GOD'S PLAN IN GEOGRAPHY.

Physical geography has taught us that the particular arrangement of seas, continents, mountains, and rivers which the earth has received, is the very best that could be given for the purpose to which the earth is designed. As the divine wisdom is manifested in the order and adaptation of the parts of the human body, of animals, and of plants, so there is an object in the peculiar shape the continents have been made to assume. Every thing works in harmony with a divine plan, which we claim to be beginning to comprehend.

Change the position of Asia and Europe, and you will have ruin and death. Ireland, now always green, would have the climate of Labrador. Compare the British Isles, Norway, and Sweden with the corresponding latitudes upon our own coasts, and we see dreadful consequences. Take away the Andes, which arrest the rain clouds, and South America, that most wonderfully watered continent, would be a desert. Take away the Rocky Mountains, or change their direction to east and west, and we have our own fertile country ruined. Elevate our southern coast, so as to change the direction of the Mississippi, and what mischief would ensue!

There is literally a face to nature as there is a face to man. As we have our circulation of the blood, so there is a circulation of the earth's great heart of fire, the circulation of the waters, and the ventilation of the air. We have yet to consider these varied shapes of nature in their relation to each other and to man and animal life. But we are not to stop here. The physical geographer claims that the intellect of man can be explained by the peculiar arrangement of the earth's surface. We know that civilization has marched from east to west, from Asia to Europe, and even across the Atlantic to the New World—growing and expanding in its course. We can see what has been developed in Asia and Europe, and may predict something for America.—*National Freemason.*

MANUFACTURE OF CHRONOMETERS IN AMERICA.

[From the Piladelphia North American.]

Probably no mechanical operation involves greater nicety of work—except that of making the corsets of Eugenie or the moustache dye of Louis Napoleon—than the work involved in making strictly first-class marine chronometers. Almighty power has endowed the needle of the mariner's compass with the instinct of pointing to the north, but the navigator, with compass alone, could not trust himself with a valuable cargo upon uncertain waters, and successful navigation depends upon the accuracy of the chronometer.

There are in the United States but six makers of marine chronometers, and even these combine with the profession the making of chronometers for pocket use. Once made, a chronometer virtually lasts forever, and the demand for the article is so limited that, generally speaking, they must be ordered in advance of the necessity for their use. Of the six American makers of these delicate time-keepers, the oldest and confessedly most experienced is a quiet gentleman, a devotee of astronomical science—literally a star-gazer—whose place of business is at No. 407 Chestnut street. Upon the roof of his building Harper has constructed an observatory, in which each day he takes and registers the astronomical and the mean time—a great deal more for his own satisfaction than for pecuniary return.

It is a privilege to ascend with him to the summit of these four stories, and watch him with quadrant, sextant, and other scientific instruments, verifying and altering the second hand, or the minute in his chronometers, as the case may be. It is the more interesting because there is nothing lucrative in the profession. Makers of many kinds of scientific instruments realize handsome returns from their toil. Mathematical, optical, engineering and other instruments are in constant demand. A marine chronometer is the representative of a ship, for the ship requires more than one of them. If a vessel is wrecked and anything is to be saved, the chronometer is the first article of property that is taken into the lifeboat, so the market is well supplied, and the demand for the exquisite time-keeper is very limited.

The makers in this country import none of the material they employ except the brass frame in which the movement is inclosed. To produce a single one requires the constant labor of the maker for from two and a half to three months, and three months at least are required after it is finished to rate and adjust it. To get a chronometer from a regulator pool maker, we must be ordered—unless the man has one on hand—from nine months to a year in advance of the occasion for its use. England is the chronometer maker for all Europe. The Swiss make the cheap watches of the world, just as they make cheap music boxes, cheap pictures and curiosities in carved wood. But their watches lack the solidity of those of English make. Any reader of Dickens who can recall the description of Gradgrind's watch, with its "gushing" tick, will comprehend the difference between it and the gentle tap of the escapement in the watches of Eochle and Geneva.

But the Swiss have never yet made reliable chronometers. They are too far inland to render the study an object, and the astronomical accomplishments necessary to rate them. The man who can "rate" a chronometer—give him the nautical skill to handle her, and necessary charts, could of course sail a ship in any waters.

The cost of a first class ship's chronometer is about $400. It would be much more, but the larger the instrument, the less jeweling it requires. What we mean by this is that the frame is sufficiently heavy to sustain the shafts in lieu of jewels, which the majority of many jewelled watches contain. The jewels of the mariner's chronometer are made for the pocket, but to possess one is an expensive luxury. In a plain silver case, $450 is about the average price. Each shaft must be inserted at either end in a ruby, sapphire or diamond, drilled for the purpose, and requiring a magnifying glass. In the whole range of mechanics or arts there can be nothing, excepting steel-plate engraving, that is more trying to the eye.

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d209-3m

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A Planer

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d104y

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d239

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d227 3m

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d248 6m

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d204-4m

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