

of the last century prevented our author from carrying out various plans of foreign travel which he had contemplated, and detained him an unwilling prisoner in Europe. In the year 1799 he went to Spain, with the hope of entering Africa from Cadiz, but the unexpected patronage which he received at the court of Madrid led to a great alteration in his plans, and decided him to proceed directly to the Spanish possessions in America, "and there gratify the longings for foreign adventure, and the scenery of the tropics, which had haunted him from boyhood, but had all along been turned in the diametrically opposite direction of Asia." After encountering various risks of capture, he succeeded in reaching America, and from 1799 to 1804 prosecuted there extensive researches in the physical geography of the New World, which have indelibly stamped his name in the undying records of science.

Excepting an excursion to Naples with Gay-Lussac and Von Buch in 1805 (the year after his return from America), the succeeding twenty years of his life were spent in Paris, and were almost exclusively employed in editing the results of his American journey. In order to bring these results before the world in a manner worthy of their importance, he commenced a series of gigantic publications in almost every branch of science on which he had instituted observations. In 1817, after twelve years of incessant toil, four fifths were completed, and an ordinary copy of the part then in print cost considerably more than one hundred pounds sterling. Since that time the publication has gone on more slowly, and even now, after the lapse of nearly half a century, it remains, and probably ever will remain, incomplete.

In the year 1828, when the greatest portion of his literary labor had been accomplished, he undertook a scientific journey to Siberia, under the special protection of the Russian government. In this journey—a journey for which he had prepared himself by a course of study unparalleled in the history of travel—he was accompanied by two companions hardly less distinguished than himself, Ehrenberg and Gustav Rose, and