

less improperly be called *ants' nests*, is in much request in a region whose inhabitants are of so turbulent a character. A new species of ant, of a fine emerald-green (*Formica spinicollis*), collects for its habitation a cotton-down, of a yellowish-brown colour, and very soft to the touch, from the leaves of a *melastomacea*. I have no doubt that the *yesca* or *touchwood of ants* of the Upper Orinoco (the animal is found, we were assured, only south of Atures) will one day become an article of trade. This substance is very superior to the *ants' nests* of Cayenne, which are employed in the hospitals of Europe, but can rarely be procured.

On the 7th of June we took leave with regret of Father Ramon Bueno. Of the ten missionaries whom we had found in different parts of the vast extent of Guiana, he alone appeared to me to be earnestly attentive to all that regarded the natives. He hoped to return in a short time to Madrid, where he intended to publish the result of his researches on the figures and characters that cover the rocks of Uruana.

In the countries we had just passed through, between the Meta, the Arauca, and the Apure, there were found, at the time of the first expeditions to the Orinoco, in 1535, those *mute dogs*, called by the natives *maios*, and *auries*. This fact is curious in many points of view. We cannot doubt that the dog, whatever Father Gili may assert, is indigenous in South America. The different Indian languages furnish words to designate this animal, which are scarcely derived from any European tongue. To this day the word *auri*, mentioned three hundred years ago by Alonzo de Herrera, is found in the Maypure. The dogs we saw at the Orinoco may perhaps have descended from those that the Spaniards carried to the coast of Caracas; but it is not less certain that there existed a race of dogs before the conquest, in Peru, in New Granada, and in Guiana, resembling our shepherds' dogs. The *allco* of the natives of Peru, and in general all the dogs that we found in the wildest countries of South America, bark frequently. The first historians, however, all speak of mute dogs (*perros mudos*). They still exist in Canada; and, what appears to me worthy of attention, it was this dumb variety that was eaten in preference in Mexico,* and at the Orinoco.

* See, on the Mexican *techichi*, and on the numerous difficulties that