

fine plantation belonging to Count Tovar, where we arrived on the evening of the fourteenth of February. The valley, which gradually widens, is bordered with hills of calcareous tufa, called here *tierra blanca*. The scientific men of the country have made several attempts to calcine this earth, mistaking it for the porcelain earth proceeding from decomposed strata of feldspar. We stayed some hours with a very intelligent family, named Ustariz, at Concesion. Their house, which contains a collection of choice books, stands on an eminence, and is surrounded by plantations of coffee and sugar-cane. A grove of balsam-trees (balsamo*) gives coolness and shade to this spot. It was gratifying to observe the great number of scattered houses in the valley inhabited by freedmen. In the Spanish colonies, the laws, the institutions, and the manners, are more favourable to the liberty of the negroes than in other European settlements.

San Mateo, Turmero, and Maracay, are charming villages, where everything denotes the comfort of the inhabitants. We seemed to be transported to the most industrious districts of Catalonia. Near San Mateo we find the last fields of wheat, and the last mills with horizontal hydraulic wheels. A harvest of twenty for one was expected; and, as if that produce were but moderate, I was asked whether corn yielded more in Prussia and in Poland. By an error generally prevalent under the tropics, the produce of grain is supposed to degenerate in advancing towards the equator, and harvests are believed to be more abundant in northern climates. Since calculations have been made on the progress of agriculture in the different zones, and on the temperatures under the influence of which corn will flourish, it has been found that, beyond the latitude of 45° , the produce of wheat is nowhere so considerable as on the northern coasts of Africa, and on the table-lands of New Grenada, Peru, and Mexico. Without comparing the mean temperature of the whole year, but only the mean temperature of the season which embraces the corn cycle of vegetation, we find for three months of summer,† in the north of Europe, from 15° to 19° ; in Bar-

* *Amyris elata*.

† The mean heat of the summers of Scotland in the environs of