



View of Upolu.

Gems of the Ocean.

Give wings to your imagination, young reader. Soar away over land and sea to the far off and wide-spreading Ocean denominated the Pacific, and there poising your wing, look down upon the innumerable islands that lie scattered over that vast extent of water. There they stand, earth's loveliest spots, all beautiful by reason of their natural scenery, their glowing verdure, their pleasant climate, and their brilliant sky. I call these islands, 'Ocean Gems,' and so they are. Gems in the sight of the naturalist, because here some of nature's rarest works are found; gems in the estimation of the philanthropist, because here he has found a fine field producing laurels for his brow; and gems in the view of saints and God and angels, because from these islands of the Southern Sea, bright souls have gone up to glory; there the cross has triumphed; and often from their shores, there mingle with angel-songs and voices, the sweet offerings of holy prayer and praise to heaven.

Over these Ocean Gems I want you for a little time to pause and look about you, while I present to you some brief descriptions of their character.

More than one sort of island meets the view. There are the beautiful volcanic islands, some of which have towering mountains rising to the height of from 10,000 to 15,000 feet. These are the most beautiful of all the islands. The immense mountains rise directly from the sea, and tower away, till their lofty peaks are lost amidst the clouds above. The most fantastic shapes are assumed by these mountains. Here, one stands out like a vast pyramid; there, another like a tall spire; and there, a number together, giving you the idea of the rugged towers and strong walls of some gigantic castle. Running in between these noble mountains, are deep valleys abounding with scenes of exquisite beauty and grandeur. There grow the stately palms, the noble bread fruit, the elegant cocoa-nut, the great banana, the Brazilian plum, besides many other vegetable productions of tropical climes. Trees of gigantic size, and splendid with foliage, always green. Here, beauty, wildness and grandeur, all mix together, and produce scenes of loveliness unequalled upon earth.

There is no doubt that these mountainous islands are of volcanic origin, and that, at some very remote period, they were pushed up from great depths