

cial constituent of active living organisms.<sup>1</sup> Water is ingested in greater amounts than all

measure it falls back again directly into the ocean. A considerable proportion, however, descends upon the land, and it is this part of the condensed vapor which we have now to follow. Upon the higher elevations it falls as snow, and gathers there into snow fields, which, by means of glaciers, send their drainage towards the valleys and plains. Elsewhere it falls chiefly as rain, some of which sinks underground to gush forth again in springs, while the rest pours down the slopes of the land, swelling the brooks and torrents which, fed both by springs and rains, gather into broader and yet broader rivers that bear the accumulated drainage of the land out to sea. Thence once more the vapor rises, condensing into clouds and rain to feed the innumerable water channels by which the land is furrowed from mountain top to seashore.

“In this vast system of circulation, ceaselessly renewed, there is not a drop of water that is not busy with its allotted task of changing the face of the earth. When the vapor ascends into the air, it is, comparatively speaking, chemically pure. But when, after being condensed into visible form, and working its way over or under the surface of the land, it once more enters the sea, it is no longer pure, but more or less loaded with material taken by it out of the air, rocks, or soils through which it has traveled. Day by day the process is advancing. So far as we can tell, it has never ceased since the first shower of rain fell upon the earth. We may well believe, therefore, that it must have worked marvels upon the surface of our planet in past time, and that it may effect transformation in the future.” — GEEKIE, “Textbook of Geology.” London, 1903, 4th ed., Vol. I, pp. 447, 448.

<sup>1</sup> Thus water makes up from 70 to 85 per cent of fishes, about 87 per cent of oysters, 85 per cent of apples, 78 per cent of potatoes, 95 per cent of the edible portion of lettuce, etc.