

later, Yucatan, now a part of the new confederation of the free states of Mexico, has nearly menaced with conquest the western coast of Cuba.

On the morning of the 11th March, we visited Cayo Flamenco. I found the latitude $21^{\circ} 59' 39''$. The centre of this island is depressed, and only fourteen inches above the surface of the sea. The water here is brackish; while in other cayos it is quite fresh. The mariners of Cuba attribute this freshness of the water to the action of the sands in filtering sea-water, the same cause which is assigned for the freshness of the lagunes of Venice. But this supposition is not justified by any chemical analogy. The *cayos* are composed of rocks, and not of sands, and their smallness renders it extremely improbable that the pluvial waters should unite in a permanent lake. Perhaps the fresh water of this chain of rocks comes from the neighbouring coast, from the mountains of Cuba, by the effect of hydrostatic pressure. This would prove a prolongation of the strata of Jura limestone below the sea, and a superposition of coral rock on that limestone.*

It is too general a prejudice, to consider every source of fresh or salt water to be merely a local phenomenon: currents of water circulate in the interior of lands between strata of rocks of a particular density or nature, at immense distances, like the floods that furrow the surface of the globe. The learned engineer, Don Francisco Le Maur, informed me, that in the bay of Xagua, half a degree east of the Jardinillos, there issue in the middle of the sea, springs of fresh water, two leagues and a half from the coast. These springs gush up with such force that they cause an agitation of the water often dangerous for small canoes. Vessels that are not going to Xagua sometimes take in water from these ocean springs, and the water is fresher and colder in proportion to the depth whence it is drawn. The manatis, guided by instinct, have discovered this region of fresh waters; and the fishermen who like the flesh of these

* Eruptions of fresh water in the sea, near Baiaë, Syracuse, and Aradus (in Phenicia), were known to the ancients. Strabo, lib. 16, p. 754. The coral islands that surround Radak; especially the low island of Otdia, furnish also fresh water. (Chamisso, in Kotzebue's *Entdeckungs-Reise*, vol. iii, p. 108.)