

they say with simplicity, "el sudar y las moscas," (the perspiration and the flies). We have reason to believe that mankind, as they change the surface of the soil, will succeed in altering by degrees the constitution of the atmosphere. The insects will diminish when the old trees of the forest have disappeared; when, in those countries now desert, the rivers are seen bordered with cottages, and the plains covered with pastures and harvests.

Whoever has lived long in countries infested by mosquitos will be convinced, as we were, that there exists no remedy for the torment of these insects. The Indians, covered with anoto, bolar earth, or turtle oil, are not protected from their attacks. It is doubtful whether the painting even relieves: it certainly does not prevent the evil. Europeans, recently arrived at the Orinoco, the Rio Magdalena, the river Guayaquil, or Rio Chagres (I mention the four rivers where the insects are most to be dreaded) at first obtain some relief by covering their faces and hands, but they soon feel it difficult to endure the heat, are weary of being condemned to complete inactivity, and finish with leaving the face and hands uncovered. Persons who would renounce all kind of occupation during the navigation of these rivers, might bring some particular garment from Europe in the form of a bag, under which they could remain covered, opening it only every half-hour. This bag should be distended by whalebone hoops, for a close mask and gloves would be perfectly insupportable. Sleeping on the ground, on skins, or in hammocks, we could not make use of mosquito-curtains (*toldos*) while on the Orinoco. The *toldo* is useful only where it forms a tent so well closed around the bed that there is not the smallest opening by which a gnat can pass. This is difficult to accomplish; and often when you succeed (for instance, in going up the Rio Magdalena, where you travel with some degree of convenience), you are forced, in order to avoid being suffocated by the heat, to come out from beneath your *toldo*, and walk about in the open air. A feeble wind, smoke, and powerful smells, scarcely afford any relief in places where the insects are very numerous and very voracious. It is erroneously affirmed that these little animals fly from the peculiar smell emitted by the crocodile. We were fearfully stung at