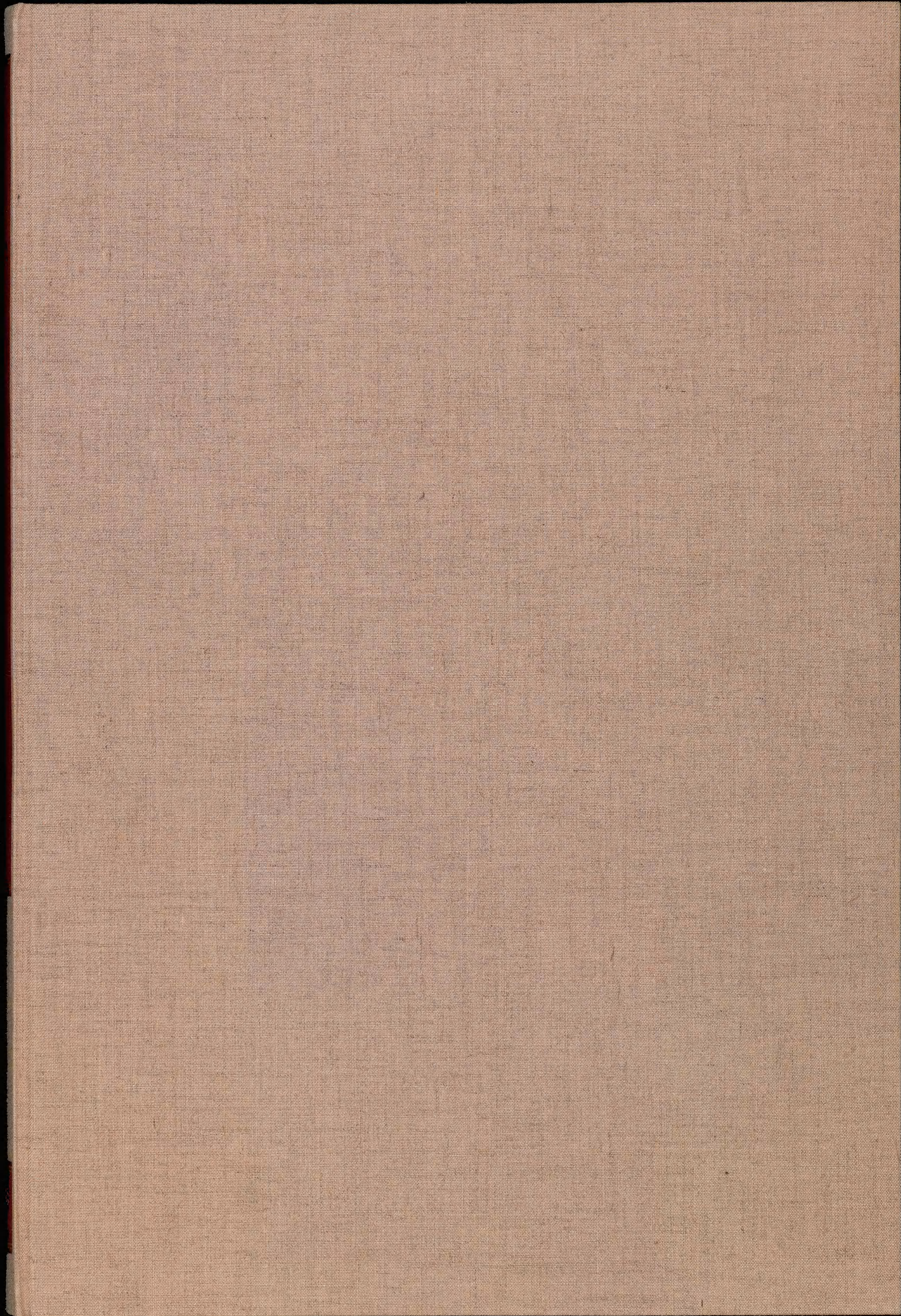

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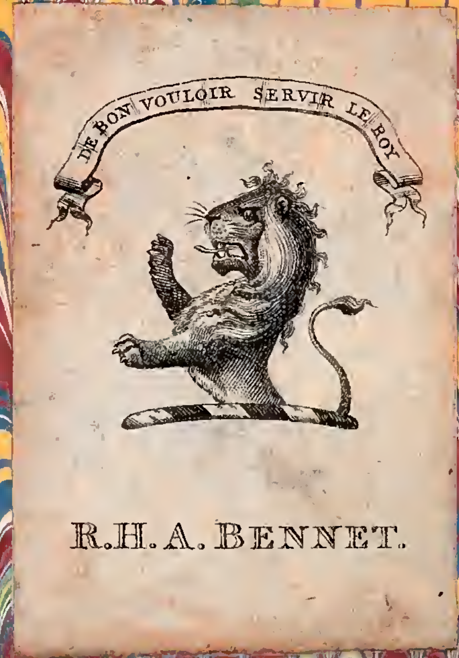
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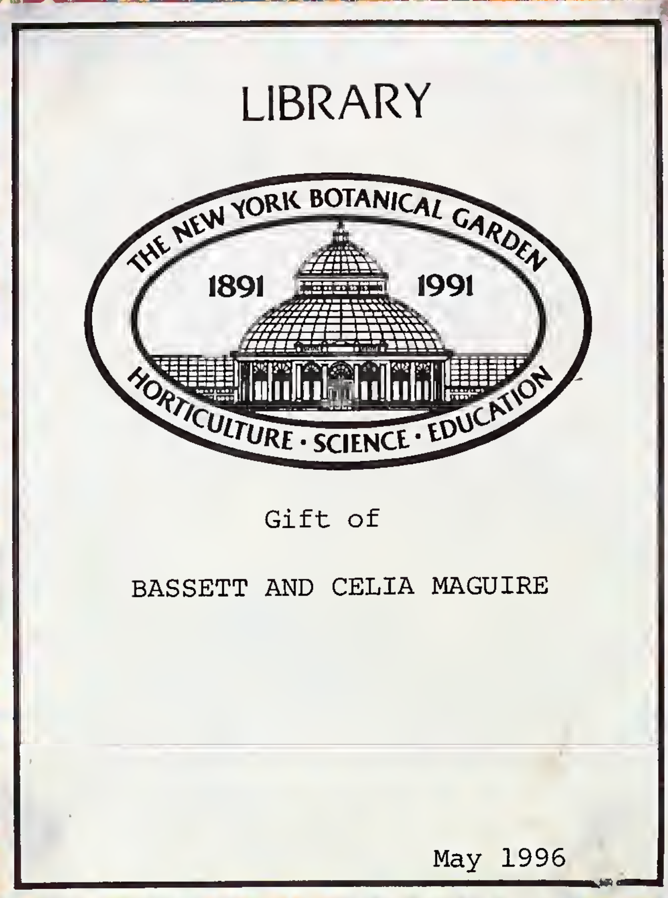
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TWELVE VIEWS

IN THE

INTERIOR OF GUIANA:

FROM DRAWINGS EXECUTED

BY

MR. CHARLES BENTLEY,

AFTER SKETCHES TAKEN DURING THE EXPEDITION

CARRIED ON IN THE YEARS 1835 TO 1839, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON,

AND AIDED BY HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT.

WITH DESCRIPTIVE LETTER-PRESS,

BY

ROBERT H. SCHOMBURGK, ESQ.

ACCOMPANIED BY ILLUSTRATIONS ON WOOD.

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TO

THE MOST NOBLE

WILLIAM SPENCER CAVENDISH,

DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE,

THESE VIEWS

IN

THE INTERIOR OF GUIANA

ARE, WITH ESPECIAL PERMISSION,

VERY RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS GRACE'S

MOST OBEDIENT SERVANT,

R. H. SCHOMBURGK.

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Map of
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to Illustrate the route
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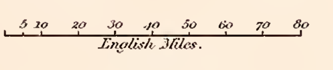

ATLANTIC OCEAN

BRITISH GUAYANA

DUTCH GUAYANA

VENEZUELA

BRAZIL

65 Longitude West from 64 Greenwich

Pub.d for the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, by John Murray, Albemarle Street, London, 1840.

John Arrowsmith

PREFACE.

IT is needless for me here to repeat how I have become acquainted with much that is sublime and beautiful in the interior of Guiana, and how I have delighted in the opportunities afforded me of studying the character of that untutored being, the Indian, who is known to the inhabitants of the Coast, from the examples there seen, only as a miserable and depraved being, just civilized enough to adopt European vices, and not her virtues. All I have now done, has been to select some of the most striking scenes from the numerous sketches made during my travels in the interior of Guiana. These travels were directed by the Royal Geographical Society of London, aided by Her Majesty's Government, and had for their object a more extended knowledge of the geography and natural productions of hitherto unvisited regions.

In justice to Mr. John Morrison I must here observe, that the sketches, which depict localities visited by us during the last expedition, have been taken under my direction by that gentleman, who accompanied me in the capacity of draughtsman. The artist's finish, the effect of colouring, light and shade, were communicated to these sketches by Mr. Charles Bentley, whose drawings in water colours have been long esteemed; and the talents of Messrs. Barnard, Gauci, and Coke Smyth, have also been engaged to draw them on stone. The woodcuts which illustrate the letter-press have been drawn by Mr. Charles Blunt on wood, and engraved by Mr. G. P. Nicholls.

The number of Subscribers who have come forward in so short a period in British Guiana, after the work was announced for publication, proves the interest which it has excited, and I feel truly grateful for this additional testimony of the good will, which the inhabitants of that colony have evinced towards me. As an humble proof of my gratitude, and that no expense has been spared in its execution, I have attempted to impart additional interest to this work; the Subscribers will therefore find, besides that which I promised in the Prospectus, a Frontispiece, equal in beauty and execution to any of the plates, and possessing still more attraction from being the representation of that wonderful flower, which was discovered in one of the rivers of the colony, and dedicated to Her Gracious Majesty, the Queen. By permission of the Council of the Royal Geographical Society, I have also been enabled to add the Map, which delineates the countries visited during my expeditions, and which will assist better than any description in pointing out those spots which have been depicted in the accompanying plates and woodcuts.

I trust that this publication, and these faithful delineations, may tend to create further attention towards a Colony comparatively so little known in Great Britain; and which by many is still considered as one of the islands which form the West Indian Archipelago, or at best to be merely a flat, traversed by dykes, and devoid of picturesque effects. They are little aware how Nature, with bountiful liberality, has clothed it in the richest garments of tropical vegetation, and with a mighty hand has stamped it with a portion of her sublimest features.

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December 1, 1840.

FRONTISPIECE.

IT appears as if the productive powers of nature, on receding from the poles, had collected themselves in their greatest strength near the equator, spreading their gifts with open hand, rendering every scene more imposing and majestic, and manifesting the abundant fertility of the soil. Gigantic trees raise their lofty crowns to a height unknown in the European forests, and display the greatest contrasts in the form and appearance of their foliage. Lianas cling to their trunks, interlace their wide spreading branches, and having reached their summit, with aërial roots descend again towards the ground, and appear like the cordage of a ship. Clusters of palm trees, of all vegetable forms the most imposing, rise in grandeur above the surrounding mass, waving their pinion-like leaves in the soft breeze. Nature, as if not satisfied with the soil allotted to her, richly decorates the trunks and limbs of trees, the stones and rocks; even the surface of the water is covered with a carpet of plants interspersed by magnificent flowers. Nothing can give a better idea of the luxuriance and richness of vegetation in Guiana than the splendid Victoria Regia, the most beautiful specimen of the Flora of the Western hemisphere. The calm of the surrounding atmosphere, where frequently not a breath of wind agitates the foliage, not a cloud veils the azure vault of heaven, contrasts strongly with the hum of animated nature. The Colibri, with its metallic lustre, passes rapidly from blossom to blossom, sipping the nectar of fragrant flowers, or sporting with the dew-drops which glitters on their petals. The ancient forest of noble trees re-echoes with the notes of feathered songsters. The plumage of the splendid macaws and parrots, perched on boughs, perhaps illumined by the beams of a setting sun, richly mingles with the brilliant and bright green foliage. Night approaches, and displays the firmament with all the southern constellations; the musical notes of birds give place to the chirping voices of crickets, the sounds of the tree-frog, lizards, and reptiles. Thousands of phosphorescent insects flutter among the leaves, emitting a light, which, if it does not illuminate, tends to increase the characteristic features of a tropical night, and to realize that idea which imagination sketches when impressed with the most splendid descriptions in the Arabian tales.

Such is the picture which has stamped itself with indelible characters upon my mind, and which has been strengthened, since my return, by comparing European vegetation with the glorious scenes, which plain, dale, or forest present under the tropics. The luxuriance and grandeur peculiar to these climes, is nowhere more strikingly exhibited than in the magnificent Victoria Regia, no doubt one of the most remarkable productions of the botanical world.

During our ascent of the river Berbice, we met with difficulties of no common nature. The river being broken up by numerous rapids and cataracts our progress was but slow, and, having been deserted by a party of Wacawais, we could not muster a sufficient number to man our canoes, and had therefore to abandon one. After we had passed the cataracts, which extended for nearly fifteen miles in almost an uninterrupted line, the river narrowed considerably, and numerous trees, which from age, or the undermining effects of the current, had fallen across, disputed our advance, so that we were obliged to cut our passage through. In order to increase the obstacles many of our Indians were unfit for work in consequence of indisposition, and so tardy was our advance, that on the 1st of January 1837, and five weeks after we had departed from New Amsterdam, we were only within one hundred and twenty miles from the coast. A succession of adverse circumstances had taken place since we undertook the second expedition into the interior of Guiana, and difficulties had beset us from the outset; the entrance of the new year was therefore well calculated to enhance the feeling of disappointment.

Such thoughts were passing in my mind when we arrived at a point where the river expanded, and formed a smooth basin on its eastern bank, while the current directed its course along the opposite shore. Something on the southern point of the basin attracted my attention; I could not imagine what it might be, and urging the crew to increase their rate of paddling, in a short time we were opposite to the object of curiosity — a vegetable wonder! All calamities were forgotten; I felt as a botanist and was rewarded. A gigantic leaf, from five to six feet in diameter, salver shaped, with a broad rim of light green above, and a vivid crimson below, rested upon the water: quite in character with the wonderful leaf was the luxuriant flower, nearly four feet in circumference, and consisting of many hundred petals passing in alternate tints from pure white to rose and pink. The smooth water was covered with them, and I rowed from one to the other, constantly finding something new to admire. When the flower first opens in the morning it is white, with pink in the middle, which spreads over the whole flower, as the sun in his daily course proceeds towards the western horizon; and is generally found the next day of a pink

colour. As if to enhance its beauty, it is sweet-scented, and chiefly so in the morning when it first opens; but even the heat of the day does not entirely overcome its fragrance *.

An account of this plant having been transmitted to England, Dr. Lindley found it to be a new and well marked genus; and Her Majesty having graciously consented that it might be dedicated to her, gave permission that it should be known by the name of

VICTORIA REGIA.

The most exquisite species of every type in Flora's kingdom appears to belong to the equatorial regions. The addition of a genus of indigenous plants at once so beautiful and remarkable, has proved of the greatest interest, and adds to the characteristic features of the equinoctial zone, already distinguished by Palms of majestic aspect, and the gigantic representatives of the Banana tribe, the Musas and Heliconias.

The richness and grandeur of which I speak, is not restricted to the Monocotyledons, but refer likewise to the Exogens. What can be more noble than the sight of a forest interspersed with trees of the Laurel tribe, the Lecythideæ, the Anonaceæ, the Caesalpineæ, and Mimoseæ with their airy leaves and splendid clusters of golden and purple flowers? Of such did the vegetation consist on the sides of the river Parima, above the Cataract Purumama. A Bignonia with digitated leaves, and large white odoriferous flowers, the gigantic Urania, the Iacaranda with its double-feathered foliage and flowers of a beautiful azure blue; but above all, a tree allied in its botanical character to the Amherstiæ, increased the picturesque effect of the primeval forest, which extended beyond its banks.

This noble tree, which I saw here for the first time, is distinguished by that light and airy trembling foliage, which is so peculiar to the delicately pinnated leaves of the tropics, and casts a charm over the landscape, which Baron de Humboldt has already observed, cannot be conveyed by any of our European trees with pinnated leaves. Its branches almost unite, so as to form a verdant arcade, and the elegance of its clusters of white flowers, tinged with rose colour, and its large stamens of a bright crimson, add to its lovely appearance. These clusters existed in profusion, and their dazzling colour was well contrasted with the feathery dark green foliage. The young leaves, of light green, hang down as if in fringes, and the long pods, like velvet in texture and of a crimson colour, gave additional beauty to this splendid tree, and afforded the painter a subject for the exercise of his pencil, equally interesting and difficult to execute. It proved to be a genus as yet unknown to botanists; and those sacred feelings which recur to us, even in the midst of the magnificent scenery of the tropics, those feelings connected with all that belongs to home, prompted me to adopt the usual practice of botanists, and like them, to name it after an individual, distinguished for her exalted situation, and patronage of science; after her, who now shares the throne in my native land, and to whom the subjects of Prussia have transferred the love which they bore to their late Queen Luisa. This exquisite tree, therefore, will henceforth bear the appellation of

ELIZABETHA REGIA,

and vies in beauty with one of the most splendid productions of the Eastern hemisphere, the noble Amherstia, and the no less distinguished Brownea, the rose of the Western tropical regions †. The lily-like flowers on the left (one with a labellum of bright pink), are the offsprings of that mountain range, which forms so remarkable a feature in the geography of Guiana, the mountains of Roraima. They are not varieties, but bear specific differences according to the rules and language of botanical science, one of them is the Sobralia Elizabetha, also dedicated to Her Majesty the Queen of Prussia, when Princess Royal.

Two of the aborigines of Guiana, armed with lance and blow-pipe, and proud of the productions of their native home, the El Dorado of Great Britain's possessions in the west, stand in the picture, as if bidding defiance to the rest of the world to produce a scene of equal beauty, and a plant so deservedly connected with the name of her, whom they acknowledge as their Queen, and during whose reign, they, like the African races, look forward for that justice, which will tend to the amelioration of their forlorn situation.

* Dr. Lindley, with his well known liberality, published a botanical description for private distribution, accompanied by a representation of the plant, half its natural size; and since my return to Europe, Mr. Bartholomew made, under my superintendence, a full sized drawing, which is now in the possession of His Grace the Duke of Devonshire.

† Elizabetha princeps *in litteris*, and in the enumeration of Schomburgk's Guiana plants, by George Bentham, Esq., Journal of Botany, vol. ii, p. 92. The discovery was made and described when Her Majesty the Queen of Prussia was still Princess Royal; but as the drawing and description of it have not yet been delivered to her, it cannot now be presented without changing the specific name, so as to accord with the more exalted rank which Her Majesty now occupies. A second species of this new genus, the Elizabetha coccinea, which fringes the banks of the inland rivers in Guiana, has clusters of scarlet flowers.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by George Barnard

THE COMUTI OR TAQUIARE ROCK,

on the River Essequibo

London: Published by Ackermann & Co. 96, Strand, 3rd Augt. 1840

THE COMUTI, OR TAQUIARI ROCK.

Latitude, 4° 53′ N. Longitude, 58° 53′ W.

IN about the fifth parallel of latitude, two ranges of mountains, the Akaiwanna and Twasinki, project into the river Essequibo on each side, and cause its general direction for about six miles to assume the form of an S. In this distance are three falls, the most formidable of which, named Yukurit or Cumakatoto, is caused by a dyke of stratified granite, crossing the river in a north and south direction, over which the water, hastened by previous rapids, and narrowed by projecting rocks, precipitates itself with violence. The surrounding mountains recede, and form an amphitheatre, affording a highly picturesque scene.

