Many Opinions on the Earth's Form.

Scientists Engaged in Destroying Long Accepted Theory of Shape.

Scientists are still at work formulating theories to overthrow preconceived notions of the shape of the earth's crust. In early ages one system of credence followed closely upon the heels of another. Belief in Atlas was succeeded by the tortoise-elephant theory, to be in turn merged in the egg system, or the world poised on the summits of a row of Corinthian columns.

The present belief in an oblate spheroid as the shape of the world that Wordsworth declares is too much with us is now rudely disturbed by two venturesome scientists arising in the might of their novel theoretical investigations. One of the new iconoclasts is Dr. J. W. Gregory, of the Royal Geographical society in London, who declares the earth to be a tetrahedroid instead of the oblate spheroid of the commonly accepted belief.

In the midst of the alarum of the Gregory theory, another note of defiance emanates from the pen of Prof. Elias Colbert, of the Chicago Astronomical society, who declares with the English scientist that the accepted form of the earth is not positively accurate. In a weighty magazine article Prof. Colbert expresses his views on the subject of the errors that have crept into the conclusions made by astronomers owing to the deviation of the plumb line, caused by the proximity of the Himalaya mountains, a deviation which would alter the angles, thus causing the lengthening of the equatorial measurement, resulting in exaggerating the oblateness of the spheroid form of the earth. The notion of a sea "level" does not form a part of Prof. Colbert's theory. He says:

PROF. COLBERT'S CONTENTION.

"The sea level could not be accurately spheroidal, even if it were undistrubed by storms in the earth's atmosphere or by tidal waves due to solar and lunar attraction. As the mountain mass attracts toward itself a plumb line that is suspended near it so must the different land masses attract the water in their vicinity; the result being a heaping up of the water near the shores with a corresponding flattening from the spheroidal shape in the middle part of the ocean basin. * * * Furthermore, nearly the whole of this land excess is situated on a hemispherical surface, the middle point of which is in the British Isles, the great Pacific ocean being on the other side of the spheroid.

"It would be a waste of energy to try to fix precisely upon the measure of disturbance due to this fact. * * * Hence we must content ourselves with rough approximations. The whole mass of the earth may be taken as about 5,000 times that of the water, and the weight of the land which lies above the ocean bed is fully one-quarter more than that of the water. Making allowance for the fact that a small portion of land surface is situated in what may be called the aqueous hemisphere, we may say that the land hemisphere contains a preponderance of not far from one part in 25,000 of the whole weight of the spheroid which is supposed to be bounded by the sea level as ordinarily understood. Hence, the axis of that imaginary spheroid cannot be the axis of actual rotation, because it is necessary to equilibrium that the sums of the momentum shall be equal for the two hemispheres that are separated by any and every plane that may pass through the axis of actual rotation.

TWO LINES OF DISTURBANCE.

"It appears to be probable that these facts will have to be taken account of if we are ever to effect a reconcilation of the now outstanding discrepancies between measures of arcs of the meridian and ratios of pendulum lengths to times of vibration; also that these discrepancies are not to be explained by reference to any system of three axes at right angles with each other, such as have been tentatively deduced by Gen. Clarke and Gen. Schubert. It may be suggested that we shall have to recognize the existence of at least two principal lines of positive disturbance, the first of which runs from the southern extremity of Lower Guinea to the Ural mountains, and the second from the southern extremity of Brazil to Melville sound, each forming a rather large angle with the meridian."

Although Dr. Gregory's idea of the earth's surface is a tetrahedral form, Prof. Colbert does not altogether incline to that form of belief. His idea is that the sea is flatter in the center to at least a degree than near the land, and that the waters are inclined to pile up on each side of two lines, one drawn from the southern extremity of Brazil to Melville sound and the other passing through the Congo Free State, Arabia and the Ural mountains.

Scientists at the different universities were not generally acquainted with the results of the two recent theories of Gregory and Colbert. Prof. Henry Crew, of the chair of physics in Northwestern university, referring to the printed reports of the Colbert and Gregory theories, said: "The earth's form is pretty well known at this time from measurements of the arcs of the meridian and from the swinging of pendulums in different latitudes. It is unquestionably an oblate spheroid, taking such form in its plastic condition by rotation. Of course there are small irregularities of surface, slight variations which are called local disturbances, resulting from mountains and bodies of water. It is a well known fact that water will heap up near the shore and be depressed in the center. It loses its spherical surface and the center is not part of the same sphere is the water near the shore. The form of the earth is an imaginary thing anyway, but it is pretty clearly demonstrated that it is an oblate spheroid."

