

The earth there was confounded with the sky. Through the dry mist and strata of vapour the trunks of palm-trees were seen from afar, stripped of their foliage and their verdant summits, and looking like the masts of a ship descried upon the horizon.

There is something awful, as well as sad and gloomy, in the uniform aspect of these steppes. Everything seems motionless; scarcely does a small cloud, passing across the zenith, and denoting the approach of the rainy season, cast its shadow on the earth. I know not whether the first aspect of the Llanos excite less astonishment than that of the chain of the Andes. Mountainous countries, whatever may be the absolute elevation of the highest summits, have an analogous physiognomy; but we accustom ourselves with difficulty to the view of the Llanos of Venezuela and Casanare, to that of the Pampas of Buenos Ayres and of Chaco, which recal to mind incessantly, and during journeys of twenty or thirty days, the smooth surface of the ocean. I had seen the plains or llanos of La Mancha in Spain, and the heaths (ericeta) that extend from the extremity of Jutland, through Luneburg and Westphalia, to Belgium. These last are really steppes, and, during several ages, only small portions of them have yielded to cultivation; but the plains of the west and north of Europe present only a feeble image of the immense llanos of South America. It is in the south-east of our continent, in Hungary, between the Danube and the Theiss; in Russia, between the Borysthenes, the Don, and the Volga, that we find those vast pastures, which seem to have been levelled by a long abode of the waters, and which meet the horizon on every side. The plains of Hungary, where I traversed them on the frontiers of Germany, between Presburg and Edenburg, strike the imagination of the traveller by the constant mirage; but their greatest extent is more to the east, between Czegled, Debreczin, and Tittel. There they present the appearance of a vast ocean of verdure, having only two outlets, one near Gran and Waitzen, the other between Belgrade and Widdin.

The different quarters of the world have been supposed to be characterized by the remark, that Europe has its heaths, Asia its steppes, Africa its deserts, and America its savannahs; but by this distinction, contrasts are established that