

they excite is not owing solely to the interest which the naturalist takes in the objects of his study, it is connected with a feeling common to all men who have been brought up in the habits of civilization. You find yourself in a new world, in the midst of untamed and savage nature. Now the jaguar,—the beautiful panther of America,—appears upon the shore; and now the hocco,* with its black plumage and tufted head, moves slowly along the sausos. Animals of the most different classes succeed each other. "*Esse como en el Paradiso*," "It is just as it was in Paradise," said our pilot, an old Indian of the Missions. Everything, indeed, in these regions recalls to mind the state of the primitive world with its innocence and felicity. But in carefully observing the manners of animals among themselves, we see that they mutually avoid and fear each other. The golden age has ceased; and in this Paradise of the American forests, as well as everywhere else, sad and long experience has taught all beings that benignity is seldom found in alliance with strength.

When the shore is of considerable breadth, the hedge of sauso remains at a distance from the river. In the intermediate space we see crocodiles, sometimes to the number of eight or ten, stretched on the sand. Motionless, with their jaws wide open, they repose by each other, without displaying any of those marks of affection observed in other animals living in society. The troop separates as soon as they quit the shore. It is, however, probably composed of one male only, and many females; for as M. Descourtils, who has so much studied the crocodiles of St. Domingo, observed to me, the males are rare, because they kill one another in fighting during the season of their loves. These monstrous creatures are so numerous, that throughout the whole course of the river we had almost at every instant five or six in view. Yet at this period the swelling of the Rio Apure was scarcely perceived; and consequently hundreds of crocodiles were still buried in the mud of the savannahs. About four in the afternoon we stopped to measure a dead crocodile which had been cast ashore. It was only sixteen feet eight inches long; some days after M. Bonpland found another, a male, twenty-two feet three inches long. In

* *Ceyx alector*, the peacock-pheasant; *C. pauxi*, the cashew-bird.