

these eruptions, and that the sea has forsaken different lands is, that but few islands are to be met with in the great seas, and never a great number of islands close to each other; that in the immense space occupied by the Pacific sea, not above two or three small islands are to be found towards the middle of it; that in the vast Atlantic ocean, between Africa and the Brazils, we only find the small islands of St. Helena and Ascension; but that all islands are near the great continents, as those of the Archipelago, near the continents of Europe and Asia, the Canaries, near Africa, all the islands of the Indian sea, near the eastern coast of Asia; the Antille islands, close to that of America, and that only the Azores lie at any great distance in the sea between Europe and America.

The inhabitants of Ceylon say, that their island was separated from the peninsula of India by an eruption of the ocean; and this popular tradition is very probable. It is also imagined the island of Sumatra has been separated from the continent, and the great number of shoals and sand banks are a strong proof of it. The Malabars assert, that the Maldivian islands formed a part of the continent of India, and in general it may be reasonably supposed that all the eastern