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The following notice of Capt. Symmes, and his new Theory of the Earth, is from the Kennebeck Journal, a well edited paper in the State of Maine. As it is probable, that a majority of our readers know very little about his theory, the following sketch will give them some idea of it:—

CAPTAIN SYMMES' THEORY.

On Friday, the 14th, and Monday following, Capt. Symmes delivered his lectures in this town, on his new theory of the earth. All his lectures were well attended. Capt. Symmes is a man of plain and simple, yet a greenable manner, with nothing arrogant or dictatorial about him, and with no pretensions to scholastic learning, nor to the graces of oratory. The weight of the arguments he uses is all that can carry conviction in his favor. Wherever he has explained his theory, it has been satisfied that it may be true; and no one, perhaps, capable of comprehending it, has been disposed to treat it with ridicule, however he may have regarded it. Capt. Symmes, himself, we have no doubt, is most thoroughly convinced of the truth of his theory. He listens to all objections against it with great patience, and answers them without any apparent desire to avoid just conclusions. He may congratulate himself that there are no religious prejudices against his theory.—Galileo was imprisoned for maintaining the Copernican system—but in the present day, any theorist may give to the earth what shape he pleases, without incurring ecclesiastical vengeance, or disturbing the faith even of the most bigoted.

According to Capt. Symmes' theory, the earth is a hollow sphere, open at the poles, the southern verge being upwards of 5000 miles in diameter, and the northern more than 4000. The verges of these openings are not parallel with the equator, but both project farther on one side than the other, particularly the northern, which is marked nearly in the following latitudes—the high side at about lat. 68, at some meridian between the Maelsrom and Nova Zembla, & the line of its acme crosses Iceland near Mount Hecla. Baffin's Bay not far north of 60: through the midst of Hudson's Bay, and near Lake Winnipeg, crossing the Northwest coast at about 54, and Kamtschatka, at 51, and so sloping to the place of commencement. The Southern verge commences the low side at or near the Cape of Good Hope in the Atlantic, crossing Patagonia between lat. 42 and 45, and crossing near the middle of New Zealand, and between New-Holland and Van Dieman's Land, to be place of beginning. The difference in the

size of the polar openings is ascribed to the fact that the northern verge is bounded by lands, particularly on its highest or European side, while the southern verge is mostly an open sea.

Capt. Symmes contends that all planetary bodies, which have a rotatory motion on their axis, must necessarily be hollow from the acknowledged principles of gravity and motion. The principle of gravitation, which governs all the material world, is on the tendency which particles of matter have to attract each other. We are attracted towards the centre of the earth by all the matter that is beneath us, even to the opposite side or our antipodes. It is not so with the particles of matter above them, as well as that below; and near the centre, (supposing the earth solid,) particles of matter would be attracted every way alike, and therefore gravity would be completely neutralized by opposing attractions. Nothing then, would prevent the centrifugal force of the earth, its rotatory or daily revolutions, from throwing these particles from the centre, and thus leaving a concavity in the interior. Such an opening once formed, the principle of gravity would operate to attract bodies towards the concave surface, and tho' the principle might be weaker, because more neutralized by opposite and lateral attractions than on the convex surface, yet this deficiency might be fully made up by the centrifugal or projectile motion of the earth, on the concave, instead of against it as on the convex or outer surface.

The difficulty in accounting for a sufficiency of light and heat to render the interior habitable, is thought to be the strongest objection to the theory. Into such openings as are supposed to exist, the sun may shine to a considerable extent, in a direct line; but it is contended that sun's rays are refracted or bent inwards so as to be carried at least as far as the equator, and for a considerable part of the year the sun, being so much larger than the earth, may shine in at both poles. Rays of light are well known to be refracted when they pass from one medium into another, or thro' the same medium, from a lesser to a greater density; but Capt. Symmes contends that they are refracted when passing thro' mediums of equal density. With a succession of prisms, carried over the top of a house, the line of vision may be carried through them so that a person may see distinctly objects on the opposite side. A number of facts were stated to prove that light is refracted so as to deceive the eye in looking in a horizontal line, one of which we will mention, for it is highly important to those who measure altitudes or falls of rivers, by water levels. A house was built on a promontory, with the sea on both sides, a level was taken on the top of the house, from which level the line of vision struck the water at no great distance, viewed either way. Particles of air are supposed to be wedge shaped; inasmuch as they are so, like prisms they refract the light which passes thro' them; and owing to the convexity of the earth's outer surface, a majority of these particles will have their points downwards—and hence the line of vision is bent with the earth's curve, and it would seem much more, from the experiments mentioned. Around the verges, where the curve of the earth is short, the refraction, upon these principles is proportionably greater; and within the concavity the larger ends of the particles of air being toward the earth, the effect would be to extend the rays into the interior.

