

towards Cape Chichivacoa? These important problems can only be solved when the chain of islands parallel with the coast has been properly examined. It must not be forgotten, that a great irruption of the ocean appears to have taken place between Trinidad and Grenada,\* and that no where else in the long series of the Lesser Antilles are two neighbouring islands so far removed from each other. We observe the effect of the rotatory current in the direction of the coast of Trinidad, as in the coasts of the provinces of Cumana and Caracas, between Cape Paria and Punta Araya, and between Cape Codera and Porto Cabello. If a part of the continent has been overwhelmed by the ocean on the north of the peninsula of Araya, it is probable that the enormous shoal which surrounds Cubagua, Coche, the island of Marguerita, Los Frailes, La Sola, and the Testigos, marks the extent and outline of the submerged land. This shoal or placer, which is of the extent of 200 square leagues, is well known only to the tribe of the Guayqueries; it is frequented by these Indians on account of its abundant fishery in calm weather. The *Gran Placer* is believed to be separated only by some canals or deep furrows of the bank of Grenada from the sand-bank that extends like a narrow dyke from Tobago to Grenada, and which is known by the lowering of the temperature of the water, and from the sand-banks of Los Roques and Aves. The Guayquerie Indians, and, generally speaking, all the inhabitants of the coast of Cumana and Barcelona, are imbued with an idea that the water of the shoals of Marguerita and the Testigos diminishes from year to year; they believe that, in the lapse of ages, the Morro de Chacopata, on the peninsula of Araya, will be joined by a neck of land to the islands of Lobos and Coche. The partial retreat of the waters on the coast of Cumana is undeniable, and the bottom of the sea has been upheaved at various times by earthquakes; but these local phenomena, which it is so difficult to account for by the

\* It is affirmed that the island of Trinidad is traversed in the northern part by a chain of primitive slate, and that Grenada furnishes basalt. It would be important to examine of what rock the island of Tobago is composed; it appeared to me of dazzling whiteness; and on what point, in going from Trinidad northward, the trachytic and trappean system of the Lesser Antilles begins.