

in the mouth of the Atrato, beyond the cape of La Vela, along an extent of 120 leagues, has a general direction from S.W. to N.E.

The wind having dropped during the night we could only advance to the island of Arenas, where we anchored. I found it was  $78^{\circ} 2' 10''$  of longitude. The weather became stormy during the night. We again set sail on the morning of the 29th of March, hoping to be able to reach Boca Chica that day. The gale blew with extreme violence, and we were unable to proceed with our frail bark against the wind and the current, when, by a false manœuvre in setting the sails, (we had but four sailors), we were during some minutes in imminent danger. The captain, who was not a very bold mariner, declined to proceed further up the coast, and we took refuge, sheltered from the wind, in a nook of the island of Baru, south of Punta Gigantes. It was Palm Sunday; and the Zambo, who had accompanied us to the Orinoco, and did not leave us till we returned to France, reminded us that on the same Sunday in the preceding year, we had nearly been lost, on the north of the mission of Uruana.

There was to be an eclipse of the moon during the night, and the next day an occultation of  $\alpha$  Virginis. The observation of the latter phenomenon might have been very important in determining the longitude of Cathagena. In vain I urged the captain to allow one of his sailors to accompany me by land to the foot of Boca Chica, a distance of five miles. He objected on account of the wild state of the country, in which there is neither habitation nor path. A little incident, which might have rendered Palm-Sunday more fatal, justified the prudence of the captain. We went by moonlight, to collect plants on the shore; as we approached the land, we saw a young negro issue from the thicket. He was quite naked, loaded with chains, and armed with a machete. He invited us to land on a part of the beach covered with large mangroves, as being a spot where the surf did not break, and offered to conduct us to the interior of the island of Baru, if we would promise to give him some clothes. His cunning and wild appearance, the often-repeated question whether we were Spaniards, and certain unintelligible words which he addressed to some