

lies the almost ruined mission of San Miguel de la Tortuga. The Indians assured us that the environs of this little mission abound in otters with a very fine fur, called by the Portuguese 'water-dogs' (perritos de agua); and what is still more remarkable, in lizards (lagartos) with only two feet. The whole of this country, which is very accessible between the Rio Cuchivero and the strait of Baraguan, is worthy of being visited by a well-informed zoologist. The *lagarto* destitute of hinder extremities, is perhaps a species of Siren, different from the Siren lacertina of Carolina. If it were a saurian, a real Bimanis (Chirotes, Cuv.), the natives would not have compared it to a lizard. Besides the arrau turtles, of which I have in a former place given a detailed account, an innumerable quantity of land tortoises also, called *morocoi*, are found on the banks of the Orinoco, between Uruana and Encaramada. During the great heats of summer, in the time of drought, these animals remain without taking food, hidden beneath stones, or in the holes they have dug. They issue from their shelter and begin to eat, only when the humidity of the first rains penetrates into the earth. The *terekay*, or *tajelu* turtle which lives in fresh water, has the same habits. I have already spoken of the *summer-sleep* of some animals of the tropics. As the natives know the holes in which the tortoises sleep amidst the dried lands, they get out a great number at once, by digging fifteen or eighteen inches deep. Father Gili says that this operation, which he had seen, is not without danger, because serpents often bury themselves in summer with the *terekays*.

From the island of Cucuruparu, to the capital of Guiana, commonly called Angostura, we were but nine days on the water. The distance is somewhat less than ninety-five leagues. We seldom slept on shore; but the torment of the mosquitos diminished in proportion as we advanced. We landed on the 8th of June at a farm (Hato de San Rafael del Capuchino) opposite the mouth of the Rio Apure. I obtained some good observations of latitude and longitude.\* Having two months before taken horary angles

\* I had found, on the 4th of April, for the Boca del Rio Apure (on the western bank of the Orinoco), the latitude  $7^{\circ} 36' 30''$ , the longitude  $59^{\circ} 7' 30''$ ; on the 8th of June I found, for the Hato del Capuchino (on