

not, by the mere view of the soil, without digging a large trench in the direction of the vein, judge of the existence of the mine; I was compelled to yield to the desire of my hosts. For twenty years past the overseer's waistcoat had been the subject of conversation in the country. Gold extracted from the bosom of the earth is far more alluring in the eyes of the vulgar, than that which is the produce of agricultural industry, favoured by the fertility of the soil, and the mildness of the climate.

North-west of the Hacienda del Tuy, in the northern range of the chain of the coast, we find a deep ravine, called the *Quebrada Seca*, because the torrent, by which it was formed, loses its waters through the crevices of the rock, before it reaches the extremity of the ravine. The whole of this mountainous country is covered with thick vegetation. We there found the same verdure as had charmed us by its freshness in the mountains of Buenavista and Las Lagunetas, wherever the ground rises as high as the region of the clouds, and where the vapours of the sea have free access. In the plains, on the contrary, many trees are stripped of a part of their leaves during the winter; and when we descend into the valley of the Tuy, we are struck with the almost hibernal aspect of the country. The dryness of the air is such that the hygrometer of Deluc keeps day and night between 36° and 40° . At a distance from the river scarcely any huras or piper-trees extend their foliage over thickets destitute of verdure. This seems owing to the dryness of the air, which attains its maximum in the month of February; and not, as the European planters assert, "to the seasons of Spain, of which the empire extends as far as the torrid zone." It is only plants transported from one hemisphere to the other, which, in their organic functions, in the development of their leaves and flowers, still retain their affinity to a distant climate: faithful to their habits, they follow for a long time the periodical changes of their native hemisphere. In the province of Venezuela the trees stripped of their foliage begin to renew their leaves nearly a month before the rainy season. It is probable, that at this period the electrical equilibrium of the air is already disturbed, and the atmosphere, although not yet clouded, becomes gradually more