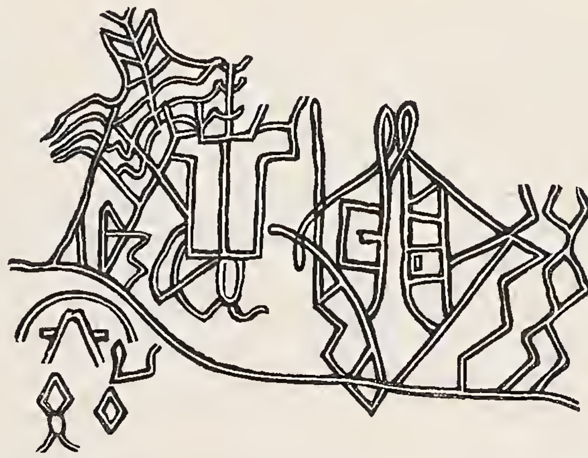
The Comuti, or Taquiari mountains, the southernmost of this group, have received their name from a remarkable pile of large granitic boulders, so placed as to resemble a water-jar, called Comuti by the Arawaak Indians, and Taquiari by the Caribs. Circumstances prevented us from ascending the hill during our first expedition up the river Essequibo; but when our further explorations led us a second time up that stream, we halted at the foot of the Comuti mountain, and commenced its ascent. When we had climbed for about half an hour, we arrived at a comparatively level place, overgrown with numerous Seperi trees. The hill became steeper, and we soon after reached the granitic pile, which has given a name to these hills, and which is about a hundred and fifty feet below the summit. We were, however, told by our guides, if we ascended somewhat higher we might attain a huge block, from the top of which the view was much more extensive. By means of two bushropes, the name given to the lianas, or large creepers, which were trailing against the rock, and to which sticks were tied in a horizontal direction, we reached, as by a ladder, the top of the block, and one of the loveliest prospects was stretched out before us.

So enchanting was this view, that I was at a loss where to commence in order not to overlook any object in the lovely picture; but as if by a charm, my eyes were fixed for some time on two gigantic piles of granite which rose before me, perhaps the monuments of some convulsion of nature. What are the famed piles of the Hartz mountains, what the celebrated pedestal of the statue of Peter I, if compared with these which I now saw! On the left rose the pile, called by the Indians, Comuti, consisting of three huge blocks of blue granite; the second seated upon the lower one by only three supporting points; the third has entirely the shape of a large jar, and is covered by a fourth, rather flat. These two latter have been likened by the Indians to a jar with its cover, and so striking is the resemblance, that it does not require much vivacity of imagination to detect it, nor does it lose its resemblance by being viewed from the river or its immediate vicinity. The second pile, of pyramidical shape, was on our right, and is called Kamai. We stood on the third pile, which, by measurement, I found afterwards to be one hundred and sixty feet high. The two other piles appeared inaccessible; but their height no doubt surpasses the one we measured. At our feet extended a beautiful landscape; to the south the Makarapan mountains arrested the eye; to the eastward, the abrupt peak of the Maccari, resembling the gable end of a gigantic building, was not to be mistaken, for the sun's rays were reflected on its white rocks; to the south-west meandered the river Siparuni, while at our feet, the Essequibo, dividing into numerous branches studded with islands and rocks, lost itself amidst the dense forest. The large cataracts were perspicuous by their white foam; and the uproar caused by the turbulent waters of the one at our feet was even audible at the height at which we stood; it sounded like breakers on a lee shore. The hills of Akaiwanna were opposite to us, a dark cloud, which dissolved itself into rain on their eastern peak, heightened the effect, and a column of smoke pointed out the Indian habitations, which we had left the preceding day. The Arissaro hills, distant upwards of fifty miles to the north, appeared as if enveloped in a veil.

We fired our muskets while we stood on the rock, and were answered by the guns of the party which had remained in the camp below; their report reverberated through the mountains, but our's appeared almost lost, there being no object to return the sound. The echo at the foot of mount Comuti is beautiful, and perhaps one of the most distinct in the river Essequibo. The sun had set when I was obliged to leave "the giants of the hill," as Mr. Waterton, in his amusing "Wanderings," has so appropriately termed these heaps of granite.

So attractive and charming was the view, that on my return, in 1839, from my last expedition, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of revisiting these interesting piles, in order once more to enjoy the prospect which they afforded. On our ascent, one of the Carib Indians who accompanied me, pointed out, on a large granitic block, some Indian "picture writing," which we had not previously observed. Its lines were more regular, and there was more symmetrical arrangement in it than I had generally observed

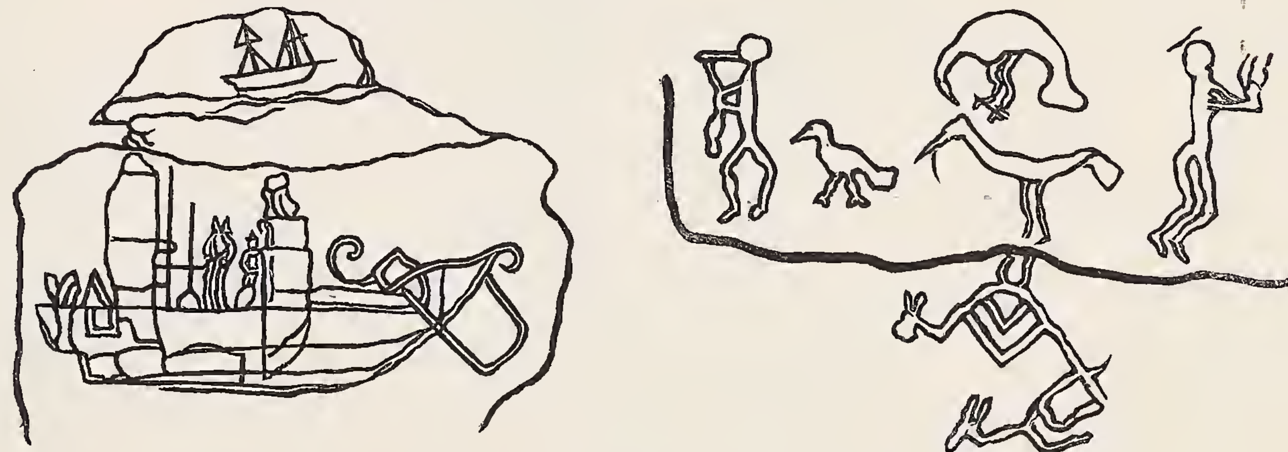
in these sculptured figures. It bore a resemblance to the sculptures found to the eastward of Ekaterinburg, in Siberia, near the sources of the rivers Irbit and Pishma, tributary of the river Tura; and at Dighton, near the banks of the Taunton river, twelve leagues south of Boston in the United States of America. The granite on which they were engraved was decomposing, and the figures much effaced; I took however a drawing of a compartment of the rock.



INDIAN "PICTURE WRITING" AT COMUTI, ON THE ESSEQUIBO.

A mystery not yet solved hangs over these sculptured rocks. Whatever may be their origin, the subject is one of high interest, and demands the full investigation of the antiquarian and historian. I have myself traced these inscriptions through seven hundred miles of longitude, and five hundred of latitude, or scattered here and there over an extent of three hundred and fifty thousand square miles. I have copied many of them, and although they do not denote an advanced state of civilisation, in my opinion they have a higher origin and signification than that generally ascribed to them, namely, the idle tracings of hunting nations. It is remarkable that the situation of those which I have seen was generally near cataracts and rapids *. The Indian races of the present day can give no account of their origin; some ascribe them to the good spirit, others to their forefathers; and the Taruma Indians, on the river Cuyuwini, a tributary of the upper Essequibo, gave me, in answer to the question, who had made the figures which I saw sculptured on some blocks of greenstone in that river? "that women had made them a long time ago."

In the general uncertainty which prevails with regard to these monuments of by-gone races, it was particularly gratifying to me to find, during my last expedition, some sculptures which afforded a clue to the date when they were executed. Among the numerous figures which we found carved in hard granite blocks at the Ilha de Pedra, on the Rio Negro, and about twelve miles west of Itarendaua, or Pedrero, we likewise observed the representation of two vessels under sail; the smaller with two masts, the larger not unlike a galleon; there remains therefore no doubt that these pictures were made at a later period, and after the discovery of the Amazon, when the vessels of the *Conquistadores* floated on the mightiest stream in the world. The other figures are representations of birds, animals, and men. Among others there is a group of thirteen men arranged in a row as if dancing; and they possibly relate to an event which caused great rejoicing, perhaps the first arrival of Europeans on the Amazon; little thinking that the destruction of their own races would be consequent on the landing of their European tyrants.



INDIAN "PICTURE WRITING" AT THE ILHA DE PEDRA ON THE RIO NEGRO.

The Indians of the present day, in the vicinity of Pedrero, admit the antiquity of these figures, and say, that they were engraved by means of constant friction with quartz pebbles. Such may have been the case; but our attempt to produce such results proved fruitless, as indeed did our endeavours to produce fire from two sticks, though it is done with comparative ease by the Indians: unwearied patience may have accomplished it. These figures, it should be remarked, are not so deeply cut as those on the Corentyn, or at Waraputa, on the Essequibo.

* In a paper which I addressed ten years ago to the Antiquarian Society of London, I gave an account of some sculptured rocks which are near a cascade in the Island of St. John's, one of the Virgin Isles. They closely resemble those at the Cataract of Waraputa, on the river Essequibo. The Island of St. John's is known to have been inhabited by Caribs.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by Cake ...

ATARAIPU OR THE DEVIL'S ROCK.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

London. Published by Ackermann & Cº 96. Strand. 3rd Augt 1840

ATARAIPU, THE DEVIL'S ROCK.

Latitude, 2° 55′ N. Longitude, 58° 48′ W.

DISAPPOINTED in two journies in our wish of attaining the central ridge of mountains where the river Essequibo is supposed to take its rise, we determined, when the expedition which started in September 1837 from Georgetown, reached the confluence of the river Roiwa with the Rupununi, to ascend the former, and its tributary the Guidaru, and by crossing the savannahs, try to gain one of the rivers which flow from the west into the upper Essequibo *. An opportunity was thus afforded to us of seeing another of those geological phœnomena which add to the picturesque and magnificent scenery of Guiana, namely, the Ataraipu, a natural pyramid, which rises on the western bank of the river Guidaru, and is estimated at a height of nine hundred feet above the river †. There was no account of any of the travellers who preceded me having reached this remarkable rock. Doctor Hancock saw it from a distance, but did not approach it within twenty miles; and its situation has been so erroneously given, that there is a difference of eighteen miles of latitude between its assumed and real position.

On reaching the rapids called Carabiru by the Caribs, we encamped, and accompanied by a party of Indians, I struck off in a westerly direction, through woods so dense, that we were at times obliged to clear our path with cutlasses. As we forced our way through the wood, we were greeted from time to time by the finest perfume, which we traced to a liana, or creeper, and one of the bush-rope vines of the colonists. This sweet-smelling plant was Schnella brachystachya (Benth.) with white flowers, of which the largest petal was spotted with pink, growing in voluminous clusters, its stem twisted and contorted in so remarkable a manner as well to deserve the name of bush-rope. To describe the various ways in which these twists and contortions take place would be difficult; sometimes the stem is as delicate as a ribbon, while at others it presents a bundle of stems so closely twined together as to make it no easy matter to separate them with an axe. A troop of little Sackowinkis, or squirrel monkeys (Callithrix sciureus), some of the most beautiful and most active of their kind, leaped with the agility of a true squirrel from branch to branch, and alarmed by our appearance, uttered their plaintive call, resembling more the voice of a bird than an animal, and then hastening away, were soon hidden among the thick foliage of the large forest trees.

We had scrambled for about two hours through the woods when the nature of the soil changed, and in lieu of a vegetable mould, shelfy pieces of rock were lying heaped upon each other; among them grew numerous plants of the pine-apple tribe, and I refreshed myself with the fruits of the Bromelia penguin, the date of the West Indies, a plant which I saw for the first time in Guiana, although so common in the former place. We ascended a mass of granite about four hundred feet in height. Wherever a layer of black earth had accumulated, a species of Clusia had fixed its roots in the shelves of granite, surrounded by numerous Orchideæ, of which an Epidendrum, with large umbels of bright pink flowers was the greatest ornament; Oncidium, Monochanthus, and Cyrtopodium grew there in voluminous clusters. Several Cacti, with only a few inches of soil, in which they could take root, raised their huge limbs in the form of a Candelabrum, while a more humble station satisfied the curiously formed Melocactus, or Melon-thistle, which, like the Bromelia penguin, I here met with for the first time. We crossed some hollows, which appeared to have been scooped out by the frequent torrents caused by the tropical rains, and soon after reached the northern side of the hill, when the magnificent natural pyramid of Ataraipu burst on our sight, raising its bare head from an abyss of dense foliage, which spread around in all directions at its foot. The base of this mountain is wooded for about three hundred and fifty feet; from thence rises the mass of granite, devoid of all vegetation, in a pyramidical form, for about five hundred and fifty feet more, making its whole height nine hundred feet above the Guidaru, or thirteen hundred feet above the sea. We ascended the summit of Hutu-cubana, as the Indians called the hill on which we stood, in order to have a more extensive view. At the distance of two miles the remarkable mass of granite appeared to be one of those eminences which the poet says,

> " Like giants stand
> To sentinel enchanted land."

In the distance, mountains rose above mountains, partly bare and rocky, partly wooded, and forming an amphitheatre. To the west I

* Our success in this undertaking has been related in the Report to the Royal Geographical Society, and a detailed account has just appeared in the Tenth Volume of the Journal of that Society.

† Guidaru signifies in the *lingua geral* a kind of war-club.

reeognised the blue outline of the Canuku chain, the remarkable Saeraeri mountains with their eonieal peaks, the dome-shaped Vivi, and the Dororu rising out of the vast savannahs, the scene of my former wanderings in 1836. Then the eye again reverted to that monument of unnumbered ages. What changes may have oeeurred sinee the word which ealled it into existenee was pronouneed? Had the earthy substanee, whieh probably onee surrounded it, been washed away by tempests and torrents, and left nothing but the eolumn impervious to the tooth of time? Had it risen out of the bowels of the earth; the ehild of that earth's convulsion? Whatever intermediate eause may have brought it forth, it is a wonderful monument of Him who is Almighty!

As I gazed around on this romantie and picturesque scene, and on this striking pillar now lighted up by the rieh glow of a tropieal sunset, my thoughts naturally reverted to the eompanions and ineidents of my preeeding journey, and I eould not but look forward with hope, not unmixed with anxiety, towards the distant south, the object of my present expedition.

The Sacraeri mountains, which form sueh a striking feature in the landscape when seen from Hutu-eubana, rise, an isolated group, on the western bank of the river Rupununi, in the approximate latitude of 2° 50′ north, and longitude 59° 23′ west. They are eonieal and rugged, but well wooded at the base. They are probably the Sierra Uassari* of aneient maps; the Indian tribes, however, living in their neighbourhood eall them Saeraeri from a speeies of bird. At their eastern extremity is a pyramidical mountain, the top consisting of granite. Its shape is so peeuliar that it eannot fail to attraet attention; it is quite isolated, and ealled by the Wapisianas Oehlopan, or Dochlopan.

The height of the north-eastern peak of Saeraeri, aeeording to some trigonometrieal operations whieh I made in the savannahs in the vicinity of the Wapisiana village of Kuiaraton, is two thousand one hundred and sixty feet above the savannah, and two thousand eight hundred feet above the sea; and that strange mountain, Dochlopan, is one thousand and seventy feet above the savannahs. They appear mueh higher, but this may arise from their standing entirely isolated. Their formation is peculiar, and they are easily reeognised at a great distanee by their three peaks. At their western foot flows the small river Saraou-auri (Saruru, Sarauri in maps), between which and the Rupununi there is a path, or portage, by which the Indians keep up a eommunication between the Rupununi and Takutu, dragging their eorials from the former, a short distanee over land, to the Saraou-auri. This portage was traversed as early as 1739 by Nieholas Hortsman†. The stream has reeeived its name from a speeies of Palm (Astrocaryum Jauari) which the Wapisianas eall Saraou-auri, and is a tributary of the river Takutu, whieh flows into the Rio Branco.

The wood-eut represents the Saeraeri mountains, seen from the savannahs to the north-east, at a distanee of about sixteen miles. The small river Akatauri, fringed by trees, meanders in the foreground towards the Rupununi; further to the south are the distant Ursato mountains, so lately the tragieal seene of Indian sufferings and Brazilian tyranny.

* M. de Humboldt's Pers. Narrat., vol. vi, p. 518.

† M. de Humboldt's Pers. Narrat., vol. v, p. 480.

URSATO AND SAERAERI MOUNTAINS.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by [illegible]

Printed by C Hullmandel.

PIRARA AND LAKE AMUCU.

The Site of El Dorado

London. Published by Ackermann & Co 96, Strand, 3rd Augt 1840

PIRARA.

Latitude, 3° 38′ N. Longitude, 59° 16′ W.

CENTURIES have elapsed since the supposed existence of an extensive auriferous district fired the imagination of all Europe, and found ready belief, at a period when chivalrous enterprise seems to have been succeeded by a thirst for adventures in the newly found part of the world.

The marvellous discoveries and narratives of the first conquerors had already prepared the minds of the credulous for the greatest wonders, and disposed them to admit the accounts given of a still more recently discovered country, called El Dorado, the gold-covered capital of which was built upon a vast lake, surrounded by mountains so impregnated with the precious metals, "that they shone with a dazzling splendour." This picture excited the desires of thousands, and by alluring them to follow the phantom, led them to encounter dangers, privations, and a waste of human life unparallelled in the history of imaginary schemes.

The mania for the discovery of these auriferous regions was not confined to Spain, it spread equally over England and Germany, and such was the influence of this seducing picture, first sketched by rumour, and then coloured by imagination, that like another Scylla and Charybdis, the more victims it drew into its vortex, the more were found to embark in the plans laid for its attainment. If we look at that splendid army of adventurers, who to the number of several thousands were beguiled by the persuasive Domingo de Vera, and his highly wrought description of the boundless riches of the great lagoon with auriferous banks; the opulent city of Manoa, over which reigned a grand Patiti, which was covered with gold dust, and the golden roofed palaces of which could be seen afar off, while hundreds of canoes floated on the bosom of the surrounding waters, or lay stranded on their glittering sands—or if we turn to the pages of British history, and there find recorded how, deceived by these reports and his thirst for adventures, the chivalric Raleigh led forth from England's shores several armaments with the lofty object of conquering the golden capital of El Dorado, we everywhere meet with a series of disasters, and read a continued narrative of human privations and sufferings. It is related of those deluded adventurers, whom the flattering accounts of Domingo de Vera induced to leave their homes, that only two or three returned to Spain. Disappointed in his undertakings, and assailed by his commander with reproaches, Keymis, the faithful follower of Raleigh, with his own hand ended his career; and the accomplished Raleigh himself, he whom his contemporaries called "the gallantest knight that ever was," paid the forfeit of his illusions with his life upon the scaffold. What wonder therefore that the fable of El Dorado was reprobated as a device, invented by Satan to lure mankind to destruction!

The existence or non-existence of the Dorado and lake Parima, continued to occupy the imagination and attention of adventurers until the close of the last century, at which late period (1766 and 1777) Don Manuel Centurion, the Governor of Santo Thomé, sent an expedition from the Orinoco in search of the Laguna de Parima and the city of Manoa; enterprises equally marked by the endurance of the greatest hardships, and the sacrifice of human life.

In this universal search for El Dorado, two places appear to have more particularly attracted general attention; namely, the regions along the eastern slope of the Andes of Cundinamarca (New Grenada) which have been considered as the birth-place of the fiction, and that part of Guiana which lies between the river Rupununi, and the Rio Branco. A large inland lake, "another Caspian Sea," as Raleigh expresses himself, was the constant companion of the golden city, and whether this locality referred to the Andes, south of Mexico, or to Guiana, we find it surrounded by water. Thus when the space where El Dorado was situated was supposed to be in Guiana, the name of the river Parima, and the inundations to which the flat country or savannahs were subjected, through which the rivers Parima, Takutu, Xurumu, Mahu, and Rupununi, take their course, gave rise to the fable of the white sea, or Laguna del Parima or Rupununi. Captain Keymis, who at the expense of Raleigh undertook a second voyage to Guiana, identified the locality of Dorado with this lake, which, as he imagined, contained the town of Manoa.

The researches of the most eminent traveller of our age, to whom every physical science is indebted for his contributions, the celebrated de Humboldt, proved by deep reasoning, founded either upon personal experience, or upon the inspection of every document which related to this lake Parima, that it no longer existed, and with its erasure from our maps vanished the last vestiges of that delusive bubble, El Dorado.

