

Azores, finally came to the New Continent, which, however, had already been reached by the Northmen at an earlier period and from a different direction.

While Alexander was opening the far East, the great Stagirite* was led, by a consideration of the form of the earth, to conceive the idea of the proximity of India to the Pillars of Hercules; while Strabo had even conjectured that there might be "*many other habitable tracts of land*† in the northern hemisphere, perhaps in the parallel which passes through those Pillars, the island of Rhodes and Thinaë, between the coasts of Western Europe and Eastern Asia." The hypothesis of the locality of such lands, in the prolongation of the major axis of the Mediterranean, was connected with a grand geographical view of Eratosthenes, current in antiquity, and in accordance with which the whole of the Old Continent, in its widest extension from west to east, and nearly in the thirty-sixth degree of latitude, was supposed to present an almost continuous line of elevation.‡

The expedition of Colæus of Samos does not, however, alone indicate an epoch in which the Hellenic races, and the nations to whom their cultivation was transmitted, developed new views that led to the extension of maritime expeditions, but it also immediately enlarged the sphere of ideas. The great natural phenomenon which, by the periodic elevation of the level of the sea, exhibits the connection existing between the earth, and the sun, and moon, now first permanently arrested the attention of men. In the African Syrtic Sea this phenomenon had appeared to the Greeks to be accidental, and had not unfrequently been attended by danger. Posidonius, who had observed the ebb and flow of the sea at Ilipa and

* Aristot., *De Cælo*, ii., 14 (p. 298, b., Bekk.); *Meteor.*, ii., 5 (p. 362, Bekk.). Compare my *Examen Critique*, t. i., p. 125-130. Seneca ventures to say (*Nat. Quæst.*, in præfat., 11), "Contemnet curiosus spectator domicilii (terræ) angustias. Quantum enim est quod ab ultimis littoribus Hispaniæ usque ad Indos jacet? Paucissimorum dierum spatium, si navem suus ventus implevit." (*Examen Critique*, t. i., p. 158.)

† Strabo, lib. i., p. 65 and 118, Casaub. (*Examen Critique*, t. i., p. 152.)

‡ In the Diaphragma of Dicæarchus, by which the earth is divided, the elevation passes through the Taurus, the chains of Demavend and Hindoo-Coosh, the Northern Thibetian Kuen-lun, and the mountains of the Chinese provinces Sse-tschuan and Kuang-si, which are perpetually covered with snow. See my orographical researches on these lines of elevation in my *Asie Centrale*, t. i., p. 104-114, 118-164; t. ii., p. 413 and 438.