der Erdkunde*, bd. xii., 1835, s. 490, and *Physikal. Atlas*, 1839 No. iii, s. 69.

§ Strabo, lib. ii., p. 92, 198, Casaub.