

empire of the Cæsars from the wild forest-lands and barren plains of the barbarians. But to-day, tourists from all parts of the world wander in security over the romantic and savage scenes which, for so many generations, were the undisputed domain of the chamois and the eagle. The iron road has surmounted or penetrated the granitic flanks of the mighty mountains, and through the very heart of a snow-crowned Alp the Mont Cenis Tunnel carries the punctual train. The rampart which so long defied the rage of the warrior, which a Hannibal and a Napoleon made it their greatest glory to have traversed, has been levelled by the genius of Steam. Soon, too, shall the Ural chain throw open its gates to the unrelenting march of civilization, and the steppes of the nomadic Kirghiz become familiar as the European highways. The seas, which so long opposed a formidable obstacle to international communications, are now the most facile intermediary of their relations. The Cape of Good Hope, which it cost the maritime power of Portugal in the sixteenth century a hundred years to attain, is now for ship and steamer a mere station of relief; a frigate accomplishes the entire distance, some 4000 leagues, in two months. At the close of the last century, the China voyage occupied ten months; now, a steam-vessel achieves in four a trajet which represents one-half of the voyage round the world; and this period will be diminished by a moiety when the Suez Canal shall be opened up to navigation. The channels or ocean-arms which separate any two countries are nothing more than the ports of both. London touches Paris, Marseilles lies contiguous to Algiers, Stockholm shakes hands with St. Petersburg. The great American rivers—the Mississippi, the St. Lawrence, the Ohio, and even the Amazons—are covered with steam-ships, which display on their busy waters the mingled flags of every civilized nation of the two hemispheres; all these vessels blend and unite, as the interests of men, everywhere correlative and consolidated, are to-day united. It is impossible to anticipate the transformations and prodigies which human society will see realized, in a more or less neighbouring future, when Science, in possession of even more potent instruments than it now disposes of, shall have opened broad and convenient routes across the mountain-chains of the Cordilleras and the Himalayas, the Caucasus and the Ural, across the isthmuses of Suez and Panama; or, aerial navigation, reduced into practice, and regularly established, shall have fulfilled the poet's ardent aspiration: "Wings! O give us wings!"