

CHAPTER X.

WHAT THE VOICE OF NATURE TELLS OF THE SEA.

WHAT does the voice of Nature say of the sea and its relation to the human race? If one were to drop down from another planet, and, taking the wings of the morning, pass the whole globe under review, one would find nearly three-quarters of its surface covered with salt water. Why this great waste of water with so little land? Because the vast surface is required so that the sun's heat may raise enough cloud and moisture to supply rain to the continents. Without this immense evaporating pan the gardens of the earth would be as barren as the crater-scarred ranges and cracked plains of the moon. The sea, then, is the mother and nurse of all land life as well as the generator of those illimitable varieties of animal and vegetable life brought forth within her own bosom. Her mists, which furnish the boreal pole with its glaciers and wastes of snow, give movement and purity to the air of other zones, while her clouds shield the southern toiler from the torrid heat. None so strong as can defy her anger; and yet how gentle and soothing to the nerve-racked soul or the feeble invalid, to whom her ozone breath gives new life and hope where physicians fail. She no longer divides and estranges mankind; the siren music of her waves is borne to every zone and interpreted into the one meaning, in every language—"I unite." The sea is herself a unity, for her waters are nowhere entirely cut off from each other. The purifier of the air of all the earth, and the never-failing restorer of the healthful balance of nature's elements, she bears her blessings with impartial generosity to every clime and to every race and condition of men. Her universality and her