Prof. G. W. Hough, the astronomer who watches the heavens through the circular dome of the Dearborn observatory on the north edge of the campus at Northwestern, had little faith in the new theories concerning the form of the earth's crust. "All planets of the solar system are oblate spheroids which rotate with great rapidity, Jupiter being one-fifteenth oblate and the earth one-three hundredth oblate, being therefore much flattened at the end the slight irregularities formed poles. As far as the earth is concern- through mountain changes and other excrescences and depressions are due to causes in the earth itself in its process of solidification. The shape of the earth follows the regular laws. As far as is known there is no abrupt change from one section of the earth to the other as would be necessary if the earth's form were a tetrahedroid or any pyramidal figure. Such an abrupt change from one plane to another would be absurd as far as oblateness goes. In such a pyramidal figure abrupt changes in latitude would be in proximity, which have never been noticed to exist anywhere."

Out in the lovely Gothic settlement of the University of Chicago little attention was paid to the Gregory or Colbert theories. Prof. Chamberlin, the geology scientist who presides over Walker museum, was ill, and Prof. Hale, the astronomer, was out at Williams' bay, occupied with the mammoth lenses of the Yerkes telescope. Prof. Michelson, of the physical laboratory, knew nothing of either of the advertised scientists and was therefore "very sceptical about the new theories."

Bygone days were full of theories concerning the earth's crust, a subject of profound interest to early scientists and philosophers. As early as 48 B. C. Aristotle, with no facts, but only logic to rely upon, believed that the earth was evidently in repose, not only because man saw it so, but because repose is natural to the earth. He taught that the earth was at rest in the center of a moving sphere of stars. He also thought it spherical in form, but was puzzled by the uncertainty of how it could remain in one place without foundation. Each of the early patriotic races thought its land and people the best in the world and consequently located themselves in the center of the universe. The Hindoos and Scandinavians both call themselves "the central habitation," while with the Greeks Olympus was the center, the Egyptians acknowledging Thebes only, the Assyrians Babylon, the Hebrews Jerusalem and the Chinese, not behindhand, called themselves "the central empire."

SOME EARLY IDEAS.

One of the early theories taught was that the earth was a vast plain or island, surrounded on all sides by an inaccessible and interminable ocean, while at the extremities and around the borders were placed "the fortunate isles," the abode of giants, fairies and pygmies. When navigators first began to venture out beyond the ocean the idea of a circular horizon made them believe that the ocean was bounded in place and the whole world contained in a circle beneath which roots reached down without ever finding an end.

The Veda priests preached that the earth was supported on twelve columns, sustained by the people's sacrifices to the gods, which if suspended would cause the pillars to collapse. The Hindoos believed the world hemispherical and that it was balanced like a capsized boat on the heads of four elephants, supported in turn on the back of a tortoise. Some believed that the tortoise rested on nothing, but the Hindoos say that it floated on the surface of the universal ocean. They also believed that the animals were symbolical, the four elephants meaning the four directions of the compass and the tortoise representing eternity. Anaximander, in the sixth century before Christ, taught that the earth was a cylinder, with the upper part alone inhabited. He believed it floated freely in the celestial vault, and his belief was concurred in by Leucippus, Democritus, Heraclitus and Anaxagoras.

