

hundred and fifty souls. San Luis de Guaraguaraico is a colony of negroes, some freed and others fugitives from Essequibo. This colony merits the particular attention of the Spanish Government, for it can never be sufficiently recommended to endeavour to attach the slaves to the soil, and suffer them to enjoy as farmers the fruits of their agricultural labours. The land on the Caura, for the most part a virgin soil, is extremely fertile. There are pasturages for more than 15,000 beasts; but the poor inhabitants have neither horses nor horned cattle. More than five-sixths of the banks of the Caura are either desert, or occupied by independent and savage tribes. The bed of the river is twice choked up by rocks: these obstructions occasion the famous Raudales of Mura and of Para or Paru, the latter of which has a *portage*, because it cannot be passed by canoes. At the time of the expedition of the boundaries, a small fort was erected on the northern cataract, that of Mura; and the governor, Don Manuel Centurion, gave the name of *Ciudad de San Carlos* to a few houses, which some families consisting of whites and mulattoes, had constructed near the fort. South of the cataract of Para, at the confluence of the Caura and the Erevato, the mission of San Luis was then situated; and a road by land led thence to Angostura, the capital of the province. All these attempts at civilization have been fruitless. No village now exists above the Raudal of Mura; and here, as in many other parts of the colonies, the natives may be said to have reconquered the country from the Spaniards. The valley of Caura may become one day or other highly interesting from the value of its productions, and the communications which it affords with the Rio Ventuari, the Carony, and the Cuyuni. I have shown above the importance of the four tributary streams which the Orinoco receives from the mountains of Parima. Near the mouth of the Caura, between the villages of San Pedro de Alcantara and San Francisco de Aripao, a small lake of four hundred toises in diameter was formed in 1790, by the sinking of the ground, consequent on an earthquake. It was a portion of the forest of Aripao, which sunk to the depth of eighty or a hundred feet below the level of the neighbouring land. The trees remained green for several