

the year, and wishes to make it a more desirable place of residence for those who inhabit it all the months. He helps in the starting of a library, he aids in reviving an academy, he encourages the formation of a village improvement association. Perhaps he puts up in his birthplace a library building or some other edifice which both serves a utilitarian purpose and elevates the taste of the community. In one way or another he displays his appreciation of the village, and in turn the villagers themselves come to appreciate its charms. If it is so beautiful a spot that it draws people from the city early in the season and holds them late, it cannot be so dreary as it had once seemed. And it is not; for the dreariness too often had come chiefly from the decline of public spirit, and the consequent dying out of the higher life that is always possible to a rural community. Revive this higher life, and the village may again have its attractions, as it once did, for those who were born in it. The city may thus repair some of the harm which its own growth has done the country, and sounder ideas of society and of solitude may come to pervade both.

The New School of Explorers.

It was a suggestive coincidence that the project for celebrating the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America should have been under discussion when the great African explorer was again returning to civilization from his latest plunge into the Dark Continent. That the names of Christopher Columbus and Henry M. Stanley should thus be on people's lips together seems both natural and proper, for the American of the nineteenth century belongs to the same type of the world's great men as the Genoese of the fifteenth. But the striking feature of the collocation is the fact that Stanley is really the last representative of this type. In other words, the explorer has now had his day in the history of the world, and passes from the stage.

It is but a little while since the earth was a mystery to its inhabitants. Vast spaces upon the map were frankly confessed by the geographer to be utterly unknown to him. The immense island of Australia, so large as almost to demand the title of continent, which some bestow, had not been visited by civilized man. Vast tracts of Asia were hardly distinguished by name. Africa was virtually a sealed book. Even our own country scarcely more than a generation ago still offered opportunities for the explorer; and people in middle life recall the strange impression made upon the childish mind by the expression, "The Great American Desert," which covered so large an area west of the Mississippi. In short, when men and women who do not call themselves old were young, the earth still remained full of unknown lands.

We have changed all that, along with so many other things. The map of the United States no longer contains any vast unknown waste, and the Great American Desert has shrunk away before the advance of civilization. The Old World has yielded up one after another of its mysteries. Last of all, a flood of light has been thrown upon the Dark Continent itself. With Africa opened up, the globe, for the first time in the history of the human race, ceases to have its dark corners. Man finally knows what sort of place the earth is, and henceforth the explorer's rôle on an heroic scale

is impossible. There remain, to be sure, many regions about which we know comparatively little, but there are few regions in any part of the world about which we know nothing — if we except the poles; and even there the approach has been so near that what remains is rather the glory of achievement than the satisfaction of a baffled curiosity. This is not to say that there is nothing left for the information and entertainment of the public in the fuller knowledge that we shall constantly gain of remote regions, for there is here a great field which will richly reward careful cultivation; but what remains must be the prolonged work of many, rather than the brilliant dash of one or another great spirit. Stanley is the last of the school of explorers to which Columbus belonged.

It must be admitted that the world has lost something by its gains. The charm of mystery and the zest of adventure are gone when there are no longer trackless seas to sail or pathless continents to thread. It is a somewhat prosaic reflection that we have done away with the mystery of unknown regions, so that the map-maker need no longer use any of those vague terms for large areas which once piqued curiosity and fired the imagination. Indeed, one may almost feel a grudge against the explorers when he realizes how much of poetry they have banished by substituting knowledge for the unknown; and may envy those more fortunate generations who lived and died enjoying the pleasures of speculation about parts of the earth which were practically almost as remote and puzzling as the moon. Fortunately the loss is not irreparable. A world which man knew all about would indeed be a tiresome sort of world. But the explorers, who have shown us what the geography of the globe is, have, after all, only scratched the surface. The realm of mystery, so far from dwindling into nothingness, has really widened. The field for the imagination's play has grown immeasurably. The range of possible discovery has spread from the globe to the universe.

The new school of explorers is glad not to be obliged to waste energy in what is at best the essentially commonplace business of finding out "the lay of the land" or the bounds of the sea. Its field of study is those forces of nature which the old explorer, however clear-sighted, never saw, or, seeing, comprehended not. It analyzes the elements; it searches out motive power; it makes electricity its servant. The earth, the sea, the air, all invite its investigation, and one discovery only serves to stimulate the search for others. It sets no bounds to its ambition, and the imagination has a boundless play in contemplating the possibilities of its achievements. The telephone, the phonograph, the electric motor — these are hints, but only hints, of its future work. Thus it happens that, as the old explorer disappears, a new appears upon the scene, and the type of which Henry M. Stanley is the last representative is succeeded by the one personified in Thomas A. Edison. We should name with men like Edison and Thomson and Bell also the psychologists and philosophers — those who are prying into the mysteries of the human spirit: a slow and laborious and baffling quest, but surely not the least interesting, or, to the possessors of souls, the least important. Latitude and longitude circumscribed the scope of the old explorer, but the time can never come when the new will have sounded all the depths of the universe.