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OUR WORLD.

BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

A GENERAL GLANCE AT SOME GREAT FACTS.

Facts are first forms of truth. In all solid and substantial structures they are the base-blocks. To ascertain them, classify and arrange them, and then utilize them are the triumphs of the scientist, the sage, and the seer.

There are certain great facts pertaining to our world and its inhabitants which we need to master. They so seriously affect our work and our success that to know them and to have them at command are of the first importance. Some of these we seek here to collate and compare, aiming at comprehensiveness and accuracy, and hinting the lines along which investigation should be carried on, and additions constantly made.

I. OUR EARTH.—The dimensions of our globe are familiar—its circumference of about 25,000 miles, its diameter of about 8000, its surface of 200,000,000 square miles, of which three fourths represent water. Europe, inclusive of the British Isles, has an area of 3,600,000 square miles, with a coast-line of 20,000 miles; Asia, an area of 17,000,000 square miles, with a coast-line of 40,000 miles; Africa, an area of 11,500,000 square miles, with a coast-line of 16,000 miles. To North America belongs an area of 8,000,000, and to South America an area of 6,800,000 square miles, while the united coast-line of these twin continents cannot fall much short of 30,000 miles on the Atlantic frontier alone. Australia, the island continent, has an area of 3,000,000 square miles; and the estimated area of the polar regions is over 3,000,000 square miles. The islands of the sea embrace about one hundredth part of the land area, or 550,000 square miles. If, then, Australia represents the unit of measurement, Europe has a fraction more area, South America twice as much, North America more than two and a half times as much, Africa nearly four times, and Asia nearly six times as great area.

The river systems are immense. They represent a total length of over 125,000 miles, or five times the circumference of the earth. The navigable