

nor the *chamek*, nor any of the Ateles. Our Indians themselves had never seen any that resembled them. Monkeys, especially those living in troops, make long emigrations at certain periods, and consequently it happens that at the beginning of the rainy seasons the natives discover round their huts different kinds which they have not before observed. On this same bank our guides showed us a nest of young iguanas only four inches long. It was difficult to distinguish them from common lizards. There was no distinguishing mark yet formed but the dewlap below the throat. The dorsal spines, the large erect scales, all those appendages that render the iguana so remarkable when it attains its full growth, were scarcely traceable.

The flesh of this animal of the saurian family appeared to us to have an agreeable taste in every country where the climate is very dry; we even found it so at periods when we were not in want of other food. It is extremely white, and next to the flesh of the armadillo, one of the best kinds of food to be found in the huts of the natives.

It rained toward evening, and before the rain fell, swallows, exactly resembling our own, skimmed over the surface of the water. We saw also a flock of paroquets pursued by little goshawks without crests. The piercing cries of these paroquets contrasted singularly with the whistling of the birds of prey. We passed the night in the open air, upon the beach, near the island of Carizales. There were several Indian huts in the neighbourhood, surrounded with plantations. Our pilot assured us beforehand that we should not hear the cries of the jaguar, which, when not extremely pressed by hunger, withdraws from places where he does not reign unmolested. "Men put him out of humour" (*los hombres lo enfadan*), say the people in the Missions. A pleasant and simple expression, that marks a well-observed fact.

Since our departure from San Fernando we had not met a single boat on this fine river. Everything denoted the most profound solitude. On the morning of the 3rd of April our Indians caught with a hook the fish known in the country by the name of *caribe*,* or *caribito*, because no other fish has such a thirst for blood. It attacks bathers and

* *Caribe* in the Spanish language signifies *cannibal*.