

William of Orange died Saturday 18th March,
1702.

Anne died Saturday 1st August, 1704.

George I. died Saturday 10th June, 1727.

George II. died Saturday 25th October, 1760.

George III. died Saturday 30th January, 1820.

George IV. died Saturday 26th June, 1830.

The Terrestrial Paradise.

THE exact position of Eden and its present condition, does not seem to have occupied the minds of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors, nor to have given rise among them to wild speculations.

The map of the tenth century in the British Museum, accompanying the *Periegesis* of Priscian, is far more correct than the generality of maps which we find in MSS. at a later period; and Paradise does not occupy the place of Cochin China, or the isles of Japan, as it did later, after that the fabulous voyage of S. Brandan had become popular in the eleventh century¹. The

¹ S. Brandan was an Irish monk, living at the close of the sixth century; he founded the Monastery of Clonfert, and is commemorated on May 16. His voyage seems to be founded on that of Sinbad, and is full of absurdities. It has been republished by M. Jubinal from MSS. in the *Bibliothèque du Roi*, Paris, 8vo., 1836; the earliest printed English edition is that of Wynkyn de Worde, London, 1516.

site, however, had been already indicated by Cosmas, who wrote in the seventh century, and had been specified by him as occupying a continent east of China, beyond the ocean, and still watered by the four great rivers Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates, which sprang from subterranean canals. In a map of the ninth century, preserved in the Strasbourg library, the terrestrial Paradise is, however, on the Continent, placed at the extreme east of Asia; in fact, is situated in the Celestial Empire. It occupies the same position in a Turin MS., and also in a map accompanying a commentary on the Apocalypse in the British Museum.

According to the fictitious letter of Prester John to the Emperor Emanuel Comnenus, Paradise was situated close to—within three days' journey of—his own territories, but where those territories were, is not distinctly specified.

"The river Indus, which issues out of Paradise," writes the mythical king, "flows among the plains, through a certain province, and it expands, embracing the whole province with its various windings: there are found emeralds, sapphires, carbuncles, topazes, chrysolites, onyx, beryl, sardius, and many other precious stones. There too grows

the plant called Asbestos." A wonderful fountain, moreover, breaks out at the roots of Olympus, a mountain in Prester John's domain, and "from hour to hour, and day by day, the taste of this fountain varies; and its source is hardly three days' journey from Paradise, from which Adam was expelled. If any man drinks thrice of this spring, he will from that day feel no infirmity, and he will, as long as he lives, appear of the age of thirty." This Olympus is a corruption of Alumbo, which is no other than Columbo in Ceylon, as is abundantly evident from Sir John Mandeville's Travels: though this important fountain has escaped the observation of Sir Emerson Tennant.

"Toward the heed of that forest (he writes) is the cytee of Polombe, and above the cytee is a great mountayne, also clept Polombe. And of that mount, the Cytee hathe his name. And at the foot of that Mount is a fayr welle and a gret, that hathe odour and savour of all spices; and at every hour of the day, he chaungethe his odour and his savour dyversely. And whoso drynkethe 3 times fasting of that watre of that welle, he is hool of alle maner sykenesse, that he hathe. And thei that duellen there and drynken often of that

welle, thei nevere han sykenesse, and thei semen alle weys yonge. I have dronken there of 3 or 4 sithes ; and zit, methinkethe, I fare the better. Some men clepen it the Welle of Youthe : for thei that often drynken thereat, semen alle weys yongly, and lyven withouten sykenesse. And men seyn, that that welle comethe out of Paradys : and therefore it is so vertuous."

Gautier de Metz, in his poem on the "Image du Monde," written in the thirteenth century, places the terrestrial Paradise in an unapproachable region of Asia, surrounded by flames, and having an armed angel to guard the only gate.

Lambertus Floridus, in a MS. of the twelfth century, preserved in the Imperial Library in Paris, describes it as "Paradisus insula in oceano in oriente:" and in the map accompanying it, Paradise is represented as an island, a little south-east of Asia, surrounded by rays, and at some distance from the mainland ; and in another MS. of the same library—a mediæval encyclopædia—under the word Paradisus is a passage which states that in the centre of Paradise is a fountain which waters the garden—that in fact described by Prester John, and that of which story-telling Sir John Mandeville declared he had "dronken 3 or 4

sithes." Close to this fountain is the Tree of Life. The temperature of the country is equable ; neither frosts nor burning heats destroy the vegetation. The four rivers already mentioned rise in it. Paradise is however inaccessible to the traveller on account of the wall of fire which surrounds it.

