

most anciently known processes of animal magnetism. Though I had opportunities of seeing many persons who had closely observed the confederated Caribs, I could not learn whether the *marirris* belong to a particular caste. It is observed in North America, that, among the Shawanese,* divided into several tribes, the priests, who preside at the sacrifices, must be (as among the Hebrews) of one particular tribe, that of the Mequachakes. Any facts that may hereafter be discovered in America respecting the remains of a sacerdotal caste appears to me calculated to excite great interest, on account of those priest-kings of Peru, who styled themselves "the children of the Sun;" and of those "sun-kings" among the Natchez, who recall to mind the Heliades of the first eastern colony of Rhodes.

On quitting the mission of Cari, we had some difficulties to settle with our Indian muleteers. They had discovered that we had brought skeletons with us from the cavern of Atarupe; and they were fully persuaded that the beasts of burden which carried "the bodies of their old relations" would perish on the journey.† Every precaution we had taken was useless; nothing escapes a Carib's penetration and keen sense of smell, and it required all the authority of the missionary to forward our passage. We had to cross the Rio Cari in a boat, and the *Rio de agua clara*, by fording, or, it may almost be said, by swimming. The quicksands of the bed of this river render the passage very difficult at the season when the waters are high. The strength of the current seems surprising in so flat a country; but the rivers of the plains are precipitated, to quote a correct observation of Pliny the younger,‡ "less by the declivity of their course than by their abundance, and as it were by their own weight." We had two bad stations, one at Matagorda and the other at Los Riecetos, before we reached the little town of Pao. We beheld everywhere the same objects; small huts constructed of reeds, and roofed with leather; men on horseback armed with lances, guarding the herds; herds of cattle half wild, remarkable for their uniform colour, and disputing the

* People that came from Florida, or from the south (*shawanau*) to the north.

† See vol. ii. p. 485.

‡ Epist. lib. viii. ep. 8. "Clitumnus non loci devexitate, sed ipsa sui copia et quasi pondere impellitur."