

narrows. Full of little islands and masses of granite rock, it presents rapids, or small cascades (*remolinos*), which at first sight may alarm the traveller by the continual eddies of the water, but which at no season of the year are dangerous for boats. A range of shoals, that crosses almost the whole river, bears the name of the *Raudal de Marimara*. We passed it without difficulty by a narrow channel, in which the water seems to boil up as it issues out impetuously* below the *Piedra de Marimara*, a compact mass of granite eighty feet high, and three hundred feet in circumference, without fissures, or any trace of stratification. The river penetrates far into the land, and forms spacious bays in the rocks. One of these bays, inclosed between two promontories destitute of vegetation, is called the Port of Carichana.† The spot has a very wild aspect. In the evening the rocky coasts project their vast shadows over the surface of the river. The waters appear black from reflecting the image of these granitic masses, which, in the colour of their external surface, sometimes resemble coal, and sometimes lead-ore. We passed the night in the small village of Carichana, where we were received at the priest's house, or *convento*. It was nearly a fortnight since we had slept under a roof.

To avoid the effects of the inundations, often so fatal to health, the Mission of Carichana has been established at three quarters of a league from the river. The Indians in this Mission are of the nation of the Salives, and they have a disagreeable and nasal pronounciation. Their language, of which the Jesuit Anisson has composed a grammar still in manuscript, is, with the Caribbean, the Tamanac, the Maypure, the Ottomac, the Guahive, and the Jaruro, one of the mother-tongues most general on the Orinoco. Father Gili thinks that the Ature, the Piraoa, and the Quaqua or Mapoye, are only dialects of the Salive. My journey was much too rapid to enable me to judge of the accuracy of this opinion; but we shall soon see that, in the village of Ature, celebrated on account of its situation near the great cataracts, neither the Salive nor the Ature is now spoken, but the language of the Maypures. In the Salive of Cari-

* These places are called *chorreras* in the Spanish colonies.

† Piedra y puerto de Carichana.