

state, the *igua*, a tree resembling the *Caryocar nuciferum*, which is cultivated in Dutch and French Guiana, and which, with the *almendron* of Mariquita (*Caryocar amygdaliferum*), the *juvia* of the Esmeralda (*Bertholletia excelsa*), and the *Geoffrœa* of the Amazon, yields the finest almonds of all South America. No commercial advantage is here made of the *igua*; but I saw vessels arrive on the coast of Terra Firma, that came from Demerara laden with the fruit of the *Caryocar tomentosum*, which is the *Pekea tuberculosa* of Aublet. These trees reach a hundred feet in height, and present, by the beauty of their corolla, and the multitude of their stamens, a magnificent appearance. I should weary the reader by continuing the enumeration of the vegetable wonders which these vast forests contain. Their variety depends on the coexistence of such a great number of families in a small space of ground, on the stimulating power of light and heat, and on the perfect elaboration of the juices that circulate in these gigantic plants.

We passed the night in a hut lately abandoned by an Indian family, who had left behind them their fishing-tackle, pottery, nets made of the petioles of palm-trees; in short, all that composes the household furniture of that careless race of men, little attached to property. A great store of *mani* (a mixture of the resin of the moronobœa and the *Amyris caraña*) was accumulated round the house. This is used by the Indians here, as at Cayenne, to pitch their canoes, and fix the bony spines of the ray at the points of their arrows. We found in the same place jars filled with a vegetable milk, which serves as a varnish, and is celebrated in the missions by the name of *leche para pintar** (milk for painting). They coat with this viscous juice those articles

months a produce of nine *tortas*. In an excellent soil, around clumps of *mauritica*, there is every year from fifty feet square a produce of thirteen or fourteen *tortas*. A *torta* weighs three quarters of a pound, and three *tortas* cost generally in the province of Caracas one silver rial, or one-eighth of a piastre. These statements appear to me to be of some importance, when we wish to compare the nutritive matter which man can obtain from the same extent of soil, by covering it, in different climates, with bread-trees, plantains, *jatropha*, maize, potatoes, rice, and corn. The tardiness of the harvest of *jatropha* has, I believe, a beneficial influence on the manners of the natives, by fixing them to the soil, and compelling them to sojourn long on the same spot.