

the almonds of the Amazon, or Brazil-nuts. We have made it known by the name of *Bertholletia excelsa*. The trees attain after eight years' growth the height of thirty feet.

The military establishment of this frontier consisted of seventeen soldiers, ten of whom were detached for the security of the neighbouring missions. Owing to the extreme humidity of the air there are not four muskets in a condition to be fired. The Portuguese have from twenty-five to thirty men, better clothed and armed, at the little fort of San Jose de Maravitanos. We found in the mission of San Carlos but one *garita*,* a square house, constructed with unbaked bricks, and containing six field-pieces. The little fort, or, as they think proper to call it here, the *Castillo de San Felipe*, is situated opposite San Carlos, on the western bank of the Rio Negro.

The banks of the Upper Guainia will be more productive when, by the destruction of the forests, the excessive humidity of the air and the soil shall be diminished. In their present state of culture maize scarcely grows, and the tobacco, which is of the finest quality, and much celebrated on the coast of Caracas, is well cultivated only on spots amid old ruins, remains of the huts of the *pueblo viejo* (old town). Indigo grows wild near the villages of Maroa, Davipe, and Tomo. Under a different system from that which we found existing in these countries, the Rio Negro will produce indigo, coffee, cacao, maize, and rice, in abundance.

The passage from the mouth of the Rio Negro to Grand Para occupying only twenty or twenty-five days, it would not have taken us much more time to have gone down the Amazon as far as the coast of Brazil, than to return by the Cassiquiare and the Orinoco to the northern coast of Caracas. We were informed at San Carlos that, on account of political circumstances, it was difficult at that moment to pass from the Spanish to the Portuguese settlements; but we did not know till after our return to Europe the extent of the danger to which we should have been exposed in proceeding as far as Barcellos. It was known at Brazil, possibly through the medium of the newspapers, that I was

* This word literally signifies a sentry-box; but it is here employed in the sense of store-house or arsenal.