

highly-gifted writers, even for centuries afterward, so, in like manner, did the discovery of America act in exercising a second and stronger influence on the western nations than that of the crusades. The tropical world, with all the luxuriance of its vegetation on the plains, with all the gradations of its varied organisms on the declivities of the Cordilleras, and with all the reminiscences of northern climates associated with the inhabited plateaux of Mexico, New Granada, and Quito, was now first revealed to the eyes of Europeans. Fancy, without whose aid no truly great work can succeed in the hands of man, lent a peculiar charm to the delineations of nature sketched by Columbus and Vespucci. The first of these discoverers is distinguished for his deep and earnest sentiment of religion, as we find exemplified in his description of the mild sky of Paria, and of the mass of water of the Orinoco, which he believed to flow from the eastern paradise, while the second is remarkable for the intimate acquaintance he evinces with the poets of ancient and modern times, as shown in his description of the Brazilian coast. The religious sentiment thus early evinced by Columbus became converted, with increasing years, and under the influence of the persecutions which he had to encounter, into a feeling of melancholy and morbid enthusiasm.

In the heroic ages of the Portuguese and Castilian races, it was not thirst for gold alone, as has been asserted from ignorance of the national character at that period, but rather a general spirit of daring, that led to the prosecution of distant voyages. The names of Hayti, Cubagua, and Darien acted on the imaginations of men in the beginning of the sixteenth century in the same manner as those of Tinian and Otaheite have done in more recent times, since Anson and Cook. If the narrations of far-distant lands then drew the youth of the Spanish peninsula, Flanders, Lombardy, and Southern Germany, to rally around the victorious standard of an imperial leader on the ridges of the Andes, or the burning plains of Uraba and Coro, the milder influence of a more modern civilization, when all portions of the earth's surface were more generally accessible, gave other motives and directions to the restless longing for distant travels. A passionate love of the study of nature, which originated chiefly in the north, glowed in the breast of all; intellectual expansion of views became associated with enlargement of knowledge; while the poetic and sentimental tone of feeling, peculiar to the epoch of which we speak, has, since the close of the last century, been identi-