The errors of geographers respecting a great interior lake having been corrected and explained by de Humboldt's able pen, the long entertained and pleasing idea of a surrounding country, rich in gold, has been abandoned in our enlightened times; yet such is the charm

of these illusions, over which the description of Sir Walter Raleigh has spread so romantic a hue, that although we are now aware of their exaggerated tone, we yet read them with avidity and interest. How much that interest increases on approaching the classical soil, which Keymis described as the site of El Dorado, that traveller alone can conceive, who treads a *terra incognita* connected with such associations.

In the course of our first expedition into the interior of Guiana, we landed on the 5th of December 1835, at Wai-ipucari, or Marocco, a small inlet which the river Rupununi forms in 3° 42′ N. latitude. The village of Pirara, inhabited by Macusi Indians, is about eleven miles distant from this inlet, and is situated near a lake, through which the river Pirara directs its course. The occurrence of this name, its situation on a lake, and the extensive savannahs, or plains, which, according to the information of the Indians, surround the village, brought the accounts of Keymis, Hortsmann, and Santos, of the locality of the lake Parima to our recollection, and persuaded that we stood on the borders of that enchanted land, we prepared for our excursion to Pirara with increased interest.

On leaving the river Rupununi, we passed over undulating ground, thinly covered with Malpighias, shrubs of stunted appearance, and bright yellow or pink flowers. We turned round a small hillock, and before us was one of those groves of Mauritia palms, which give to the savannahs of South America so characteristic an appearance. This graceful tree, with its fanshaped leaves, alone afforded the scanty shade to be found in those arid places, while it contributed to the picturesque scene before us. The different tints of the savannah, which extended to the Pacaraima mountains, might have been compared to a sea of verdure, which illusion was powerfully increased by the waving motion of the deceptive mirage. Isolated groups of trees rose like islands from the bosom of this sea, and a few scattered palms, with their tall trunks appearing like masts in the horizon, assisted in conveying to our imagination the seducing picture of the Laguna de Parima, with its hundreds of canoes floating on its bosom. Towards the west, where the savannah was bounded by the horizon, we observed some Indian dwellings, and having crossed a small stream, we soon after entered a village consisting of fourteen huts, and inhabited by eighty Indians of the Macusi tribe. It was situated upon rising ground, affording an extensive view over the savannahs to the chain of mountains known to geographers under the name of Pacaraima. At the foot of this small elevation is a lake, which extends east and west for about three miles, and which, at the period when rain seldom falls, is almost covered with rushes; only here and there presenting patches of water. It is however an inland sea, when, during the tropical winter, the rivers overflow their banks. Three islets rise from the middle of the lake, and a small stream flows through it, which has its source somewhat south of the village. The lake is called Amucu; the group of islands, the Islas Ipomucena, described by Santos; and the stream, the Pirara *, names so closely associated with the fable of the Dorado and the Laguna de Parima, that we looked with redoubled interest on the landscape before us.

The vast savannahs, on which Pirara is situated, are encompassed by the Pacaraima mountains to the north, the Canuku and Carawaimi mountains to the south, the thick forests of the Essequibo and isolated mountains to the east, and the mountains of the Mocajahi, and branches of the Sierra Parima to the west; and, according to a superficial computation, cover a space of fourteen thousand four hundred square miles. The geological structure of this region leaves but little doubt that it was once the bed of an inland lake, which by one of those catastrophes, of which even later times give us examples, broke its barriers, and forced a path for its waters to the Atlantic. May we not connect with the former existence of this inland sea the fable of El Dorado and lake Parima? Ages may have elapsed; generations may have been buried and returned to dust; the nations who once wandered on its banks may be extinct, and exist even no more in name; still the tradition of the lake Parima has survived these changes, and transmitted from father to son, imagination has connected it with El Dorado; while these accounts, carried across the Atlantic, have caused those adventurous expeditions, and that sacrifice of human lives, to which allusion has already been made.

Three years had elapsed since my first visit, when in the pursuit of discovery I again approached Pirara, and remarked with surprise and pleasure the change which had taken place in the appearance and number of dwellings which composed the village. I counted upwards of thirty Indian huts, the highest place being occupied by a building somewhat European in construction, the walls of which, plastered by the red ochreous clay of the savannahs, and the roof with gable ends neatly thatched with palm leaves, formed a strong contrast to the surrounding dome-shaped huts of the Indians. Another building, a little to the east of the former, and of larger dimensions, but of similar construction, was in the course of erection, and men, women, and children, appeared equally eager to lend an assisting hand for its completion. This house was intended to be dedicated to the service of the only true God, the former for the dwelling of their missionary, to whose arrival and residence among them they appeared to look forward with great delight. It was pleasing to observe their zeal in such a good cause, and the more so when I considered that the light of Christianity had not yet been diffused among them. Their wish to become Christians had been awakened by the temporary visit of a missionary from the mission at Bartika Point, at the confluence of the Mazaruni with the Essequibo, who, as they expressed themselves, only opened the sacred

* The Macusi Indians call the ferrugineous conglomerate, which forms extensive strata in an east and west direction on the savannahs, Pirara, from which the river and village have received their names.

book, which the white man possessed, without telling them of its contents. In anticipation that their request for a missionary to come and settle among them would be ultimately granted, they had begun to erect these houses according to their idea of the mode of building among white people, and twenty-nine men of their tribe had been selected to proceed to the coast-region, in order to assist in conveying the missionary to his new station.

At my first visit I had formed a predilection for Pirara, not only from the historical interest connected with it, but likewise from its picturesque situation between the two mountain chains of Pacaraima and Canuku, and not least from the kind hospitality of its untutored inhabitants. It was not surprising, therefore, that I should select it partly for my winter quarters, when I resolved to remain, during the rainy season of 1838, in the interior of Guiana. I have not regretted my stay in Pirara, although my comfort was alloyed by sickness, for it has given me ample opportunity to increase my researches in natural history, and to study the character and manners of that interesting race, among whom I was a guest, the Macusi Indians. How frequently have I been sitting near those three Palm trees *, which we see in the picture occupied by a Macusi family, and allowed my eye to range across the village of motley architecture, and the enchanted lake with its verdant isles, until it has been arrested by the chain of mountains clothed in blueish tints, and the play of extraordinary refractions over a soil strongly exposed to the full influence of a tropical sun. The course of the Mahu, which river emerges from the mountain chain at the distance of twenty miles from Pirara, between the peaked mountains of Cucuyé, a little to the right of our group of Macusis, and the truncated hill Tupanaghé, was then designated by a whitish mist, apparently hovering over the trees which fringed its banks; or indeed the mirage adopted frequently such an aqueous appearance, that the river itself might have been fancied to be suspended in the air, and to flow over the tops of the trees. At other times the mountains appeared so close, that every tree in the tufts of wood, which partly covered them, might have been counted, and their distance might have been supposed to be half a mile in lieu of twenty. I shall never forget the splendid spectacle I witnessed one evening after darkness had set in, when, towards the north, the whole horizon was illuminated; for the grass on the savannahs, which had been burning for the last four days, had communicated the fire to the mountain chain, which now blazed for a distance of many miles. A thunder-storm approaching from the north-west, much enhanced the sublimity of the scene, and mingled its forked lightning with the fiery columns, which, as if arranged in battle-array, seemed to storm the heights of the Sierra; and the vivid lightning and the rolling of the thunder were the batteries employed for the onset.

While residing in this place I was present at the arrival of the first protestant missionary among the Indians in the interior of British Guiana, and the joy which it caused to those who were to be confided to his spiritual care, although they were as yet walking in perfect darkness, was a proof of their earnest wish to become Christians. The efforts of the missionary were crowned with success. and I have seen from four to five hundred Indians assembled in the chapel; and although in the commencement they attended in their naked and savage state, young and old appeared equally zealous for conversion, and to receive instruction.

Our party left for San Joaquim, the Brazilian boundary fort, at the end of June 1838, where we intended to stay during the remainder of the rainy season. The new mission at Pirara already promised the best results, and at that period great changes might be observed in the conduct and manners of the Indians, when, under the plea of pressing natives for the Brazilian Imperial navy, one of those slaving expeditions arrived at San Joaquim, which have been practised by the Brazilians for ages, and have been the bane of the Indian races. The expedition was to be directed against Pirara, where, from the then populous state of that village, they thought they might seize a large number of unsuspecting natives. Many favourable circumstances combined, enabled me to have some influence in saving the new mission at Pirara from the evil effects and subsequent miseries of a *descimento*, as these slaving expeditions are called; it fell, however, upon some settlements at the Ursato mountains, on the eastern bank of the river Takutu, which they surprised at midnight, and having set fire to the houses, captured the greater part of their inhabitants, and ransacked the huts of every valuable article which they contained. I saw with the deepest sorrow, that the number of those who were led away into slavery consisted of forty individuals; namely, eighteen children under twelve years of age, thirteen women, and nine men, of whom only four were less than thirty years old, and consequently fit for the avowed purpose of serving in the Imperial navy. The sensation which these cruel proceedings caused among the Indians at the new mission cannot be described. Seven hundred of them assembled at Pirara, where they thought that the presence of the missionary would protect them against the barbarous atrocities of unprincipled men.

Our expedition left San Joaquim in October, and after having explored more than two thousand miles, and visited many spots which never had been trod before by European feet, we returned to Pirara in May 1839, and found it occupied by a detachment of Brazilian national guards, under Senhor Pedro Ayres. The church, in which formerly hymns to the praise of our Lord had been sung, and where the first seeds of Christianity had been sown among the benighted Indians, was now converted into barracks, and the theatre of obscene language and nightly revels. Urgent business had called the missionary to the colony, and during his absence it had been taken possession of by the Brazilians.

* The Macusis call this species of palm, Yawailé, it is an Astrocaryum.

On his return an official despatch was delivered to him from the commander of the upper and lower Amazon, who, it appears, assumed authority over Pirara, and desired him to withdraw and to disperse the mission. The Brazilian detachment had orders to see the mandate obeyed, or to enforce it in case of refusal. The missionary removed to the eastern bank of the Rupununi, and after his departure the inhabitants of Pirara dispersed and have since wandered about the wilderness. The traveller who may pass from the present village of Pirara to the place of embarkation on the rivulet Pirara, will observe a spot which evidently shows that it was once the site of human habitations; but posts, on which the vestiges of fire are observable, a few cashew and arnotto trees, as well as some straggling shrubs of cotton, are all that remain of this once happy Macusi settlement. His guides will tell him, that on one dark night a lawless band of slave hunters arrived from the Rio Branco, surprised the poor inmates, and, after having set their huts on fire, carried old and young away to die far from their native land in bondage and slavery. Too many desolated places are now to be seen in the savannahs, which were once the site of villages, and which met with a similar fate. May the moment soon arrive when the boundaries of the rich and productive colony of British Guiana shall be clearly defined, then only can peace and happiness be insured to the poor remnants of those who once roved in full supremacy over the soil which Europeans and their descendants have usurped. Taught by the past, let them settle on the British side of the frontier, and they will soon be aware, that

> "Where Britain's power is felt,
> Mankind will feel her blessings too."

Previous to the occupation of Pirara by a detachment of Brazilian militia, the Brazilians were not in actual possession of the regions further east than Fort San Joaquim do Rio Branco. This boundary fort, which is pleasantly situated in the midst of the savannahs, is built on the eastern shore of the river Takutu, within a few hundred yards of its confluence with the Rio Branco, the Parima of the Macusi Indians, or Urariquera of the Paravilhanas. A detachment of Spaniards from Nueva Guayana, on the Orinoco, arrived in 1775 by the Caroni and the Uraricapara at the Rio Branco, and fortified themselves in the vicinity of the confluence of the river Yurumé. They were dispersed by the Portuguese, who, against the incursions of the Spaniards as well as against the Dutch, erected the boundary fort San Joaquim. It is constructed of red sandstone found in the vicinity, and has fourteen embrasures mounted with eight nine-pounders in tolerable condition. A commandant, who is an officer in the provincial militia, and ten privates garrisoned it when we were there, and a small chapel and five houses constituted the village. Every two or three years a priest visits the fortress to administer to the spiritual wants of its inhabitants.

Our party spent the rest of the dreary time of a tropical winter in San Joaquim. We had received permission for that purpose from the commander of the district, Ambrosio P. Ayres, at Manaos, or Barra do Rio Negro, who had sent his brother, Pedro Ayres to welcome us at the Brazilian boundary, and to afford us every facility, which such a distant spot could yield towards our geographical pursuits. Two comfortable houses outside the fort were given up to us for our quarters, as long as we might think it convenient to use them.

This reception from a Government whom we knew to be at that time fully engaged in suppressing an insurrection, which had lasted for more than five years, and had therefore little leisure to pay attention to scientific objects, was more than I could have expected in my most sanguine hopes, and I felt truly grateful for the kindness and civility I experienced. The same hospitality had been shown on former occasions to Mr. Charles Waterton, the author of the delightful "Wanderings," and to those two unfortunate travellers Lieut. Gullifer, R. N., and Mr. Smith, both of whom lost their lives in the attempt to visit the interior of Guiana. The circumstances connected with their death are of so melancholy a nature that they deeply excite our sympathy.

SAN JOAQUIM DO RIO BRANCO.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by P. Gauci

Printed by P. Gauci

PURE-PIAPA.

A remarkable Basaltic Column in Guiana.

London Published by Akermann & Co. 96 Strand, 1st Aug. 1840

PURÉ-PIAPA,

A REMARKABLE BASALTIC COLUMN IN GUIANA.

Latitude, 3° 59′ N. Longitude, 59° 28′ W.

THE second day after we had left Pirara, on our journey to Esmeralda, and when that village was in a south-eastern direction, about thirty miles from us, we entered the chain of mountains, which we had hitherto followed only along their southern offsets. A large valley was before us, bounded on each side by precipitous and rugged mountains, crowned with wall-like masses of trappean rocks, the strangeness of the forms of which did not fail to excite the attention of the Indians, who, as usual, were frightened at approaching what they believed to be the abodes of evil spirits. We traversed this valley, which was but thinly covered with grass, and bore evidences of having been lately inundated, and after a turn to the northward we entered a basin-like expanse, surrounded by high mountains, and remarkable for the singular appearance of three masses of rocks. Mara-etshíba, the highest, appears to be of columnar basalt, terminating on the summit in one abrupt pillar about fifty feet in height: a portion which bulges out in the middle of this mass of rock has, by the ever-fruitful imagination of the Indian, been assimilated to the Maraca, a large rattle made of the fruit of the calabash-tree, filled with pebbles, feathers, and snake-teeth, and which is the indispensable instrument of the Piatsang, Piai-man, or Indian sorcerer, during his conjurations.

Near the entrance to the valley, and rising from sixty to eighty feet above the plain, is a columnar group of trap-rocks, the largest of which has been named by the Macusis, Canuyé-piapa, or the Guava tree-stump. Half a mile further westward, and not quite so high, is another mass of rocks, which the traveller might mistake for the trunk of some large old tree, deprived of its leafy crown. It is a great object of wonder amongst the Indians far and near, who call it Puré-piapa, "the felled tree." So complete was the illusion, that I almost doubted my guides when they told me it was the work of nature, and was composed of stone. The rock rises straight to a height of at least fifty feet, its sides are partly covered by a red Lichen, and in some places it is more acted upon by weather than in others: the delusion being increased by this play of colours, the mind can scarcely divest itself of the belief that it is the gigantic trunk of a tree, the head of which, stricken by years, or shivered by lightning, lies mouldering at its foot. On its summit, a Jabiru, a species of stork *, had built its nest, above which we saw the head of a young one. On our approach its mother hastened from a neighbouring savannah to its protection, and perched on one leg, on the summit of the rock, stood sentinel over the plain around.

The rock may be considered sacred by the Macusi Indians, but it did not afford an asylum to the poor bird; for before I was aware of it, or could prevent it, we heard the report of a gun, saw the poor bird balance itself for a few moments, and, pierced by the ball, fall at the foot of the column. One of the Indians had taken my rifle, and he being too unerring a marksman, even the height which the bird had selected for its nest could not preserve its life.

We fixed our night-quarters near a streamlet, and as soon as the necessary arrangements for our camp had been made, I set off to visit this singular rock. The access to it is difficult, in consequence of the numerous boulders which lie on the side of the hill, with which we also found the summit to be strewed in confused masses. Sharp-pointed rocks, many thirty feet long, and scarcely six to eight inches thick, stood either erect or overlaid each other. They were of trap, and similar to those in the valley of the Mahu, and at St. Bernard's in Tortola. Interspersed with these broken rocks we found a few Palms, Cacti, the Agave Americana, Bursera gummifera, Lecythideæ, and the wild Jatropha manihot. Amongst those in blossom, the snow-white flowers and purple fruits of the Cactus repandus were strikingly conspicuous.

It is not to be wondered at that three such remarkable objects as the Mara-etshíba, Canuyé, and Puré-piapa have given rise to some tradition, the more so since the Indian who inhabits the mountains is like our mountaineers, more vivid and fanciful in his imagination, and possesses a larger stock of traditional history than he of the forest or of the plain; consequently it is related, that when Makunaima, the good spirit, wandered still upon earth, he passed these savannahs, and fatigued and thirsty, he observed a tree on the summit of a hill, which, in the hope of finding it covered with fruit, he cut with a stone axe. He was disappointed, and proceeded further eastward, and discovered the Canuyé or Guava tree full of fruit; he cut it likewise, and after having refreshed himself, he proceeded

* Mycteria Americana. When full grown they stand from six, to six and a half feet high.

on his journey. It appears, that whatever Makunaima touched was converted into stone, and thus the trees were changed into this substance. Every rock among these mountains, which is of more than ordinary size, or fantastically shaped by nature, is compared to some bird, animal, or tree, and is supposed to have been petrified by the powerful wish of Makunaima.

After having taken a sketch of this remarkable mass from the north, where it stood in the most advantageous point of view, we met with some delay in returning to our camp. The Indians had set the savannahs on fire, and we found it difficult to make our way through the columns of dense smoke, which for a time separated us from our companions.

The Puré-piapa is no doubt of equal interest to the lover of the picturesque and to the geologist. An almost perfect column (for as such it would be taken if seen at the distance of a mile, and if the architectural skill of the Indian permitted the idea that it were the work of art) crowns a hillock of inconsiderable height. Shall we adopt for its origin the theory of elevation, or has the ground which once surrounded it been washed away by tropical rains? Both theories will leave their doubts, while its picturesque appearance and the tropical vegetation which surrounds it, only tend to increase our admiration of the wonderful works of God.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley. On Stone by George Barnard.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

RORAIMA.

A remarkable Range of Sandstone Mountains in Guiana.

London Published by Ackermann & C° 96, Strand 3rd Aug.t 1840

RORAIMA.

Latitude of Eastern Point, 5° 9′ 40″ N. Longitude, 60° 48′ W.

VAGUE accounts of a mountain, steep as a wall, and from the summit of which water flows in abundance, had been given to me during my first visit to Pirara in 1835 and 1836. I compared these with some details concerning a lake, which are to be found in the manuscript journal of Hortsman, who says, that "at the distance of two days' journey, below the confluence of the Mahu with the Rio Parima, a lake is found on the top of a mountain, which is stocked with the same fish as those in the Rio Parima, but the waters of the former were black, and those of the latter white *." Neither direction nor distance however agreed with that which I had heard, and it was therefore planned, when we departed from Pirara in 1838 for the Orinoco, to make a detour in order to visit this remarkable mountain.

After we had passed Mount Mairari, instead of following the longitudinal valleys of the Pacaraima chain, we turned northward over the mountains, and on the 19th of October entered the country of the Arécuna Indians, a tribe of people, which it appears formerly inhabited the river Uaupes, and whom Monteiro and Ribeiro accuse of cannibalism. Our party was however most hospitably received, and as we were the first white people who had come to visit them, we excited the greatest curiosity, and whenever we passed through one of their villages, we found entertainments prepared for us. A ridge of mountains, differing widely in appearance from those we had hitherto seen, extended east and west, which on our approach we found to consist of red and white sandstone, and after we had ascended them, we continued our march on table-land and entered the fluvial district of the Orinoco. At an abandoned settlement we got the first view of those remarkable mountains, to visit which was the object of our present journey. Wrapped in dark clouds, and distant about forty miles to the north north-east, they rose like gigantic walls, and contributed to the enchanting view which we enjoyed, while the vegetation that surrounded us displayed an interesting and peculiar aspect. In lieu of granite rocks we observed only compact sandstone more or less crystaline, and with this change in the geological feature of the country, the form of the plants appeared to have undergone a similar alteration. Almost all were new to me; but one of the most interesting was an Orchidea, doubtless the largest yet described, and which, for the gracefulness of its stem, the splendid shape of its flowers, and its aromatic smell, is perhaps not equalled among this most singular and most fragrant tribe of plants. Long before we reached it the eastern breeze wafted the delightful odour towards us, and I looked inquisitively from side to side to discover the source of this fragrance; at last I espied flowers, white as a lily, which rose on graceful stems above the surrounding shrubs. I hesitated in pronouncing it to be an Orchidea, strange and eccentric as all this tribe may be in their forms: on coming nearer no uncertainty was left, and it proved to be one of the most beautiful of its class, and has since been named Sobralia Elizabetha in honour of Her Majesty the Queen of Prussia †.

