

of the globe, distances disappear; and places the most remote insensibly draw near each other. The basin of the Upper Orinoco, the Rio Negro, and the Amazon, is bounded by the mountains of Parime on the north, and by those of Miñas Geraes, and Matogrosso on the south. The opposite slopes of the same valley often display an analogy in their geological relations.

I have described in this and the preceding volume the vast provinces of Venezuela and Spanish Guiana. While examining their natural limits, their climate, and their productions, I have discussed the influence produced by the configuration of the soil on agriculture, commerce, and the more or less rapid progress of society. I have successively passed over the three regions that succeed each other from north to south; from the Mediterranean of the West Indies to the forests of the Upper Orinoco and of the Amazon. The fertile land of the shore, the centre of agricultural riches, is succeeded by the Llanos, inhabited by pastoral tribes. These Llanos are in their turn bordered by the region of forests, the inhabitants of which enjoy, I will not say liberty, which is always the result of civilization, but a sort of savage independence. On the limit of these two latter zones the struggle now exists which will decide the emancipation and future prosperity of America. The changes which are preparing cannot efface the individual character of each region; but the manners and condition of the inhabitants will assume a more uniform colour. This consideration perhaps adds interest to a tour made in the beginning of the nineteenth century. We like to see, traced in the same picture, the civilized nations of the sea-shore, and the feeble remains of the natives of the Orinoco, who know no other worship than that of the powers of nature; and who, like the ancient Germans, deify the mysterious object which excites their simple admiration.*

* "Deorum nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident."—*Tacitus, Germania, IX.*