

been recognized among those that were gathered by M. Bonpland and myself on the cold table-lands of Mexico, along the burning shores of the Orinoco, and in the southern hemisphere on the Andes and Quito.\* How can we conceive the migration of plants through regions now covered by the ocean? How have the germs of organic life, which resemble each other in their appearance, and even in their internal structure, unfolded themselves at unequal distances from the poles and from the surface of the seas, wherever places so distant present any analogy of temperature? Notwithstanding the influence exercised on the vital functions of plants by the pressure of the air, and the greater or less extinction of light, heat, unequally distributed in different seasons of the year, must doubtless be considered as the most powerful stimulus of vegetation.

The number of identical species in the two continents and in the two hemispheres is far less than the statements of early travellers would lead us to believe. The lofty mountains of equinoctial America have certainly plantains, valerians, arenarias, ranunculuses, medlars, oaks, and pines, which from their physiognomy we might confound with those of Europe; but they are all specifically different. When nature does not present the same species, she loves to repeat the same genera. Neighbouring species are often placed at enormous distances from each other, in the low regions of the temperate zone, and on the alpine heights of the equator. At other times (and the Silla of Caracas affords a striking example of this phenomenon), they are not the European genera, which have sent species to people like colonists the mountains of the torrid zone, but genera of the same tribe, difficult to be distinguished by their appearance, which take the place of each other in different latitudes.

The mountains of New Grenada surrounding the table-lands of Bogotá are more than two hundred leagues distant from those of Caracas, and yet the Silla, the only elevated peak in the chain of low mountains, presents those singular groupings of befarias with purple flowers, of

\* *Cyperus mucronatus*, *Poa eragrostis*, *Festuca myurus*, *Andropogon avenaceus*, *Lapago racemosa*. (See the *Nova Genera et Species Plantarum*, vol. i. p. xxv.)