

year; and sell to the number of five or six thousand. According to official documents, the exportation of hides from the whole capitania-general of Caracas amounted annually to 174,000 skins of oxen, and 11,500 of goats. When we reflect, that these documents are taken from the books of the custom-houses, where no mention is made of the fraudulent dealings in hides, we are tempted to believe that the estimate of 1,200,000 oxen wandering in the Llanos, from the Rio Carony and the Guarapiche to the lake of Maracaybo, is much underrated. The port of La Guayra alone exported annually from 1789 to 1792, 70,000 or 80,000 hides, entered in the custom-house books, scarcely one-fifth of which was sent to Spain. The exportation from Buenos Ayres, at the end of the eighteenth century, was, according to Don Felix de Azara, 800,000 skins. The hides of Caracas are preferred in the Peninsula to those of Buenos Ayres; because the latter, on account of a longer passage, undergo a loss of twelve per cent. in the tanning. The southern part of the savannahs, commonly called the Upper Plains (Llanos de arriba), is very productive in mules and oxen; but the pasturage being in general less good, these animals are obliged to be sent to other plains to be fattened before they are sold. The Llano de Monai, and all the Lower Plains (Llanos de abaxo), abound less in herds, but the pastures are so fertile, that they furnish meat of an excellent quality for the supply of the coast. The mules, which are not fit for labour before the fifth year, are purchased on the spot at the price of fourteen or eighteen piastres. The horses of the Llanos, descending from the fine Spanish breed, are not very large; they are generally of a uniform colour, brown bay, like most of the wild animals. Suffering alternately from drought and floods, tormented by the stings of insects and the bites of the large bats, they lead a sorry life. After having enjoyed for some months the care of man, their good qualities are developed. Here there are no sheep: we saw flocks only on the table-land of Quito.

The *hatos* of oxen have suffered considerably of late from troops of marauders, who roam over the steppes killing the animals merely to take their hides. This robbery has increased since the trade of the Lower Orinoco has become