

plenty; and, by opening the earth, so great a number of shells are found as to leave no doubt that this great extent may be regarded as a place which formerly was part of the sea.

The inhabitants of Malabar pretend that formerly the Maldivian islands were attached to the Indian continent, and that the violence of the sea has divided them from it. The number of these islands is so great, and some of the channels, which separate them, are so narrow, that the boltsprits of vessels which pass them tear off the leaves of the trees on each side, and in some places an active man, by holding by the branch of a tree, may leap into another island.*

The cocoa-trees, which are at the bottom of the sea, is a proof that the Maldivians were formerly part of the continent: cocoa-nuts are often detached from them and thrown on the shore by a storm.

It is imagined that the island of Ceylon was formerly united to the continent, and that the currents, which are extremely rapid in many parts of India, have divided that as well as Rammanakoil, and many other islands.† However,

* See the Dutch Travels to the East-Indies, page 274.

† See the Dutch Travels to the East-Indies, vol. II. p. 485.