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## A PARTING WORD.

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N completing this long work, begun in the days of my youth, I may congratulate myself on the good fortune by which, in the course of a life not lacking in stirring incidents, I have been enabled to fulfil my engagements of regular publication, without ever once breaking faith with my readers. At the same time I am well aware that the best intentions and most conscientious labour would have been inadequate to such an undertaking, but for the devoted fellow-workers who have constantly aided me by their researches and advice.

A feeling of gratitude must therefore be uppermost, and my thanks are accordingly given to all friends who have directly or indirectly helped me by notes, studies, correspondence, corrections, encouragement, or criticism. But this acknowledgment can no longer reach all those to whom it is due! A retrospective glance shows the path marked at intervals by the memory of comrades in work garnered by death. Towards them above all my thoughts are turned at the close of my task. On this last page I record the name of Emile Templier, who sought me out on the pontoons of Brest with a view to the publication of the long contemplated *Earth and its Inhabitants*.

This period of twenty years, long relatively to the life of a man, is as nought in the history of the Earth; yet how well it has been utilised! How many discoveries and explorations have followed one on the other, adding to our previous