

and other European fruits for the market of Caracas. Between Antimano and Ajuntas we crossed the Rio Guayra seventeen times. The road is very fatiguing; yet, instead of making a new one, it would perhaps be better to change the bed of the river, which loses a great quantity of water by the combined effects of filtration and evaporation. Each sinuosity forms a marsh more or less extensive. This loss of water is to be regretted in a province, nearly all the cultivated portions of which are extremely dry. The rains are much less frequent and less violent in this place than in the interior of New Andalusia, at Cumanacoa, and on the banks of the Guarapiche. Many of the mountains of Caracas enter the region of the clouds; but the strata of primitive rocks dip at an angle of  $70^{\circ}$  or  $80^{\circ}$ , and generally to northwest, so that the waters are either lost in the interior of the earth, or gush out in copious springs not southward but northward of the mountains of the coast of Niguatar, Avila, and Mariara. The rising of the gneiss and mica-slate strata to the south appears to me to explain in a considerable degree the extreme humidity of the coast. In the interior of the province we meet with portions of land, two or three leagues square, in which there are no springs; consequently sugar-cane, indigo, and coffee, grow only in places where running waters can be made to supply artificial irrigation during very dry weather. The early colonists imprudently destroyed the forests. Evaporation is enormous on a stony soil surrounded with rocks, which radiate heat on every side. The mountains of the coast, like a wall, extending east and west from Cape Codera toward Point Tucacas, prevent the humid air of the shore (that is to say, those inferior strata of the atmosphere resting immediately on the sea, and dissolving the largest proportion of water) from penetrating to the islands. There are few openings, few ravines, which, like those of Catia or of Tipe, lead from the coast to the high longitudinal valleys, and there is no bed of a great river, no gulf allowing the sea to flow inland, spreading moisture by abundant evaporation. In the eighth and tenth degrees of latitude, in regions where the clouds do not, as it were, skim the surface of the soil, many trees are stripped of their leaves in the months of January and February; not by the sinking of the temperature as in