

sition the author attempts to prove from some ancient maps preserved in the library of St. Mark, which appear from repeated inscriptions to have been drawn by Andrea Bianco of Venice, in the year 1436. In these maps many islands are inserted to the west of Europe and Africa, as the Azores, (which seem properly to belong to Europe, the nearest continent,) the Madeira islands, the Canaries, &c.; while at a greater distance, but at no great interval, is placed *Isola de Antillia*, of considerable extent, but, by a comparative scale, not above 150 miles in length by 50 in breadth. Further to the N. W. is another fabulous island called Delaman Satanaxio, or Satan's-own-hand, an appellation which rivals any since conferred by navigators. This island of Antillia, by its coincidence with the French name Antilles, given to part of the West Indies, has completely embarrassed and misled Formaleoni, who confesses that he cannot conceive whence the term was derived.

A short explanation may serve entirely to obliterate this wonderful discovery. As human follies are generally similar, a recollection of what happened forty years ago, when many philosophers asserted the indispensable existence of a great southern continent, in order to balance Europe and Asia, will serve to illustrate the present subject. The mathematicians and philosophers of the middle ages, in like manner, imagined that some lands were necessary on the opposite part of the globe, to balance the known continents. As these lands were to them wholly imaginary, they were laid down at random; and the very map of Bianco, which gives a kind of oblong square form, of a regularity unknown to nature, is a proof that the whole is ideal. These imaginary lands were, in the middle ages, called *Ante-Insulæ*, or *Antinsulæ*, whence the French Antilles* simply implying *islands opposite to the known continents*; the extent of which latter was, at that period, considered as about a third part of their real size. Hence the reader will immediately per-

* The French alone have retained the old imaginary name, and applied it to the Caribbee Islands: but the Spaniards appear to have led the way in this absurd appellation, and it is a wonder that they did not retain Satan's-own-hand.

The name of *Antinsulæ* was perhaps originally substituted for that of *Antipodes*, which had been branded by a special papal anathema. From the life of Colon, by his son, it would seem that *Antilla* was originally a Portuguese idea.