

quiare. The water at the surface of the river was only 24° (when the air was at 25·6°). This is nearly the temperature of the Rio Negro, but four or five degrees below that of the Orinoco. After having passed on the west the mouth of the Caño Caterico, which has black waters of extraordinary transparency, we left the bed of the river, to land at an island on which the mission of Vasiva is established. The lake which surrounds this mission is a league broad, and communicates by three outlets with the Cassiquiare. The surrounding country abounds in marshes which generate fever. The lake, the waters of which appear yellow by transmitted light, is dry in the season of great heat, and the Indians themselves are unable to resist the miasmata rising from the mud. The complete absence of wind contributes to render the climate of this country more pernicious.

From the 14th to the 21st of May we slept constantly in the open air; but I cannot indicate the spots where we halted. These regions are so wild, and so little frequented, that with the exception of a few rivers, the Indians were ignorant of the names of all the objects which I set by the compass. No observation of a star helped me to fix the latitude within the space of a degree. After having passed the point where the Itinivini separates from the Cassiquiare, to take its course to the west towards the granitic hills of Daripabo, we found the marshy banks of the river covered with bamboos. These arborescent gramina rise to the height of twenty feet; their stem is constantly arched towards the summit. It is a new species of *Bambusa* with very broad leaves. M. Bonpland fortunately found one in flower; a circumstance I mention, because the genera *Nastus* and *Bambusa* had before been very imperfectly distinguished, and nothing is more rare in the New World, than to see these gigantic gramina in flower. M. Mutis herborised during twenty years in a country where the *Bambusa guadua* forms marshy forests several leagues broad, without having ever been able to procure the flowers. We sent that learned naturalist the first ears of *Bambusa* from the temperate valleys of Popayan. It is strange that the parts of fructification should develop themselves so rarely in a plant which is indigenous, and which vegetates with such extraordinary vigour from the level of the sea to the height of nine hundred