

together with useful products of commerce, are alone noticed. The episode of the magic island\* certainly presents the most charming pictures of natural scenery, but the vegetation, as befits an *Ilha de Venus*, is composed of "myrtles, citrons, fragrant lemon-trees, and pomegranates," all belonging to the climate of Southern Europe. We find a greater sense of enjoyment from the littoral woods, and more attention devoted to the forms of the vegetable kingdom, in the writings of the greatest navigator of his day, Columbus; but then, it must be admitted, while the latter notes down in his journal the vivid impressions of each day as they arose, the poem of Camoens was written to do honor to the great achievements of the Portuguese. The poet, accustomed to harmonious sounds, could not either have felt much disposed to borrow from the language of the natives strange names of plants, or to have interwoven them in the description of landscapes, which were designed as back-grounds for the main subjects of which he treated.

By the side of the image of the knightly Camoens has often been placed the equally romantic one of a Spanish warrior, who served under the banners of the great Emperor in Peru and Chili, and sang in those distant climes the deeds in which he had himself taken so honorable a share. But in the whole epic poem of the *Araucana*, by Don Alonso de Ercilla, the aspect of volcanoes covered with eternal snow, of torrid sylvan valleys, and of arms of the sea extending far into the land, has not been productive of any descriptions which may be regarded as graphical. The exaggerated praise which Cervantes takes occasion to expend on Ercilla in the ingenious satirical review of Don Quixote's books, is probably merely the result of the rivalry subsisting between the Spanish and Italian schools of poetry, but it would almost appear to have deceived Voltaire and many modern critics. The *Araucana* is certainly penetrated by a noble feeling of nationality. The description of the manners of a wild race, who perish in struggling for the liberty of their country, is not devoid of animation, but Ercilla's style is not smooth or easy, while it is overloaded with proper names, and is devoid of all trace of poetic enthusiasm.†

\* Canto ix., est. 51-63. (Consult Ludwig Kriegk, *Schriften zur allgemeinen Erdkunde*, 1840, s. 338.) The whole *Ilha de Venus* is an allegorical fable, as is clearly shown in est. 89; but the beginning of the relation of Dom Manoel's dream describes an Indian mountain and forest district (canto iv., est. 70).

† A predilection for the old literature of Spain, and for the enchanting region in which the *Araucana* of Alonso de Ercilla y Zuñiga was