

seemed stifling, though the thermometer rose only to 26°. The breeze, which generally refreshed the air from eight or nine o'clock in the evening, was no longer felt. The atmosphere was burning hot, and the parched and dusty ground was cracked on every side. On the 4th of November, about two in the afternoon, large clouds of peculiar blackness enveloped the high mountains of the Brigantine and the Tataraqual. They extended by degrees as far as the zenith. About four in the afternoon thunder was heard over our heads, at an immense height, not regularly rolling, but with a hollow and often interrupted sound. At the moment of the strongest electric explosion, at 4<sup>h</sup> 12', there were two shocks of earthquake, which followed each other at the interval of fifteen seconds. The people ran into the streets, uttering loud cries. M. Bonpland, who was leaning over a table examining plants, was almost thrown on the floor. I felt the shock very strongly, though I was lying in a hammock. Its direction was from north to south, which is rare at Cumana. Slaves, who were drawing water from a well more than eighteen or twenty feet deep, near the river Manzanares, heard a noise like the explosion of a strong charge of gunpowder. The noise seemed to come from the bottom of the well; a very curious phenomenon, though very common in most of the countries of America which are exposed to earthquakes.

A few minutes before the first shock there was a very violent blast of wind, followed by electrical rain falling in great drops. I immediately tried the atmospherical electricity by the electrometer of Volta. The small balls separated four lines; the electricity often changed from positive to negative, as is the case during storms, and, in the north of Europe, even sometimes in a fall of snow. The sky remained cloudy, and the blast of wind was followed by a dead calm, which lasted all night. The sunset presented a picture of extraordinary magnificence. The thick veil of clouds was rent asunder, as in shreds, quite near the horizon; the sun appeared at 12 degrees of altitude on a sky of indigo-blue. Its disk was enormously enlarged, distorted, and undulated toward the edges. The clouds were gilded; and fascicles of divergent rays, reflect