

length); *a*, the southern mountains; *b*, the southern plateau; *c*, Lake Tehad depression; *d*, Sahara plateau; *e*, oases depression; *f*, mountains on the Mediterranean, of which there are two or three parallel ranges.

Africa has, therefore, a basin-like form, but is a double basin; and its highest mountains are on the side of the largest ocean, the Indian. The height of the mountains adjoining the Mediterranean is the only exception to the relation to the oceans.

(4) **Australia.** — Australia conforms also to the continental model. The highest mountains are on the side of the Pacific,—the larger of its border-oceans. Mountain ranges extend along the whole eastern border from Portland in Victoria to Cape York in the extreme north. The Australian Alps, in New South Wales, facing the southeast shores, have peaks 5000 to 6500 feet in height. The Blue Mountains next to the north are 3000 to 4000 feet high, with some more elevated summits. On the side of the Indian Ocean the heights are 1500 to 2000 feet. The interior is an arid region, the center more than 600 feet above the sea.

The continents thus exemplify the law laid down, and not merely as to high borders around a depressed interior,—a principle stated by many geographers,—but also as to the highest border being on the side of the greatest ocean.<sup>1</sup>

This difference between the interior and the border regions runs parallel with another of geological nature: the border region in its older rocks, if not the newer, is a region usually of upturned beds, and the interior, for the most part, of nearly horizontal beds. The interior basin has this feature in North America, in South America, and over eastern Europe in the great plains of Turkey and Russia.

It is owing to this law that America and Europe literally stand facing one another, and pouring their waters and the treasures of the soil into a common channel, the Atlantic. America has her loftier mountains, not on the east, as a barrier to intercourse with Europe, but off in the remote west, on the broad Pacific, where they stand open to the moist easterly winds as well as those of the west, to gather rains and snows, and make rivers and alluvial plains for the continent; and the waters of all the great streams, lakes, and seas make their way eastward to the narrow ocean that divides the civilized world. Europe has her slopes, rivers, and great seas opening into the same ocean; and even central Asia has her most natural outlet westward to the Atlantic. Thus, under this simple law, the civilized world is brought within one great country, the center of which is the Atlantic, uniting the land by a convenient ferriage, and the sides the slopes of the Rocky Mountains and Andes on the *west*, and the remote mountains of Mongolia, India, and Abyssinia on the *east*.<sup>2</sup>

This subject affords an answer to the inquiry, What is a continent as

<sup>1</sup> First announced *American Jour. Sci.*, II., vols. iii. 398, iv. 92, 1847, and xxii. 335, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> See Guyot's *Earth and Man*.