

Caledonia, and New Zealand make it highly probable that they mark the original outline of this great land, so that the ancient southerly point between Van Diemen's Land and New Zealand lay in about 50° south latitude and between 170 and 180° east longitude, from Ferro. The proportion of breadth would indeed thus be greater than in South America and Africa, but the similarity of the south-western indentation obviously stronger.

Another striking correspondence which attracts the attention is that three similar lands are linked at one of their northern angles by an isthmus to the northern masses. Thus there originate three divisions of all the land of the earth. But America presents the purest type of the structure. Like America, each of these divisions consists of a southern and a northern half, connected by an isthmus. At the point where the two halves diverge we find an archipelago lying before the isthmus, and beyond it a southwardly stretching peninsula. We will consider each of these physically separated divisions of the earth, marked as they are by striking relations between their northern and southern halves.

America is the most divided and the longest mass. Its isthmus is long, small and connected throughout. Yet the land is low in the isthmus of Panama, having, according to Humboldt, in places an elevation of scarcely 650 feet. The lofty and gigantic mountains which predominate in South America, become continually lower toward the isthmus, and first attain an important height again when the isthmus widens in Mexico. The isthmus of this division occupies a middle position among them all, since it begins in 8° N. Lat. and ends in 18° N. Lat., that is if we consider it as terminating near Vera Cruz, where the land begins to widen. The easterly archipelago before the isthmus is large, the peninsula beyond it (California) insignificant. Both halves of this continent maintain an equilibrium, neither part has any preponderance of mass. Among the three naturally separated continents America is the one which extends farthest north and south, for reckoning in, as we may, Terra del Fuego, its southern point reaches 56° 27' S. Lat.

In the two remaining continents the northern halves are united. The one reaches with its northern half, its isthmus, archipelago, southern half and peninsula beyond the isthmus toward the west, the other toward the east. We will consider each of these masses separately.

The northern half of the western continent consists of Europe and a part of Asia. It has been taken for granted that the Ural mountains are the natural boundary between Europe and Asia. According to Herman, this chain extends from nearly 75° N. Lat. (for he considers Nova Zembla as a continuation of the Ural) to the high ridge between the Caspian Sea and the Ural. For the purposes of our present sketch we must trace an unbroken connection of this chain with the Caucasus through the Caspian Sea. This is joined by the Armenian and Georgian mountains to the mountains of Asia Minor and Syria, and thereby forms a transition to the isthmus of this continent at Suez. This isthmus is the shortest and most contracted of all, the land here also is low. It is the most northerly isthmus, being in 30° N. Lat. The westerly archipelago before the isthmus is of but little importance, the easterly peninsula beyond the isthmus (Arabia) is large. It is characteristic of this division that its extension both north and south is the most limited. For, excepting that continuation of the Ural mountains through Nova Zembla which, lying as it does, on the boundary, may with equal right be assigned to the northern half of the third continent, North Cape is the most northern point, and this does not reach 72° N. Latitude, while Northern Siberia approximates throughout to 75° N. Lat., and in the promontory of Taimura and the eastern part of Nova Zembla reaches 78° N. Lat. So, also, among the three points of the southern lands the Cape of Good Hope is admittedly that which extends the least to the south, for Cape Agulhas (the southern-most point of Africa) is only in 34° 45' S. Lat. The chief distinction of this division, striking the eye at first glance, is the preponderance of the southern half, which exceeds the northern about threefold.

Finally, the similarity of the third division to the form of America is indeed very obvious. The northern half is formed by Asia, the southern by New Holland. The isthmus is very distinct, and its similarity with the American has also been remarked by Lamarck, indeed it could escape no one. It is formed by Malacca, Sumatra, Java, Sumbawa, Flores Timor and New Guinea. It is the longest of all and, unlike any of the others, fragmentary. It is also the most southerly, for it begins in about 16° N. Lat. and ends in 10° S. Lat. The archipelago before the isthmus is very considerable, and also the peninsula beyond the isthmus (Hindustan). The whole division does not, indeed, extend so far north and south as America, but exceeds Europe-Africa in this respect. We have already shown this relation for the northern half, and the southern most point of the division (Van Diemen's Land) extends beyond 42° S. Lat. Among the three extremities of the great south lands, South America approaches nearest to the South Pole, Africa the least, and New Holland holds the mean. So, also, among the northern lands, North America (including its islands), extends farthest toward the North Pole, Europe the least, and Asia holds the mean. A fact obvious to all is the determinate, strong preponderance of mass in the northern halves, as compared with the south. The three continents, also, are specially distinguished by the equality of mass in the north and south halves in the first (America), the excess of mass in the south half in the second (Europe-Africa), and of the northern half in the third (Asia-Australia). The American isthmus, like the two halves of the continent, holds the mean between the isthmuses of the remaining divisions both in length and position. The isthmus of the second division is the most contracted and most northerly, that of the third division the most extended, most broken, most southerly. Through this position of the isthmuses and the archipelagos which constantly accompany them. There originates a remarkable zone, intersected by the equator, whose greatest curve lies in the northern hemisphere and reaches 40° of latitude. In the southern hemisphere it extends only over 20° of latitude, if we include the islands of the South Sea, which may be viewed as a continuation of the archipelago of the third continent. In this zone we find nothing but isthmuses, seas and islands.—*Michigan Teacher.*

#### A Model Composition.

The funny man of the Cincinnati *Times* has perpetrated the following school-boy essay on "Winter:"

Winter is the coldest season of the year, because it comes in winter, mostly. In some countries, winter comes in the summer, and then it is very pleasant. I wish winter came in the summer in this country. Then we could go skating barefoot, and slide down hill in linen trousers. We could snowball without getting our fingers cold, and men who go out sleigh-riding wouldn't have to stop at every tavern and warm, as they do now. It snows more in the winter than it does at any other season of the year. This is because so many cutters and sleighs are made then.

Ice grows much better in winter than in summer, which was an inconvenience before the discovery of ice houses. Water that is left out of doors is apt to freeze at this season. Some folks take in their wells and cisterns on a cold night and keep them by the fire so they don't freeze.

Skating is great fun in the winter. The boys get their skates on when the river is froze over, and race, play tag, break through the ice and get wet all over (they get drowned sometimes and are brought home all dripping, which makes their mothers scold, getting water all over the carpet in the front room,) fall and break their heads, and enjoy themselves in many other ways. A wicked boy once stole my skates and ran away with them and I couldn't catch him. Mother said: "Never mind, punishment will catch him."

There ain't much sleigh-riding except in winter. Folks don't seem to care about it in warm weather. Grown-up boys and girls like to go sleigh-riding. The boys generally drive with one hand and help the girls hold their muffs with the other. Brother Bob