Such were the interesting features of the landscape in which Roraima, capped by clouds, formed the most striking object, and heightened our desire to visit it; but various circumstances intervened before we could execute our design, and the 25th of October approached before we left the Arécuna village, Uruparu. We continued our journey in a northern direction, upon an extensive table-land, and followed the southern foot of a range of sandstone hills, remarkable for their resemblance to fortifications on a gigantic scale. After we reached the foot of mount Anauparu, our path turned over hills so cleft and rugged in their structure, that we could only ascend them by treading in the exact steps that had been worn, or perhaps cut out by the Indians. Having ascended mount Canaupang, one of the highest we had yet crossed, and perhaps not less than four thousand feet above the level of the sea, our road led us on the descent towards a wood, which we shortly after entered. We issued from it again, entered a savannah, and turning round a small hillock, a pretty

* Humboldt's Pers. Narrative, vol. v, p. 800. The mountain here alluded to is the Caruma or Sierra Grande, situated at the eastern or left bank of the Rio Branco, and about thirty-one miles below Fort San Joaquim. The popular tradition of the existence of this lake still existed when we sojourned in Fort San Joaquim, and the superstition, that he who should ascend its summit would die in the course of the year, had no doubt prevented its non-existence from being ascertained. I planned an excursion thither with Senhor Pedro Ayres, and we prevailed upon Andres Miguel, the patriarch of the Vaqueiros, or herdsmen, to accompany us, who said, that if we, who had still pretensions to some years of life, could risk ours, he might easily forget the few years likely to be granted to him. We reached the top after many toils, but no lake was to be seen, nor is the second tradition much to be trusted — that death within a year is the penalty for treading upon the summit of Caruma; for while I write this, two years have elapsed since I enjoyed a splendid prospect from its highest point.

† For a representation of this beautiful plant, see frontispiece.

prospect opened before us. An Indian village occupied the foreground, and unlike the other Indian settlements we had seen, it was enclosed or barricaded; and Roraima, that remarkable range of flat-topped sandstone mountains, resembling basalt in their outline, rising like a wall in the north, formed the background. Dark opaque clouds hovered round their summits, which, chased by the morning breeze, produced such a sudden change of light and shade on these mural precipices, that they appeared perpetually under new shapes and colours. Our delight at this varying scene was of short duration, the mountains were suddenly enveloped in clouds, and hidden from our view. We reached the Indian village of Arawayam-botte, at eleven o'clock, which was inhabited by Arécuna Indians, and consisted of three square houses, with gable ends, and a round cabin. Unfavourable weather detained us here eight days; the mountains were almost constantly clouded, and no day passed without thunder and lightning.

We started at last, on the 2d of November, for the Roraima range, crossed several intermediate ridges and rivulets, and ascended Kaimari, a mountain about four thousand feet above the level of the sea, in doing which a tract of the finest white clay attracted our attention. On reaching the summit we could not but admire the regularity with which a number of blocks of different sizes were placed. If human hands had set them with line and compass they could not have been laid more regularly *. We halted at the foot of Roraima, at a settlement of two houses, built on the left bank of the river Kukenam, the inhabitants of which fled to the woods when they saw us approaching; but we soon reassured them, and they returned, when they told us that they had taken us for Brazilians come to capture and lead them into slavery. After we had rested and refreshed ourselves, we commenced the steep ascent, and stood, at six o'clock in the evening, within a mile of the perpendicular walls of Roraima. We encamped for the night in a hollow, about three thousand seven hundred feet above the Arécuna village of Arawayam-botte, where we had the greatest difficulty in procuring fire, the constant moisture which prevails on these heights having rendered the brushwood too damp to burn. At midnight the thermometer stood at 59° Fahr., and the cold rendered us quite uncomfortable, for our constitutions had become sensible to such a decrease of heat, accustomed as we were to the uniform temperature of the lowlands; nor did the fires, which we could not kindle into bright flames, afford us any warmth. Before sunrise, and half an hour after, Roraima was beautifully clear, which enabled us to see it in all its grandeur. These stupendous walls rise to a height of one thousand five hundred feet, their summit is therefore five thousand two hundred feet above Arawayam-botte. They are as perpendicular as if erected with the plumbline; nevertheless in some parts they are overhung with low shrubs, which, seen from a distance, give a dark hue to the reddish rock, and an appearance of being altered by the action of the atmosphere. Baron de Humboldt observes, that a rock of one thousand six hundred feet of perpendicular height has in vain been sought for in the Swiss Alps, nor do I think that Guiana offers another example of that description. A much more remarkable feature of this locality, however, lies in the cascades, which fall from this enormous height, and strange as it may appear, afterwards flow in different directions, into three of the mightiest rivers of the northern half of South America, namely, the Amazon, the Orinoco, and the Essequibo. The origin of this abundance of water can only be explained by the circumstance, that the precipitation of atmospheric vapours is much promoted by those cold and high mural precipices: local peculiarities, and among these the thick forests, which towards the north extend from the foot of these mountains to the coast of the Atlantic, while large savannahs spread to the south, may in many respects contribute to the increase of aqueous vapours. The summit of the mural precipices is somewhat rounded, and overgrown with shrubs; but that part which rises in a rounded form above the walls, must be of inconsiderable elevation, perhaps not more than fifty feet; nevertheless at this height from the summit, where the mountains assume the wall-like appearance, the supply of water is so great, that it falls in streams, and forms those wonderful cascades for which Roraima is famed among the Indians, who in their dances sing of the wonders of "Roraima, the red rocked, wrapped in clouds, the ever fertile source of streams:" and in consequence of the darkness which frequently prevails, when thick clouds hover about its summit, it is likewise called the night mountain — "Of Roraima, the red rocked, I sing, where with daybreak night still prevails." This was one of the burdens which we heard many times repeated, during the dance of the Arécuna Indians, in the vicinity of this mountain group. Roraima and the neighbouring mountains of the same structure represent, on a large scale, that which the spring of the Brocken in the Hartz mountains offers in miniature; namely, water breaking out from the side of the mountain only a short distance below its summit.

We left our camp soon after sunrise, and attempted to reach one of the cataracts which appeared more voluminous in water than the others. We had to cross a marshy savannah, abounding in most curious and interesting plants. Among these was an Utricularia, the prettiest of its tribe, and which I have since had the pleasure of dedicating to the most distinguished among American travellers, Baron de Humboldt. The stem is of a dark purple colour, rises to a height of three or four feet, and bears several flowers about two

* They consisted of decomposed felspar, and their direction was S. 84° W. We found similar blocks at the foot of Roraima, and the white clay which we noticed was no doubt the remainder of decomposing felspar. We likewise saw, at Mount Kaimari, a few blocks of compact felspar, of a blue colour; the surface, however, from exposure to the air, was white and pulverulent. At the river Kukenam, where it passes the foot of Roraima, similar compact stratified felspar occurred, a bed of yellow ochre resting upon it. Red Jasper (Hornstone) is frequently met with in the vicinity of Roraima, chiefly at the river Cako, but the predominant rock is sandstone more or less compact, which surmounts the other formations, and forms the mural precipices. Carefully as I tried to find limestone and gypsum in the vicinity of this mountain group, I could not discover either.

and a half inches in diameter, also of a beautiful purple. Another plant of great interest was a new genus of Pitcher plant, the Heliamphora nutans, with radical leaves, and a hollow, urn-shaped petiole open at the top, the lamina forming a small concave lid, which differs however from that of the Nepenthes in not closing over the pitcher, or urn-shaped petiole. The scape bears a loose raceme of from two to six nodding flowers, sometimes white, sometimes tinged with rose colour. Of no less interest is a Cypripedium and a Cleistia, the latter with deep scarlet flowers and stem, and purple leaves, growing by the side of the Utricularia and Pitcher plant. We found another species of Sobralia, differing from the S. Elizabetha in its having sheathing, hairy leaves, and the labellum and petals being of a bright pink.

The execution of our design to reach the large cascade, which the Indians called Kamaiba, was no easy task; the surprising strength of vegetation, and the entanglement of trees and creepers, only permitted us to advance slowly, and numerous craggy precipices, which we were forced to descend by means of lianas and ladders of roots, even presented dangers. A humid vapour appears to be here constantly held in suspension, and the rays of the sun are scarcely admitted through the thick canopy of foliage. The trunks of the trees are thickly clothed with Mosses and Lichens. The Arums and Pothos, almost gigantic in size, Uranias, Heliconias, arborescent Ferns, in appearance more resembling the stately Palm than the Fern of our northern countries, and numerous Alpinias contested for the possession of the soil which had gathered between large blocks of a black colour, their surface also affording a peculiar vegetation of Orchideæ, Gesnerias, Peperomias, and numerous succulent plants, all attesting the humidity of the spot. Large trees, rooted in the clefts, and overhanging the glens, added to the sombre character of the scene. An oppressive solitude prevailed; there was no sign of animal life; only the noise of falling waters was heard, which served as a guide to direct our steps thither. We had continued our dangerous path for several hours, sometimes ascending, sometimes descending almost perpendicular cliffs by means of the roots of herbaceous plants, or those natural ropes formed by the Bauhinia tribe, when the thunder-clouds which had been threatening, passed the mountains and enveloped us almost in darkness; the rain fell in torrents, and thunder and wind appeared to vie with the cataract in producing the greatest uproar. The forest opened, and, as if it had been called forth by magic, a perpendicular wall stood before us, from which the Kamaiba, swelled by the torrents of rain, precipitated itself with a thundering noise into a spacious basin below. The whole environs seemed as if enveloped in foam, and the gusts of wind which accompanied the storm raised the froth before it in flakes. The summit of the wall was perfectly hidden from us; even the cliff opposite the one on which we stood was only seen occasionally as through a veil, illuminated by vivid flashes of lightning. Numerous blocks, apparently torn from these gigantic walls, which were lying in great confusion around, conveyed the possibility that a similar accident might now occur, an idea which was strengthened by the uproar of the elements; and the danger of being near to these cliffs was so fully impressed on me, that instead of enjoying this romantic scene, I felt oppressed, and a wish to escape from it. It appeared to have communicated a similar feeling to my companions, for not a word was spoken; the Indians squatted on the ground and looked dispirited; indeed every one appeared to feel relieved when I gave orders for our return. This, however, was not done before we descended to the basin, and had tried the temperature of the water, which we found to be 56° Fahr., that of the air being then 61° Fahr. The perpendicular wall of Roraima, whence Kamaiba falls from the summit, had been ascertained from Arawayam to be fifteen hundred feet high, it therefore surpasses in height the celebrated Staubbach in the Swiss Alps, which is nine hundred French feet, and presented, at the time of our visit, a real cascade, not a mere precipitation of mist. In height it surpassed the Cascade de Gavarnie in the Pyrenees by nearly two hundred feet, which has been hitherto considered the highest, being one thousand two hundred and sixty-six French feet. I estimated the breadth of the fall at about seventy yards. Of the extent of the arc which this mass of water formed in its descent I could not judge; the basin which received it might have been compared to a vast cauldron, the water foaming and bubbling within it with uproarious noise.

Turbulently pushing itself a way through the numerous blocks which fill the bed of the mountain stream, it continues for a few hundred yards, and, approaching another cliff, it precipitates itself a second time, down a height of about one hundred and twenty feet *.

We returned by the path which we had partly cut through the thick wood on our way, and the continued rain and low temperature chilled us completely. When we issued from the wood and again approached the mountain savannah, we found ourselves perfectly enveloped in clouds, driven rapidly across by gusts of wind, and the thermometer fell to 57° Fahr. Once or twice it partially cleared, and we observed a sunny landscape within a few miles from the foot of the mountain; the thunder-storm was therefore perfectly local.

Roraima is the most eastern, and the highest of this remarkable group of mountains, the greatest extent of which between

* The geological character of this cliff is sandstone, with grains of quartz and particles of decomposed felspar, and is so compact and hard that I found it difficult to break off any specimens, nevertheless the water had likewise here hollowed out a large basin for itself. The perpendicular high walls are of similar structure, the sandstone is however of a finer grain.

Roraima and Irutibuh is about twenty-five miles in a north-west and south-east direction. North-west of it is Ikukenam and Ayang-catsibang, and to the north Marima, which form almost a quadrilateral figure. This quadrangle from south-east to north-west occupies ten geographical miles; the eastern end of Roraima, which has entirely the appearance of a gigantic portal, is, according to my calculations from astronomical observations in Arawayam-botte, in 5° 9′ 40″ N. latitude, and five thousand one hundred feet above that village, and the north-western point of Ayang-catsibang in 5° 18′ N. latitude. At the distance of two miles north-west from Ayang-catsibang rises another rocky wall, Irwarkarima, to a height of three thousand six hundred feet, remarkable for an urn-shaped rock at its eastern end, which, standing as it were on a pedestal of three thousand one hundred and thirty-five feet above the Arécuna village, is four hundred and sixty-six feet high, and at its widest part three hundred and eighty-one feet *. Next follows Wáyaca-piapa, or the felled tree, another of those monuments of stone, which, formed by nature, has been compared, like Puré-piapa, to the trunk of a tree deprived of its crown, and the Indians have attached a similar tradition to it. Wayaca is less in height than the rest of the group, and resembles an obelisk with a truncated head. The three mountains, Yuruaruime, Carauringtebuh, and Irutibuh conclude the group, which, if seen from the Arécuna village, appear like one.

I can but imperfectly describe the magnificent appearance of these mountains, with their thundering and foaming cataracts, and the peculiar aspect which these gigantic walls offer if seen from Arawayam-botte. They convey the idea of vast buildings, and might be called nature's forum, or associating them with those splendid remains of man's gigantic conception and execution, we may imagine what the forum would have been, if its columns and walls could have been raised to a height of one thousand five hundred feet, and if it had covered an extent of ten miles. Although this village is between fifteen and twenty miles from the mountains, which form the quadrangle, I recollect one afternoon, when a severe thunder-storm had just abated, that with the naked eye we counted fifteen cataracts, which precipitated themselves from their walls. From the eastern end of Roraima and a short distance from that gigantic portal, flows the Coting or Cotinga, mingling its waters with the Takutu, Branco, and Negro, and ultimately falling into the largest river in the world, the Amazon. A little to the north of it descends the Cuya, a tributary to the Cako, which, joining the Mazuruni or Mazuring, flows into the Essequibo. Several streams from the south-western side of Roraima flow into the Kukenam; among them is Kamaiba, which forms the cascade before described. The Kukenam has its source in the neighbouring mountain, Ikukenam, and forms, at its confluence with the Yuruani, the River Caroni, a tributary of the Orinoco. The Yuruani itself, which the Indians consider as the head of the Caroni, flows in numerous streams from the north-eastern side of Ikukenam, and is joined by others from its western side, and from the mountains of Ayang-catsibang, Zarangtibuh, and Irwarkarima. The river Ariparu also flows in numerous streams from the rocky wall of Marima. The Cako, one of the chief branches of the upper Mazuruni, rises on the eastern side of Irutibuh, while the Cama, which flows from the western side, joins the Apauwanga, a tributary of the Caroni. The abundance of water which proceeds from these mountains may be judged of from the circumstance, that the Kukenam, within three miles of its source, already forms a stream from forty to fifty yards in breadth.

This group of mountains is the culminating point of the Sierra Pacaraima, and here unite the natural boundaries of British Guiana, Venezuela, and Brazil. This mountain range is therefore not only remarkable for its picturesque scenery, and its importance in geography, but it likewise possesses peculiar interest from political considerations.

* These measurements are all the results of trigonometrical operations in Arawayam-botte: it must be however recollected that they were performed only by means of a sextant, and are consequently merely approximations.

AYANG-CATSIBANG, IKUKENAM, MARIMA, AND RORAIMA.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley.

On Stone by George Barnard.

PURUMAMA.

The great Cataract of the River Parima.

London Published by Ackermann & Co. 96, Strand 3rd Augt. 1841

PURUMAMA,

THE GREAT FALL OF THE RIVER PARIMA.

Latitude, 3° 20′ N. Longitude, 62° 3′ W.

AFTER our visit to Roraima we travelled about one hundred miles, in a south south-west direction, over savannahs and mountains, and embarked in canoes on the river Parima, which some Indian tribes call Urariquera, and the Brazilians, from the colour of its water, Rio Branco, or white river, in contra-distinction to the Rio Negro, which has black waters.

From the information which I had collected from some Maiongkong Indians, one of whom was particularly acquainted with the regions of the Orinoco, I thought it advisable to follow the Parima, in order to reach Esmeralda on the upper Orinoco. We embarked on the 6th of December, and found the river much obstructed by falls and rapids, and our progress was consequently very slow. In the morning of the 10th of December we reached the mouth of the Uraricapara * which joins the Parima from the north-west.

Towards the end of the last century, namely in 1775, the Spaniards, who claimed the sovereignty over those regions, erected a small fort on the right bank of the Uraricapara, called Santa Rosa, which however was not many years after abandoned, and its site was already overgrown with bushes when the Portuguese surveyors visited it in the commencement of this century. A chain of hillocks, which crosses the Uraricapara, likewise traverses the Urariquera or Parima, and not far from the junction of both rivers forms the formidable cataracts.

The Purumama Iméru is without doubt one of the largest falls in Guiana, and vies in size and magnificence with the cataract of William IV, on the Essequibo, and the falls of the Corentyn. This powerful obstacle to navigation seems to arise from the river having forced its way through the hilly range to which I have already alluded. Diminishing to about fifty yards, it divides into two streams, and precipitates itself from a height of forty, or forty-five feet to the basin below. The grand and awful appearance of this large body of water is sublime beyond description, and in consequence of stony dykes, has for miles previous to its reaching the large fall, formed an uninterrupted succession of rapids and whirlpools, and ultimately dashes down a precipice of forty-five feet between two immense pillars of black shining rocks, which rise at the brink of the precipice from the foaming waters. The outflow from the basin here owes its existence to the narrowing of the main channel of the river on either side, in consequence of two or more abutments of rocks, and was not more than thirty feet wide when we saw it. Through this contracted channel, the whole mass of the waters of the Parima, just after having rushed over a precipice, is forced to make its way. On meeting with this new obstacle an indraught is caused and rushes back in an eddy, and forms in the middle of the basin a vortex or whirlpool, which perhaps more powerfully realizes the picture of the Charybdis as painted by the ancients, than we find that whirlpool does in reality. In order to witness its power we sent some Indians above the fall, and ordered them to cut down one of the largest trees which lined the bank. How great was our admiration when, after having been directed into the midchannel, it approached the chasm, and with its numerous branches was hurled down the precipice! Scarcely had it approached the whirling gulf, when it was sucked under, and when it reappeared it was already in the middle of the outflowing stream, a naked trunk, its countless branches broken, and rushing down the impetuous channel.

The grandeur of the tropical scenery, the numerous Palms and Uranias with their gigantic leaves, which skirt the Cataract, and add sublimity to the mountains around, enhance the picturesque view of the Purumama Iméru.

We distinctly heard the roar of the great cataract before we reached the junction of the Uraricapara with the Parima, and at least at a distance of a mile and a half from the fall. A little beyond, a second fall occurs of about twenty-five feet, making altogether a descent of from seventy to seventy-five feet, and to overcome this formidable impediment to our navigation of the river, we had no alternative but to carry our corials over the range of hills, which rise about three hundred and fifty feet above the river. Though the ascent was for about a third of the way at an angle of sixty degrees, and the Indians had to support themselves by steps and ropes of lianas, which had been made by our predecessors, we nevertheless completed the portage by four o'clock in the afternoon, and embarking above the cataracts, once more proceeded about half a mile further to a convenient resting place.

