

convenient distance in space, and scrutinizing its features as it rolls before him, we may suppose him to be struck with the fact that eleven-sixteenths of its surface are covered with water, and that the land is so unequally distributed that from one point of view he would see a hemisphere almost exclusively oceanic, while nearly the whole of the dry land is gathered in the opposite hemisphere. He might observe that large portions of the great oceanic areas of the Pacific and Antarctic Oceans are dotted with islands—like a shallow pool with stones rising above its surface—as if the general depth were small in comparison with the area. Other portions of these oceans he might infer, from the colour of the water and the absence of islands, cover deep depressions in the earth's surface. He might also notice that a mass or belt of land surrounds each pole, and that the northern ring sends off to the southward three vast tongues of land and of mountain chains, terminating respectively in South America, South Africa, and Australia, towards which feebler and insular processes are given off by the antarctic continental mass. This, as some geographers have observed,<sup>1</sup> gives a rudely three-ribbed aspect to the earth, though two of the ribs are crowded together, and form the Eurasian mass or double continent, while the third is isolated in the single continent of America. He might also observe that the northern girdle is cut across, so that the Atlantic opens by a wide space into the Arctic Sea, while the Pacific is contracted toward the north, but confluent with the Antarctic Ocean. The Atlantic is also relatively deeper and less cumbered with islands than the Pacific, which has the highest ridges near its shores, constituting what some visitors to the Pacific coast of America have not inaptly called the "back of the world," while the wider slopes face the narrower ocean. The Pacific and Atlantic, though both depressions or flat-

<sup>1</sup> Dana, "Manual of Geology," introductory part. Green, "Vestiges of a Molten Globe," has summed up these facts.