

to pass, contrary to the expectation of him who was steering. Sometimes there was a torrent the entrance of which was nearly closed by an *embarras*, or only by two trees of enormous length and size lying across from one side of the current to the other and making it more impetuous. Sometimes the entrance would be entirely barred by a tree; we were obliged to change our course, with the chance of finding the same obstacle a moment afterward. Or we would find but very little water, and, instead, mud and brambles; then we had to push the pirogue through by main strength. Often one of our men was obliged to plunge into the water up to his neck, in order to fasten the pirogue to an overhanging tree — so that, if the current overbore the force of the paddles and made the pirogue recede, it would not crash against a tree. Our pirogue ran the most risk; it began to fill in a current which had made it recede, and the moment had come when it was about to sink; by dint of paddling we were saved, and fortunately there was at that point neither an *embarras* nor overthrown trees. Afterward we went through another of these places, which had a passage only the width of the pirogue; it remained a moment motionless between the force of the current and the force of the paddles; we did not know whether it would recede or advance. This means that, in that moment, we were hanging between life and death; for, if the paddle had yielded to the force of the current we would have crashed against a large tree which almost entirely barred the current. Our people in the other pirogue, who had gone on ahead of us, were waiting for us in a mournful and sad silence; and they uttered a great shout of joy when they saw us out of danger.