

In one of the islands of Europe we live. Europe is the smallest of the continents, but it contains the greatest nations in the world—nations which hold in subjection the people of many distant lands. In this continent live the British, French, Russian, and other mighty nations you may have heard of.

Asia is joined to Europe and is the largest of the continents. It is the place where Adam and Eve lived, where Noah was saved in the flood, and where Abraham lived and died. On its right hand side is the oldest nation in the world, China, where we get tea; and on its left hand side lived the Jews in a small country, around their sacred city Jerusalem.

Africa, the continent next to Europe as you travel downwards, is very little known to us from the great heat of the sun there, and the great extent of it away from the reach of ships. In Africa live the Blacks, with the flat noses and thick lips, you sometimes see. Over a large part of it rain never falls. It is there covered with sand and can only be traversed by the camel. It is still so little known that several travellers have gone there from these countries to find out what sort of a place the middle of it is, and what sort of people inhabit it.

America was found out by the great Christopher Columbus nearly 400 years ago. It is the place where most people go who emigrate from Ireland. There are few people in this country who have not relatives there. America, for its size, has not many people. Good land may be had in many parts for almost nothing. America supplies Europe with many things: cotton, Indian corn, and other products.

Geographical Terms.—Continents are the largest divisions of land, and contain several countries. They are Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

Islands are lands surrounded by water; as Ireland, Newfoundland, Ceylon.

Peninsulas are lands almost surrounded by water; as the Mullet in Mayo, Denmark, South America.

Isthmuses are necks of land joining peninsulas to mainlands; as Corinth, Suez, Darien.

Capes are points of land, generally the ends of countries or islands, stretching into the sea; Mizen Head, Land's End, Cape of Good Hope.

Shore or Coast is land bordering on the sea, often waste sand and rocks.

Mountains are portions of land suddenly rising above the level country. If not much elevated they are called hills. Mountains are generally found together in ranges for many miles; as the Wicklow mountains, the Alps, the Andes. Volcanoes are mountains which throw out smoke, flames, and melted matter from the interior of the earth, through an opening at top.

Plains are portions of countries flat, or nearly so; as the Curragh of Kildare, the Steppes of Russia, the Prairies of America.

Valleys are lands lying between mountains or hills; as Glendalough in Wicklow.

Deserts are barren plains or wastes generally covered with sand; as the Sahara in Africa.

Oases are fertile spots in a desert; as Fezzan.

Prominent Facts.—Three fourths of the land on the surface of the earth are in the northern hemisphere, and one-fourth in the southern.

The great continents taper towards the south, and are wide on the north.

Three-fifths of the Old World consist of high table lands. The New World is for the most part covered by low-lying plains and valleys.

It may be said that the chains of mountains in the Old World extend from east to west, with short slope to south, and long slope to north. In the New World great chains run generally north and south, with short slope to west, and long to east.

Mountains are not so high in appearance as they are tabulated. Their height is given from the level of the sea, thereby including the elevated levels from which they in almost all cases rise.

Highest mountain in the world, Mount Everest, five miles high nearly.

Greatest depth of the ocean, about nine (?) miles.

WATER.

Oceans are the largest divisions of water; as the Pacific, Atlantic.

Seas are smaller than oceans but still large, and are more confined by land; as the Irish Sea, the Black Sea. (1)

Lakes are portions of water, generally fresh, entirely surrounded by land; as Lough Neagh, Lake Superior. Some lakes are salt and generally take the name of sea.

Straits are narrow passages of water which join other bodies of water together; as the Straits of Dover, connecting the German Ocean with the British Channel.

If a strait is wide it is called a channel.

Rivers are waters flowing over the land, and forming its natural drainage; as the Shannon, the Liffey.

Where a river begins is called its *source*; where it ends its *mouth*; its *course* is its entire length. A river flowing into another is called a *tributary*; where they meet their *confluence*; the *channel*, the hollow formed in the earth by the rush of its waters.

Basin, extent of country drained by a river.

Watershed high land or ridge separating two basins.

Interesting Facts.—The terms *ocean* and *sea* are used in reference to the whole body of water on the earth's surface. The bed of the ocean consists of mountains, valleys, and vast plains. In many places it is so deep it cannot be sounded.

The Pacific (*peaceful*) is the largest ocean. It is 9,000 miles long, and 12,000 miles wide.

The Atlantic (Mount *Atlas*) is the same length as the Pacific, but only one-third of its width.

The Indian Ocean lies about *India*. It is 6,000 miles each way.

The Arctic is said to extend to the North Pole, and the Antarctic to the South Pole. Not much is known of their dimensions.

(The pupil is directed to the observation of the river, hill, or mountain, lake, or valley, in his locality, in the manner laid down in the introduction.)

ARTIFICIAL DIVISIONS.—(This lesson may be omitted at present.)

The Equator is a circle round the middle of the earth, half way between the poles. All places on the world are north of this circle, south of it, or on it. Latitude a distance north or south from the Equator. There are 90° from the Equator to the poles. No place can have more than 90° of latitude. A degree is 69 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles.

Meridians are lines drawn through any place from pole to pole, (meridian is a word meaning mid-day). The meridian of any place intersecting the line showing its latitude marks the position of that place.

One meridian must be fixed on, to measure from. That chosen by us is the meridian of London (Greenwich). (2)

As the earth turns round towards the east, places in that direction have the sun over their heads sooner than we: that is, they have sunrise and mid-day earlier. 15 degrees of longitude make a difference of one hour in time. In our latitude ten miles make a difference of one minute.

The sun is overhead to all countries of the world as far as 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ degrees north, and to the same distance south, from the equator. Circles through these points are called tropics, (Cancer north, Capricorn south); and circles at same distance from the poles are called polar circles. These are the four great circles of latitude.

(1) A cluster of islands in a sea or ocean, is often called an archipelago.

(2) An idea of longitude may be obtained from an umbrella when opened out: the widest part of the umbrella representing the middle of the earth, or the place of the Equator, the ribs the lines of longitude.