

he communicates the results of his researches, and for the frank and generous affability which induced him to communicate his treasures of natural history.

It is in the collection of this bold and patient naturalist that we behold the different shades of colour, often opposite, that cover birds from their state of infancy to perfect growth, as well as the no less striking disparities which exist between the male and female of certain species. It is in his magnificent work,* that the beauty of the figures answers the interest of the discoveries, and the conclusion of which is too tardy in its appearance for those who know the first volumes, and who are eager for the most interesting and the most complete details upon the habits of many, hitherto unknown, birds, in which he has, at once, brought their history to a point which has hardly been attained in that of the most familiar birds.

Entrusted to write the history of birds before it was possible to consult all the records that are preserved in the archives of nature, I shall often be compelled to use conjecture instead of fact; but I will present them at least as conjectures, and will cautiously avoid to give my own feeble conceptions as the
sublime

* The Natural history of African birds.