

of the crocodiles in the water, and of the tigers on land. It is difficult to conceive, how, being thus persecuted by two powerful enemies, they become so numerous; but they breed with the same rapidity as the little *cavies* or guinea-pigs, which come to us from Brazil.

We stopped below the mouth of the Caño de la Tigrera, in a sinuosity called *la Vuelta del Joval*, to measure the velocity of the water at its surface. It was not more than 3·2 feet* in a second, which gives 2·56 feet for the mean velocity. The height of the barometer indicated barely a slope of seventeen inches in a mile of nine hundred and fifty toises. The velocity is the simultaneous effect of the slope of the ground, and the accumulation of the waters by the swelling of the upper parts of the river. We were again surrounded by chiguire, which swim like dogs, raising their heads and necks above the water. We saw with surprise a large crocodile on the opposite shore, motionless, and sleeping in the midst of these nibbling animals. It awoke at the approach of our canoe, and went into the water slowly, without frightening the chiguire. Our Indians accounted for this indifference by the stupidity of the animals, but it is more probable that the chiguire know by long experience, that the crocodile of the Apure and the Orinoco does not attack upon land, unless he finds the object he would seize immediately in his way, at the instant when he throws himself into the water.

Near the *Joval* nature assumes an awful and extremely wild aspect. We there saw the largest jaguar we had ever met with. The natives themselves were astonished at its prodigious length, which surpassed that of any Bengal tiger I had ever seen in the museums of Europe. The animal lay stretched beneath the shade of a large zamang.* It had just killed a chiguire, but had not yet touched its prey, on which it kept one of its paws. The zamuro vultures were assembled in great numbers to devour the remains of the jaguar's repast. They presented the most curious spectacle,

* In order to measure the velocity of the surface of a river, I generally measured on the beach a base of 250 feet, and observed with the chronometer the time that a floating body, abandoned to the current, required to reach this distance.

† A species of mimosa.