

we shall speak hereafter, yields a resin very much sought after by the *Piaches*, or Indian sorcerers; the leaves of the latter have the smell of the real cinnamon of Ceylon.* From Punzera the road leads by Terecin and Nueva Palencia, (a new colony of Canarians,) to the port of San Juan, situated on the right bank of the river Areo; and it is only by crossing this river in a canoe, that the traveller can arrive at the famous petroleum springs (or mineral tar) of the Buen Pastor. They were described to us as small wells or funnels, hollowed out by nature in a marshy soil. This phenomenon reminded us of the lake of asphaltum, or of *chapapote*, in the island of Trinidad,† which is distant from the Buen Pastor, in a straight line, only thirty-five sea leagues.

Having long struggled to overcome the desire we felt to descend the Guarapiche to the Golfo Triste, we took the direct road to the mountains. The valleys of Guanaguana and Caripe are separated by a kind of dyke, or calcareous ridge, well known by the name of the Cuchilla‡ de Guanaguana. We found this passage difficult, because at that time we had not climbed the Cordilleras; but it is by no means so dangerous as the people at Cumana love to represent it. The path is indeed in several parts only fourteen or fifteen inches broad; and the ridge of the mountain, along which the road runs, is covered with a short slippery turf. The slopes on each side are steep, and the traveller, should he stumble, might slide down to the depth of seven or eight hundred feet. Nevertheless, the flanks of the mountain are steep declivities rather than precipices; and the mules of this country are so sure-footed

* Is this the *Laurus cinnamomoides* of Mutis? What is that other cinnamon tree which the Indians call *tuorco*, common in the mountains of Tocayo, and at the sources of the Rio Uchere, the bark of which is mixed with chocolate? Father Caulin gives the name of *curucay* to the *Copai-fera officinalis*, which yields the Balsam of Capivi.—Hist. Corograf., pp. 24 and 34.

† Laguna de la Brea, south-east of the port of Naparima. There is another spring of asphaltum on the eastern coast of the island, in the bay of Mayaro.

‡ Literally "blade of a knife." Throughout all Spanish America the name of "cuchilla" is given to the ridge of a mountain terminated on each side by very steep declivities.