

which our sun with his planets is ceaselessly and swiftly revolving? At present, and ever since the appearance of civilized man on earth, our solar system lies far remote from the thickest clusters of the fixed stars: we are but circling on the rim or edge of the great Plain of the Worlds, indicated by the shining depths of the Milky Way. But it may not, it cannot have been so always in the past; nor is it likely to be so always in the future of our planet. In truth, may we not ascribe to such extra-terrestrial influence one of the most striking features in the present aspect of our globe—namely, the great predominance of land in the northern hemisphere, where the continents appear to have been vastly increasing in extent in the most recent geological periods, while in the southern hemisphere land is not only rare, but over a large area appears to have been gradually sinking? Is it not possible, then, that the superior activity of the upheaving forces in our northern hemisphere, and the comparative absence of land in the southern hemisphere, is due to the greater cosmical influence exerted upon the former, which is turned to immense strata of stars and constellations; whereas in the southern skies there are vast spaces of darkness, where not a single starry world is visible?"

The reader may also be referred to an interesting article on volcanoes in the *North American Review*, July 1869.

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Page 433.—SCENERY OF JAVA.

As a pendant to Michelet's brilliant description, the reader will not be displeased with the following:—

"All these features are imposing in their size and loftiness, and yet so delicately executed, so sharply chiselled or modelled, as it were, out of the earth, as at the same time to affect the mind with the solemnity of grandeur and the delight of beauty. But when these mountain steeps are clothed with endless woods of magnificent forest trees, having lofty stems and widely-branching heads, and every glen is crowded with stately palms, drooping and elegant tree-ferns, arching clusters of feathery bamboos, delicately-stemmed acacias, and broad-leaved plantains and bananas, all rising from piles and heaps of plants of lesser growth, ferns and creepers and succulent plants, with huge round-lobed or variously-shaped leaves; and when, among these luxuriant woods, or by the side of these falling waters, wind paths and alleys carpeted with short green turf, twining from dell to dell, as if searching for the loveliest spots, with a fresh cool breeze rustling the leaves above, and a deep blue sky shining over all, against which, here and there, some tall grassy peak starts up above the loftiest heights of wood, I do not believe that more exquisite scenery ever rose before the imagination, even in his youthful dreams. The eye of the gazer becomes satiated with every form of earthly loveliness, and to me, at least, the valleys among these mountains of Java have ever since been the very type of beauty, the remembrance of which will, I hope, dwell with me as long as I exist."—*J. Beete Jukes*, "*Narrative of Surveying Voyage of H. M. S. Fly*," vol. ii., pp. 124, 125.

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Page 435.—VOLCANOES OF JAVA.

A recent traveller furnishes a graphic description of his exploration of the crater of the Manindyu volcano in Java:—

"Down and down we went, until at last I became quite discouraged, and seriously