

granitic soil of the two banks of the Orinoco was agitated as far as the Raudales of Atures and Maypures. South of these Raudales shocks are sometimes felt, which are confined to the basin of the Upper Orinoco and the Rio Negro. They appear to depend on a volcanic focus distant from that of the Caribbee Islands. We were told by the missionaries at Javita and San Fernando de Atabapo, that in 1798 violent earthquakes took place between the Guaviare and the Rio Negro, which were not propagated on the north towards Maypures. We cannot be sufficiently attentive to whatever relates to the simultaneity of the oscillations, and to the independence of the movements in contiguous ground. Everything seems to prove that the propagation of the commotion is not superficial, but depends on very deep crevices, that terminate in different centres of action.

The scenery around the town of Angostura is little varied; but the view of the river, which forms a vast canal, stretching from south-west to north-east, is singularly majestic.

When the waters are high, the river inundates the quays; and it sometimes happens that, even in the town, imprudent persons become the prey of crocodiles. I shall transcribe from my journal a fact that took place during M. Bonpland's illness. A Guaykeri Indian, from the island of La Margareta, was anchoring his canoe in a cove where there were not three feet of water. A very fierce crocodile, which habitually haunted that spot, seized him by the leg, and withdrew from the shore, remaining on the surface of the water. The cries of the Indian drew together a crowd of spectators. This unfortunate man was first seen seeking, with astonishing presence of mind, for a knife which he had in his pocket. Not being able to find it, he seized the head of the crocodile and thrust his fingers into its eyes. No man in the hot regions of America is ignorant that this carnivorous reptile, covered with a buckler of hard and dry scales, is extremely sensitive in the only parts of his body which are soft and unprotected, such as the eyes, the hollow underneath the shoulders, the nostrils, and beneath the lower jaw, where there are two glands of musk. The Guaykeri Indian was less fortunate than the negro of Mungo Park, and the girl of Uritucu, whom I mentioned in a former part of this work, for the crocodile did not open its jaws and lose hold