

ports, lie behind those little islands. The rents in the land, the fracture and dip of the strata, all here denote the effects of a great revolution: possibly that which clove asunder the chain of the primitive mountains, and separated the mica-schist of Araya and the island of Margareta from the gneiss of Cape Codera. Several of the islands are visible at Cumana, from the terraces of the houses, and they produce, according to the superposition of layers of air more or less heated, the most singular effects of suspension and mirage. The height of the rocks does not probably exceed one hundred and fifty toises; but at night, when lighted by the moon, they seem to be of a very considerable elevation.

It may appear extraordinary, to find the Caracas Islands so distant from the city of that name, opposite the coast of the Cumanagotos; but the denomination of Caracas denoted at the beginning of the Conquest, not a particular spot, but a tribe of Indians, neighbours of the Tecs, the Taramaynas, and the Chagaragates. As we came very near this group of mountainous islands, we were becalmed; and at sunrise, small currents drifted us toward Boracha, the largest of them. As the rocks rise nearly perpendicular, the shore is abrupt; and in a subsequent voyage I saw frigates at anchor almost touching the land. The temperature of the atmosphere became sensibly higher whilst we were sailing among the islands of this little archipelago. The rocks, heated during the day, throw out at night, by radiation, a part of the heat absorbed. As the sun arose on the horizon, the rugged mountains projected their vast shadows on the surface of the ocean. The flamingoes began to fish in places where they found in a creek calcareous rocks bordered by a narrow beach. All these islands are now entirely uninhabited; but upon one of the Caracas are found wild goats of large size, brown, and extremely swift. Our Indian pilot assured us that their flesh has an excellent flavour. Thirty years ago a family of whites settled on this island, where they cultivated maize and cassava. The father alone survived his children. As his wealth increased, he purchased two black slaves; and by these slaves he was murdered. The goats became wild, but the cultivated plants perished. Maize in America, like wheat in Europe, connected with man since his first migrations, appears to be preserved only by his care. We some-