

I placed the most active *curare* in contact with the crural nerves of a frog, without perceiving any sensible change in measuring the degree of irritability of the organs, by means of an arc formed of heterogeneous metals. Galvanic experiments succeeded upon birds, some minutes after I had killed them with a poisoned arrow. These observations are not uninteresting, when we recollect that a solution of the upas-poison poured upon the sciatic nerve, or insinuated into the texture of the nerve, produces also a sensible effect on the irritability of the organs by immediate contact with the medullary substance. The danger of the *curare*, as of most of the other strychnææ, (for we continue to believe that the *mavacure* belongs to a neighbouring family,) results only from the action of the poison on the vascular system. At Maypures, a zambo descended from an Indian and a negro, prepared for M. Bonpland some of those poisoned arrows, that are shot from blowing-tubes to kill small monkeys or birds. He was a man of remarkable muscular strength. Having had the imprudence to rub the *curare* between his fingers after being slightly wounded, he fell on the ground seized with a vertigo, that lasted nearly half an hour. Happily the poison was of that diluted kind which is used for very small animals, that is, for those which it is believed can be recalled to life by putting muriate of soda into the wound. During our passage in returning from Esmeralda to Atures, I myself narrowly escaped an imminent danger. The *curare*, having imbibed the humidity of the air, had become fluid, and was spilt from an imperfectly closed jar upon our linen. The person who washed the linen had neglected to examine the inside of a stocking, which was filled with *curare*; and it was only on touching this glutinous matter with my hand, that I was warned not to draw on the poisoned stocking. The danger was so much the greater, as my feet at that time were bleeding from the wounds made by chegoes (*Pulex penetrans*), which had not been well extirpated. This circumstance may warn travellers of the caution requisite in the conveyance of poisons.

An interesting chemical and physiological investigation remains to be accomplished in Europe on the poisons of the New World, when, by more frequent communications, the *ourare de bejuco*, the *curare de raiz*, and the various poisons of