* Uraricapara and Urariquera are compound terms of Urari, the plant of which the Indians make their arrow poison, and which I discovered to be a species of Strychnos. Capara signifies "river, stream;" but the signification of quera, or as it is pronounced by the Paravilhanas Coira, I am not able to give.

Rapids and cataracts opposed numerous difficulties to our progress the next morning, which we safely surmounted, and arrived at one o'clock at a Zapara settlement, where we found the people located in a very wild spot, almost inaccessible from the falls and rapids by which it is encircled. The men and women of this tribe were so hideously ugly that we called them the Ugly Faces. They seemed to suffer, most of them, from inflammation in the eyes; many squinted horribly, and others were evidently dropsical. Their voices were squeaking and very disagreeable: the chief was, however, a good looking personage, and one young girl formed a striking contrast, she being the prettiest Indian I had as yet seen. Altogether there might be about forty of them crowded into three huts; these were built in a round form, neatly thatched with palm leaves, not pointed at the top as the Macusi houses are, though with an opening for smoke. The interior was clean, the only thing commendable among them.

The Zaparas, it appears, have arisen from the intermarriage of Macusis and Arécunas. They principally inhabit the mountains Tupac-eng and Waikamang, though there are likewise a few of their settlements along the banks of the Parima, of which this was one. Their whole number probably amounts to not more than three hundred. They differ little in appearance from the Macusis; if any thing, they are more slender, and not so robust in figure. I had no opportunity of collecting any of their words, but their language is merely a the variety of that of the parent tribes, the Arécuna and Macusi.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley.

On stone by George Barnard

JUNCTION OF THE KUNDANAMA WITH THE PARAMU.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

London: Published by Ackermann & C° 96. Strand. 3rd Aug. 1840

JUNCTION OF THE KUNDANAMA WITH THE PARAMU.

Latitude, 3° 30′ N. Longitude, 65° 34′ W.

WE continued the ascent of the river Parima from the Zapara settlement, in latitude 3° 16′ N., to the confluence of the Arekatsa, which falls into that river in latitude 3° 44′ N., and following a north-west direction, ascended the mountains which divide the Merewari and its tributaries from the Arekatsa and Parima, and entered the country of the Guinau and Maiongkong Indians, many of whose tribes live in a perfect state of nudity, but to whom, in spite of their savage state, hospitality was no stranger. They had no knowledge of Esmeralda, or mount Duida, by those names, though on further explanation I concluded that Esmeralda must be their Mirara, and the Duida, mount Yéonamari. Under these circumstances I determined, as soon as my invalids (several of the Indians who had accompanied me) were convalescent after their fever, to cross the peninsula formed by the Merewari, and to proceed westward in search of the sources of the Orinoco.

We had already entered the fluvial system of the Orinoco, and found all the streams which we crossed, flowing south-westward into the Ocamo, when our Indian guides pointed out one of the mountains forming part of a chain, the blue outlines of which we saw to the southward, where they said the Orinoco and Parima derived their sources; we therefore had reason to hope that we should reach them in a few days, but the evening of the 1st of February put an end to our anxious expectations. We arrived at a Maiongkong settlement, the inhabitants of which we found in great consternation, and about to fly from the place in consequence of the massacre of twenty of their tribe by the Kirishanas, who inhabit the mountains between the Orinoco and Ocamo, and who had treacherously fallen upon them, when by invitation they had been on their way to visit them for the purposes of traffic. The same savages had immediately afterwards surprised a Maiongkong settlement, only a day's journey from where we then were, and with the exception of a child, who had found means to hide herself, killed every person. These outrages had caused a general panic, and my party of Maiongkongs became infected with the same fears to such an extent, that not only did they peremptorily refuse to go forward, but made hasty preparations for taking to their heels and leaving us to our fate. We were thus obliged, most reluctantly, to turn back at the very threshold of the sources of the Orinoco. However, their true position is no longer a geographical problem, a single glance on the map where my route is delineated will show, that all uncertainty as to their situation is reduced to within the narrow limits of less than thirty miles.

I now determined to attempt reaching Esmeralda by a long circuit to the northward, by which the Indians considered themselves safer from their enemies. It was a most wearisome and monotonous route, over steep mountains and through forests so dense and high that nothing was visible beyond our path. The Uranias, Heliconias, and Palm trees vanished, and on the summit of these elevations we found two species of Lichens (Cladonia rangiferina and reticulata), of a pure white colour, which thickly covered the ground, and gave the appearance of a heavy fall of snow. We crossed the river Parámu, or Padamo, on the 10th of February, and remained for some days at a Maiongkong settlement near mount Marawaca. During our stay I found an opportunity of ascertaining to what genus of plants those remarkable reeds belong, of which the Indians make their blow-pipes, and which are from fifteen to seventeen feet long, entirely free from any thing like a knot in that length, quite straight and smooth, and perfectly cylindrical. I found that they grew at the foot of Marawaca, and from specimens which were brought to me in flower, they proved to be a new species of Arundinaria.

We started from the Maiongkong settlement on the 15th of February, and embarked on the Parámu, which we followed in a southern course. Somewhat below the river Puruniama a series of falls commenced, where we met with a serious disaster. One of the small canoes or corials, in passing a fall, filled with water and sunk, and though the corial was recovered, her load was almost entirely lost. Among other things was a small quantity of salt, which, after having been deprived of that condiment for several weeks, we had found an opportunity of buying at an enormous price from some Indians. It was a great punishment to us Europeans who were accustomed to salt, and for my part I freely confess, that of all privations which we naturally suffered after being for such a long period away from all traces of civilization, I felt none so bitterly as the want of salt. With the corial likewise sunk all our plates and kitchen utensils, which, although not of the most valuable metal, had rendered us the same service as the most costly would have done, and what was worse, could not be replaced. A similar accident shortly afterwards befel another canoe, and the river Parámu

appeared to be a succession of rapids and falls, some so large and dangerous, that we had to unload the corials five times in the course of the 15th of February, and to carry the luggage over land. The following day, about noon, we reached the cataract Mariwacaru, the largest we had yet passed in the Parámu; the river precipitated itself upwards of thirty feet over a ledge of rocks, and we had therefore to unload and to carry our corials and baggage over land to the foot of this formidable obstacle. Thence we followed the river in a south-east direction, when towards sunset we saw, at some distance before us, what I at first mistook for clouds of white smoke from the fires which I supposed to have been kindled by some of our Indians who had gone on before; but I was soon undeceived, it was a sheet of foam caused by a cataract which the river Kundanama forms at its junction with the Parámu. This river, coming from the north-east, is, near its junction, about thirty-five feet higher than the Parámu; it falls gradually fifteen feet, when at its very mouth, the river being divided by a small island into two streams, it rushes down over two grand cataracts, the southernmost of which is twenty feet high. The dense white foam contrasts strongly with the dark colour of the Parámu, while clouds of mist, formed by the contest of waters, rise high into the air, and hang like a veil over the verdant clusters of Palms and thick umbrageous trees.

Need I observe that we stopped to enjoy this sublime scene, and that our pencils were soon engaged in transferring to paper the striking features of this remarkable spot? I know no other instance where a river joins its recipient in so turbulent a manner. I estimated the breadth of the two falls at three hundred yards; at their foot they formed a large basin, studded with huge black blocks, and on its southern shore thick masses of sand were deposited, brought down by the Kundinama from the sandstone mountains. We had crossed this stream on the 1st of February, in latitude 3° 57′ N., where it was of inconsiderable breadth, and whence its course had been south-west by south to its junction with the Parámu, in latitude 3° 30′ N.

The effect caused by the junction of the Kundanama and its whitish waters, with the Parámu, the waters of which are called black, is peculiar. There is no gradual transition, the turbulence of the Kundanama frequently pushes bodies of whitish water among the black stream of the Parámu, giving a spotted appearance to the latter. We found the Indians, who had preceded us, occupied in shooting fish, and the large basin below the cataract appeared to teem with the delicious Pacu and other fishes. The skill of the Indian in securing these animals by this method cannot be sufficiently admired, and if the false reflection, and the resistance which the water offers to the arrow be considered, it is easy to conceive how precarious is this method of procuring them; but the Indian has, by practice from his earliest age, conquered what we consider obstacles, and those tribes who have no intercourse with the coast, and consequently are unable to procure hooks, depend solely upon their bows and arrows for their success in fishing.

We passed the last cataract of the Parámu on the 20th of February, and I was truly thankful to the Almighty that it had pleased him to allow us to reach their termination without accident. The Parámu in the number and height of its falls surpasses any river I have ever before seen, and many an anxious moment had I known during our descent.

Below the last cataract we were welcomed by a pair of fresh water dolphins, which followed us, sporting and gamboling around the canoe. On starting the succeeding morning from our night camp, they again made their appearance; at least we fancied they were the same, as we saw no more than that one pair; and under their escort, we, at nine o'clock in the morning of the 21st of February, entered the Orinoco, and expected to reach Esmeralda on the succeeding day.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by P. Gauci.

ESMERALDA, ON THE ORINOCO.

Printed by P. Gauci.

Site of a Spanish Mission

ESMERALDA ON THE ORINOCO.

Latitude, 3° 11′ N. Longitude, 66° 3′ W.

ALTHOUGH Esmeralda has not excited the same interest as that which has been attached to El Dorado, it has yet attained some celebrity, and in consequence of a mineralogical error, it attracted general attention towards the middle of the last century. During the general search in the newly discovered continent for mountains impregnated with gold and boundless riches, the rock-crystals which were found at the mountains of Duida and Maravaca, some of them of great transparency, others coloured by chlorine or blended with actinolite, were taken for diamonds and emeralds *; and to the miserable hamlet of twelve or fifteen huts, the pompous title "Nueva Villa de Esmeraldas" was given. In later times it has been brought again into remembrance by the journey of Baron de Humboldt, who visited Esmeralda, in May 1800, and made it his extreme point in his remarkable ascent of the Orinoco. The hostility of the Indians, who inhabit the upper part of the Orinoco, prevented him from advancing further.

One of the ulterior objects of these expeditions, which were undertaken in the interior of Guiana under the direction of the Royal Geographical Society, was to connect the positions astronomically ascertained in British Guiana, with Esmeralda, the most easterly point determined by Baron de Humboldt; to effect which, we had to traverse seven hundred miles of a country never yet trodden by any European, as far as we know, and to suffer privations and fatigues of every description. As already related, we entered the Orinoco by its tributary the Parámu, or Padamo, on the 21st of February, 1839, and encamped that night opposite to the mouth of the Wapo. Our camp was broken up next morning at six o'clock, in full expectation of reaching Esmeralda that day. Light, fleecy clouds enveloped Mount Duida, but they vanished after the sun rose above the horizon, and for the first time we had a full view of these stupendous rocky masses, partly illuminated by the rays of the morning sun. Our progress was attended by difficulties; we got aground several times on sandbanks, and had to cross from shore to shore to avoid shallows, and to follow the winding course of the current. At length we came in view of a fine savannah, interspersed with thickets of trees, and tufts of Mauritia Palms. I knew it, from Humboldt's description, to be Esmeralda, and some canoes, which were tied to the river's bank, left us no further doubt. I cannot describe with what feelings I hastened ashore; my object was realized, and my observations, commenced on the coast of Guiana, were now connected with those of Humboldt at Esmeralda. It is but due to that great traveller to acknowledge, that at times, when my own physical powers were almost failing me, and when, surrounded by dangers and difficulties of no ordinary nature, his approbation of my previous exertions cheered me on, and encouraged me to that perseverance which was now crowned with success. The emaciated forms of my companions, and my faithful Indian guides, told more than volumes what difficulties we had encountered.

The village was a few hundred yards from the shore; half way to it we were met by the Alcalde, who welcomed us in broken Spanish. His attire certainly did not bespeak his dignity, being nothing but a shirt made of the bark of a tree. He led us to his hut where his wife, children, and grandchildren were assembled, and while his Señora put some smoked fish and cassada before us, he made incessant inquiries respecting European affairs: he spoke of France and Paris, England and London, Prussia and Berlin; he inquired what states were at war, and what Ferdinand VII was doing in Catalonia. The change of affairs in Spain was new to him, and he could not conceive how a Queen could govern there: equally wonderful to him was Donna Maria's accession to the Portuguese throne. He mentioned Napoleon; and indeed showed that he had a very fair acquaintance with European matters, which was accounted for, when he told me that he had served, during the late revolution in Columbia, as a sailor on board a privateer, under a Catalonian commander, and had been much in the West Indies. Old Antonio Yarumari was an Indian of the Ipavaquena nation, which inhabits the banks of the Durovaca, or Siapa, a river which falls into the Cassiquiare. After the independence of the Colombian republic had been declared, he had settled at Esmeralda, and was now surrounded by a numerous family, over which he presided.

Thirty-nine years had now elapsed since Alexander von Humboldt visited Esmeralda, and found, in the most remote Christian settlement on the upper Orinoco, a population of eighty persons. The cross before the village still showed us that its inhabitants professed the Christian religion; but their number had dwindled to a single family—a patriarch, and his children and grandchildren. Of six houses which we found standing, only three were inhabited; their plastered walls, and massive and well-finished doors, showed that they were not

* De Humboldt's Pers. Narr., vol. v, p. 506.

built by Indians. Before one of them, which we supposed to have been the church or convent, we observed a small bell hung up in the gallery, bearing the inscription — "San Francisco Deasis Capp. 1769."

Whatever change time might have produced in the works of man, nature had remained the same. Duida still raises its lofty summit to the clouds, and flat savannahs "decorated with clumps of the Mauritia Palm," stretch from the banks of the Orinoco to the foot of the mountains beyond, giving to the landscape that grand and animated appearance which so much delighted de Humboldt. A ridge of heaped-up blocks of granite, named Caquire, of the most grotesque forms, and in some places looking like vast edifices in ruins, occupies the foreground, and at its foot Esmeralda is situated. Some pious hand has planted a cross on the largest of these granitic blocks, the airy form of which stands boldly in relief, with the blue sky as a background, and heightens the picturesque appearance of the surrounding scenery. It also reminds us, that although nature and man appear in a savage state, there are still some in this wilderness who adore the Deity, and acknowledge a crucified Saviour.

The village is about seven miles distant from the foot of Duida, which mountain rises to a height of seven thousand one hundred and forty-seven feet above Esmeralda, or probably eight thousand two hundred and seventy-eight feet above the sea *. The Indians of the rivers Paramu, Cunucuma, or the Maiongkongs, or Maquiritares, in general call the Duida, Yeonamari; and Esmeralda, Mirara. Towards the west north-west the mountains rise gradually to the height of about two thousand feet, clothed at first with dense forests, succeeded by rocky cliffs, only here and there thinly covered with vegetation. The range extends in sinuous outlines towards the loftiest peak, which bears north 30° west from the village. Its base is covered with wood, from which a misshapen rocky mass rises boldly to a height of four thousand six hundred and sixty feet, and so precipitous, that it is impossible to climb its summit. A similar rocky mass of considerable height stands west of Duida; I could not however ascertain its actual elevation above the savannah, in consequence of dark clouds, which, during the period of our stay, hovered constantly round its summit, while to the west the ridge was perfectly clear. The base of the mountain chain is of granite, but where the dense wood ceases, and the rocky mass rises for four or five thousand feet almost perpendicularly, it is of quartzose sandstone, more or less compact in its nature. Numerous veins of quartz traverse this sandstone in various directions, and are analogous to those of the crystal mountains near Roraima. Spots of dazzling whiteness are observable along the precipitous declivities of Duida, when the atmosphere is clear, and the sun reflects his rays on its walls, which consist no doubt of quartz; and the numerous fragments which we found on the savannah below, and in the beds of the streams which flow from it, prove the abundance of this mineral throughout the range.

A charming prospect presents itself from the cross of which I have already spoken. To the north, the high mountains, with their steep wall-like forms throwing out buttresses and escarpments which look like the works surrounding a vast fortification, soften into blueish tints as they recede in the distance. The course of the Orinoco upwards can be traced for a considerable distance; and a few isolated, rounded hills, of inconsiderable height, rise on either side of its banks; elsewhere, dense forests cover the plain. Below is Esmeralda, looking like a deserted village; the noon-tide heat and prodigious swarms of sand-flies confining the few inhabitants to their houses; the savannah extends from the village to the river; a few stunted trees, and some Mauritia Palms rise from the thick grass, on which numerous ant-hills, of a pyramidical shape, from three to four feet high, and black like the soil of which they are built, form a singular and remarkable object.

Baron de Humboldt observed, that the inhabitants of Esmeralda "lived in great poverty, and their miseries were augmented by large swarms of mosquitoes," an observation equally applicable at the present day. The inhabitants are miserably poor, and as to the numbers of sand-flies, or mosquitoes as they are more properly called by the Spaniards, from the first dawn to nightfall, they surpassed any thing I had ever seen. Indeed, Esmeralda, on account of the immense number of insects which obscure the air at all seasons of the year, was considered by the monks, when the missions still existed along the Orinoco, as a place of banishment and malediction, and to be sent to Esmeralda was said "to be condemned to the mosquitoes, to be devoured by those buzzing flies with which God has peopled the earth to chastise man †." In consequence of the bites which they had inflicted upon me during our stay in Esmeralda, more than four months elapsed before I was perfectly cured; and although in romantic scenery and situation Esmeralda may not be easily surpassed, I almost feel inclined, with the good fathers, to consider it as a place of proscription and chastisement.

* See de Humboldt's Personal Narrative, vol. v, p. 550, and Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London, vol. x, p. 245.

† Fray Pedro Simon, p. 481; vide Humboldt's Pers. Narr., vol. v, p. 508.

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by George Barnard.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

BRAZILIAN FORT St. GABRIEL.

On the Rio Negro.

London: Published by Ackermann & Co. 96, Strand, 3rd Augt. 1840

FORT SAN GABRIEL.

Latitude, 0° 7′ 30″ S. Longitude, 67° 17′ W.

AFTER a stay of three days in Esmeralda, we left it on the afternoon of the 25th of February, and continuing the descent of the Orinoco to the west north-west for thirteen miles, we arrived at the remarkable bifurcation of this river, so well and so fully described by Baron de Humboldt, that little is left for any subsequent traveller to add. From this spot the principal branch of the Orinoco pursues its course west by north, winding round the foot of the Sierra Parima, and eventually, after a semicircular sweep of about eight hundred miles, falls into the Atlantic Ocean. The lesser branch, named the Cassiquiare, or Cassisiare, by the Guinaus and Maiongkongs, strikes off at a right angle to the south-west, and continues this course for about one hundred and twenty miles, direct to the Rio Negro, a tributary to the great Amazon, and joins the former river about six miles above San Carlos; thus connecting the two great basins of the Orinoco and the Amazon.

We entered the Rio Negro or Guainia, as the Indian tribes call its upper course, on the 4th of March, and continued on it for about seventy miles, in a south south-east direction, passing the Venezuelan and Brazilian boundary forts, San Carlos, and San José de Marabitanas, and found ourselves, on the 10th of March, opposite the junction of the Uaupes or Ucayari with the Rio Negro. The Uaupes divides near its mouth into two branches, forming a low island about five miles long. Just below the southern point of the island the river has high banks, and is narrowed in by two ledges of rocks, to a width of four hundred yards, but scarcely has it overcome this impediment when it expands again, like a basin, to upwards of a mile in breadth, with islands near both banks, and studded with rocks.

The prospect here is very lovely; in the distance to the south south-east is the group of peaked mountains named Wanari-mapan; nearer are some isolated hillocks, which rear their heads out of the plain, while the foreground is animated by several little cottages erected on the islands and banks of the river, surrounded by Plantain and Banana trees, above which the graceful Paripa or Pirijao Palm * raises its pinnated leaves. The river Cocobixi here joins the Rio Negro from the south, while almost immediately opposite, on a projecting point of the eastern bank, stands the lonely chapel of Santa Barbara, raising the peaceful emblem of Christianity even in these sequestered wilds, above the broad river which foams and flows at its foot.

