

same formation as that of Guire, on the coast of Paria, which contains sulphur? or do the masses of this latter substance, found in the valley of Buen Pastor and on the banks of the Orinoco, belong, with the argillaceous gypsum of the Llanos, to a secondary formation much more recent.

These questions are very interesting in the study of the relative antiquity of rocks, which is the principal basis of geology. I know not of any salt-deposits in the Llanos. Horned cattle prosper here without those famous *bareros*, or muriatiferous lands, which abound in the Pampas of Buenos Ayres.*

After having wandered for a long time, and without any traces of a road, in the desert savannahs of the Mesa de Pavones, we were agreeably surprised when we came to a solitary farm, the Hato de Alfa Gracia, surrounded with gardens and basins of limpid water. Hedges of bead-trees encircled groups of *icacoos* laden with fruit. Farther on we passed the night near the small village of San Geronymo del Guayaval, founded by Capuchin missionaries. It is situated near the banks of the Rio Guarico, which falls into the Apure. I visited the missionary, who had no other habitation than his church, not having yet built a house. He was a young man, and he received us in the most obliging manner, giving us all the information we desired. His village, or to use the word established among the monks, his Mission, was not easy to govern. The founder, who had not hesitated to establish for his own profit a *pulperia*, in other words, to sell bananas and *guarapo* in the church itself, had shown himself to be not very nice in the choice of the new colonists. Many marauders of the Llanos had settled at Guayaval, because the inhabitants of a Mission are exempt from the authority of secular law. Here, as in Australia, it cannot be expected that good colonists will be formed before the second or third generation.

We passed the Guarico, and encamped in the savannahs south of Guayaval. Enormous bats, no doubt of the tribe of *Phyllostomas*, hovered as usual over our hammocks during a great part of the night. Every moment they seemed to be about to fasten on our faces. Early in the

* Known in North America under the name of 'salt-licks.'