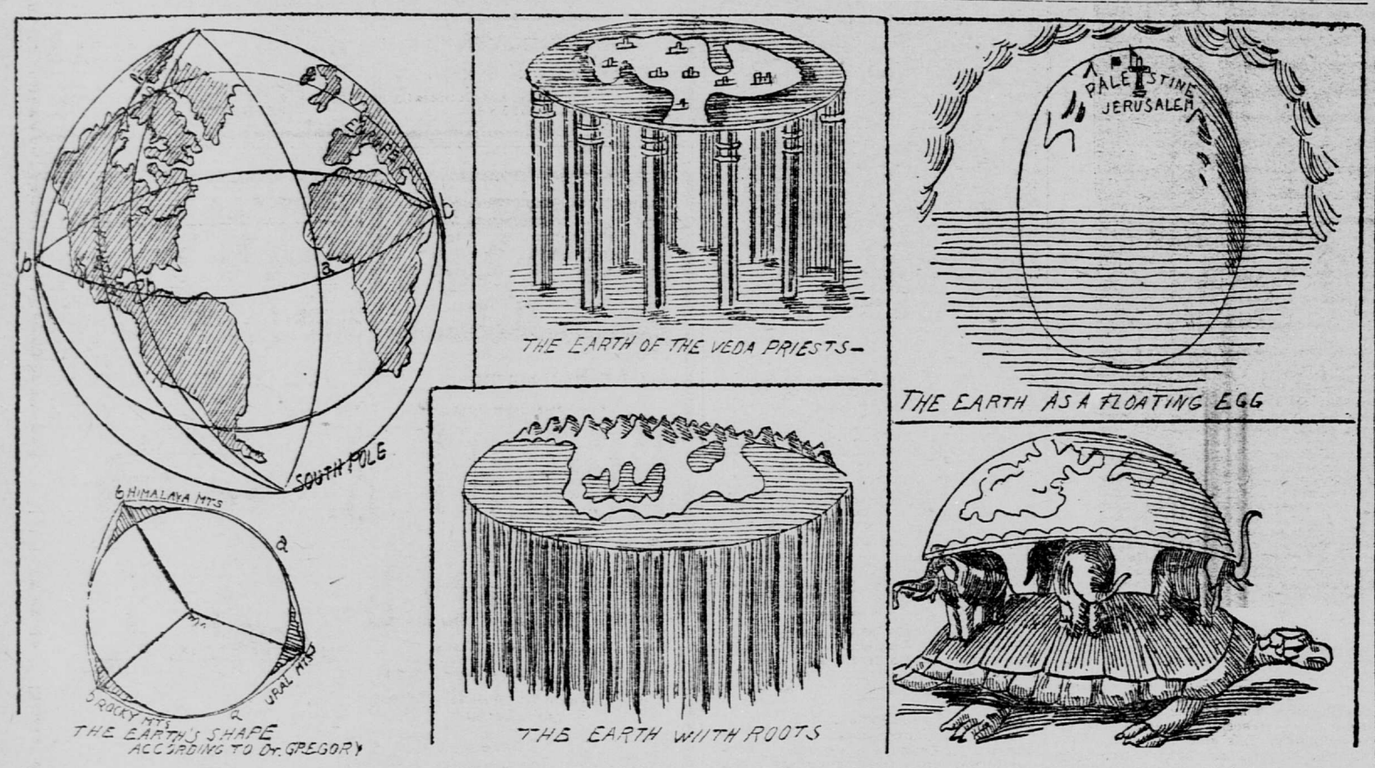
Plato taught that matter in the beginning was devoid of form, but God invested it with a kind of triangular constitution. The question of the earth's support was always of great interest to scientists. The early Greenlanders thought it was upheld by a row of pillars so devastated by time as to be cracked in many places and only kept from crumbling finally by the incantations of magicians. Flammarion says: "An ancient Egyptian papyrus in the library of Paris gives a very curious hieroglyphical representation of the universe. The earth is here imagined under the form of a reclining figure and is covered with leaves. Heaven is personified by a goddess, who forms the vault by her star-bespangled body, which is elongated in a very peculiar manner. Two boats, carrying each the rising and setting suns, are moving along the heavens over the body of the goddess. In the center of the picture is the god Maon, a divine intelligence, who presides over the equilibrium of the universe."

In the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries of the Christian era little progress was made in theory. In 535 Cosmas, after a voyage to India, wrote his "Christian Topography," an attempt to explain the universe according to his erroneous conception of Scripture. He taught that the world took the form of a parallelogram, the long sides twice the extent of the shorter ones, so that man lived on it like a bird in a cage. The earth took the form of the tabernacle constructed by the Israelites in the desert to hold the commandments given to Moses. The box was divided into three parts—a habitable section in the middle, the second section devoted to the ocean, which surrounded the first part on all sides, and a third, another dry land, encircling all, on which the firmanent rested. The stars were impelled by angels, and "each angel that pushes a star takes great care to observe what the others are doing, so that the relative distances between the stars may always remain what they ought to be.

Venerable Bede, in the eighth century, taught that the world was fashioned in the form of an egg, the yolk being the earth element, the water the white substance encircling the yolk, the air like the membrane of an egg, and the shell being fire which encloses everything. Later an Arabian geographist, Edrisi, conceived the necessity of supporting the egg matter in space, and he taught that the upper half only was inhabited and that the lower was immersed in water.

