

fective in regions where there are travellers and no roads, herds and no herdsmen, and farms so solitary, that notwithstanding the powerful action of the mirage, a journey of several days may be made without seeing one appear within the horizon.

Whilst traversing the Llanos of Caracas, New Barcelona, and Cumana, which succeed each other from west to east, from the snowy mountains of Merida to the Delta of the Orinoco, we feel anxious to know whether these vast tracts of land are destined by nature to serve eternally for pasture, or whether they will at some future time be subject to the plough and the spade. This question is the more important, as the Llanos, situated at the two extremities of South America, are obstacles to the political union of the provinces they separate. They prevent the agriculture of the coast of Venezuela from extending towards Guiana, and they impede that of Potosi from advancing in the direction of the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. The intermediate Llanos preserve, together with pastoral life, somewhat of a rude and wild character, which separates and keeps them remote from the civilization of countries anciently cultivated. Thus it has happened that in the war of independence, they have been the scene of struggle between the hostile parties; and that the inhabitants of Calabozo have almost seen the fate of the confederate provinces of Venezuela and Cundinamarca decided before their walls. In assigning limits to the new states, and to their subdivisions, it is to be hoped there may not be cause hereafter to repent having lost sight of the importance of the Llanos, and the influence they may have on the disunion of communities which important common interests should bring together. These plains would serve as natural boundaries like the seas, or the virgin forests of the tropics, were it not that armies can cross them with greater facility, as their innumerable troops of horses and mules, and herds of oxen, furnish every means of conveyance and subsistence.

What we have seen of the power of man struggling against the force of nature in Gaul, in Germany, and recently (but still beyond the tropics), in the United States, scarcely affords any just measure of what we may expect from the progress of civilization in the torrid zone. Forests