

was cooler, for the thermometer (which generally kept up in the daytime to 30° or 35°) had sunk to 24°. The temperature of the river was little changed: it continued constantly at 26° or 27°. The current carried with it an enormous number of trunks of trees. It might be imagined that on ground entirely smooth, and where the eye cannot distinguish the least hill, the river would have formed by the force of its current a channel in a straight line; but a glance at the map, which I traced by the compass, will prove the contrary. The two banks, worn by the waters, do not furnish an equal resistance; and almost imperceptible inequalities of the level suffice to produce great sinuosities. Yet below the Joval, where the bed of the river enlarges a little, it forms a channel that appears perfectly straight, and is shaded on each side by very tall trees. This part of the river is called Caño Rico. I found it to be one hundred and thirty-six toises broad. We passed a low island, inhabited by thousands of flamingos, rose-coloured spoonbills, herons, and moorhens, which displayed plumage of the most various colours. These birds were so close together that they seemed to be unable to stir. The island they frequent is called *Isla de Aves*, or Bird Island. Lower down we passed the point where the Rio Arichuna, an arm of the Apure, branches off to the Cabulare, carrying away a considerable body of its waters. We stopped, on the right bank, at a little Indian mission, inhabited by the tribe of the Guamos, called the village of Santa Barbara de Arichuna.

The Guamos* are a race of Indians very difficult to fix on a settled spot. They have great similarity of manners with the Achaguas, the Guajibos,† and the Öttomacs, partaking their disregard of cleanliness, their spirit of vengeance, and their taste for wandering; but their language differs essentially. The greater part of these four tribes live by fishing and hunting, in plains often inundated, situated between the Apure, the Meta, and the Guaviare. The nature of these regions seems to invite the natives to a wandering life. On entering the mountains of the Cata-

* Father Gili observes that their Indian name is *Uamu* and *Pau*, and that they originally dwelt on the Upper Apure.

† Their Indian name is *Guahiva*.