In later years Leibnitz conceived the theory that the earth was an extinguished sun on the surface of water, and as it gradually cooled its vapors were condensed water. Buffon's doctrine was very similar, only he believed that the earth and the other planets were fragments of the sun splintered from its surface by the concussions of a comet. Kepler taught that the earth was a living animal sustained by the regular circulation of its internal fluids and winging its way through heaven by its own vital energy. One of the most engaging of the old myths was the story of Atlas supporting the world on his shoulders. Some say he was the brother of Prometheus and Epimetheus, and others represent him as the owner of the Hesperides, whom Perseus armed with Medusa's head, turned into a rocky mountain for his inhospitality. Homer makes him the father of Calypso, the siren who proved so disastrous to wandering Ulysses.

It was the navigators whose discoveries led to the present theory of the earth's form being a flattened sphere, the obleate spheroid, which Prof. Crew believes it still unquestionably the correct theory, in spite of the later developments of Dr. Gregory and Prof. Colbert.



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Your Nose Betrays You.

Dr. H. S. Drayton, the Famous Physiognomist, Says the Nose Changes in Accordance With the Individual's Life, Character and Profession.

NEW YORK, Feb. 9.—A man's character is as plain as the nose on his face. This is true, because the nose tells just what his character is. If his character changes, so does his nose. In fact, Dr. H. S. Drayton, famous as a student of human nature, says that just as the face is the index of the brain, so is the nose the index of the real individual. It is nature's method of telling what sort of a person you are.

The knowledge that a human nose is never the same two years in succession is a fact that is realized by few. Almost every one has the idea that the relative proportion of the nose to the other features is maintained from the beginning to the end of the span of life. And now we find that this is not so at all. Work changes the hand in appearance, and life changes the nose. We may do what we like to conceal our real likes and dislikes, the ways of getting money and methods of living, but the general course pursued will be shown by the nose. It is as relentless as the hand of fate, and there is no escape from it.

Dr. Drayton told me that any one who cared to study physiognomy would see for himself that the nose is the only reliable index of what humanity really is, which the face furnishes, and he said this was so because it was a physiological fact. Nature has her own way of telling an individual's life story, or perhaps it would be better to say writing it. The nerves and the muscles are her means of indication. They are what make those fine lines on one person's face, the curious expression about the mouth of another, the deep creases running down from beside the nose to and beyond the corner of the mouth. All of these are facts that cannot be explained away, and each has its indication. In a measure they make your face your fortune, but if you are after the truth complete, perfect, look at the nose.

"In looking at the face for signs of character," said Dr. Drayton, "bear this fact in mind: The nerves utilize the muscles and through the action of the muscles the life of the individual is imprinted in various ways on the features. While the general facial formation furnishes a key to natural characteristics, it is in the development of the features, in the appearance of the face itself as a whole, that is found the basis for the impression of like or dislike, admiration or distrust, which we receive on taking a good look at a stranger.

"You take the man with high cheek bones, with what you might call a bony formation of the face, meaning a prominence of bone. It is safe to say that that man was intended by nature to lead. He is very likely to form his own opinions and not look to others to aid him in framing them. The chances are that he is a forceful, energetic and thoughtful man. When you see a man with what are called strongly marked features, you can also be pretty sure that he does his own thinking. But if you want an index of his real character, look at his nose.

"I think the form of nose with which most of us are familiar, though a great many persons don't realize they are, is the business nose. It is apt to be short, rather flat and broad. It evidences firmness of character, decision, and executive ability, although the latter cannot always be counted as certain. And I say that, no matter what sort of nose a man begins life with, if he becomes a business man, his nose will develop along that line. For instance, he might have begun with a nose inclined to turn up at the end and rather thin withal, perhaps with a tendency to length. As his years advance, the nose will broaden at the tip, the retrousse appearance will disappear, in other words, he will have the business nose.

"There is no nose that better illustrates the transformation caused by business than what is called the Roman nose. The nose of the Hebrew is a very good example of this. Originally inclined to hook and to be rather long, it straightens out as the years go on and whoever cares to study our business men of today will see plenty of illustrations of this fact. The more you look at the business nose, the more you will see that what I have told you is correct.

"To be sure, it is not every nose in business that indicates thorough executive ability, any more than you can say that the man with the round and pleasing face is not good in business. It is generally the case that the individual in whose face the bones are not prominent is inclined toward a sedentary life, toward being what is called a desk man. He is likely to be a good wire puller in a way, and yet notice the 'man behind the gun.' The fellow who does the sighting in nine cases out of ten is one of your tall, raw-boned sort. The other fellows are all right to work for him, carry out the plans he makes, but he always sights the gun."

