

manner of catching this herbivorous cetacea. The Piraoas, some families of whom inhabit the mission of Carichana, detest this animal to such a degree, that they hid themselves, to avoid being obliged to touch it, whilst it was being conveyed to our hut. They said, that the people of their tribe die infallibly, when they eat of it. This prejudice is the more singular, as the neighbours of the Piraoas, the Guamos and the Ottomacs, are very fond of the flesh of the manati. The flesh of the crocodile is also an object of horror to some tribes, and of predilection to others.

The island of Cuba furnishes a fact little known in the history of the manati. South of the port of Xagua, several miles from the coast, there are springs of fresh water in the middle of the sea. They are supposed to be owing to a hydrostatic pressure existing in subterraneous channels, communicating with the lofty mountains of Trinidad. Small vessels sometimes take in water there; and, what is well worthy of observation, large manatis remain habitually in those spots. I have already called the attention of naturalists to the crocodiles which advance from the mouth of rivers far into the sea. Analogous circumstances may have caused, in the ancient catastrophes of our planet, that singular mixture of pelagian and fluviatile bones and petrifications, which is observed in some rocks of recent formation.

Our stay at Carichana was very useful in recruiting our strength after our fatigues. M. Bonpland bore with him the germs of a cruel malady; he needed repose; but as the delta of the tributary streams included between the Horeda and Paruasi is covered with a rich vegetation, he made long herbalizations, and was wet through several times in a day. We found, fortunately, in the house of the missionary, the most attentive care; we were supplied with bread made of maize flour, and even with milk. The cows yield milk plentifully enough in the lower regions of the torrid zone, wherever good pasturage is found. I call attention to this fact, because local circumstances have spread through the Indian Archipelago the prejudice of considering hot climates as repugnant to the secretion of milk. We may conceive the indifference of the inhabitants of the New World for a milk diet, the country having been originally