

are, in Mr. Darwin's happy phrase, satellites to those continents, in respect of natural history. Again," he continues, "when masses of land are only divided from each other by narrow seas, there is usually a community of forms. The European and African shores of the Mediterranean present an example. Our own islands afford another of far higher value. It appears that the flora of Ireland and Great Britain is various, or rather that we have five floras or distinct sets of plants, and that each of these is partaken of by a portion of the opposite continent. There are, first, a flora confined to the west of Ireland, and imparted likewise to the north-west of Spain; second, a flora in the south-west promontory of England and of Ireland, extending across the Channel to the north-west coast of France; third, one common to the south-east of England and north of France; fourth, an Alpine flora developed in the Scottish and Welsh Highlands, and intimately related to that of the Norwegian Alps; fifth, a flora which prevails over a large part of England and Ireland, 'mingled with other floras, and diminishing slightly as we proceed westward:' this bears intimate relation with the flora of Germany. Facts so remarkable would force the meanest fact-collector or species-demonstrator into generalization. The really ingenious man who lately brought them under notice (Professor Edward Forbes) could only surmise, as their explanation, that the spaces now occupied by the intermediate seas must have been dry land at the time when these floras were created. In that case, either the original arrangement of the floras, or the selection of land for submergence, must have been apposite to the case in a degree far from usual. The necessity for a simpler cause is obvious, and it is found in the hypothesis of a *spread of terrestrial vegetation from the sea into the lands adjacent*. The community of forms in the vari-