Paludanus relates in his "Thesaurus Novus," of course on incontrovertible authority, that Alexander the Great was full of desire to see the terrestrial Paradise, and that he undertook his wars in the East for the express purpose of reaching it, and obtaining admission into it. He states that on his nearing Eden an old man was captured in a ravine by some of Alexander's soldiers, and they were about to conduct him to their monarch, when the venerable man said, "Go and announce to Alexander that it is in vain he seeks Paradise, his efforts will be perfectly fruitless, for the way of Paradise is the way of humility, a way of which he knows nothing. Take this stone and give it to Alexander, and say to him, 'From this stone learn what you must think of yourself.'" Now this stone was of great value and excessively heavy, outweighing and excelling in value all other gems, but when reduced to powder it was as light as a tuft of hay, and as worthless. By which token the mysterious

old man meant, that Alexander alive was the greatest of monarchs, but Alexander dead would be a thing of nought.

That strangest of mediæval preachers, Meffreth, who got into trouble by denying the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, in his second sermon for the Third Sunday in Advent, discusses the locality of the terrestrial Paradise, and claims S. Basil and S. Ambrose as his authorities for stating that it is situated on the top of a very lofty mountain in Eastern Asia; so lofty indeed is the mountain, that the waters of the four rivers fall in cascade down to a lake at its foot, with such a roar that the natives who live on the shores of the lake are stone-deaf. Meffreth also explains the escape of Paradise from submergence at the Deluge, on the same grounds as does the Master of Sentences (lib. 2, dist. 17, c. 5), by the mountain being so very high that the waters which rose over Ararat were only able to wash the base of the mountain of Paradise.

The Hereford map of the thirteenth century represents the terrestrial Paradise as a circular island near India, cut off from the continent not only by the sea, but also by a battlemented wall, with a gateway to the west.

Rupert of Duytz regards it as having been situated in Armenia. Radulphus Highden, in the thirteenth century, relying on the authority of S. Basil and S. Isidore of Seville, places Eden in an inaccessible region of Oriental Asia; and this was also the opinion of Philostorgus. Hugo de S. Victor, in his book "*De Situ Terrarum*," expresses himself thus:—"Paradise is a spot in the Orient productive of all kind of woods and pomiferous trees. It contains the Tree of Life: there is neither cold nor heat there, but perpetual equable temperature. It contains a fountain which flows forth in four rivers."

Rabanus Maurus, with more discretion, says:—"Many folk want to make out that the site of Paradise is in the east of the earth, though cut off by the longest intervening space of ocean or earth from all regions which man now inhabits. Consequently, the waters of the Deluge, which covered the highest points of the surface of our orb, were unable to reach it. However, whether it be there, or whether it be any where else, God knows; but that there *was* such a spot once, and that it was on earth, that is certain."

Jacques de Vitry ("*Historia Orientalis*"), Gervais of Tilbury, in his "*Otia Imperialia*," and many

others, hold the same views as to the site of Paradise that were entertained by Hugo de S. Victor.

Jourdain de Sèverac, monk and traveller in the beginning of the fourteenth century, places the terrestrial Paradise in the "Third India;" that is to say, in trans-Gangic India.

Leonardo Dati, a Florentine poet of the fifteenth century, composed a geographical treatise in verse, entitled "Della Sfera;" and it is in Asia that he locates the garden:—

"Asia e le prima parte dove l'huomo
Sendo innocente stava in Paradiso."

But perhaps the most remarkable account of the terrestrial Paradise ever furnished, is that of the "Eireks Saga Vídförla," an Icelandic narrative of the fourteenth century, giving the adventures of a certain Norwegian, named Eirek, who had vowed, whilst a heathen, that he would explore the fabulous Deathless Land of pagan Scandinavian mythology. The romance is possibly a Christian recension of an ancient heathen myth; and Paradise has taken the place in it of Glæsisvellir.

According to the majority of the MSS. the story purports to be nothing more than a religious novel;

but one audacious copyist has ventured to assert that it is all fact, and that the details are taken down from the lips of those who heard them from Eirek himself. The account is briefly this:—

Eirek was a son of Thrand, king of Drontheim, and having taken upon him a vow to explore the Deathless Land, he went to Denmark, where he picked up a friend of the same name as himself. They then went to Constantinople, and called upon the Emperor, who held a long conversation with them, which is duly reported, relative to the truths of Christianity and the site of the Deathless Land, which, he assures them, is nothing more nor less than Paradise.

