

place by the passage of Fomalhaut over the meridian; but the observation was lost, owing to the time I employed in taking the level of the artificial horizon. It was midnight, and I was benumbed with cold, as were also our guides: yet the thermometer kept at 19.7° . At Cumana I have never seen it sink below 21° ; but then the house in which we dwelt on the Imposible was 258 toises above the level of the sea. At the Casa de la Polvora I determined the dip of the magnetic needle, which was 42.5° .* The number of oscillations correspondent to 10' of time was 233. The intensity of the magnetic forces had consequently augmented from the coast to the mountain, perhaps from the influence of some ferruginous matter, hidden in the strata of sandstone which cover the Alpine limestone.

We left the Imposible on the 5th of September before sunrise. The descent is very dangerous for beasts of burden; the path being in general but fifteen inches broad, and bordered by precipices. In descending the mountain, we observed the rock of Alpine limestone reappearing under the sandstone. The strata being generally inclined to the south and south-east, a great number of springs gush out on the southern side of the mountain. In the rainy season of the year, these springs form torrents, which descend in cascades, shaded by the hura, the cuspa, and the silver-leaved cecropia or trumpet-tree.

The cuspa, a very common tree in the environs of Cumana and of Bordones, is yet unknown to the botanists of Europe. It was long used only for the building of houses, and has become celebrated since 1797, under the name of the cascarrilla or bark-tree (cinchona) of New Andalusia. Its trunk rises scarcely above fifteen or twenty feet. Its alternate leaves are smooth, entire, and oval.† Its bark very thin, and of a pale yellow, is a powerful febrifuge. It is even more bitter than the bark of the real cinchona, but is less disagreeable. The cuspa is administered with the greatest success, in a spirituous tincture, and in aqueous infusion, both in intermittent and in malignant fevers.

* The magnetic dip is always measured in this work, according to the centesimal division, if the contrary be not expressly mentioned.

† At the summit of the boughs, the leaves are sometimes opposite to each other, but invariably without stipules.