

great mass of stagnant water. The causes of this partial motion of the clouds are probably very various; we may suppose them to arise from some impulsion at a great distance; from the slight inequalities of the soil, which reflects in a greater or less degree the radiant heat; from a difference of temperature kept up by some chemical action; or perhaps from a strong electric charge of the vesicular vapours.

As we approached the town of Orotava, we met great flocks of canaries.* These birds, well known in Europe, were in general uniformly green. Some, however, had a yellow tinge on their backs; their note was the same as that of the tame canary. It is nevertheless remarked, that those which have been taken in the island of the Great Canary, and in the islet of Monte Clara, near Lancerota, have a louder and at the same time a more harmonious song. In every zone, among birds of the same species, each flock has its peculiar note. The yellow canaries are a variety, which has taken birth in Europe; and those we saw in cages at Orotava and Santa Cruz had been bought at Cadiz, and in other ports of Spain. But of all the birds of the Canary Islands, that which has the most heart-soothing song is unknown in Europe. It is the capirote, which no effort has succeeded in taming, so sacred to his soul is liberty. I have stood listening in admiration of his soft and melodious warbling, in a garden at Orotava; but I have never seen him sufficiently near to ascertain to what family he belongs. As to the parrots, which were supposed to have been seen at the period of captain Cook's abode at Teneriffe, they never existed but in the narratives of a few travellers, who have copied from each other. Neither parrots nor monkeys inhabit the Canary Islands; and though in the New Continent the former migrate as far as North Carolina, I doubt whether in the Old they have ever been met with beyond the 28th degree of north latitude.

Toward the close of day we reached the port of Orotava, where we received the unexpected intelligence that the Pizarro would not set sail till the 24th or 25th. If we could have calculated on this delay, we should either have lengthened

* *Fringilla Canaria*. La Caille relates, in the narrative of his voyage to the Cape, that on Salvage Island these canaries are so abundant, that you cannot walk there in a certain season without breaking their eggs.