

tint is, no doubt, owing to the perfect calm which pervades those regions. Whenever the agitation is propagated to a certain depth, a very fine sand, or a mass of calcareous particles suspended in the water, renders it troubled and milky. There are shallows, however, which are distinguished neither by the colour, nor by the low temperature of the waters; and I believe that phenomenon depends on the nature of a hard and rocky bottom, destitute of sand and corals; on the form and declivity of the shelvings; the swiftness of the currents; and the absence of the propagation of motion towards the lower layers of the water. The cold frequently indicated by the thermometer, at the surface of the high banks, must be traced to the molecules of water which, owing to the rays of heat and the nocturnal cooling, fall from the surface to the bottom, and are stopped in their fall by the high banks; and also to the mingling of the layers of very deep water, that rise on the shelvings of the banks as on an inclined plane, to mix with the layers of the surface.

Notwithstanding the small size of our bark, and the boasted skill of our pilot, we often ran aground. The bottom being soft, there was no danger; but, nevertheless, at sun-set, near the pass of Don Cristoval, we preferred to lie at anchor. The first part of the night was beautifully serene: we saw an incalculable number of falling-stars, all following one direction, opposite to that from whence the wind blew in the low regions of the atmosphere. The most absolute solitude prevails in this spot, which, in the time of Columbus, was inhabited and frequented by great numbers of fishermen. The inhabitants of Cuba then employed a small fish to take the great sea-turtles; they fastened a long cord to the tail of the *revès* (the name given by the Spaniards to that species of *Echeneis**). The

* To the *sucet* or *guaican* of the natives of Cuba, the Spaniards have given the characteristic name of *revès*, that is, "placed on its back, or reversed." In fact, at first sight, the position of the back and the abdomen is confounded. Anghiera says: "Nostrates *reversum* appellat, quia versus venatur." I examined a remora of the South Sea during the passage from Lima to Acapulco. As he lived a long time out of the water, I tried experiments on the weight he could carry before the blades of the disk loosened from the plank to which the animal was fixed; but