

people who attend at the ferries have a stupid kind of sluggishness in their manner, which is very provoking when you are in haste. At present I did not feel it, for, scrambling up the cliffs, my eye followed the river as it rolled between the grand rocky banks; and, to complete the scenery, they were covered with firs and pines, through which the wind rustled as if it were lulling itself to sleep with the declining sun.

Behold us now in Norway; and I could not avoid feeling surprise at observing the difference in the manners of the inhabitants of the two sides of the river, for everything shows that the Norwegians are more industrious and more opulent. The Swedes (for neighbours are seldom the best friends) accuse the Norwegians of knavery, and they retaliate by bringing a charge of hypocrisy against the Swedes. Local circumstances probably render both unjust, speaking from their feelings rather than reason; and is this astonishing when we consider that most writers of travels have done the same, whose works have served as materials for the compilers of universal histories? All are eager to give a national character, which is rarely just, because they do not discriminate the natural from the acquired difference. The natural, I believe, on due consideration, will be found to consist merely in the degree of vivacity, or thoughtfulness, pleasure, or pain, inspired by the climate, whilst the varieties which the forms of government, including religion, produce are much more numerous and unstable.

A people have been characterised as stupid by nature;