

region, where the mean heat is below 19° or 20°; and that, with few exceptions, they shun the *black waters*, and dry and unwooded spots.* The atmosphere swarms with them much more in the Upper than in the Lower Orinoco, because in the former the river is surrounded with thick forests on its banks, and the skirts of the forests are not separated from the river by a barren and extensive beach. The mosquitos diminish on the New Continent with the diminution of the water, and the destruction of the woods; but the effects of these changes are as slow as the progress of cultivation. The towns of Angostura, Nueva Barcelona, and Mompox, where from the want of police, the streets, the great squares, and the interior of court-yards are overgrown with brushwood, are sadly celebrated for the abundance of zancudos.

People born in the country, whether whites, mulattoes, negroes, or Indians, all suffer from the sting of these insects. But as cold does not render the north of Europe uninhabitable, so the mosquitos do not prevent men from dwelling in the countries where they abound, provided that, by their situation and government, they afford resources for agriculture and industry. The inhabitants pass their lives in complaining of the insufferable torment of the mosquitos, yet, notwithstanding these continual complaints, they seek, and even with a sort of predilection, the commercial towns of Mompox, Santa Marta, and Rio de la Hacha. Such is the force of habit in evils which we suffer every hour of the day, that the three missions of San Borja, Atures, and Esmeralda, where, to make use of an hyperbolical expression of the monks, "there are more mosquitos than air,"* would no doubt become flourishing towns, if the Orinoco afforded planters the same advantages for the exchange of produce, as the Ohio and the Lower Mississippi.

It is a curious fact, that the whites born in the torrid zone may walk barefoot with impunity, in the same apart-

* Trifling modifications in the waters, or in the air, often appear to prevent the development of the mosquitos. Mr. Bowdich remarks that there are none at Coomassie, in the kingdom of the Ashantees, though the town is surrounded by marshes, and though the thermometer keeps up between seventeen and twenty-eight centesimal degrees, day and night.

† Mas moscas que aire.