

THE STORY OF
THE EARTH AND ITS PEOPLES

THE EARTH AND THE OCEANS

As Others See Us

"TO see ourselves as others see us" is not easy. To see our home-planet, the earth, as it is seen from other planets, is impossible. There is a pleasure sometimes, however, in imagining things that are really impossible, and we like to read books in which a clever writer pictures the doing of impossible things. A well-known book of this kind describes how two men made a journey from the earth to the moon. This journey, we are told, was made in a hollow globe covered with shutters, which could shut out the power of gravitation, just as wooden shutters shut out light. When these shutters were closed, the sphere and all that was in it had no longer any weight. It ceased to be attracted by the earth. As a result it gradually rose from the ground, being thrown off by the spin of the earth's rotation, just as a drop of water is flicked off a mop or a revolving wheel. To return to the earth it was only necessary to open a shutter and admit enough of the power of gravitation to pull the globe down again.

Let us now suppose ourselves in a sphere of this kind one fine summer day, ready to start on a trip to the sky in order to get a view of our world from a distance. We will not go so far as the moon, however, as we should then be too far from the earth to see it well; we will stop at about