

sive quantity of mosquitos. The site of the mission is highly picturesque; the surrounding country is lovely, and of great fertility. I never saw plantains of so large a size as these; and indigo, sugar, and cacao might be produced in abundance, if any trouble were taken for their cultivation. The Cerro Duida is surrounded with fine pasturage; and if the Observantins of the college of Piritu partook a little of the industry of the Catalonian Capuchins settled on the banks of the Carony, numerous herds would be seen wandering between the Cunucunumo and the Padamo. At present, not a cow or a horse is to be found; and the inhabitants, victims of their own indolence, are often reduced to eat the flesh of alouate monkeys, and flour made from the bones of fish, of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. A little cassava and a few plantains only are cultivated; and when the fishery is not abundant, the natives of a country so favoured by nature are exposed to the most cruel privations.

The pilots of the small number of boats that go from the Rio Negro to Angostura by the Cassiquiare are afraid to ascend as far as Esmeralda, and therefore that mission would have been much better placed at the point of the bifurcation of the Orinoco. It is probable that this vast country will not always be doomed to the desertion in which it has hitherto been left, owing to the errors of monkish administration and the spirit of monopoly that characterises corporations. We may even predict on what points of the Orinoco industry and commerce will become most active. In every zone, population is concentrated at the mouth of tributary streams. The Rio Apure, by which the productions of the provinces of Varinas and Merida are exported, will give great importance to the little town of Cabruta, which will then be in rivalry with San Fernando de Apure, where all commerce has hitherto centred. Higher up, a new settlement will be formed at the confluence of the Meta, which communicates with New Grenada by the Llanos of Casanare. The two missions of the Cataracts will increase, from the activity to which the transport of boats at those points will give rise; for an unhealthy and damp climate, and the swarming of mosquitos, will as little impede the progress of cultivation at the Orinoco as at the Rio Magdalena, whenever a powerful mercantile