

astonishment how many things are connected with the existence of a single plant. The winds, losing their velocity when in contact with the foliage and the branches, accumulate sand around the trunk. The smell of the fruit, and the brightness of the verdure, attract from afar the birds of passage, which love to perch on the slender, arrow-like branches of the palm-tree. A soft murmuring is heard around; and overpowered by the heat, and accustomed to the melancholy silence of the plains, the traveller imagines he enjoys some degree of coolness on hearing the slightest sound of the foliage. If we examine the soil on the side opposite to the wind, we find it remains humid long after the rainy season. Insects and worms, everywhere else so rare in the Llanos, here assemble and multiply. This one solitary and often stunted tree, which would not claim the notice of the traveller amid the forests of the Orinoco, spreads life around it in the desert.

On the 13th of July we arrived at the village of Cari, the first of the Caribbee missions that are under the Observantin monks of the college of Piritu. We lodged as usual at the convent, that is, with the clergyman. Our host could scarcely comprehend "how natives of the north of Europe could arrive at his dwelling from the frontiers of Brazil by the Rio Negro, and not by way of the coast of Cumana." He behaved to us in the most affable manner, at the same time manifesting that somewhat importunate curiosity which the appearance of a stranger, not a Spaniard, always excites in South America. He expressed his belief that the minerals we had collected must contain gold; and that the plants, dried with so much care, must be medicinal. Here, as in many parts of Europe, the sciences are thought worthy to occupy the mind only so far as they confer some immediate and practical benefit on society.

We found more than five hundred Caribs in the village of Cari; and saw many others in the surrounding missions. It is curious to observe this nomade people, recently attached to the soil, and differing from all the other Indians in their physical and intellectual powers. They are a very tall race of men, their height being from five feet six inches, to five feet ten inches. According to a practice common in America, the women are more sparingly clothed than the men.