

more widely-diffused cultivation of tropical floras, and the more strongly contrasting opposition of exotic and indigenous forms. Each of these might, owing to their historical relations, be made the object of a widely-extending consideration, but it appears to me more in conformity with the spirit and aim of this work merely to unfold a few leading ideas, in order to remind the reader how differently the aspect of nature has acted on the intellect and feelings of different nations at different epochs, and how, at periods characterized by general mental cultivation, the severer forms of science and the more delicate emanations of fancy have reciprocally striven to infuse their spirit into one another. In order to depict nature in its exalted sublimity, we must not dwell exclusively on its external manifestations, but we must trace its image, reflected in the mind of man, at one time filling the dreamy land of physical myths with forms of grace and beauty, and at another developing the noble germ of artistic creations.

In limiting myself to the simple consideration of the incitements to a scientific study of nature, I would not, however, omit calling attention to the fact that impressions arising from apparently accidental circumstances often—as is repeatedly confirmed by experience—exercise so powerful an effect on the youthful mind as to determine the whole direction of a man's career through life. The child's pleasure in the form of countries, and of seas and lakes,\* as delineated in maps; the desire to behold southern stars, invisible in our hemisphere;† the representation of palms and cedars of Lebanon as depicted in our illustrated Bibles, may all implant in the mind the first impulse to travel into distant countries. If I might be permitted to instance my own experience, and recall to mind the source from whence sprang my early and fixed desire to visit the land of the tropics, I should name George Forster's *Delineations of the South Sea Islands*, the pictures of Hodge, which represented the shores of the Ganges, and which I first saw at the house of Warren Hastings, in London, and a colossal dragon-tree in an old tower of the Botanical Garden at Berlin. These objects, which I here instance by way of illustration, belong to the three classes of induce-

\* As the configuration of the countries of Italy, Sicily, and Greece, and of the Caspian and Red Seas. See *Relation Historique du Voy. aux Régions Equinoxiales*, t. i., p. 208.

† Dante, *Purg.*, i., 25-28.

Goder pareva il ciel di lor fiammelle:  
O settentrional vedovo sito,  
Poi che privato se' di mirar quelle!