

occultations of the satellites of Jupiter. I had previously determined the instant of the observation, but we missed them all, owing to some error of calculation in the *Connaissance des Temps*. The apparent time had been mistaken for mean time.

I was much disappointed by this accident; and after having observed at the foot of the mountain the intensity of the magnetic forces, before sunrise, we set out at five in the morning, accompanied by slaves carrying our instruments. Our party consisted of eighteen persons, and we all walked one behind another, in a narrow path, traced on a steep acclivity, covered with turf. We endeavoured first to reach a hill, which towards the south-east seems to form a promontory of the Silla. It is connected with the body of the mountain by a narrow dyke, called by the shepherds the Gate, or Puerta de la Silla. We reached this dyke about seven. The morning was fine and cool, and the sky till then seemed to favour our excursion. I saw that the thermometer kept a little below  $14^{\circ}$  ( $11.2^{\circ}$  Reaum.). The barometer showed that we were already six hundred and eighty-five toises above the level of the sea, that is, nearly eighty toises higher than at the Venta, where we enjoyed so magnificent a view of the coast. Our guides thought that it would require six hours more to reach the summit of the Silla.

We crossed a narrow dyke of rocks covered with turf; which led us from the promontory of the Puerta to the ridge of the great mountain. Here the eye looks down on two valleys, or rather narrow defiles, filled with thick vegetation. On the right is perceived the ravine which descends between the two peaks to the farm of Muñoz; on the left we see the defile of Chacaito, with its waters flowing out near the farm of Gallegos. The roaring of the cascades is heard, while the water is unseen, being concealed by thick groves of erythrina, clusia, and the Indian fig-tree.\* Nothing can be more picturesque, in a climate where so many plants have broad, large, shining, and coriaceous leaves, than the aspect of trees when the spectator looks down from a great height above them, and when they are illumined by the almost perpendicular rays of the sun.

\* *Ficus nymphaeifolia*, *Erythrina mitis*. Two fine species of mimosa are found in the same valley; *Inga fastuosa*, and *I. cinerea*.