Such is the scenery at the spot in which the Rio Negro crosses the equator. More than fourteen months had elapsed since I had before traversed this parallel, five hundred miles further to the east; and, although but an imaginary line, we cannot help attaching some interest to the great circle, to which we are accustomed to refer our chief geographical measurements. A low hill, about two miles south of the chapel of Santa Barbara, on the western bank, would, according to my reckoning, be exactly on the equinoctial line; and in the absence of any other name, perhaps it may be permitted to call it Cerro do Equador.

Below this the river is impeded by rapids and falls, which follow in quick succession, and a steady hand at the helm, and a quick eye, are of the first importance; these excellent qualities we had in our old pilot Bernardo from Xié, and we landed safely towards sunset at San Gabriel, a Brazilian fortress crowning a projecting eminence on the river's left bank.

The small fort upon the hillock is built of stone, and was erected, in 1763, to prevent the incursions of the Spaniards, who came from San Carlos. It mounts six guns, among them two English, and has in ordinary cases a garrison of fourteen men under a commandant who is an Ensign in the provincial militia. The guns were of iron, and three were spiked. When the insurgents, or Cabannos, were in possession of the Lower Rio Negro, the commandant did not consider himself strong enough to defend the fort, and after having spiked three of the cannons he left it to defend itself, and fled over the Venezulean boundary to San Carlos.

The present commandant was in great dread of an attack from the Indians of the rivers Isanna and Uaupes. A slaving expedition, similar to the one which desolated the villages in the vicinity of the Ursato mountains, had been sent against the native Indians who inhabit the contested boundaries between the Brazils and Venezuela, and in return for the atrocities there committed, the Indians had threatened to storm San Gabriel, and devastate the villages along the Rio Negro. Such an attack would, at that time, have proved very awkward, when the fighting men from San Gabriel, and the surrounding environs, had been enlisted to proceed up

* Guilielma speciosa Mart. Palm., Tab. 66, 67.

the Isanna on a second expedition, undertaken with the pretext of pressing Indians for the navy, but in fact to secure them as slaves. The trees and shrubs had been cleared away wherever it was thought they might impede an open prospect, and serve as a cover to the enemy, and the few men who had been left at the fort had a most harassing duty to perform. To increase their difficulties and perilous situation, the commandant was short of ammunition, and the whole stock of powder did not amount to twenty pounds. San Gabriel, as well as other places in the magnificent province of Rio Negro, has suffered from the destructive influence of political disturbances. Flourishing villages formerly existed where their name is now alone to be found; numerous boats were then trading between Gram Para on the mouth of the Amazon, and the Upper Rio Negro, an inland navigation of fourteen hundred miles, almost without impediment, and now there is hardly a vessel.

The largest cataract in this river occurs just below the fort; we estimated its fall at about twenty feet, and it is considerable enough to oblige the canoes to be unloaded, and the baggage to be transported for about a mile over land. The view from the foot of this cataract is very lovely; the fortress with mount Arruyabai on the western bank, the river broken up by a number of islets and cataracts, and the mountains of Wamari-mapan, and that interesting hill which we have named Cerro do Equador, unite in forming a picturesque landscape. The black appearance of the water, where it is not agitated and foaming, contrasts strongly with the white banks and the lively green of the trees on its borders.

That kind of boat, which is represented in the view of San Gabriel as ready to enter the surge at the foot of the cataract, is called an Igaritea. Arrived at the cataract, it is drawn by means of ropes through the rushing water, and over the rocks which impede the passage of the river. The canoe of the natives is very different to the Igaritea of the Brazilians—the smallest is a Pakassa, or light boat, merely made of the bark of a tree. In British Guiana, the colonists call those frail boats "wood-skins."

We had to transport our baggage over land to the lower port, or "embareadero," while the empty corial, under the guidance of our pilot, passed the fall in safety, and re-embarked at eight o'clock in the morning; and quickly carried forward by a strong current, caused by the continual rapids of Cujubi, for two hours, we again entered comparatively smooth water, opposite the small settlement of Cumanau. These falls and rapids extend for about twenty miles, and the most dangerous passes are called Poredão, Hurnas, and Cujubi.

A melancholy and utter picture of desolation meets the eye on descending the Rio Negro: houses in ruins, and without inhabitants; the plants clambering over the roofs, and the high bushes and grass before the door. During a journey of several weeks, and over an extent of more than five hundred miles on the Rio Negro, after entering the Brazilian territory, we saw only one native boat, with two Indians in her, who fled as soon as they got sight of our canoe. This desolation, so different to the cheerfulness we had observed in the Venezuelan villages on the Cassiquiara and in San Carlos, is caused by the oppression which the Indians receive from those petty officers to whom the official duties are entrusted, and who compel the Indians to work with no other pay than a slender subsistence. This is sufficient to ruin commerce and agriculture, and cause the desertion of the Indians. For want of hands the inhabitants are obliged to abandon their plantations, and the canoes, deprived of their crews, remain stationary for months together.

With the best wishes of the Government at Para for the object of our expeditions, and an inclination to afford us every assistance, the latter circumstance would have befallen us on descending the Rio Negro, but I had brought with me a crew of Warraus and Macusis, increased by Maiongkongs and Guinaus from the Parima mountains; and independent of the assistance of the natives of the Rio Negro, we reached Mariua, or Barcellos, in twenty-one days from the time we had left Esmeralda, having made a distance of five hundred and seventy-five miles in boats. We descended the Rio Negro about a hundred miles more, to Pedrero, or Itarendana, and entering the Rio Branco, we ascended that river for about three hundred miles, in its winding course, and eventually reached our starting point, at Fort San Joaquim, after an absence of seven months, during which period we had made a circuit of two thousand two hundred geographical miles, partly over land, partly in boats, and comprising tracts which never before had been trodden by the foot of a white man. We awaited for the setting-in of the rainy season, and inundation of the rivers, and then transported our large canoe, which I had bought in the river Paramu, a tributary of the upper Orinoco, over a short portage of about eight hundred yards from lake Amucu into the Quatata, which communicates with the Rupununi. It soon floated on the latter river, and carried rapidly forward by a strong current, we, on the 17th of June 1839, approached the Protestant mission at Bartika Point, situated at the confluence of the river Mazuruni with the Essequibo; and the hoisting of flags, and firing of guns, gave us a proof of the kind interest which the inhabitants took in our safe return.

Two and twenty months had elapsed since we passed this spot, on our ascent up the Essequibo, and bade adieu to civilized life and its comforts, and after having made a circuit of upwards of three thousand miles, were now, by the blessing of Providence, returning in safety to Georgetown.

THE GREAT CATARACTS OF THE RIVER CORENTYN.

Latitude, 4° 21′ N. Longitude, 57° 25′ W.

WOTETO-TOBO, OR SIR JOHN BARROW'S CATARACT.

THE river Corentyn is not only interesting because it forms the boundary between the British and Dutch possessions in Guiana, but on account of its magnitude and length, it being one of the most considerable rivers between the Amazon and Orinoco; and from the information which I acquired while at the Upper Essequibo, I suppose it to be equal in length to that stream. In 1837 we selected it as the high road to the central mountain-chain, which has been called by the missionaries Acaraí and Tumucuraque, and the upper part of which, according to the tradition of the Caribs, is said to be inhabited by the Amazons. The treachery of those very Caribs, who by their extravagant accounts had raised our curiosity, prevented our ascent beyond the great cataracts, and anxious as we were to ascertain the existence or non-existence of a republic of females, the accounts of which since the sixteenth century have excited the greatest interest, it was yet impossible to realize our wishes. We are in the present times too well acquainted with the truth not to remark in those accounts, which have been transmitted to us by the early historians, a desire to adorn whatever related to the New Continent with the most marvellous stories. It is, however, extraordinary, that if the tradition originated with the Europeans, that it has not only remained, but is even now adopted by several Indian tribes in Guiana, and the Caribs of the rivers Corentyn, Essequibo, and Rupununi; they in the gravest manner declare, that these separate hordes of females, or Worisamacos, still exist at the upper part of the Corentyn, in a country called Marawonne. The locality where they are said to live was so well described to me, that the Carib, from whom I had the information, assured me, that when we should have passed high above the cataracts, to that part where two huge rocks called Poiomoco and Surama rise from each bank of the river, and bound it like a portal, then we might consider ourselves in the republic of women.

It was not decreed that we should get beyond a certain point. After we had passed a turn which the river makes in latitude 4° 22′ N. we observed several hills on both sides: half an hour's further progress, and we found ourselves in apparently a large basin, surrounded by hills from sixty to one hundred feet high. The river was now broken up into torrents, the white flakes of foam, which came floating down as if to give us welcome, the thundering noise of the falling waters, and a cloud of mist which hung over the southern hills, all told in an intelligible voice that some great scene of nature was before us. This basin was the furthest extent of our ascent up the river Corentyn in boats; for the Caribs, who formed our crew, refused to go further, and we were ultimately obliged to return without having paid a visit to the Worisamaco *.

I followed a party of Indians who appeared acquainted with this place, and after some labour and wading, reached a branch of the river which divided itself into two channels. The western branch formed a fall, and the opening prospect on reaching its head was

* Two years afterwards I learned that the Caribs who accompanied us in that expedition, believed firmly in the existence of these women, and having persuaded themselves we intended to go thither, they became afraid of being detained for more than nine months among them, which determined them neither to show us the portage by which we could have avoided the cataracts, nor accompany us any further. We ascribed this unwillingness to other reasons.

indeed beautiful; the water rushed, at an angle of sixty degrees, into a valley formed by gigantic piles of rocks; at our feet foamed the turbulent water, dashing its spray against the rocks that impeded its course: but the most splendid object was a cascade on the opposite side of the chasm. The rocks over which the water fell, were clothed with a species of Lacis, a water-plant, the pendulous branches of which were often five and six feet long, and the whole resembled a rich carpet: the various tints of green, the strong contrast of its flowers, and the foam of the water which rushed over it, made the scene exceedingly beautiful. We estimated the height of the fall at twenty-five feet, and that, on the top of which we stood, at thirty feet; they are almost opposite to each other, but a third, more voluminous, is formed by three channels of the river uniting at the head of the cataract, and at their junction, their further progress being obstructed by a huge block of granite, the water forces a passage for itself, and thence precipitates headlong into a chasm full forty feet below. A large rock stands out in relief, and has been fancifully compared by the Indians to a thigh-bone, and from this resemblance it has received the name of Woteto-tobo.

The westernmost cataract is on a grander scale. Some of our party having visited it, and being quite enthusiastic in its description, we resolved to proceed thither; and after climbing over, and crawling round numerous blocks of granite, we stood at the head of the largest fall I had before seen in Guiana. The huge mass of water, and the velocity with which it precipitates itself over the ledge of rocks to a depth of upwards of thirty perpendicular feet, causes the spray to form the cloud we had observed. I stood surprised—the sight of the foaming waters below, the unceasing noise of the cataract, which made every attempt fruitless to communicate my feelings to my companions, rendered the impression of this scene powerful almost to oppression. I became giddy, and retired quickly to prevent myself from joining the dance of the whirling, white-crested billows. I have stood in much more perilous situations without ever feeling the slightest sensation of vertigo, and I ascribe it in the present instance to those masses of water unceasingly rolling in the abyss below, which seemed to urge me to follow them, a feeling which the same sort of scene had likewise communicated to my companion Mr. Reiss.

I was anxious to see the fall from below, and as we could not reach it in any other way, we had to climb over piles of rocks, or to seek a path across chasms, the trunk of a fallen tree serving us frequently as a bridge, while at other times we let ourselves down to the next ledge of rocks by means of lianas. Under our feet we heard the rolling of the streams, which forced a way through immense cavities. The spray, which was driven into the air by the fall of the water of the great cataract, descended in drops like a heavy summer shower, and the constant moisture thus produced, covered rocks and trunks of trees with a luxuriant vegetation. Disturbed by our approach, thousands of swallows rushed from the cavities formed by the rocks, encircled the cloud of spray in their flight, and hovered over the cataract. Before I reached the foot of the fall I was as wet as if I had been in a heavy rain, but the view from that situation richly recompensed me for this trifling inconvenience. The sun being to the west, I saw large spots adorned with all the colours of the rainbow, forming themselves in the spray, and vanishing in order to reappear the next moment.

The Indians named this cataract Wanaré-wono-tobo; we called it after General Sir James Carmichael Smyth, the late much lamented Governor of British Guiana, who always took the liveliest interest in these exploring expeditions, and whose kindness and attention, during the time he presided over the colony as representative of his Sovereign, have been registered with gratitude in my heart. On the eastern cataract which I have described, we bestowed the name of Sir John Barrow, President of the Geographical Society of London.

WANARÉ-WONO-TOBO, OR GENERAL SIR JAMES CARMICHAEL-SMYTH'S CATARACT.

CHRISTMAS CATARACT.

On the River Berbice

London, Published by Ackermann & Co. 96, Strand, 3rd Augt. 1840.

ITABRU, AND CHRISTMAS CATARACTS,

ON THE RIVER BERBICE.

Latitude, 4° 49′ N. Longitude, 58° W. And Latitude, 4° 42′ N. Longitude, 57° 54′ W.

I HAVE already alluded to the difficulties which we met with in our ascent up the river Berbice. We passed the first rapid on the 13th of December, 1837, and in the afternoon arrived at a point where the river, hemmed in on both sides by ledges of rocks, forms an entrance to a natural basin, bordered by hills: it is followed by a second, the entrance to which, through barriers of rock, is only eighteen yards wide; the basin spreads in the form of a curved lozenge, and is upwards of five hundred and thirty yards long, from west to east, by three hundred yards wide, with a depth of ten fathoms. At its northern point the river rushes violently over a dyke of rocks, and forms the cataract Itabru. I at once saw the impossibility of getting the loaded corials over the fall, and orders were consequently given to unload and transport the baggage to the head of the cataract. We selected a spot for our camp on the river's left bank, near the foot of the cataract, a highly picturesque situation, as it afforded a prospect over the remarkable basin, which appeared as if it were perfectly "land-locked," to use a nautical term, being encompassed by hills from two hundred to six hundred feet high. Huge blocks, some consisting of light green chert, others of decomposing clay-stone porphyry were lying in the greatest confusion on the banks, and their surfaces smooth as glass, being covered with a crust of oxide of manganese, added to the peculiarity of the scenery. A large block of this description rises at the foot of the cataract, about ten feet out of the water, against which the stream dashes with the greatest fury. On the morning of the 15th of December we conveyed the last corial over the cataract, but as the river continued to be impeded by rapids and cataracts, our progress was slow, and after two days of the most fatiguing labour we were only five miles distant from Itabru. Our advance on the 18th of December was of short duration, for while turning round a sudden bend of the river, a series of formidable cataracts and rapids lay before us. On examination I found that they extended for upwards of a mile and a half, and that besides five cataracts, we should have to pass several rapids before we came to a place where we could embark again. I decided therefore to have the baggage carried over the different ledges of rocks which cause these falls, and to drag the corials after. In order to effect this, we had to sling our baggage on poles, and raise it over blocks which were occasionally ten feet high. Where the nature of the dyke permitted it, rollers were placed, and the corials, or canoes having been put upon them, we dragged them by main force over these ridges. As if to increase our difficulties, the Wacawais and Macusis, whom we had engaged in the river Berbice, and who formed part of our crew, deserted us.

Christmas-day approached while we were still at these cataracts, toiling to overcome the impediments which they caused to our further progress. We enjoyed this sacred day in our peculiar manner, and allowed the Indians to partake of our better fare; and, as we could not ascertain what might be the native name for these formidable impediments, the proposal to call them "Christmas Cataracts" was gladly adopted.

We re-embarked at the head of the southernmost of these cataracts, on the morning of the 28th of December, and as the details of our journey up the Berbice have been related elsewhere*, my limits do not permit me to dwell on it further than a few words concerning the most striking incidents. If we except the discovery of that splendid plant, which adorns the frontispiece, there is no cheerful gleam to brighten the retrospective view of this journey. No human being appeared for centuries to have inhabited these regions, and we had frequently to struggle for every foot which we advanced, so thickly was the river overgrown. Unable to procure fresh supplies of provisions, we were reduced to want, and were put for several weeks upon an allowance of six ounces of rice per day, and the game which chance led into our hands. The Caribs in our crew, as they saw that I was determined to continue, plotted to surprise us by night, and to take away the canoes, leaving us to our fate. Their intention was discovered, and they deserted us that very night, preferring to return on foot, the way they had come, to advancing further. We ultimately reached a path, on the 22nd of January 1838, which leads from the Corentyn to the Essequibo, crossing the Berbice in 3° 55′ N. Lat., from whence we marched over land to the Essequibo only nine miles distant, without seeing any thing of the river Demerara, which consequently cannot extend so far, and takes its rise to the north of that path.

Want of provisions, and sickness, obliged us now to retrace our route by the Berbice, and we again reached the uppermost of

* Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London, 1837, vol. vii.

that series of falls, which we had called the Christmas Cataracts, on the 9th of February. In consequence of the river having been swollen by the late rains, the rocks, which we found bare on our ascent, were now mostly covered, and the falls, from the increased volume of water, more powerful. Our attempt to descend the first fall without unloading proved nearly fatal, and we determined to carry the baggage over land as we did during our ascent, while we were still obliged to hazard the corials. Our camp was stationed on a small island, near one of the most dangerous cataracts, and we watched at its foot for the descent of the corials. It is an exciting scene when once the corial is in the current, shooting along with the swiftness of lightning; she arrives at the edge of the cataract, and balancing for a moment, she plunges headlong into the surge below, dashing the spray on either side against the rocks that bound the passage; she then rises, and again obeying the helm of the intrepid steersman, is carried forward by the increased current. A mistake on the part of the pilot, or if the crew do not act in strict obedience to his orders, would cause her to split by coming in close contact with those rocks which she appears almost to touch in her descent. My own corial was the last which was to descend the dangerous cataract, when Mr. Reiss, a young man of talent and courage, and who accompanied the expedition as a volunteer, expressed his desire to descend in her with the Indians. I remonstrated with him, as he was not an experienced swimmer, but my advice was not taken. I proceeded over land to the foot of the cataract, to witness her descent, and when the corial came in sight, the first object that struck me was Mr. Reiss standing on one of the thwarts of the corial, when prudence dictated that he should sit down. From that moment to the catastrophe, not two seconds elapsed. The corial was directed to a point where the fall was very precipitous. The shock, when her bow struck the surge, caused Mr. Reiss to lose his balance; in falling he grasped one of the iron staunchions of the awning. The corial was upset, and in the next moment, her inmates, thirteen in number, were seen struggling with the current; and, unable to stem it, were carried with rapidity towards the next cataract. My eyes were fixed on poor Reiss; he kept himself above water but a short time, sunk, and reappeared; and when I hoped that he might reach one of the rocks, the current of the next rapid seized him, and I fear he came in contact with a sunken rock; he was turned completely round, and disappeared in the whirlpool at the foot of the rapid. Immediately I could muster men enough to guide a corial, we commenced a most diligent search, in which we were assisted by some who had manned a second corial. For two hours all our endeavours were fruitless. At length we found his body, in a direction where we least expected it, and where an under current must have drifted it. Life was extinct; nevertheless, the usual means for recovering drowned persons were resorted to, but in vain. The Indians had saved themselves by swimming, and he alone paid with his life for the rash attempt.

Two aged trees stand on the western bank of the river, opposite to the place where our poor companion was drowned, whence I desired a path to be cleared to a rising ground, which the water, even when at its greatest height during inundations, does not reach. Here, on a level spot, where Mora trees and Palms, the latter an emblem of the Christian faith, form an almost perfect circle, now rises a pile of stones, under which rests our lamented companion to await his Maker's call. A small tablet, which he himself brought in order to engrave his name, and to leave it as a remembrance, in case we should reach the Acarai mountains and the sources of the Essequibo, is firmly fixed to one of the trees which form the circle, and now bears this inscription—

DROWNED,

12TH FEB., 1837,

CHARLES F. REISS,

AGED 22 YEARS.

CATARACT ITABRU, ON THE RIVER BERBICE.

THE ABORIGINES OF GUIANA.

THE letter-press which accompanies these views has been hitherto confined to the description of the stupendous scenes of nature, and magnificent landscapes in which Guiana abounds; but the aboriginal inhabitants, those untutored beings, the miserable remnant of numerous tribes who peopled Guiana when the first Europeans landed, have not received that attention which I am so anxious to give to them; as it is, the nature of the work, and the limits which have been prescribed to it, scarcely permit me to do more than dwell upon them in general terms. The two remaining plates are therefore particularly intended to show the aboriginal inhabitant in his domestic character, combined with the landscape which surrounds him; and the following remarks I hope may serve as a sketch of the manners and customs of a race, which, although termed savage, is yet interesting from its primitive condition.

