

they break against the rocks. The *jaguas* and *cucuritos* with plummy leaves, with which all the islands are covered, seem like groves of palm-trees rising from the foamy surface of the waters. The Indians, whose task it is to pass the boats empty over the *raudales*, distinguish every shelf, and every rock, by a particular name. On entering from the south you find first the Leap of the Toucan (*Salto del Piapoco*); and between the islands of Avaguri and Javariveni is the Raudal of Javariveni, where, on our return from Rio Negro, we passed some hours amid the rapids, waiting for our boat. A great part of the river appeared dry. Blocks of granite are heaped together, as in the *moraines* which the glaciers of Switzerland drive before them. The river is engulfed in caverns; and in one of these caverns we heard the water roll at once over our heads and beneath our feet. The Orinoco seems divided into a multitude of arms or torrents, each of which seeks to force a passage through the rocks. We were struck with the little water to be seen in the bed of the river, the frequency of subterraneous falls, and the tumult of the waters breaking on the rocks in foam.

Cancta fremunt undis; ac multo murmure montis
Spumeus invictis canescit fluctibus amnis.*

Having passed the Raudal of Javariveni (I name here only the principal falls) we come to the Raudal of Canucari, formed by a ledge of rocks uniting the islands of Surupamana and Uirapuri. When the dikes, or natural dams, are only two or three feet high, the Indians venture to descend them in boats. In going up the river, they swim on before, and if, after many vain efforts, they succeed in fixing a rope to one of the points of rock that crown the dike, they then, by means of that rope, draw the bark to the top of the raudal. The bark, during this arduous task, often fills with water; at other times it is stove against the rocks, and the Indians, their bodies bruised and bleeding, extricate themselves with difficulty from the whirlpools, and reach, by swimming, the nearest island. When the steps or rocky barriers are very high, and entirely bar the river, light boats are carried on shore, and with the help of branches of trees

* Lucan, *Pharsalia*, lib. x, v. 132.