

ment like an immense clock-dial, whose daily volution would indicate to him the four-and-twenty hours. The *phases of the earth* would mark his months. In Figure 25, our globe is shown as it would appear when viewed from the Moon.

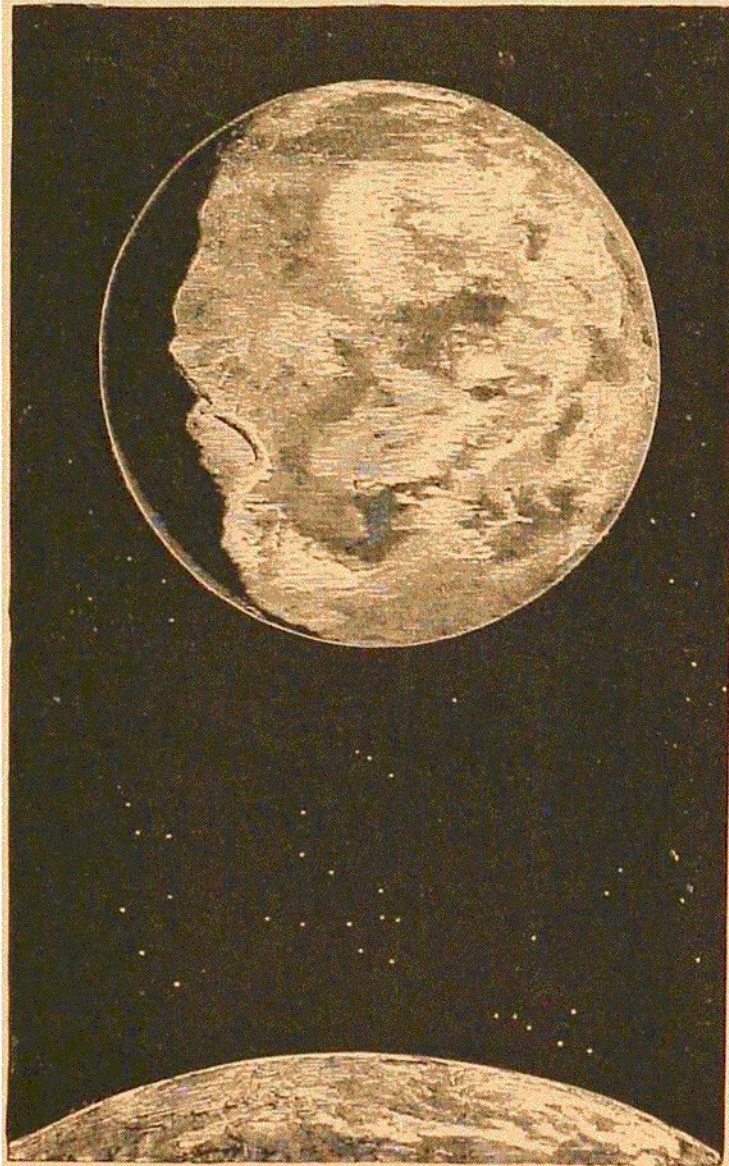


FIG. 25. —THE EARTH SEEN FROM THE MOON.

The determination of the true form of the Earth has cost, from the earliest days of science, an incredible amount of laborious effort. If we climb to some elevated ground,—to the summit, for instance, of a hill situated on a vast plain,—or, still better, to the mast-head of a ship,—the broad expanse which lies before us assumes the outline of a circular plain, on whose borders rests the celestial dome. For many centuries, therefore, men figured to themselves the Earth as a kind of limitless plain—that is to say, as a level and horizontal sur-

face. It needed all the scientific learning of a series of successive generations to conquer and dispel this error of the senses; to place the human mind, as it were, at an abstract view-point; and to contemplate, with the inner gaze, the Earth floating in space, under the form of a globe freely suspended in the planetary regions.

The first practical demonstration of the spheroidal form of our planet was furnished by the navigators who accomplished the entire