

said that the air has acquired salubrity since trees have been planted round a small lake, the emanations of which were dreaded, and which is now less exposed to the ardour of the sun. To the west of Caravalleda, a wall of bare rock again projects forward in the direction of the sea, but it has little extent. After having passed it, we immediately discovered the pleasantly situated village of Macuto; the black rocks of La Guayra, studded with batteries rising in tiers one over another; and in the misty distance, Cabo Blanco, a long promontory with conical summits, and of dazzling whiteness. Cocoa-trees border the shore, and give it, under that burning sky, an appearance of fertility.

I landed in the port of La Guayra, and the same evening made preparations for transporting my instruments to Caracas. Having been recommended not to sleep in the town, where the yellow fever had been raging only a few weeks previously, I fixed my lodging in a house on a little hill, above the village of Maiquetia, a place more exposed to fresh winds than La Guayra. I reached Caracas on the 21st of November, four days sooner than M. Bonpland, who, with the other travellers on the land journey, had suffered greatly from the rain and the inundations of the torrents, between Capaya and Curiepe.

Before proceeding further, I will here subjoin a description of La Guayra, and the extraordinary road which leads from thence to the town of Caracas, adding thereto all the observations made by M. Bonpland and myself, in an excursion to Cabo Blanco about the end of January 1800.

La Guayra is rather a roadstead than a port. The sea is constantly agitated, and ships suffer at once by the violence of the wind, the tideways, and the bad anchorage. The lading is taken in with difficulty, and the swell prevents the embarkation of mules here, as at New Barcelona and Porto Cabello. The free mulattoes and negroes, who carry the cacao on board the ships, are a class of men remarkable for muscular strength. They waded up to their waists through the water; and it is remarkable that they are never attacked by the sharks, so common in this harbour. This fact seems connected with what I have often observed within the tropics, with respect to other classes of animals which live in society, for instance monkeys and crocodiles. In the Mis-