

lency and the colony amply repaid for the patronage you extend to them in the attachment and fidelity of a grateful people.

My visit to their settlement at the Morocco was at their own urgent request. About six months back they commissioned a white man to call upon me and inform me of their destitute condition, deprived of the comforts of religion, and the advantages of civilized life. This man gave me so much curious information concerning them, their manners and habits, that I expressed a wish to see and confer with some of their head men as to the practicability of extending to them the benefits of religion. Accordingly, within a few weeks after this interview, I had the pleasure of conversing with their chief (Captain Guan Aguilar,) and a few others, and was struck at the good sense and intelligence which characterized their discourse. The captain reads well in his own language, writes, and is not deficient in what may be called general information; his knowledge of the system of christianity and of morals, is as extensive and correct as I found it among the generality of those who compose the lower order of peasantry in civilized Europe. As a proof of his general knowledge, I may instance what occurred on the occasion of his first visit to my house. His eye happened to be arrested by some scriptural and historical pictures which were suspended in one of the apartments, and after adjusting his spectacles, (which, as I am writing of an inhabitant of the forest, it may not be uninteresting to mention, were of gold,) and surveying them, he instantly gave me the histories of what they represented. As a proof of his sense of moral rectitude, I may adduce the following case of conscience, which he proposed for my solution: "His mind," he said, "was much perplexed with regard to certain matters on which he wished my advice; he had been lawfully married," he continued, "lived many years happily with his wife, till the disturbances which convulsed Columbia, and some peculiar calamity, separated them both; he has had no tidings of her since, and despairing of ever more seeing her, he formed a connexion with another woman. In this state of uncertainty as to the death or existence of his wife, he knew not how he should act; whether he should marry the woman with whom he then lived, or live singly till he should hear something positive on the subject; whatever I would counsel, he would obey." I cannot express how delighted I was at the docility of this casuist of the forest. He brought with him his little son, and begged me to catechize him. This child, who cannot be more than eight years old, and who never saw a minister of religion before he saw me, recited with surprising memory all the prayers which compose our morning and evening devotions, the ten commandments, and the Sacraments of the Church, and gave additional evidence, if further proof was wanting, how deeply the truths of religion struck their roots in the mind of the venerable father. This good old man informed me, that all his compatriots were most desirous to see me, and entreated me to name a day that I would visit their settlements, to give them an opportunity once more of assisting at the rites of their religion. They had likewise many children to be baptized, and there were some young couples who were desirous to be joined in wedlock. Having intimated the matter to your Excellency, you were kindly pleased to approve my visiting them; whereupon I appointed for that purpose, St. John's Day, which is a day of great festivity amongst them.

On the eve of the feast of St. John, I reached their settlement, and was received by them with every demonstration of joy and affection. Guns were fired as I approached, and on my landing, men, women and children flocked to kiss my hand in token of respect. It being night, the forest was illuminated with wax lights of their own manufacture. Considerable numbers had arrived from all quarters for the celebration of the festival, and they danced and enjoyed themselves with much sobriety and decorum till a late hour, and without indulging in any of that uproaring mirth so characteristic of the savage. I retired to the little apartment they had specially prepared for me, much gratified at what I witnessed the first night. On the morning of the festival, great preparations were made for the celebration of the Divine mysteries. A large logie was cleared out for the purpose and tastefully decorated with flowers and green boughs. I performed Divine service in this rustic temple with a feeling of thrilling delight I never experienced before, and can safely say that I never officiated in the presence of a more orderly and edifying congregation. I caused the captain to kneel by my side and to read some prayers in his own language, in which they all simultaneously joined, as if the prayers had been familiar. There was not an European that witnessed the scene that was not impressed with it. On the two other occasions