

cactus of the American deserts, the more arid regions produce a leafless bush called the euphorbia.

South America possesses the most luxuriant vegetation in the world. The greater part of the continent is covered by a dense and almost impenetrable tropical forest. There are many distinguishing characteristics—the great varieties of species, the remarkable development of foliage, the brilliancy of the blossoms and the great number of flowering trees. Palms, banana trees, tree ferns, fig trees, and mimosas abound, while mahogany, rosewood and the caoutchouc are numbered among the continent's resources. The dry table-land of Brazil, the llanos, and the pampas, while practically treeless, are, nevertheless covered with tall luxuriant grasses.

The flora of Australia is indeed remarkable. It bears but slight resemblance to the flora of any other continent, is less perfect and seems to be the remains of the vegetation of some earlier age of this world. The foliage is scanty and of sombre hues, the leaves being stiff and lustreless. The eucalyti and the casuarinas or marsh-oaks supply the continent with timber. Acacia bushes are numerous in the dry interior. The grass tree inhabits the Australian deserts. The north coast resembles the Indian Archipelago in its flora, possessing cabbage palms, nutmegs and sandalwood.

Let us now consider the fauna of the different continents. In consequence of the abundant vegetation of this continent, herbivorous animals are much more numerous than carnivorous in North America. Rodents, many of them aquatic, and water-fowls are very numerous. There are many species of deer and of bears. The punna is the American lion, dogs are indigenous in the far north, while turkeys and bisons are peculiar to this continent. Sheep and goats are found in the Rockies.

The fauna of Europe possesses no distinguishing characteristics and resemble that of North America. The wild boar is, however, peculiar to Asia and Europe. As its flora, so, also, the fauna of Asia is remarkable for the great number of useful species it has contributed to the world. Many of these species have been domesticated. Northern Asia has contributed the reindeer; Central Asia, the horse, the ass, the yak, the goat, the sheep and the two-humped camel; Southern Asia nourishes the swine, the elephant, the buffalo, the dromedary and the Syrian ox. The highest orders of animals have been brought forth in Tropical Asia. Here we find the orangoutang, the elephant, the rhinoceros,