

undefined height, a semicircular waggon-vault is turned, at the level of the springing of which lies the firmament, like a flat ceiling. All below this firmament is this world; the upper story is Heaven, or the world to come. In fact one of those enormous receptacles which carry the dresses of female travellers in our day forms a perfect model of the Cosmos of Cosmas.

In the middle of the rectangular surface of this world lies the inhabited earth encompassed by the Ocean. Beyond the Ocean, bordering the edges of creation, is the unvisited transoceanic land, on which, in the far east, lies Paradise. Here, too, on a barren and thorny soil, without the walls of Paradise, dwelt man from the fall to the deluge. The ark floated the survivors of the human family across the great ocean belt to this earth which we inhabit, and which, in comparison with that where Noah and his fathers dwelt, is itself almost a Paradise. The earth rises gradually from the south towards the north and west, culminating in a great conical mountain, behind which the sun sets.

Again and again this crochety monk sputters with indignation against those who reject these views of his, "not built," he says, "on his own opinions and conjectures, but drawn from Holy Scripture, and from the mouth of that divine man and great Master, Patricius." Those wretched people who chop logic, and hold that the earth and heavens are spherical, are mere blasphemers, given up for their sins to the belief of such impudent nonsense as the doctrine of Antipodes.<sup>1</sup> The sun, instead of being larger than the earth, is only of the diameter of two climates (18° of latitude) on the earth's surface.<sup>2</sup>

Altogether the book is a memorable example of that mischievous process of loading Christian truth with a dead-weight of false science, which has had so many followers. The book as a whole is what Robert Hall called some dreary commentary, "a continent of mud," but there are a few geographical fossils of considerable interest to be extracted from it. These have been dug out accordingly, and will be found in Note IX, at the end of this Essay.

22. It will be seen from one of these extracts that Cosmas had

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 125, 185, 191, etc., and the drawing in ridicule of the doctrine of Antipodes.

<sup>2</sup> P. 264.