

A Voyage to the Isle of France, the Isle of Bourbon, and the Cape of Good Hope: With Observations and Reflections upon Nature and Mankind (Cambridge Library Collection - Maritime Exploration)

Bernardin de Saint-Pierre

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Already a widely travelled man, Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-1814) set sail again from his native France in 1768 on a voyage which took him via the Indian Ocean islands now known as Mauritius and Réunion. This collection of his letters covers many aspects of the journey, from the conditions aboard ship to the plants, animals and peoples he encountered. The account is interspersed with harsh criticism of European colonialism and the cruelties of the island slave trade. A friend and follower of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Bernardin celebrated nature and simple living in his later work. His novel Paul et Virginie (1788), a tale of youthful innocence unspoilt by Western society, takes place on Mauritius. First published in 1773, the present work is known to have accompanied Darwin on his famous voyage aboard the Beagle. It is reissued here in the English translation that appeared in 1800.



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