

as *Tundras*; where, says Admiral Wrangel, endless snows and ice-bound rocks bound the horizon, Nature lies shrouded in all but perpetual winter, life is an unending struggle with privation and with the terrors of cold and hunger . . . the very grave of Nature, the sepulchre of the primeval world, which occasionally reveals to the astonished gaze the forms of colossal animals long since extinct. Where the people, and even the snow, emit a constant smoke, and this evaporation is immediately changed into millions of icy needles, which make a noise in the air like the crackling of thick silk. Where the reindeer crowd together for the sake of the warmth derivable from such contiguity; and only the raven, the dark bird of winter, cleaves the sombre sky with slow-labouring wing, and marks the track of his solitary flight by a long line of thin vapour.

Often, the trunks of the thickest trees split asunder with a loud noise; masses of rock are loosened from their sites; the ground in the valley is rent with yawning fissures, from which the subterranean waters rise in a cloud of steam that immediately, on contact with the upper air, congeals into ice. Dense grows the atmosphere; the stars wane and flicker. All Nature sleeps a sleep that is most like death, and which is only interrupted in the summer by a short interval of spasmodic activity. Enough to say, that near Yakutsk the ground is perpetually frozen to the depth of more than 400 feet, of which, in the summer, only three feet are thawed.

In Southern Siberia, however, the coming of the summer is as magical in its effects as the transformation scene in a theatric spectacle. Almost as soon as the snow melts, the ground laughs with verdure, and with the bloom of flowers of many and dazzling hues.]

THE PAMPAS.

From the Old World we pass to the New.

The *Pampas* of South America are low grassy plains, shut in on the west by the terraces of the Cordilleras, but open towards the east and the south-east. They may, perhaps, be considered as ancient gulfs, which the sea would fill anew, if any extraordinary tide should