

and we again walked three quarters of an hour without finding the pool. We sometimes thought we saw fire on the horizon; but it was the light of the rising stars enlarged by the vapours. After having wandered a long time in the savannah, we resolved to seat ourselves beneath the trunk of a palm-tree, in a spot perfectly dry, surrounded by short grass; for the fear of water-snakes is always greater than that of jaguars among Europeans recently disembarked. We could not flatter ourselves that our guides, of whom we knew the insuperable indolence, would come in search of us in the savannah before they had prepared their food and finished their repast. Whilst somewhat perplexed by the uncertainty of our situation, we were agreeably affected by hearing from afar the sound of a horse advancing towards us. The rider was an Indian, armed with a lance, who had just made the *rodeo*, or round, in order to collect the cattle within a determinate space of ground. The sight of two white men, who said they had lost their way, led him at first to suspect some trick. We found it difficult to inspire him with confidence; he at last consented to guide us to the farm of the Cayman, but without slackening the gentle trot of his horse. Our guides assured us that "they had already begun to be uneasy about us;" and, to justify this inquietude, they gave a long enumeration of persons who, having lost themselves in the Llanos, had been found nearly exhausted. It may be supposed that the danger is imminent only to those who lose themselves far from any habitation, or who, having been stripped by robbers, as has happened of late years, have been fastened by the body and hands to the trunk of a palm-tree.

In order to escape as much as possible from the heat of the day, we set off at two in the morning, with the hope of reaching Calabozo before noon, a small but busy trading-town, situated in the midst of the Llanos. The aspect of the country was still the same. There was no moonlight; but the great masses of nebulae that spot the southern sky enlighten, as they set, a part of the terrestrial horizon. The solemn spectacle of the starry vault, seen in its immense expanse;—the cool breeze which blows over the plain during the night:—the waving motion of the grass, wherever it has attained any height; everything recalled to our minds the