

the 'Lucanian oxen,' as they called the elephants of the army of Pyrrhus.

We embarked at Puerto de Arriba, and passed the Raudal de Cameji with some difficulty. This passage is reputed to be dangerous when the water is very high; but we found the surface of the river beyond the raudal as smooth as glass. We passed the night in a rocky island called Piedra Raton, which is three-quarters of a league long, and displays that singular aspect of rising vegetation, those clusters of shrubs, scattered over a bare and rocky soil, of which we have often spoken.

On the 22nd of April we departed an hour and a half before sunrise. The morning was humid but delicious; not a breath of wind was felt; for south of Atures and Maypures a perpetual calm prevails. On the banks of the Rio Negro and the Cassiquiare, at the foot of Cerro Duida, and at the mission of Santa Barbara, we never heard that rustling of the leaves which has such a peculiar charm in very hot climates. The windings of rivers, the shelter of mountains, the thickness of the forests, and the almost continual rains, at one or two degrees of latitude north of the equator, contribute no doubt to this phenomenon, which is peculiar to the missions of the Orinoco.

In that part of the valley of the Amazon which is south of the equator, but at the same distance from it, as the places just mentioned, a strong wind always rises two hours after mid-day. This wind blows constantly against the stream, and is felt only in the bed of the river. Below San Borja it is an easterly wind; at Tomependa I found it between north and north-north-east; it is still the same breeze, the wind of the rotation of the globe, but modified by slight local circumstances. By favour of this general breeze you may go up the Amazon under sail, from Grand Para as far as Tefe, a distance of seven hundred and fifty leagues. In the province of Jaen de Bracamoros, at the foot of the western declivity of the Cordilleras, this Atlantic breeze rises sometimes to a tempest.

It is highly probable that the great salubrity of the Amazon is owing to this constant breeze. In the stagnant air of the Upper Orinoco the chemical affinities act more powerfully, and more deleterious miasmata are formed.