

sions of the Orinoco, and on the banks of the river Amazon, the Indians, who catch monkeys to sell them, know very well that they can easily succeed in taming those which inhabit certain islands; while monkeys of the same species, caught on the neighbouring continent, die of terror or rage when they find themselves in the power of man. The crocodiles of one lake in the llanos are cowardly, and flee even when in the water; whilst those of another lake will attack with extreme intrepidity. It would be difficult to explain this difference of disposition and habits, by the mere aspect of the respective localities. The sharks of the port of La Guayra seem to furnish an analogous example. They are dangerous and blood-thirsty at the island opposite the coast of Caracas, at the Roques, at Bonayre, and at Curassao; while they forbear to attack persons swimming in the ports of La Guayra and Santa Martha. The natives, who like the ignorant mass of people in every country, in seeking the explanation of natural phenomena, always have recourse to the marvellous, affirm that in the ports just mentioned, a bishop gave his benediction to the sharks.

The situation of La Guayra is very singular, and can only be compared to that of Santa Cruz in Teneriffe. The chain of mountains which separates the port from the high valley of Caracas, descends almost directly into the sea; and the houses of the town are backed by a wall of steep rocks. There scarcely remains one hundred or one hundred and forty toises breadth of flat ground between the wall and the ocean. The town has six or eight thousand inhabitants, and contains only two streets, running parallel with each other east and west. It is commanded by the battery of Cerro Colorado; and its fortifications along the sea-shore are well disposed, and kept in repair. The aspect of this place has in it something solitary and gloomy; we seemed not to be on a continent, covered with vast forests, but on a rocky island, destitute of vegetation. With the exception of Cabo Blanco and the cocoa-trees of Maiquetia, no view meets the eye but that of the horizon, the sea, and the azure vault of heaven. The heat is excessive during the day, and most frequently during the night. The climate of La Guayra is justly considered to be hotter than that of Cumana, Porto Cabello, and Coro, because the sea-breeze is less felt, and the air is