

it commonly sits on a branch of the ombu-tree, near a house, and thence takes a short flight in pursuit of insects, and returns to the same spot. When on the wing it presents in its manner of flight and general appearance a caricature-likeness of the common swallow. It has the power of turning very shortly in the air, and in so doing opens and shuts its tail, sometimes in a horizontal or lateral and sometimes in a vertical direction, just like a pair of scissors.

October 16th.—Some leagues below Rozario, the western shore of the Parana is bounded by perpendicular cliffs, which extend in a long line to below San Nicolas; hence it more resembles a sea-coast than that of a fresh-water river. It is a great drawback to the scenery of the Parana, that, from the soft nature of its banks, the water is very muddy. The Uruguay, flowing through a granitic country, is much clearer; and where the two channels unite at the head of the Plata, the waters may for a long distance be distinguished by their black and red colors. In the evening, the wind being not quite fair, as usual we immediately moored, and the next day, as it blew rather freshly, though with a favoring current, the master was much too indolent to think of starting. At Bajada, he was described to me as "hombre muy aflicto"—a man always miserable to get on; but certainly he bore all delays with admirable resignation. He was an old Spaniard, and had been many years in this country. He professed a great liking to the English, but stoutly maintained that the battle of Trafalgar was merely won by the Spanish captains having been all bought over; and that the only really gallant action on either side was performed by the Spanish admiral. It struck me as rather characteristic that this man should prefer his countrymen being thought the worst of traitors rather than unskilful or cowardly.

18th and 19th.—We continued slowly to sail down the noble stream: the current helped us but little. We met, during our descent, very few vessels. One of the best gifts of nature, in so grand a channel of communication, seems here wilfully thrown away—a river in which ships might