History informs us, that at the discovery of America by the Spaniards in the fifteenth century, the Europeans found it inhabited by a race of men, who were externally distinguished from all other nations of the known world by peculiarities of structure, and internally by their mental condition, and who, although the greatest analogy existed between them in manners, habits, and occupation, were nevertheless divided into a vast number of tribes, speaking different languages. So great was the similarity in their appearance, that accurate observers, who saw the aborigines of America in provinces far removed from each other, and differing in climate and productions, were struck with their surprising resemblance in figure and aspect. Pedro de Cieca de Leon, who had an extensive knowledge of the Indian tribes, says, "The people, men and women, although they are of such a vast multitude of tribes or nations, in such diverse climates, appear nevertheless like the children of one family."

Whence arises then the discordance of languages between different tribes, and which appears to be more considerable in the New Continent than even in Africa? According to the researches of Seezen, Vater, and de Humboldt, there are at least five hundred different American tongues. Alexander von Humboldt, great alike as a traveller, a philologist, and a natural philosopher, ascribes their differences "to the configuration of the soil, the strength of vegetation, the apprehensions of the mountaineers, under the tropics, of exposing themselves to a burning sun," all of which he considers as obstacles to communication, and contributes, as he thinks, to the remarkable variety of dialects.

This is not the proper place in which to inquire into the cause of the above variety, a cause which must continue to operate as long as these languages depend upon oral delivery, and consequently are liable to corruption; but there exists a grammatical analogy, a similarity in their general structure, which make it evident, that however they may differ as dialects, they have a common origin.

To guide the inquirer, however, through the intricacies of this labyrinth, to give him a notion whence that language, and the people who speak it, originated, there is not a vestige of history, not a thread of tradition to afford a clue; and all our knowledge in this respect depends upon hypothetical reasoning. The opinions, which at present have been adopted with regard to this subject, may be divided into three conjectures: —

I. Whether they be indigenous to, or coeval with, the Continent which they inhabit?

II. Whether they be of Asiatic origin, first peopling the South Sea Islands, and then emigrating to the Continent of America?

III. Whether they arrived across Behring's Straits and the Aleoutski Islands in the northern part of America, and from thence spread over the Continent?

Many scoffers have attempted to establish the hypothesis, that the first germs of the development of the human race in America, can be sought for nowhere but in that quarter of the globe; but unless it can be proved that the laws of nature are in direct violation with Mosaic records, which expressly say that "God has made of one blood all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth," we must still appeal to that Holy Book for interpretation.

The Bible and Profane History corroborate the narrative that ancient Egypt and Hindostan were invaded by a powerful tribe, who introduced their peculiar customs into the conquered country, built temples and pyramids, and covered them with hieroglyphics. Historians here allude to the Cushites, who, after having erected a splendid empire, were dispersed by the Almighty. They are traced

chiefly by the ruins of their mural defences in a north-easterly direction to Palestine; by the relics found in their tumuli, and their peculiar zodiacal signs, to the north of Siberia, where all further traces of them are lost. Similar tumuli, mural defences, hieroglyphic inscriptions, astronomical divisions of time, and zodiacal signs, were used by the civilized aboriginal race of America; and as the geographical position of Behring's Strait, and the Alcoutski Islands, admit the possibility of emigration from Asia to America, we are led to believe that the Toltecans, and Aztecs arrived that way. They were however expelled by succeeding hordes, and during the struggle for occupancy the earthen ramparts may have been constructed; but the frequent attacks, and the arrival of new hordes, rendered their destruction inevitable, if they obstinately persisted in remaining; they therefore abandoned the country to the conquerors, emigrated southward, and became ultimately extinct. The descendants of the latter savage tribes, the conquerors of the ancient Mexicans, constitute at present the aboriginal inhabitants of North and South America, tribes, who though dissimilar in language, possess philological affinities, and are distinguished by the same predilections for a nomadic, or roving and savage life, and are given alike to war and to the chase.

The Mongolian races of Northern Asia possess a similar disposition; but we may infer a still stronger affinity between the Indians of North America, and the nomadic tribes of Northern Asia, from anatomical evidences. Indeed, the learned Author of the "Physical History of Mankind," Dr. Prichard, in alluding to the Mongolian races and the North American Indians, observes, "we do not find that any clearly defined difference has been generally proved between the two classes of nations." The present American race, blended with the Mongolian to the north, spreads over the whole of the New World, and however feeble their intellect may be, they surpass the more civilized, but now extinct races of Mexico, in their full belief of the existence of one Good Spirit, a future life, and the immortality of the soul.

These tribes, to whom a roving life and a home in the forest are essential, contain several subdivisions, differing in customs, habits, and language; but an original affinity runs through them all, and shows that they were once intimately connected. Ancient customs have become modified by change of situation and circumstance, but after so great a lapse of time, the present aboriginal inhabitants of Guiana, and the adjacent territories, still resemble the Americans of the northern portion of this wide-spread race in their manners.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to form a close approximation to truth in calculating the number of aborigines within the boundaries of British Guiana: our imperfect knowledge of the country, and still more their wandering life, increases this difficulty; but I estimate the tribes who inhabit the British territory at about seven thousand. The different nations consist of

Arawaaks.	Arécunas.
Warraus.	Wapisianas.
Caribs or Caribisi.	Atorais or Atorias.
Acawais or Waccawaios.	Tarumas.
Macusis.	Woyawais.

The Arawaaks and Warraus live in the coast regions, and their small settlements scarcely extend one hundred miles inland: I reckon their number at above three thousand. The Caribs inhabit the Lower Mazaruni and Cuyuni; about one hundred are located at the Corentyn, eighty at the Rupununi, thirty at the Guidaru, and their whole number (though once the lords of the soil) does not at present surpass three hundred. The Acawais or Waccawaios inhabit the Upper Demerara, the Mazaruni, and Potaro, and amount probably to six hundred. The Macusis live in the open country, or savannahs of the Rupununi, Parima, and the mountain-chains Pacaraima and Canuku. Those who inhabit the British territory amount to fifteen hundred; the whole tribe is probably not less than three thousand: they are bounded to the north by the Arécunas, who dwell in the mountainous regions and savannahs, at the springs of the Caroni, Cuyuni, and Mazaruni. They are a powerful tribe, but are more properly the inhabitants of the Venezuelan territory. The Wapisiana are a tribe belonging to the savannahs of the Upper Rupununi, and the banks of the Parima: I estimate the number of those who inhabit British Guiana at five hundred. The Atorais, at the Carawaimi mountains, and along their north-western foot, border on the territory of the Wapisiana; and, like the Caribs, are fast approaching to extinction, their whole number does not reach to two hundred. The Tarumas inhabit the tributaries of the upper Essequibo, and amount to no less than five hundred individuals. The Woyawais, a race who live in the regions between the sources of the Essequibo, and the affluents of the Amazons, number about three hundred and fifty; they are on the southern confines of the British territory.

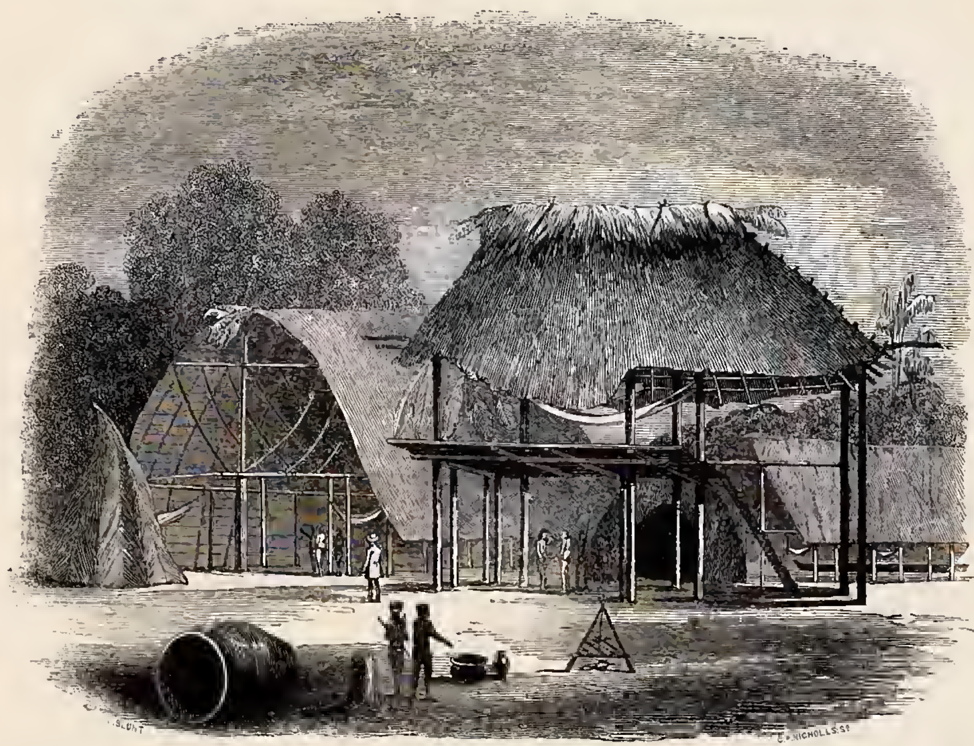
The Indians of Guiana who have come under my notice, are seldom more than five feet four inches in height, and although they on their first appearance convey the idea of strength, a closer inspection will show that they are not muscular. Their head is rather large in comparison with their bodies, and the same may be also remarked as to the trunk of the body in proportion to the limbs; their necks are short, their eyes slope upwards towards the temples, and although the forehead is lower than that of Europeans, it is much

superior in its development to that of the Negro. The breast is well formed and strong, especially in the females, and their hands, feet, and ancles, particularly those of the women, are remarkably small. Indeed the inferior extremities are so well proportioned, that they might serve as models, although it must be observed that the foot, from never having been confined by shoes, is rather broad. The females are almost equal in size to the males, but with a few exceptions their embonpoint prevents them from appearing graceful. Their colour is a brownish olive, varying more or less according to the tribe, or whether they inhabit the sea-coast, forests, or savannahs. Some of the casts are almost as fair as the Spaniards and Portuguese, while others are of a very dark brown. However dark, their straight, luxuriant black hair, small features, and well proportioned limbs, will always strongly mark the difference between the Indian and the African.

The Indian tribes of Guiana paint their faces and bodies with lines, sometimes straight, sometimes in imitation of the Etruscan or Grecian patterns. A few, and among them the Warrau, Arawaak, and Macusis, tattoo their faces slightly. The tattooing generally consists only of a few curved lines at the corners of the mouth, and over the eyebrows, giving to the faces of the females, among whom it is more customary than the men, a characteristic and not uninteresting expression.

Their arms, necks, and ancles are embellished with glass beads, either in imitation of coral, or of a blue or white colour, which they procure through their intercourse with the inhabitants of the coast regions. Necklaces of the teeth of monkeys, peccaris, and divers seeds or shells, are used as substitutes when the former are not to be procured. Their dress is otherwise restricted to a piece of cloth which covers their loins, or the females use a small apron formed of glass beads. When they are able to procure a kind of blue cotton cloth, which in the Colony is called Salempores, they give it the preference to their own manufacture, although the latter is much more durable. The way in which that cloth is worn in a great measure designates their tribe, and the Caribs and Macusis distinguish themselves by the size, and rather picturesque manner in which they throw it over them. The Kirishana, Oewaku, and some of the Maiongkongs, go perfectly naked, but paint their bodies with black and red pigments.

The more populous tribes are subdivided into hordes, connected by consanguinity or marriage. The form of the huts which they inhabit, generally marks the tribe by whom they were erected; and while the hut of the Warrau, Arawaak, and Carib, is a mere shed, the houses of the Macusis and Wapisianas are frequently built of mud, surmounted by a roof of a pointed form, of almost eastern character. These roofs are neatly thatched with palm leaves, and whatever may be the form of the house, this substance is generally used. The inner structure is simple, and answers all the purposes for which it is intended. The absence of nails and bolts is replaced by lianas, or withes. The hut of the Wapisiana is dome-shaped, and his architectural skill in supporting the arches which form the dome is to be admired. These houses, for the most part, have only a ground floor; I noted however, among the Caribs, one storied huts, the communication being effected by a ladder, or wooden steps on the outside.



CARIB HUTS AT TOMATAI ON THE RIVER CORENTYN.

Several families generally inhabit one of these huts, there is however no dividing partition; the beams from which the hammock is slung, the few stones which constitute the hearth, are tacitly acknowledged to form a claim to that particular spot, which is never usurped by a third, although readily relinquished to a guest or stranger. Every village of consequence possesses a house which is exclusively dedicated to the reception and residence of strangers. It generally occupies the middle of the Indian village, and to it the stranger, who passes the place, resorts and awaits the welcome of the chieftain, and the refreshments which are soon after brought to the weary traveller by the females who belong to the chieftain's household. This house is called Tapoi by the Macusis and Wapisianas.

The Oewakus and Kirishanas on the rivers Parima and Orinoco, and the Muras on the Amazon, have no fixed habitations; like

the gypsies they wander from place to place, and build a temporary shed wherever they promise themselves success in fishing and hunting. No girdle surrounds their loins, no Perizoma hides their nakedness, and averse to intercourse with any other being, they consider every individual who does not belong to their tribe, as their natural enemy.

Each tribe has its own hunting ground, and each family its own plantations, which, after the trees have been felled by the husband and grown-up sons, are cultivated by the women. Although the same hut may be occupied by more families than one, there is no community of utensils. These, as may be presumed, are very simple, consisting of many sorts of earthenware vessels of different shapes and size, resembling the Etruscan vases in their form. The women principally fabricate their pottery, and mould the largest vases, containing from twenty-five to thirty gallons, with their hands. They are frequently ornamented with greek, arabesque, and meandering designs. A few low stools carved out of a solid piece of wood, and resembling the wooden pillows or headstools of the Egyptians, the necessary utensils for the preparation of the cassada bread, the weapons for the chase and war, form the furniture of the hut. The Indians usually sit on their haunches, or rest in their hammocks.

Members of the same tribe frequently form small villages, of from six to ten houses ; over such communities a chieftain presides, called Yuputorikung in the Carib language, or Toyeputori in the Macusi, whose authority is only acknowledged to its full extent during feuds and wars. His power and influence depend upon his personal superiority in strength and enterprise. The hereditary dignity is derived from the mother; but it is rendered easy for any one who has talents and courage to assume the command on the death of his predecessor, without the advantage of relationship, and his authority is more frequently retained by his undisputed superiority than by any formal election.

It is customary among some nations, before the child is born, for not only the wife, but likewise the husband to subject themselves to a rigid fasting, and to abstain from many viands. The day after its birth, the child is carried into the air without covering on its head, or, as among the Macusis, the head is daubed over with Arnotto or Rucu. Their heads are generally more covered with hair than those of European children, and they learn to speak and to walk at an earlier period than Europeans. They, however, are suckled to a more protracted period, and I have seen children, in appearance five to six years of age, who were not yet weaned. At the birth of the child the husband receives the congratulations of his friends, and the women of the village are attentive to the wants of the mother, who is restored in a few days to her wonted strength and occupations. Twins very seldom occur amongst them; but I have nowhere found any reason to suppose that one is always destroyed. As a direct contradiction to this assertion I have seen Carib and Macusi mothers with twins in their arms. The child is named by the Piaiman, Piatsang Paché, or conjurer, who receives an offering of considerable value, and the strength of the incantations, which he pronounces on that occasion in a dark hut, corresponds with that of the fee. An unnamed Indian is supposed to be more subjected to disease and misfortunes than one who has been named. The appellations are generally patronymic. The borings of the lips, ears, and septum of the nose, take place at an early age, and are kept open by pieces of wood. The parents are exceedingly affectionate to their children, and with one or two exceptions, I have never seen them administer personal correction : they will rather bear any inconvenience, or even insult, although I have seen few instances of the latter, than inflict punishments.

The first delight of the boy is a bow and arrows; his little hand grasps the light bow, and with the greatest self-satisfaction and infantine prowess depicted upon his face, he tries his skill, and takes small lizards, locusts, &c. as his mark. The girls assist their mother in the hut to prepare bread, or the favourite drink; or, by means of a primitive spindle, they convert the indigenous cotton into thread for the manufacture of hammocks. They accompany their mothers to the provision fields, and help to cultivate the ground, and are accustomed at an early age to carry the heavy cassada roots to their homes. These wild children of the forest and savannahs are modest, and without being tutored by their mothers, we see the girls reserved towards strangers.

I have not observed many games among the children, but wrestling is frequently practised, and a kind of tennis, for which purpose they use balls made of indigenous Caoutchouc, or the ears of Maize or Indian corn. When the boys verge from child into man, they have to subject themselves to severe trials of laceration; others make wounds on the breasts of the youths with the teeth of the wild hog, or the beak of the Toucan: there are several other ceremonies which appear symbolical of courage, fearlessness, and endurance of pain, such as being put into a bag where there are stinging ants, and if they endure these without shrinking, they are accepted companions among men. When the girl progresses from childhood into womanhood, among the Warraus, she is deprived of her long hair. Among some tribes, such as the Mauhes, Mundrucus, and Muras, at the Rio Negro, and Amazon, the poor girl has to undergo a severe trial; her hammock is slung under the roof of the hut, where she is exposed to incessant smoke, besides being subjected to strict fastings. There are many instances where she has paid for the ordeal with her life. The Arawaaks and Warraus celebrate this period with a feast and dance, at which the young girl appears, ornamented with beads and the white down of birds, the latter of which, by means of a gummy substance, is fixed to her head, shoulders, and legs.

Drawn from the Original Sketch by Charles Bentley.

On Stone by George Barnard.

WATU TICABA.

a Wapisiana Village.

Printed by C. Hullmandel.

London Published by

Marriage among these Indians is not accompanied by any religious rites. They are frequently contracted by the parents when infants, in which case the young man is bound to assist the family of his wife till she arrives at puberty; in the intermediate time he is very particular in his attention to her, presents her with beads, and brings her the best of what he has been able to procure at the chase. At the time of marriage he leads her where he pleases, and establishes his own household.

Young men and women, at a more advanced age, consult their own inclinations; a visit to the bride's abode, and some presents are the usual preliminaries: if the suitor meet with favour in the eyes of the parents, the woman is purchased either by gifts or labour; in the latter instance the bridegroom is bound to serve the parents of the bride for a year, or longer. When the marriage takes place, the husband clears a sufficient space of ground for raising provisions: when cleared, it is made over to the care of the woman, who from that time has the whole management of it.

The generality of husbands have only one wife, but polygamy is allowed and practised by all those who have the means of maintaining several wives. I recollect an Arawaak chief in the river Berbice, who had five, the youngest of whom was only thirteen years of age, and handsome. The first wife generally pretends to superiority in domestic affairs over the rest, but it is frequently necessary for the husband to exercise his authority in order to restore tranquillity in his harem.

On the husband's return from hunting or fishing, his wife prepares his meal, which usually consists of fish or game, the latter frequently boiled in the blood of the animal, and well-seasoned with Capsicums or Cayenne pepper. The male part of the family all eat together, and if the weather permit it, before the door in the open air. Squatted on the ground, the Indian dips his cassada bread into the pot which contains the food, and helps himself with his fingers to that piece of meat, for which he has the greatest fancy. Their meals last but a short time, and every one rises as soon as he has done. The females do not eat with the men, but wait till the latter have finished; it frequently happens that a favourite dish is put aside by the Indian women, which they contrive to hide until a favourable moment arrives in which they may enjoy it unobserved by the men.

