

during the journey that mild temperature of the spring, which in so southern a latitude usually occurs during March and April. The snow still covered the lofty granitic tops of the Guadarama; but in the deep vallies of Galicia, which resemble the most picturesque spots of Switzerland and the Tyrol, cistuses loaded with flowers; and arborescent heaths clothed every rock. We quitted without regret the elevated plain of the two Castiles, which is everywhere devoid of vegetation, and where the severity of the winter's cold is followed by the overwhelming heat of summer. From the few observations I personally made, the interior of Spain forms a vast plain, elevated three hundred toises (five hundred and eighty-four metres) above the level of the ocean, is covered with secondary formations, grit-stone, gypsum, sal-gem, and the calcareous stone of Jura. The climate of the Castiles is much colder than that of Toulon and Genoa; its mean temperature scarcely rises to  $15^{\circ}$  of the centigrade thermometer.

We are astonished to find that, in the latitude of Calabria, Thessaly, and Asia Minor, orange-trees do not flourish in the open air. The central elevated plain is encircled by a low and narrow zone, where the chamærops, the date-tree, the sugar-cane, the banana, and a number of plants common to Spain and the north of Africa, vegetate on several spots, without suffering from the rigours of winter. From the 36th to 40th degrees of latitude, the medium temperature of this zone is from 17 to 20 degrees; and by a concurrence of circumstances, which it would be too long to explain, this favoured region has become the principal seat of industry and intellectual improvement.

When, in the kingdom of Valencia, we ascend from the shore of the Mediterranean towards the lofty plains of La Mancha and the Castiles, we seem to discern, far inland, from the lengthened declivities, the ancient coast of the Peninsula. This curious phenomenon recalls the traditions of the Samothracians, and other historical testimonies, according to which it is supposed that the irruption of the waters through the Dardanelles, augmenting the basin of the Mediterranean, rent and overflowed the southern part of Europe. If we admit that these traditions owe their origin, not to mere geological reveries, but to the remembrance of some ancient catastrophe,