

various sensations that derive their charm and permanency from the peculiar character of the scene.

If I might be allowed to abandon myself to the recollections of my own distant travels, I would instance, among the most striking scenes of nature, the calm sublimity of a tropical night, when the stars, not sparkling, as in our northern skies, shed their soft and planetary light over the gently-heaving ocean; or I would recall the deep valleys of the Cordilleras, where the tall and slender palms pierce the leafy veil around them, and waving on high their feathery and arrow-like branches, form, as it were, "a forest above a forest;"* or I would describe the summit of the Peak of Teneriffe, when a horizontal layer of clouds, dazzling in whiteness, has separated the cone of cinders from the plain below, and suddenly the ascending current pierces the cloudy veil, so that the eye of the traveler may range from the brink of the crater, along the vine-clad slopes of Orotava, to the orange gardens and banana groves that skirt the shore. In scenes like these, it is not the peaceful charm uniformly spread over the face of nature that moves the heart, but rather the peculiar physiognomy and conformation of the land, the features of the landscape, the ever-varying outline of the clouds, and their blending with the horizon of the sea, whether it lies spread before us like a smooth and shining mirror, or is dimly seen through the morning mist. All that the senses can but imperfectly comprehend, all that is most awful in such romantic scenes of nature, may become a source of enjoyment to man, by opening a wide field to the creative powers of his imagination. Impressions change with the varying movements of the mind, and we are led by a happy illusion to believe that we receive from the external world that with which we have ourselves invested it.

When far from our native country, after a long voyage, we read for the first time the soil of a tropical land, we experience a certain feeling of surprise and gratification in recognizing, in the rocks that surround us, the same inclined schistose strata, and the same columnar basalt covered with cellular amygdaloids, that we had left in Europe, and whose identity of character, in latitudes so widely different, reminds us that the solidification of the earth's crust is altogether independent of climatic influences. But these rocky masses of schist and of basalt are covered with vegetation of a character with which we are unacquainted, and of a physiognomy wholly

* This expression is taken from a beautiful description of tropical forest scenery in *Paul and Virginia*, by Bernardin de Saint Pierre.