

ment of enjoyment derived from communion with nature, and consequently, also, to give impetus to its inseparable accompaniment, the love of distant travels, we may mention in France Jean Jacques Rousseau, Buffon, and Bernardin de St. Pierre, and, exceptionally to include a still living author, I would name my old friend Auguste de Chateaubriand;* in Great Britain, the intellectual Playfair; and in Germany, Cook's companion on his second voyage of circumnavigation, the eloquent George Forster, who was endowed with so peculiarly happy a faculty of generalization in the study of nature.

It would be foreign to the present work were I to undertake to inquire into the characteristics of these writers, and investigate the causes which at one time lend a charm and grace to the descriptions of natural scenery contained in their universally-diffused works, and at another disturb the impressions which they were designed to call forth; but as a traveler, who has derived the greater portion of his knowledge from immediate observation, I may perhaps be permitted to introduce a few scattered remarks on a recent, and, on the whole, but little cultivated branch of literature. Buffon—great and earnest as he was—simultaneously embracing a knowledge of the planetary structures, of organization, and of the laws of light and magnetic forces, and far more profoundly versed in physical investigations than his cotemporaries supposed, shows more artificial elaboration of style and more rhetorical pomp than individualizing truthfulness when he passes from the description of the habits of animals to the delineation of natural scenery, inclining the mind to the reception of exalted impressions rather than seizing upon the imagination by presenting a visible picture of actual nature, or conveying to the senses the echo, as it were, of reality. Even throughout the most justly celebrated of his works in this department of literature, we instinctively feel that he could never have left Central Europe, and that he is deficient in personal observation of the tropical world, which he believes he is correctly describing. But that which we most especially miss in the writings of the great naturalist is a harmonious mode of connecting the representation of nature with the expression of awakened feelings; he is, in fact, deficient in almost all that flows from the mysterious analogy existing between the mental emotions of the mind and the phenomena of the perceptive world.

* [This distinguished writer died July 4th of the present year (1848).]—*Tr.*