

from the coast of Guinea, eat earth; not from a depraved taste, or in consequence of disease, but from a habit contracted at home in Africa, where they eat, they say, a particular earth, the taste of which they find agreeable, without suffering any inconvenience. They seek in our islands for the earth most similar to this, and prefer a yellowish red volcanic tufa. It is sold secretly in our public markets; but this is an abuse which the police ought to correct. The negroes who have this habit are so fond of *caouac*, that no chastisement will prevent their eating it."

In the Indian Archipelago, at the island of Java, Labillardière saw, between Surabaya and Samarang, little square and reddish cakes exposed for sale. These cakes called *tanaampo*, were cakes of clay, slightly baked, which the natives eat with relish. The attention of physiologists, since my return from the Orinoco, having been powerfully directed to these phenomena of *geophagy*, M. Leschenault, (one of the naturalists of the expedition to the Antarctic regions under the command of captain Baudin) has published some curious details on the *tanaampo*, or *ampo*, of the Javanese. "The reddish and somewhat ferruginous clay," he says "which the inhabitants of Java are fond of eating occasionally, is spread on a plate of iron, and baked, after having been rolled into little cylinders in the form of the bark of cinnamon. In this state it takes the name of *ampo*, and is sold in the public markets. This clay has a peculiar taste, which is owing to the baking: it is very absorbent, and adheres to the tongue, which it dries. In general it is only the Javanese women who eat the *ampo*, either in the time of pregnancy, or in order to grow thin; the absence of plumpness being there regarded as a kind of beauty. The use of this earth is fatal to health; the women lose their appetite imperceptibly, and take only with relish a very small quantity of food; but the desire of becoming thin, and of preserving a slender shape, induces them to brave these dangers, and maintains the credit of the *ampo*." The savage inhabitants of New Caledonia also, to appease their hunger in times of scarcity, eat great pieces of a friable *Lapis ollaris*. Vauquelin analysed this stone, and found in it, beside magnesia and silex in equal portions, a small quantity of oxide of copper. M. Goldberry had seen the negroes in