

of the Orinoco, in the Rio Atabapo. Did they penetrate into the centre of equinoctial America from the mouth of the Amazon, by the communication of that river with the Rio Negro, the Cassiquiare, and the Orinoco? They are found here at all seasons, and nothing seems to denote that they make periodical migrations like salmon.

While the thunder rolled around us, the sky displayed only scattered clouds, that advanced slowly toward the zenith, and in an opposite direction. The hygrometer of Deluc was at 53° , the centigrade thermometer 23.7° , and Saussure's hygrometer 87.5° . The electrometer gave no sign of electricity. As the storm gathered, the blue of the sky changed at first to deep azure and then to grey. The vesicular vapour became visible, and the thermometer rose three degrees, as is almost always the case, within the tropics, from a cloudy sky which reflects the radiant heat of the soil. A heavy rain fell. Being sufficiently habituated to the climate not to fear the effect of tropical rains, we remained on the shore to observe the electrometer. I held it more than twenty minutes in my hand, six feet above the ground, and observed that in general the pith-balls separated only a few seconds before the lightning was seen. The separation was four lines. The electric charge remained the same during several minutes; and having time to determine the nature of the electricity, by approaching a stick of sealing-wax, I saw here what I had often observed on the ridge of the Andes during a storm, that the electricity of the atmosphere was first positive, then nil, and then negative. These oscillations from positive to negative were often repeated. Yet the electrometer constantly denoted, a little before the lightning, only E., or + E., and never — E. Towards the end of the storm the west wind blew very strongly. The clouds dispersed, and the thermometer sunk to 22° on account of the evaporation from the soil, and the freer radiation towards the sky.

I have entered into these details on the electric charge of the atmosphere because travellers in general confine themselves to the description of the impressions produced on a European newly arrived by the solemn spectacle of a tropical storm. In a country where the year is divided into