

Carichana. They had at their service a great number of slaves and servants (peones), to tend their herds. Nothing is now cultivated but a little cassava, and a few plantains. Such however is the fertility of the soil, that at Atures I counted on a single branch of a musa one hundred and eight fruits, four or five of which would almost have sufficed for a man's daily food. The culture of maize is entirely neglected, and the horses and cows have entirely disappeared. Near the *raudal*, a part of the village still bears the name of *Passo del ganado* (ford of the cattle), while the descendants of those very Indians whom the Jesuits had assembled in a mission, speak of horned cattle as of animals of a race now lost. In going up the Orinoco, toward San Carlos del Rio Negro, we saw the last cow at Carichana. The Fathers of the Observance, who now govern these vast countries, did not immediately succeed the Jesuits. During an interregnum of eighteen years, the missions were visited only from time to time, and by Capuchin monks. The agents of the secular government, under the title of Royal Commissioners, managed the *hatos* or farms of the Jesuits with culpable negligence. They killed the cattle for the sake of selling the hides. Many heifers were devoured by the jaguars, and a great number perished in consequence of wounds made by the bats of the *raudales*, which, though smaller, are far bolder than the bats of the Llanos. At the time of the expedition of the boundaries, horses from Encaramada, Carichana, and Atures, were conveyed as far as San Jose de Maravitanos, where, on the banks of the Rio Negro, the Portuguese could only procure them, after a long passage, and of a very inferior quality, by the rivers Amazon and Grand Para. Since the year 1795, the cattle of the Jesuits have entirely disappeared. There now remain as monuments of the ancient cultivation of these countries, and the active industry of the first missionaries, only a few trunks of the orange and tamarind, in the savannahs, surrounded by wild trees.

The tigers, or jaguars, which are less dangerous for the cattle than the bats, come into the village at Atures, and devour the swine of the poor Indians. The missionary related to us a striking instance of the familiarity of these animals, usually so ferocious. Some months before our