

between the publication of the "Crania Americana" and his death,—are thus defined: "The Indian skull is of a decidedly rounded form. The occipital portion is flattened in the upward direction, and the transverse diameter, as measured between the parietal bones, is remarkably wide, and *often exceeds the longitudinal line.*"

It is curious to observe in this latter statement the evidence of a careful and most conscientious observer allowing all the proofs of varying physical type which his own indefatigable industry had accumulated, to be subordinated to this foregone conclusion. Here Dr. Morton must have had in view his theoretical type, rather than the results of his own careful observations, for even if he accepted as evidence the artificially abbreviated and flattened skulls, his "Crania Americana" furnishes only one exceptional example, from a mound on the Alabama river (Pl. LIV), of which he says: "It is flattened on the occiput and os frontis in such a manner as to give the whole head a sugar-loaf or conical form, whence also its great lateral diameter and its narrowness from back to front." The idea had, in fact, received nearly universal acceptance that the European immigrants of the fifteenth and subsequent centuries intruded upon races of wholly distinct origin from themselves, and were displacing the true American autocthonous, with whom they had nothing in common.

When Prior Fernando de Talavera of Salamanca summoned a meeting in the Convent of San Estebán, in the year 1487, to take into consideration the proposition of Columbus that the earth was not a plane, but a sphere; and that, by sailing in a western course, land, which he assumed must be the most eastern coast of Asia, would be reached: the assembled philosophers and theologians gravely pronounced the idea of the earth's spherical form heterodox, and a belief in antipodes incompatible with the historical traditions of our faith; since to assert that there were inhabited lands on the opposite side of the globe, would be to maintain that there were nations not descended from Adam, it being impossible for them to have passed the intervening ocean!

We smile at the orthodox philosophers and theologians of the fifteenth century, who, with the help of St. Jerome and St. Augustine, proved this western hemisphere of ours to be an impossibility; yet it is curious to detect the same old prejudices unconsciously influencing the minds of some of the acutest men of science in very recent years. What else was it, if not this "im-