

Our passage from the island of Cuba to the coast of South America terminated at the mouth of the Rio Sinu, and it occupied sixteen days. The roadstead near the Punta del Zapote afforded very bad anchorage; and in a rough sea, and with a violent wind, we found some difficulty in reaching the coast in our canoe. Everything denoted that we had entered a wild region, rarely visited by strangers. A few scattered houses form the village of Zapote: we found a great number of mariners assembled under a sort of shed, all men of colour, who had descended the Rio Sinu in their barks, to carry maize, bananas, poultry, and other provisions, to the port of Carthagena. These barks, which are from fifty to eighty feet long, belong for the most part to the planters (haciendados) of Lorica. The value of their largest freight amounts to about 2000 piastres. These boats are flat-bottomed, and cannot keep at sea when it is very rough. The breezes from the N.E. had, during ten days, blown with violence on the coast, while, in the open sea, as far as 10° lat., we had only had slight gales, and a constantly calm sea. In the aërial, as in the pelagic currents, some layers of fluids move with extreme swiftness, while others near them remain almost motionless. The *zambos* of the Rio Sinu wearied us with idle questions respecting the purpose of our voyage, our books, and the use of our instruments: they regarded us with mistrust; and to escape from their importunate curiosity, we went to herborize in the forest, although it rained. They had endeavoured, as usual, to alarm us by stories of boas (traga-venado), vipers, and the attacks of jaguars; but during a long residence among the Chayma Indians of the Orinoco, we were habituated to these exaggerations, which arise less from the credulity of the natives, than from the pleasure they take in tormenting the whites. Quitting the coast of Zapote, covered with mangroves,* we entered a forest remarkable for a great variety of palm-trees. We saw the trunks of the *Corozo del Sinu*† pressed against each other, which

enormous size of the drops of rain that fall at Cumana, Carthagena, and Guayaquil.

* *Rhizophora mangle*.

† In Spanish America, palm-trees with leaves the most different in kind and species, are called *Corozo*: the *Corozo del Sinu*, with a short,