

the more aqueous liquid, are elastic, almost like caoutchouc; but they undergo, in time, the same phenomena of putrefaction as gelatine. The people call the coagulum that separates by the contact of the air, cheese. This coagulum grows sour in the space of five or six days, as I observed in the small portions which I carried to Nueva Valencia. The milk contained in a stopped phial, had deposited a little coagulum; and, far from becoming fetid, it exhaled constantly a balsamic odour. The fresh juice mixed with cold water was scarcely coagulated at all; but on the contact of nitric acid the separation of the viscous membranes took place. We sent two bottles of this milk to M. Fourcroy at Paris: in one it was in its natural state, and in the other, mixed with a certain quantity of carbonate of soda. The French consul residing in the island of St. Thomas, undertook to convey them to him.

The extraordinary tree of which we have been speaking appears to be peculiar to the Cordillera of the coast, particularly from Barbula to the lake of Maracaybo. Some stocks of it exist near the village of San Mateo; and, according to M. Bredemeyer, whose travels have so much enriched the fine conservatories of Schönbrunn and Vienna, in the valley of Caucagua, three days journey east of Caracas. This naturalist found, like us, that the vegetable milk of the *paló de vaca* had an agreeable taste and an aromatic smell. At Caucagua, the natives call the tree that furnishes this nourishing juice, 'the milk-tree' (*arbol del leche*). They profess to recognize, from the thickness and colour of the foliage, the trunks that yield the most juice; as the herdsman distinguishes, from external signs, a good milch-cow. No botanist has hitherto known the existence of this plant. It seems, according to M. Kunth, to belong to the sapota family. Long after my return to Europe, I found in the Description of the East Indies by Laet, a Dutch traveller, a passage that seems to have some relation to the cow-tree. "There exist trees," says Laet,* "in the province of Cu-

* "Inter arbores quæ sponte hic passim nascuntur, memorantur a scriptoribus Hispanis quædam quæ lacteum quemdam liquorem fundunt, qui durus admodum evadit instar gummi, et suavem odorem de se fundit; aliæ quæ liquorem quemdam edunt, instar lactis coagulati, qui in cibis ab ipsis usurpatur sine noxa." (Among the trees growing here, it is re-