Many of the Indian tribes reckon several animals and birds unlawful to be eaten. They abhor our domestic hog, the cow, and fishes of large size. The Caribs are more particular in that respect than any other nation. The delicious fish, the Sudis gigas, or Pirarucu, one of the largest which swims in fresh water and which abounds in the Rupununi, and different species of Silurideæ are considered unclean by the Macusis and Caribs. In their native woods and savannahs, where they are not degenerated through intercourse with Europeans, the meat of the domestic hog is held in horror. I could never induce Irai, a Carib chieftain, who was otherwise a sensible man, to taste the smallest slice of ham. The herds of wild cattle on the savannahs of the Rupununi and Rio Branco, are unmolested by the Macusi Indians who inhabit these regions, as the flesh is considered unclean. They, however, eat their native hogs, the Peccari and Cairuni. The cassada affords their chief sustenance; the root of this plant (Jatropha manihot), which in its natural state is so poisonous, is by a simple process converted into nutritious food. After it has been washed and scraped, it is grated and pressed into an elastic tube, which is called a Matappi, and has been made of the plaited stems of a Calathea. The tube being filled, its upper end is tied to one of the beams in the hut, so that its opposite end, which possesses a loophole, remains a few feet from the ground; a long pole is pushed through the loophole, the shorter end of which is fixed, while the longer being pressed down serves as a powerful lever, and the elasticity of the tube presses the grated cassada forcibly together, and the poisonous juice escapes through the interstices of the plaits. The mass deprived of its juice, is then gradually dried, and if required, some of the flour after it has been sifted, is put upon a pan over a fire, and in a few minutes a cake, resembling the oatmeal cake in appearance, is ready. Violent as the poisonous juice of the cassada root proves to be, its narcotic principle is so volatile, that it escapes by being exposed to fire; the Indian forms, therefore, a sauce of the juice, which resembles ketchup or soy.

The Indian females in the Wapisiana village, Watu Ticaba, are thus occupied in preparing these cakes, which, after they have been baked, are dried in the sun, and become ultimately so hard, that they may be kept for months. This bread constituted our chief sustenance during our sojourn in the interior, and after we had been accustomed to it for about three or four weeks, we found it as wholesome as wheaten bread.

The village, which is represented in the plate, is situated in latitude 2° 32′, on the extensive savannahs bound by the Carawaimé and Canuku mountains. The dome-shaped form of the huts is the mode of structure which the Wapisiana generally adopts, and a little hut of the description as that sketched here, is attached to the chieftain's house, which appears to be exclusively dedicated to baking and other culinary purposes.

Yams, Batatas, and Indian corn form the other articles of food which they cultivate in their fields. They are particularly fond of the half-ripe ears of the Indian corn, which they parch; this custom equally prevails in Egypt. In the morning the women rise first, and after having taken the customary bath, they prepare their husband's breakfast. The Indian eats little at one time, but he eats often; the general hours are sunrise, ten, noon, three, and sunset. The chief meals are breakfast and supper.

The Indians prepare different beverages of divers fruits and Indian corn; but the favourite drink is Paiwori, which is prepared

from cassada bread. The bread is for that purpose made thicker, and is carbonized on its surface; it is then broken into pieces, and after boiling water has been poured over it, the women begin to turn it about with their hands, the large lumps being taken out and chewed, and then put into the pot again. This disgusting process, they say, increases the fermentation of the decoction, and renders it intoxicating. Cassiri, which is a fermented liquor from the sweet potato, or yams, is made in a similar manner.

The preparation of the necessary beverage for a drinking feast will occupy the women in chewing cassada for several days. A large trough, in the form of a canoe, is an indispensable piece of furniture in a chief's hut. Although it may contain from a hundred to a hundred and twenty gallons I have seen it emptied in the course of the day by forty or fifty individuals. The cassada bread, which is intended for that use, is piled up round the trough, and having been broken into pieces and covered with hot water, the women continue their filthy work for hours.

The scenes incident to a feast of this description do not present much variety. The invitations having been given several days before, the young men of the village from whence the invitation emanated, repair the preceding night to the neighbouring settlements to repeat the summons. The guests assemble the next day, their faces and figures much painted and decorated with feathers, necklaces of monkey and peccari teeth, seeds, &c. The dancers arrange themselves round the trough which contains the intoxicating drink, their bodies bent forwards; the one who follows the leader has a calabash in his right hand, in the left a maraca or rattle; the others seize upon any object which falls first in their way, perhaps a war-club, or gun, or a cutlass; the females their baby, a puppy, or a monkey; and with eyes bent to the ground, the dance commences, the measure of which is in triple time; it is accompanied by a monotonous song, which is strongly marked by stamping with the foot, or knocking the ground with a hollow cylinder of bamboo, surrounded with the seed-vessels of a species of Cerbera, which make a rattling noise. The words of the dancers, which are extemporaneous, are frequently repeated; they continue moving round and round, first one way and then the other, or they follow each other in single file; after this measured dance, which is intended to keep off evil spirits from their amusements, the leader of the column approaches the trough of Paiwori, and taking the calabash from the hand of his neighbour, he dips it gravely into the trough and takes a sip; this is announced by the recommencement of the song, and the rattling of the maraca; the calabash is then presented to the others, who help themselves at pleasure. Several other dances follow, equally monotonous in song and movements as the others.

The opening ceremony of a Paiwori feast and dance is delineated in the plate, which represents the Carib village Anai; the large canoe in the middle, filled with the intoxicating drink is surrounded by the dancers, every one bearing some object in his hand. Their gaudy feather-dresses, the peculiar expression and drollery of their faces, perhaps produced by deep libations before the dance commenced, have been attempted with the pencil, but can scarcely be conveyed by the most skilful artist.

Anai is situated near the mountain of the same name, and about seven miles from the left bank of the Rupununi, in latitude 3° 56′ N. The house partly boarded up with spars made of the Manicole palm, served us as a residence for nearly six weeks during our first expedition. The Carib who inhabited it, had surrendered it with the same hospitality to Mr. Waterton, and to Messrs. Smith and Gullifer when they visited these regions. During my last visit, in 1838, I found the village abandoned, and the spot which was formerly occupied by the house overgrown with bushes.

Dancing appears to be a practice which belongs as much to the civilized nations of the world, as to those whom we have termed savages; and all the Indian tribes whom I have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with, delight in this amusement. While we were in Orcala, on the Corentyn, we had an opportunity of witnessing a Warrau dance, which differs in some respects from that of other Indian tribes. Mr. Layfield, who possesses a woodcutting establishment, in which many of the Indians who live in the neighbourhood are employed, gratified our wish, and the necessary notice was spread through the neighbouring settlements, that at such a day a dance would be given at his abode. The previous evening, and when I was just about retiring to my tent, I was forcibly struck by the sound of peculiar music, which at first made me think I heard a Russian horn-band; the sounds, carried by a gentle breeze, swelled and died away until they burst fully again upon my ear; and although there was something wild in it, the cadence softened the harshness, and mellowed it into harmony; the sounds were too varied for an Æolian harp, and our distance from civilized countries precluded all possibility of ascribing the music to a band; at last I recollected the dance which was to take place the following day, and that I had been told that every Warrau settlement had its band-master, called in their language Hohohit, whose duty it was to train his pupils to blow upon flutes made of reeds and bamboo. I followed the music and entered the settlement, which was only a short distance from our encampment, where I found all the young men collected around old Morose, under whose guidance those sounds were produced, which had so much astonished me. The musicians were grouped, each possessing an instrument consisting of a piece of bamboo, in which a small reed on the principle of the mouth of the clarinet, was introduced. According to the size of a slit, the reed produced a higher or deeper sound, and this was powerfully increased by a hollow bamboo called Wanawalli, in some instances five feet long. A waive with his hand, a nod with his head or instrument, were the different signals to those around him to fall in with their instruments, which naturally produced but one tone, but united into something like harmony. Who are now the inventors of that peculiar and mechanical music, which a

Drawn from the original Sketch by Charles Bentley

On Stone by Coke Smith

CARIBI VILLAGE ANAI.

Near the River Rupununi

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few years ago made so much noise in Europe, and delighted the thousands who heard it? The musical sounds which the Warrau produces on his reed flute, are conducted on the same principle as those of a Russian horn-band, and also claim originality.

The next day proved fair, and on our arrival at Mr. Layfield's, we found a great number of Indian females assembled under some shady Tamarind trees. They were handsomely dressed, according to their fashion; loose garments of flowered calico, or of blue or red cotton stuff, were attached to their waist, where they were fixed, or partly slung round their left or right shoulder; the neck, arms, wrists, and ancles, were richly adorned by red and white beads, while others, by means of gum, had fixed the white down formerly spoken of, to their faces and arms; many wore pieces of silver or metal in their nose, which completely covered the upper lip, while with others, a blueish line extended from the corners of the mouth, and ended in a figure resembling an anchor. Some had their eyebrows effaced, and a similar line of a blueish colour was painted on the place which they had occupied, and which gave a certain expression, by no means unpleasant.

A WARRAU INDIAN.

The glances of the assembled females were directed towards a neighbouring thicket, from which we soon after saw the young Warraus issue headed by their Hohohit. All stooped when advancing, their bodies nearly bent to the ground: each carried his instrument, grasped in the middle; their heads were embellished by large feather caps, that of the band-master being especially distinguished. Some of the men wore strings of the seed of the Cerbera thevetia round their ancles, which made a rattling noise whenever the foot was put to the ground. They slowly approached the place which was to be appropriated to their dancing, their movements being directed by the sound of a small whistle, which imitated the cry of a monkey. When arrived, they formed a circle round the dancing place, and another sound of the whistle being given, they laid their instruments on the ground; the men remained motionless in a cowering attitude, while the band-master muttered incomprehensible things until another sound of the whistle roused them all up, when taking their instruments they began to play. By this ceremony the place was devoted to their amusement, and, as with the Caribs and Macusis, the evil spirits were thus enjoined to keep their distance.

Dancing now commenced, but their etiquette is somewhat the reverse of ours; the fair sex are not engaged by the men, who place themselves in the dancing circle, and while they proceed once or twice round, the Warrau woman approaches the man with whom she feels inclined to dance, and placing her hand lightly upon his shoulder, he takes no further notice than assuming the same posture; and their eyes bent to the ground, they step forwards and sidewards, and with musical instruments in their left hand, they accompany their dance at the same time by a strain which possesses more music than I have heard among any other tribe. When the dance is about to end, the men shake that foot distinctly three times to which the shells are attached. If her partner be an intimate friend, a sweetheart, or brother, the woman will patiently await the third rattle; but if only a slight acquaintance, or a stranger, she will return to her place with the swiftness of a deer at the first sound. A yell from the men concludes the diversion. The dances of the Warraus are varied; they have a bird-dance, a monkey-dance, and many others in which they attempt to imitate the voice or movements of the animals of which it bears the name; but the most amusing is the Macusi dance, which is worth describing, as it represents the incursions which the Caribs, and other warlike Indian tribes, formerly committed upon the Macusis, carrying their females forcibly away as the Romans did the Sabines. When the dance is about to commence all the women hide themselves, for which they have sufficient time, as the men move first round in a circle. At a signal given by the band-master the men disperse in all directions in search of them: every corner of the house is looked into, every bush or tree in the neighbourhood is subjected to examination. As soon as the hiding place of one is discovered, she is conducted to the dancing place, and ordered to keep the station assigned to her. When the men

think they have secured all, they begin to dance round their fair prizes, and at another signal, the women are at liberty to try and make their escape; but the men quickly pursue those whom they have selected for their share, and if fortunate enough to recapture them, they are led back in triumph to the circle, and then all dance round in the usual step. It is a most animating scene, from the swiftness exerted on both sides; by the female to escape, who if she succeed is loudly applauded by her own sex; by the man, to capture, as they express themselves, a Macusi slave.

WARRAU DANCE AT OREALA.

The Paiwori in taste resembles our malt liquor, and when taken in large quantities is intoxicating; it has not however the injurious effects of spirituous liquors; but the scenes which accompany such a drinking bout beggar all description. Disgusting as the preparation of this beverage must prove to an European, when presented to him as a pledge by his host, it will be necessary to conquer whatever aversion he may feel and to drink of it; the contrary would offend the Indian and awaken distrust.

The funeral ceremonies of the Indians of Guiana differ in some respects, according to the tribe to which the deceased belonged. If a man of consequence die among the Warraus, he is put into a canoe in lieu of a coffin, and all which he possessed when alive, such as bows, arrows, clothes, beads, &c. are buried with him; on his heart they place a looking-glass. They frequently kill the favourite dog of the deceased, and put it with him into the grave. He is buried in the house which he inhabited, and a fire kept burning on the spot for many nights. His relations assemble and bewail his loss with excessive and outrageous lamentations, and this is renewed at different times, and continues many months. The widow of a Warrau and his children become the property of his brother or next male relation; however, should the widow refuse him, the incensed relations frequently satisfy themselves by subjecting her to a violent flagellation, after which she may live with whom she pleases.

The ceremonies of the Arawaaks are similar to the above. Upon the demise of a man of some standing, the relations plant a provision-field with cassada roots, and bewail him with sudden outbursts of lamentation. After the period of twelve moons, the relations and friends of the deceased are called together, and the cassada, which was planted at the time of his death being now ripe, the guests are feasted with Paiwori and game. A dance is performed over his grave, and the dancers flagellate each other with whips prepared for that purpose, which they hang up in the hut of the deceased when the ceremony is over. About six moons later, another dance follows, when these whips are buried, and with them the remembrance of the dead, as well as any resentment which they might have felt in consequence of the severe flagellation which they have inflicted upon each other.

The Caribs put the body into a hammock, where it is daily washed by the wives or nearest female relatives; and watched, that it be not molested by beasts of prey or insects. After it has become putrid, the bones are cleansed, painted, and put into a pacal or basket, and carefully preserved. If they abandon this settlement, the bones are consumed with fire, and the ashes collected, and taken with them. The women who cleanse the bones are considered unclean for several moons.

The Indians undoubtedly possess some religious principle amongst them, and believe in the immortality of the soul. They acknowledge the existence of a superior Divinity, but say, that the urgent business of keeping the world in order, prevents him from paying that attention to man, which he would otherwise afford, and numerous evil spirits are thus permitted to exercise a pernicious influence over mankind, thereby causing sickness, death, and misfortunes. In order to counteract this influence resource is had to the sorcerer, or Piaiman, who by incantations or magical ceremonies pretends to restore health, or to turn the evil from such of his dupes who pay him well for his supernatural agency. It is therefore evident, that this individual exercises the greatest power over a community, and is regarded with awe and respect.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that a subject so replete with interest as the present state of the original inhabitants of Guiana, deserves more attention than the philanthropic public of Great Britain has hitherto afforded it. The indifference with which

they have been treated, seems almost unaccountable, and I must ascribe it to ignorance, for it is hardly possible that the religious portion of Great Britain should be aware that a race of men exists, who have not only been dispossessed of their territory by Europeans, but have been wholly neglected, and are without provision for their moral or civil advancement, although their lands are now occupied by British subjects who have never made them any compensation, and export to the mother country to the annual amount of three millions; and import, in British manufactures, upwards of two millions sterling.

The present history of these Aborigines appears to be the finale of a tragical drama, for a whole race of men is wasting away under adverse circumstances. Heartless however is the assertion, unworthy of our enlightened age, that the indigenous race of the New World is incapable of elevation, and that no power, whether emanating from Christians, princes, or philosophers, can arrest its gloomy progress towards certain destruction. Such an unfeeling and impious idea could not have originated with any one who had lived among them, or who had studied their character. I speak from experience when I assert, that the Indian *is* capable of progressive improvement, and that the establishment of social order, European arts, and Christian morals among them is possible. It is unreasonable to expect that men, accustomed to a roving and unfettered life, and unacquainted with our artificial wants, should at once abandon their wandering habits, and adopt a mode of living diametrically opposite to their long established customs, and who but too frequently, where they have been brought in contact with civilization, have not partaken of its blessings, but merely felt its curse.

The obligations of moral duty, and for obvious reasons, sound policy, ought to direct those who profit by the soil to which the Indians have an indisputable right, to contribute in some degree to their religious and moral instruction. But if it be attempted to palliate the neglect which they have received, by the assertion — that the capacities and capabilities of the Aborigines render them insensible to improvement, I at once, as a contradiction to this error, adduce the example of the three natives who accompanied me in 1839 to England, and after a sojourn of nine months returned last July to their homes. They had formed part of my boat's crew during my late exploring tours in Guiana, and anxious to judge themselves of "the white man's land," on my departure from Demerara, offered to accompany me to England. It was gratifying to watch their progressive advancement in civilization, and elementary instruction in the English language. They were all three of different tribes. The eldest, Sororeng, was a Paravilhana, whose once powerful tribe inhabited the banks of the Rio Branco and its tributaries; I believe him to have been about thirty-five years old. The second in age, was Saramang, a Macusi from Pirara, the village where the first germs of Christianity were sown, as described elsewhere. I think he was about twenty-five years old, and he was decidedly the most intelligent of the three. The Warraus, to which nation Corrienau, the youngest belonged, inhabit the coast regions, along the rivers Orinoco, Pomeroon, and Corentyn. After their arrival, an intelligent master was engaged to give them instruction in the English language and our Christian religion, and every opportunity was taken to show them such of our different institutions and inventions, as would convey to them a favourable idea of the superiority of civilized arts and manners.

SARAMANG. SORORENG. CORRIENAU.

To any one who was unacquainted with their manners, their apparently apathetic look, at what to them must have appeared most wonderful and surprising, must have been discouraging; but it did not have that effect upon me. I was prepared for it, and persuaded that it resulted from that command which they possess over their feelings, and the tuition which they receive from their youth not to

show surprise, I did not attribute it to insensible stupidity. Saramang, the Macusi, frequently departed from this artificial coldness into ejaculations of surprise; Sororeng, the eldest, never; his equanimity could not be disturbed by any thing; but I admired the readiness with which the Macusi named in his own language, and in the most appropriate manner, those objects which he saw for the first time in his life, and of the existence of which he could have had no idea. A great source of delight lay in their visits to the Zoological Gardens, not only because the presence of numerous South American animals reminded them forcibly of their own country, but the gigantic forms of those of the eastern hemisphere, doubtless inspired them with astonishment; for animal nature, under the tropics of the western hemisphere, is comparatively on a small scale, when compared with that of Asia and Africa. Similar astonishment was produced by the locomotive engines, and the first time they were on a rail-road, and when at full speed another train passed with redoubled swiftness, the two younger broke out into exclamations, and only Sororeng kept true to his impervious stoicism.

I did not urge them to apply themselves to their books and writing beyond their attendance during the regular hours, when they received instruction; but so anxious were they to improve, that on entering their room several times as late as ten o'clock at night, I have found the two younger occupied in writing, or cyphering. Their behaviour in the house where they resided was without reproach, and they became in a short time favourites with every one, although I must confess, that I had some difficulty in procuring respectable lodgings for them. With the name of Indians, savages and cannibalism are so closely connected, that it caused the greatest prejudice. They soon accustomed themselves to our food and manners of eating, and were clean in their dress, the Macusi and Warrau adopting a kind of dandyism, which I rather encouraged than reproved; but it was remarkable, that these young men, whom twelve months ago I took from their native homes, in almost perfect nudity, and who ranged through their wild forests in the pride of savage life, had now, and after so short a sojourn among civilized nations, adopted customs, which were considered not only foreign, but likewise abhorrent to their natural mode of living.

Their return approached; family ties had been torn asunder when they parted from their native country, and I was anxious that the period, which I told them it was likely they would remain in Europe, should not be exceeded; but before their departure, it was with the proudest feelings, that at a public meeting at Exeter Hall of that excellent and so little known Society, the British and Foreign Aborigines Protection Society, I could step forward, and introducing the Macusi to the assembly, show him as an example, that if civilization and religion be offered simultaneously, in a rational manner, to these beings, that they *are* capable of progressive improvement and elevation into a civilized and well-ordered community.

Great Britain has been invested with wealth and power, and there are many bright examples where these have been used to spread the knowledge of the true God and civilization amongst barbarous tribes. The moment appears now to have arrived when a similar boon will be bestowed upon the hitherto neglected natives of one of her most magnificent colonies. Already has Her Majesty's Government resolved to secure to such as acknowledge British sovereignty, and live within her boundaries, the rights of human beings—personal liberty, and protection against foreign aggression and enslavement; and the friends of the poor Indians hail this as a certain proof that British influence and philanthropy will also promote among them the diffusion of Gospel truths, the improvement of moral habits, and the spread of civilization: and although the first chapel erected to the worship of the true God in the interior of Guiana, is now abandoned in consequence of Brazilian aggression and intolerance, the time may be yet approaching, when its walls will again resound with hymns in praise of Him who is Almighty.

THE END.

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