

beneath which the jaguar had lain. He was there no longer, and it would have been imprudent to have pursued him into the forest, where we must have dispersed, or advanced in single file, amidst the intertwining lianas.

In the evening we passed the mouth of the Caño del Manati, thus named on account of the immense quantity of manatis caught there every year. This herbivorous animal of the cetaceous family, is called by the Indians *apcia* and *avia*,* and it attains here generally ten or twelve feet in length. It usually weighs from five hundred to eight hundred pounds, but it is asserted that one has been taken of eight thousand pounds weight. The manati abounds in the Orinoco below the cataracts, in the Rio Meta, and in the Apure, between the two islands of Carizales and Conserva. We found no vestiges of nails on the external surface or the edges of the fins, which are quite smooth; but little rudiments of nails appear at the third phalanx, when the skin of the fins is taken off. We dissected one of these animals, which was nine feet long, at Carichana, a Mission of the Orinoco. The upper lip was four inches longer than the lower one. It was covered with a very fine skin, and served as a proboscis. The inside of the mouth, which has a sensible warmth in an animal newly killed, presented a very singular conformation. The tongue was almost motionless; but in front of the tongue there was a fleshy excrescence in each jaw, and a cavity lined with a very hard skin, into which the excrescence fitted. The manati eats such quantities of grass, that we have found its stomach, which is divided into several cavities, and its intestines, (one hundred and eight feet long,) filled with it. On opening the animal at the back, we were struck with the magnitude, form, and situation of its lungs. They have very large cells, and resemble immense swimming-bladders. They are three feet long. Filled with air, they have a bulk of more than a thousand cubic inches. I was surprised to see that, possessing such

* The first of these words belongs to the Tamanac language, and the second to the Ottomac. Father Gili proves, in opposition to Oviedo, that the *manati* (fish with hands) is not Spanish, but belongs to the languages of Hayti (St. Domingo) and the Maypurez. I believe also that, according to the genius of the Spanish tongue, the animal would have been called *manudo* or *manon*, but not *manati*.