Then I asked Dr. Drayton about the proverbial inch on a man's nose, and what the longer nose indicated. "The long nose that is inclined to be acquiline indicates the professional man," he said. "It is thin. It shows that its owner is not nearly so practical as the individual with the business nose. He is not a man who is active in the affairs of the world, and his nose shows it; for in most instances it is your broad, big-nosed man who best likes to be up and doing. The professional nose is hard to mistake, and, while all men who have it are not members of a profession, their noses show that they should have been.

"Any person of decisive character has a well-defined nose, and I mean by that it is well modeled. Your irregular nose indicates a vacillating disposition. It is the nose of a man who is never quite sure what he ought to be, is possessed of no positive ambition, who takes what the world gives him, and as long as he is fairly comfortable does not complain; or, if he does, is unable to say just exactly what is the matter with him. He is one of the easily persuaded sort, and not one of the kind who, convinced against his will, is of the same opinion still. He is very likely to be of the opinion of the last man in whom he has confidence that he talked with."

I asked Dr. Drayton if he considered that these things were only visible to persons who had made a life study of physiognomy, and if it required a special gift to possess one's self of the knowledge. "No, indeed," he said. "Don't you see, it is the basic principle of nature in every instance. It is with the face just as it is with this so-called palmistry. The individual's hand shows the life of its owner. It is not being a seer to read what it says. If you stop to think you can see that the character of a person's employment is bound to show in the hand.

The physical condition is evident. It is easy to see if the owner is full-blooded and the hand is healthy, the skin giving evidence that the general condition of the body is good. You see a good, healthy hand. You say to yourself that person eats good, healthy food, and has a good constitution. The lines on the hand indicate whether he has a nervous existence or an easy one, and it needs no very shrewd observer to put all these things together and form a very good opinion of the real self of the individual. Of course, if people want to romance they can, but palmistry is nothing in the world but a physiological fact. Wrap it with all the mysticism you will, you cannot change the fact. So it is with the human face. Just as the hand denotes the lines of life, so the face has its own life story."

"How about the American woman's nose, doctor?" I said.

"There is a great deal to be said about the nose of the American woman," was the answer. "It has changed tremendously in the last few years. There is no more noticeable mark of woman's progress. It used to be the case that the majority of our women had noses that were not beautiful. They were inclined to turn up, to be one-sided, and almost invariably to possess some irregularity. There has been a tremendous change, particularly among the women who have striven to keep up with the times. I do not mean by that the strong-minded woman, but those who know what is going on in the world and try to improve themselves by their knowledge.

"If you will go into our shops, our big stores, you will see that the larger number of the young women employed there have noses that are inclined to turn up. Do you know why? It is because their lives are not the sort that tend to develop their natures in the best and highest direction. Do not imagine that I am speaking slightingly of them. Not at all. It is simply this: That their opportunities have not been such as to make it possible for them to acquire the knowledge they ought to have.

"Look at the more enlightened women. Their noses are as straight and regular as you could wish. Mind you, I do not mean the business women, for it is a fact that the business nose is not discriminating when it comes to the question of sex. Look at the women who are leaders in the clubs and who have taken a hand in business. They have the business nose, every one of them. But the women in the homes, the women who are the American mothers, who look after their households and their minds, too—those are the women whose noses we have every right to admire."

The nose that shows the least change in life, Dr. Drayton says, belongs to the laboring man, meaning by that the member of the pick and shovel. It is never fair to confound the man who works with his head as well as his hands with the man who does not, using the word laboring for both. "The engineer," said Dr. Drayton, "always has a strongly marked face. He has to think for himself, and think quickly. He is a leader in his way, and he has the physiognomy of one. If you look at his nose you will see that it is big and shows strength. The nose of the laborer is also big and generally very broad as well as being irregular. But the engineer has strength of character fairly stamped on his nose. He has the nose of the inventor, for the type of man who loves mechanics and all that pertains thereto has a nose that is peculiarly its own."

All these facts go to show that, if one stops to think, he can change his nose if he likes. So, if one's nose is not pleasing, it is not necessary to turn to artificial aid. The much more simple way is to ask nature to help out. In fact, it almost seems to make possible the coining of a new proverb: As you live, so grows your nose.

—Charles Culver Johnson.

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