

been swayed by any sentiment other than one of sympathy and respect for all the inhabitants of the universal fatherland. On this ball, that spins so swiftly in space, a grain of sand in infinitude, is it worth while to cherish mutual hatreds?

But while taking my place at this standpoint of human solidarity, my work seems still unfinished. Before studying in detail the planetary surface and the peoples inhabiting it, I had tried in another work, *The Earth*,* to study the life-history of the globe itself, such as it is presented isolatedly, prepared to receive the humanity by which the great body is animated. That work was a sort of introduction to the series of volumes which I now bring to a close. But is not a conclusion still lacking?

Man, like the Earth, has his laws.

Seen from above and from afar, the diversity of features intermingled on the surface of the globe—crests and valleys, meandering waters, shore-lines, heights and depths, superimposed rocks—presents an image which, so far from being chaotic, reveals to him who understands a marvellous picture of harmony and beauty. The man who searchingly surveys this universe, assists at the vast work of incessant creation, always beginning, never ending, and himself sharing by the largeness of his grasp in the eternity of things, he may, like Newton, like Darwin, find the word that sums all up.

And if the earth seems consistent and simple amid the endless complexity of its forms, shall the indwelling humanity, as is often said, be nought but a blind chaotic mass, heaving at hazard, aimless, without an attainable ideal, unconscious of its very destiny? Migrations in diverse directions, settlements and dispersions, growth and decline of nations, civilisations and decadence, formation and displacement of vital centres; are all these, as might seem at the first glance, mere facts, nay, facts unconnected in time, facts whose endless play is uncontrolled by any rhythmical movement giving them a general tendency, which may be expressed by a law? This it is that it concerns us to know. Is the evolution of man in perfect harmony with the laws of the Earth? How is he modified under the thousand influences of the modifying environment? Are the vibrations simultaneous, and do they incessantly modulate their tones from age to age?

* *The Earth: A Descriptive History of the Physical Phenomena of the Life of our Globe.* By Elisée Reclus.