

many thousand miles deep in the inner rings, shallow so greatly, that in the outer rings their depth is only an inch ; while the continents, from being forty thousand miles high, sink into mere plains, almost on the level of the surrounding ocean. Such is the geography to which this religion pledges itself. Its astronomy, on the other hand, is not quite so bad as that to which Father Cullen has affixed his imprimatur, seeing that, though it gives the same sort of diurnal journey to the sun, it confers upon it a diameter, not of only six feet, but of four hundred miles. Nor is its geology a great deal worse than that of many Christians. It makes the earth consist, reckoning from its foundations upwards, of a layer of wind, a layer of water, a layer of a substance resembling honey, a layer of rock, and a layer of soil. Such is a small portion of the natural science of Buddhism : the minute details of its monstrous cosmogony, with its descriptions of fabulous oceans, inhabited by fishes thousands of miles in length, and of wonderful forests abounding in trees four hundred miles high, and haunted by singing lions that leap two miles at a bound, occupy many chapters of the sacred volumes. Every form of faith has its heretics ; and there are, it would seem, heretics among even the Buddhists, who, instead of adopting the nonsense of the priests in this physical department, originate a nonsense equally great of their own. The error of concluding that the worlds of the universe are finite in number, say the sacred books, is the heresy *antawada* ; the error of concluding that the world itself is infinite is the heresy *anantawada* ; the error of concluding that the world is finite vertically but infinite horizontally is the heresy *anantanantawada* ; and the error of concluding the world to be neither finite nor infinite is the heresy *nawantanantawada*. A name equally formidable would be, of course, found for the students of modern astronomy and the other kindred sciences, among the professed believers in