

drying our plants, and sketching those that appeared to form new genera. Unfortunately the misty atmosphere of a valley, where the surrounding forests fill the air with an enormous quantity of vapour, was unfavourable to astronomical observations. I spent a part of the nights waiting to take advantage of the moment when some star should be visible between the clouds, near its passage over the meridian. I often shivered with cold, though the thermometer only sunk to 16° , which is the temperature of the day in our climates towards the end of September. The instruments remained set up in the court of the convent for several hours, yet I was almost always disappointed in my expectations. Some good observations of Fomalhaut and of Deneb have given $10^{\circ} 10' 14''$ as the latitude of Caripe; which proves that the position indicated in the maps of Caulin is $18'$ wrong, and in that of Arrowsmith $14'$.

Observations of corresponding altitudes of the sun having given me the true time, within about $2''$, I was enabled to determine the magnetic variation with precision, at noon. It was, on the 20th of September, 1799, $3^{\circ} 15' 30''$ north-east; consequently $0^{\circ} 58' 15''$ less than at Cumana. If we attend to the influence of the horary variations, which in these countries do not in general exceed $8'$, we shall find, that at considerable distances the variation changes less rapidly than is usually supposed. The dip of the needle was 42.75° , centesimal division, and the number of oscillations, expressing the intensity of the magnetic forces, rose to 229 in ten minutes.

The vexation of seeing the stars disappear in a misty sky was the only disappointment we felt in the valley of Caripe. The aspect of this spot presents a character at once wild and tranquil, gloomy and attractive. In the solitude of these mountains we are perhaps less struck by the new impressions we receive at every step, than with the marks of resemblance we trace in climates the most remote from each other. The hills by which the convent is backed, are crowned with palm-trees and arborescent ferns. In the evenings, when the sky denotes rain, the air resounds with the monotonous howling of the alouate apes, which resembles the distant sound of wind when it shakes the forest. Yet amid these strange sounds, these wild forms of plants, and these prodigies of a new world, nature everywhere speaks to man in a voice