

closely together, and we made our horses swim, holding their bridles. The horse I had ridden suddenly disappeared, after struggling for some time under water: all our endeavours to discover the cause of this accident were fruitless. Our guides conjectured, that the animal's legs had been seized by the caymans, which are very numerous in those parts. My perplexity was extreme: delicacy, and the affluent circumstances of my host, forbade me to think of repairing his loss; and M. Lavie, more considerate of our situation, than sensible of his own misfortune, endeavoured to tranquillize us by exaggerating the facility with which fine horses were procurable from the neighbouring savannahs.

The crocodiles of the Rio Neveri are large and numerous, especially near the mouth of the river; but in general they are less fierce than the crocodiles of the Orinoco. These animals manifest in America the same contrasts of ferocity as in Egypt and Nubia: this fact is obvious when we compare with attention the narratives of Burckhardt and Belzoni. The state of cultivation in different countries, and the amount of population in the proximity of rivers, modify the habits of these large saurians: they are timid when on dry ground, and they flee from man, even in the water, when they are not in want of food and when they perceive any danger in attacking. The Indians of Nueva Barcelona convey wood to market in a singular manner. Large logs of *zygophyllum* and *cæsalpinia** are thrown into the river, and carried down by the stream, while the owners of the wood swim here and there, to float the pieces that are stopped by the windings of the banks. This could not be done in the greater part of those American rivers in which crocodiles are found. The town of Barcelona has not, like Cumana, an Indian suburb; and the only natives who are seen there are inhabitants of the neighbouring missions, or of huts scattered in the plain. Neither the one nor the other are of Carib race, but a mixture of the Cumanagotos, Palenkas, and Piritus; short, stunted, indolent, and addicted to drinking. Fermented cassava is here

* The *Lecythis ollaria*, in the vicinity of Nueva Barcelona, furnishes excellent timber. We saw trunks of this tree seventy feet high. Around the town, beyond that arid zone of cactus which separates Nueva Barcelona from the steppe, grow the *Clerodendrum tenuifolium*, the *Ionidium tubu*, which resembles the *Viola*, and the *Allionia violacea*.