

of the Silla of Caracas, the *quereme*, the *pancratium*, and so many majestic liliaceous plants, cannot be considered as destitute of aromatics. Besides, a dry air favours the development of the aromatic or exciting properties, only in certain species of plants. The most inveterate poisons are produced in the most humid zone of America; and it is precisely under the influence of the long rains of the tropics, that the American pimento, (*Capsicum baccatum*), the fruit of which is of often as caustic and fiery as Indian pepper, vegetates best. From all these considerations it follows, 1st, that the New Continent possesses spices, aromatics, and very active vegetable poisons, peculiar to itself, and differing specifically from those of the Old World; 2ndly, that the primitive distribution of species in the torrid zone cannot be explained by the influence of climate solely, or by the distribution of temperature, which we observe in the present state of our planet; but that this difference of climates leads us to perceive why a given type of organization develops itself more vigorously in such or such local circumstances. We can conceive that a small number of the families of plants, for instance the musaceæ and the palms, cannot belong to very cold regions, on account of their internal structure, and the importance of certain organs; but we cannot explain why no one of the family of the Melastomaceæ vegetates north of the parallel of the thirtieth degree of latitude, or why no rose-tree belongs to the southern hemisphere. Analogy of climates is often found in the two continents, without identity of productions.

The Rio Vichada, which has a small *raudal* at its confluence with the Orinoco, appeared to me, next to the Meta and the Guaviare, to be the most considerable river coming from the west. During the last forty years no European has navigated the Vichada. I could learn nothing of its sources; they rise, I believe, with those of the Tomo, in the plains that extend to the south of Casimena. Fugitive Indians of Santa Rosalia de Cabapuna, a village situate on the banks of the Meta, have arrived even recently, by the Rio Vichada, at the cataract of Maypures; which sufficiently proves that the sources of this river are not very distant from the Meta. Father Gumilla has preserved the names