

cas, and Guatimala, is that of Capiriqual, Uritucu, and Soconusco. Since the island of Trinidad has become an English colony, the whole of the eastern extremity of the province of Cumana, especially the coast of Paria, and the gulf of the same name, have changed their appearance. Foreigners have settled there, and have introduced the cultivation of the coffee-tree, the cotton-tree, and the sugarcane of Otaheite. The population has greatly increased at Carupano, in the beautiful valley of Rio Caribe, at Guira, and at the new town of Punta di Piedra, built opposite Spanish Harbour, in the island of Trinidad. The soil is so fertile in the Golfo Triste, that maize yields two harvests in the year, and produces three hundred and eighty fold the quantity sown.

Early in the morning we embarked in a sort of narrow canoe, called a *lancha*, in hopes of crossing the gulf of Cariaco during the day. The motion of the waters resembles that of our great lakes, when they are agitated by the winds. From the embarcadero to Cumana the distance is only twelve nautical leagues. On quitting the little town of Cariaco, we proceeded westward along the river of Carenicuar, which, in a straight line like an artificial canal, runs through gardens and plantations of cotton-trees. On the banks of the river of Cariaco we saw the Indian women washing their linen with the fruit of the parapara (*Sapindus saponaria*, or soap-berry), an operation said to be very injurious to the linen. The bark of the fruit produces a strong lather; and the fruit is so elastic that if thrown on a stone it rebounds three or four times to the height of seven or eight feet. Being of a spherical form, it is employed in making rosaries.

After we embarked we had to contend against contrary winds. The rain fell in torrents, and the thunder rolled very near. Swarms of flamingoes, egrets, and cormorants filled the air, seeking the shore, whilst the alcatras, a large species of pelican, alone continued peaceably to fish in the middle of the gulf. The gulf of Cariaco is almost everywhere forty-five or fifty fathoms deep; but at its eastern extremity, near Curaguaca, along an extent of five leagues, the lead does not indicate more than three or four fathoms. Here is found the Baxo de la Cotua, a sand-bank, which at low-water appears like a small island. The canoes which carry provisions to Cumana