"The world," said the monarch, who had not forgotten his geography since he left school, "is precisely 180,000 stages round (about 1,000,000 English miles), and it is not propped up on posts—not a bit!—it is supported by the power of God; and the distance between earth and heaven is 100,045 miles (another MS. reads 9382 miles—the difference is immaterial); and round about the earth is a big sea called Ocean." "And what's to the south of the earth?" asked Eirek. "Oh! there is the end of the world, and that is India." "And pray where am I to find the Deathless Land?"

"That lies—Paradise, I suppose, you mean—well, it lies slightly east of India."

Having obtained this information, the two Eireks started, furnished with letters from the Greek Emperor.

They traversed Syria, and took ship—probably at Balsora; then, reaching India, they proceeded on their journey on horseback, till they came to a dense forest, the gloom of which was so great, through the interlacing of the boughs, that even by day the stars could be observed twinkling, as though they were seen from the bottom of a well.

On emerging from the forest, the two Eireks came upon a strait, separating them from a beautiful land, which was unmistakably Paradise; and the Danish Eirek, intent on displaying his Scriptural knowledge, pronounced the strait to be the river Pison. This was crossed by a stone bridge, guarded by a dragon.

The Danish Eirek, deterred by the prospect of an encounter with this monster, refused to advance, and even endeavoured to persuade his friend to give up the attempt to enter Paradise as hopeless, after that they had come within sight of the favoured land. But the Norseman deliberately walked, sword in hand, into the maw of the dragon,

and next moment, to his infinite surprise and delight, found himself liberated from the gloom of the monster's interior, and safely placed in Paradise.

"The land was most beautiful, and the grass as gorgeous as purple; it was studded with flowers, and was traversed by honey rills. The land was extensive and level, so that there was not to be seen mountain or hill, and the sun shone cloudless without night and darkness; the calm of the air was great, and there was but a feeble murmur of wind, and that which there was, breathed redolent with the odour of blossoms." After a short walk, Eirek observed what certainly must have been a remarkable object, namely, a tower or steeple self-suspended in the air, without any support whatever, though access might be had to it by means of a slender ladder. By this Eirek ascended into a loft of the tower, and found there an excellent cold collation prepared for him. After having partaken of this he went to sleep, and in vision beheld and conversed with his guardian angel, who promised to conduct him back to his fatherland, but to come for him again and fetch him away from it for ever at the expiration of the tenth year after his return to Drontheim.

Eirek then retraced his steps to India, unmolested

by the dragon, which did not affect any surprise at having to disgorge him, and, indeed, which seems to have been, notwithstanding his looks, but a harmless and passive dragon.

After a tedious journey of seven years, Eirek reached his native land, where he related his adventures, to the confusion of the heathen, and to the delight and edification of the faithful. "And in the tenth year, and at break of day, as Eirek went to prayer, God's Spirit caught him away, and he was never seen again in this world: so here ends all we have to say of him²."

The saga, of which I have given the merest outline, is certainly striking, and contains some beautiful passages. It follows the commonly-received opinion, which identified Paradise with Ceylon; and, indeed, an earlier Icelandic work, the "Rymbegla," indicates the locality of the terrestrial Paradise as being near India, for it speaks of the Ganges as taking its rise in the mountains of Eden. It is not unlikely that the curious history of Eirek, if not a Christianized version of a heathen myth, may contain the tradition of a real expedition to India, by one of the hardy adventurers who overran

² Compare with this the death of Sir Galahad in the "Morte d'Arthur" of Sir Thomas Malory.

Europe, explored the north of Russia, harrowed the shores of Africa, and discovered America.

Later than the fifteenth century, we find no theories propounded concerning the terrestrial Paradise, though there are many treatises on the presumed situation of the ancient Eden. At Madrid was published a poem on the subject, entitled "Patriana decas," in 1629. In 1662 G. C. Kirchmayer, a Wittemberg professor, composed a thoughtful dissertation, "De Paradiso," which he inserted in his "Deliciæ Æstivæ." Fr. Arnoulx wrote a work on Paradise in 1665, full of the grossest absurdities. In 1666 appeared Carver's "Discourse on the Terrestrial Paradise." Bochart composed a tract on the subject; Huet wrote on it also, and his work passed through seven editions, the last dated from Amsterdam, 1701. The Père Hardouin composed a "Nouveau Traité de la Situation du Paradis Terrestre," La Haye, 1730. An Armenian work on the rivers of Paradise was translated by M. Saint Marten in 1819; and in 1842 Sir W. Ouseley read a paper on the situation of Eden, before the Literary Society in London.

THE END.