

with nature in their most primitive conditions. In carrying out his design, he journeyed far into the woody wilderness that surrounds the Orinoco, and found himself among tribes of wild Indians whose very names were unknown to the civilized world. And yet among even these forgotten races of the human family he found the tradition of the Deluge still fresh and distinct ; not confined to single tribes, but general among the scattered nations of that great region, and intertwined with curious additions, suggestive of the inventions of classic mythology in the Old World. "The belief in a great deluge," we find him saying, "is not confined to one nation singly,—the Tamanacs : it makes part of a system of historical tradition, of which we find scattered notions among the Maypures of the great cataracts ; among the Indians of the Rio Erevato, which runs into the Caura ; and among almost all the tribes of the Upper Orinoco. When the Tamanacs are asked how the human race survived this great deluge,—‘the *age of water*’ of the Mexicans,—they say, a man and woman saved themselves on a high mountain called Tamanacu, situated on the banks of the Asiveru, and, *casting behind them over their heads* the fruits of the mauritia palm-tree, they saw the seeds contained in these fruits produce men and women, who re-peopled the earth. Thus," adds the philosophic traveller, "we find in all simplicity, among nations now in a savage state, a tradition which the Greeks embellished with all the charms of imagination." The resemblance is certainly very striking. "Quit the temple," said the Oracle to Deucalion and Pyrrha, when they had consulted it, after the great deluge, regarding the mode in which the earth was to be re-peopled,—“veil your heads, unloose your girdles, and throw behind your backs the bones of your grandmother.” Rightly interpreting what seemed darkest and most obscure in the reply, they took “stones of the earth,” and, casting them behind them, the stones flung