

ness of feeling and richness of creative fancy entitle him to a high place in the ranks of the poets of all nations. The charm of his descriptions of nature is strikingly exemplified in the beautiful drama of *Vikrama and Urvasi*, where the king wanders through the thickets of the forest in search of the nymph Urvasi; in the poem of *The Seasons*; and in that of *The Messenger of Clouds (Meghaduta)*. This last poem describes with admirable truth to nature the joy with which, after long drought, the first appearance of a rising cloud is hailed as the harbinger of the approaching season of rain. The expression, "truth to nature," of which I have just made use, can alone justify me in referring, in connection with the Indian poem of *The Messenger of the Clouds*, to a picture of the beginning of the rainy season, which I sketched* in South America, at a period when Kalidasa's *Meghaduta* was not known to me even through the translation of Chézy. The mysterious meteorological processes which take place in the atmosphere in the formation of vapors, in the form of the clouds, and in the luminous electric phenomena, are the same between the tropics in both continents; and the idealizing art, whose province it is to exalt reality into a picture, will lose none of its charm from the fact that the analyzing spirit of observation of a later age may have succeeded in confirming the truthfulness of an ancient and simply graphic delineation.

We now turn from the East Arians or Brahminical Indians, and the marked bent of their minds toward the contemplation of the picturesque beauties of nature,† to the West which then first showed itself in Germany. I take pleasure in recalling some admirable lines of Göthe's, which appeared in 1792:

"Willst du die Blüthe des frühen, die Früchte des späteren Jahres,
Willst du was reizt und entzückt, willst du, was sättigt und nährt.
Willst du den Himmel, die Erde mit einem Namen begreifen;
Nenn' ich Sakontala, Dich, und so ist alles gesagt."

The most recent German translation of this Indian drama is that by Otto Böhtlingk (Bonn, 1842), from the important original text discovered by Brockhaus.

* Humboldt (*Ueber Steppen und Wüsten*), in the *Ansichten der Natur*, 2te Ausgabe, 1826, bd. i., s. 33-37.

† In order to render more complete the small portion of the text which belongs to Indian literature, and to enable me (as I did before with relation to Greek and Roman literature) to indicate the different works referred to, I will here introduce some notices on the more general consideration of the love of nature evinced by Indian writers, and kindly communicated to me in manuscript by Herr Theodor Goldstücker, a distinguished and philosophical scholar thoroughly versed in Indian poetry:

"Among all the influences affecting the intellectual development of