To support his theory Captain Symmes adduces a great many argu-

ments drawn from facts well known, and from the observation of voyagers; and he explains many phenomena which remained inexplicable under the old theory. The variation of the needle he ascribes to the obliquity of the northern polar opening, and he makes that verge correspond with the magnetic equator.—The difference between the climate of Europe and this country, in the same latitudes, he attributes to a like cause, calculating that it is the distance from the poles, which secures a mild climate.—Within the line where he

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go to the north for a warmer climate; that persons who have wintered some distance beyond where he places the verge, state that the cold was much less intense than it is farther south; and the Russian whalers and others have several times found an open sea in a very high latitude, and represent the Frozen Ocean to be filled with islands. Major Dixon, an intelligent Scotchman, for many years in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, stated that some tribes of Indians on the Northwest Coast, annually go to the north and west on the approach of winter, saying that they find a warmer country in that direction. Dixon also stated the Indians of that country have a common tradition that their ancestors came from the north. This is mentioned, if we mistake not by Hearne and Mackenzie. The north winds, beyond where the verge is supposed to be comparatively warm, even in winter, and the currents which set from the north are nearly fresh. It is supposed that more water falls in the interior than is evaporated, and less on the outside; consequently clouds and vapor must pass in at the polar openings, and currents of water flow out over the verges, and it is said such currents do exist from both poles. It is thought by Captain Symmes that the opposite side of the verge was seen by Parry. During the winter, while Parry remained in those seas, a reddish cloudy bank, five degrees above the horizon, and extending two thirds around the horizon, was always to be seen in clear weather; above it was the dark blue sky. The Indians said this cloud was perpetual. The Magellanic clouds at the south pole are accounted for in the same way. These clouds are said by navigators to have no revolution in the heavens and they cannot be seen from any part of the Indian Ocean: it is therefore supposed that these clouds are islands of New Holland and New Zealand, seen on the opposite side of the verge in the night.

The rays of light being refracted into the verges, the eye of an observer within the concave would follow out these bent rays, and see celestial bodies apparently as if their light reached him in a right line.

It has been objected by writers to the northward, that in passing over the curve of the verge, the degrees of latitude will be apparently shortened, by observations of the heavens.—To this we understood Capt. Symmes to reply that these observations do not agree with log reckoning; that Hudson and others have mentioned this, but ignorant of the true cause, attributed the difference to currents, presuming their celestial observations must be correct. Another objection in the Thomaston paper is that the shade of the earth, in an eclipse of the moon, would not appear round but flattened on two sides. To this it was replied that the earth was rarely in a position to throw any other than a circular shade on the moon. Very little inclination from the equator, with regard to the moon, would make the earth's shadow appear circular, besides the earth being much larger than the moon, a part of the edge of the shadow can only be seen at a time. But St. Pierre mentions an eclipse of the moon when such a flat side of the earth's shadow did appear, and he reports of the theory of an oblong sphere. But Capt. Symmes supposed this fact as an argument in supposes this shadow was caused by the shining directly across the south pole of the earth. The sun's rays which strike the polar openings, being refracted inwards, are therefore intercepted, do not reach the eye, and consequently the true edge of the disc is

Capt. Symmes finds in all the planets something to confirm this theory: the ring and belts of Saturn, the belts of Jupiter and some appearances on Mars and Venus, hitherto unaccounted for, are explained on the principle of hollow spheres; but we have not room for minute explanations, nor did we directly comprehend all his ideas on this subject.

There seems to be an objection to the southern verge where Capt. Symmes places it; for it would seem that the sun must shine upon it constantly for six months during the antarctic summer, and this we presume is not the case either at Patagonia, the Cape of Good Hope or New Holland. It strikes us, too, that the water would recede from the highest point of the northern verge.

The theory is entirely novel, but it is not without converts both in Europe and this country.—The late Count Romanzoff, a Russian minister of state, and great patron of the arts and sciences, sometime before his death, wrote to Capt. Symmes, offering to fit out a discovery ship and place it at his disposal. The offer was accepted, but the death of the Count and Emperor interrupted the scheme. Capt. Symmes intends to go to Russia in hopes of getting assistance, and wishes the American government would offer a bounty for discoveries within the southern verge.

THE FINE ARTS.

Another great cause that precipitates the downfall of every fine art is despotism. The reason is obvious; and there is a dismal example of it in Rome particularly with regard to eloquence. We learn from a dialogue accounting for the corruption of the Roman eloquence, that in the decline of the art, it became fashionable to stuff harangues with impertinent poetical quotations, without any view but ornament merely; and this, also, was long fashionable in France. It happened unluckily for the Romans, and for the world, that the fine arts were at their height in Rome, and not much upon the decline in Greece, when despotism put an end to the republic. Augustus, it is true, retarded their fall, particularly that of