

heights, formed intermediary spaces between the eye and the lower regions. By an illusion easily explained, they enlarged the scene, and rendered it more majestic. Trees and dwellings appeared at intervals through the openings, which were left by the clouds when driven on by the winds, and rolling over one another. Objects then appear at a greater depth than when seen through a pure and uniformly serene air. On the declivity of the mountains of Mexico, at the same height (between Las Trancas and Xalapa), the sea is twelve leagues distant, and the view of the coast is confused; while on the road from La Guayra to Caracas we command the plains (the *tierra caliente*), as from the top of a tower. How extraordinary must be the impression created by this prospect on natives of the inland parts of the country, who behold the sea and ships for the first time from this point.

I determined by direct observations the latitude of La Venta, that I might be enabled to give a more precise idea of the distance of the coasts. The latitude is $10^{\circ} 33' 9''$. Its longitude appeared to me by the chronometer, nearly $2^{\circ} 47''$ west of the town of Caracas. I found the dip of the needle at this height to be 41.75° , and the intensity of the magnetic forces equal to two hundred and thirty-four oscillations. From the Venta, called also La Venta Grande, to distinguish it from three or four small inns formerly established along the road, but now destroyed, there is still an ascent of one hundred and fifty toises to Guayavo. This is nearly the most lofty point of the road.

Whether we gaze on the distant horizon of the sea, or turn our eyes south-eastward, in the direction of the serrated ridge of rocks, which seems to unite the Cumbre and the Silla, though separated from them by the ravine (quebrada) of Tocume, everywhere we admire the grand character of the landscape. From Guayavo we proceed for half an hour over a smooth table-land, covered with alpine plants. This part of the way, on account of its windings, is called Las Vueltas. We find a little higher up the barracks or magazines of flour, which were constructed in a spot of cool temperature by the Guipuzcoa Company, when they had the exclusive monopoly of the trade of Caracas, and supplied that place with provision. On the road to Las Vueltas we see for the first time.