

In the arctic regions
the excessive cold
seems



In the arctic regions the excessive cold seems to numb men's energies and render them torpid; and there nature is so niggardly, and man's struggle for existence so severe, that it consumes all his energies, and leaves him exhausted for any other kind of effort. It is significant that no great enterprising, conquering, or highly civilized nation has arisen either in the torrid or the polar regions. The dominant races are those who dwell in the temperate zones, where the climate, neither too hot nor too cold, is healthy and bracing, and where the struggle for existence is not so severe as to consume all a man's energies, and yet severe enough to demand constant thought and exertion. Most of the European nations, the Americans, and the Japanese, the most civilized, vigorous and enterprising people in the world, are dwellers in the temperate zone. The geographical position of a country also has its influence upon the character of the inhabitants. The dwellers on fertile plains soon settle down to agriculture and trade, and to an ordered and peaceful life. They grow wealthy, civilized and luxurious. They eventually become effeminate, and are easily conquered by hardier races.

But the inhabitants of mountains and arid deserts, who have a harder struggle for existence, rarely settle down to a regular and peaceful life. They are very vigorous and independent, are great fighters, and have such a love of liberty that it is very difficult to subdue them. The sea has also a great influence upon the people who live near it. Sea-faring people, like the Phoenicians, and the British, are much more adventurous and enterprising than the dwellers in inland countries.

The boundlessness and the liberty of the sea sets into their blood, and they make the best explorers, pioneers and colonists.