

THREE WEEKS IN CUBA.

BY AN ARTIST.

A BRIGHT dream of boyhood and earnest aspirations of maturing youth, have been realized! I have seen Cuba, the "Queen of the Antilles," and am satisfied. I have felt the emotions of delight which fill the heart when the purple hills of Managua are first seen looming up in the distance, like monsters in repose on the bosom of the ocean. I have endured the vexations of official extortion at *la Punta*; lounged in the *cafés* of the capital; loitered at twilight on the margin of the *Paseo de Isabel*, or by the sparkling waters of the *Fuente de la Habana*, where groups of young men stand gazing with delight upon the lovely *señoritas*, sitting by in their light *volantes*; and better than all this, I have climbed the glorious mountains of the island, reveled in the wealth of verdure which garnish its plains, and have bathed in its clear rivers. O! she is a lovely Queen even now, scarred as she is by the implements of man's avarice; blighted as is her primal beauty by the moral mildew of kingly and priestly despotism, and warted as she is in every feature by that parasite of civilization in the Western World, the slavery of mind and muscle, in its worst form. Her mountains, rising in queenly magnificence, and crowned with a diadem of brilliant atmosphere, are yet as glorious—and, in her vestments of unequalled verdure, garnished every where with buds and blossoms, and fragrant with perfumes which Araby could not yield for the garments of Sheba's Queen, she is yet as attractive as on that brilliant October morning, three hundred and sixty years ago, when Columbus, with the Pinzons and their followers anchored in the beautiful Nisse; chanted a *Te Deum*, and then reveled in the paradisiacal luxuries of Nature in her plenitude. But there is a cloud of deep sadness upon her brow, for cruel wrongs are wringing bitter tears from her eyes. Yet there is a "still small voice" of hope, potential and abiding, in every gentle breeze from the ocean; and the Seer of inspiration seems to speak from the dim Past, "Wake Isles of the South! your redemption is nigh!" Even the hoarse voice of the hurricane appears to tell of a mighty power of deliverance which proclaims the dawning of a day at hand, when "the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands."

A blight fell upon Cuba on the day when Columbus came, with lofty spiritual professions, and first trod its soil. Filled with admiration, he exclaimed, "I know not where first to go, nor are my eyes ever weary of gazing on the beautiful verdure. The singing of the birds is such that it seems as if one would never desire to part from hence. There are flocks of parrots that obscure the sun, and other birds of many kinds, large and small; and trees, also, of a thousand species, each having its peculiar fruit, and all of marvelous flavor." Yet, while the navi-

gator's soul was thus involuntarily worshipping at the shrine of God's lovely creation, **GREED**, with its keen eye and stony heart, laid its hand upon his shoulder and bade his spirit grovel in search of gold—gold! the puissant magnet which for a century and a half afterward attracted ship after ship from Western Europe, filled with avaricious men in search of sudden wealth in the virgin bosom of the Western World. Gold, pearls, spices, and other luxuries of courts and feudal households, were the chief objects sought for by the Genoese and his companions; and when success failed to crown their efforts bitter disappointment clouded their perceptions and chilled their hearts. They could not appreciate the gentle docility of the Cubans whose brotherly kindness followed them at every step. Although here seemed to be the dim-shadowed Atlantis of antiquity, with all its wonderous romance a reality; and nature and humanity coalesced in every gentle influence to purify the heart and elevate the affections, **GREED** held its icy sway, and every sense was employed in eager search for gold, pearls, and spices. Finding neither, they left this fancied Cipangi (Japan) to search for the more wealthy shores of Farther India.

Discoverers were soon followed by conquerors, proud, avaricious, and heartless. No right was recognized, in the treatment of the natives, but might, and those simple people who had lived in physical ease and enjoyed tranquillity, love, and almost unalloyed happiness, until Europeans saw and coveted their paradise, were dispossessed, degraded to the condition of slaves, and made beasts of burden to Spanish adventurers. Settlements were formed, cities were founded, nominal Christianity was established, bishops came, and the Cubans, as a people, were no more. Political tyranny and religious bigotry blotted out their simple civil laws and religious rites, and avarice, after crushing every semblance of dignity in their character, bent their backs to its labor-burdens. From that hour to the present a voice of wail has gone up continually to high heaven from the heaving bosom of the "Queen of the Antilles."

Baracoa was founded as early as 1508. In 1514 it was invested with the dignity of a city and a bishopric, and was made the capital of the island. Havana was planted in 1515; was fortified after being burned by a French privateer in 1538; was made the vice-royal residence in 1549, and, in 1589, was declared to be the capital of the island. All manual labor was performed by the enslaved Cubans; searches for gold continued; agriculture was very little attended to, and the wealthy proprietors were mere cattle-breeders, whose herds grazed upon the bountiful plains where no seeding by the hand of man was needed. By degrees the soil revealed its promises, and the indolent Spaniards, perceiving surer wealth there than in the mines, were induced to cultivate the fertile acres. During the last twenty years of the sixteenth century, the cultivation of the sugar-cane and tobacco was introduced, and a royal license was obtained to

import negroes from the coast of Africa, to perform the labor. The natives, weighed down by oppression, rapidly diminished in numbers, and a century after the discovery of Cuba, few of pure blood remained. The women were made the wives and concubines of the conquerors, and soon a hybrid race, called Creoles, considered by the Spaniards inferior to themselves, formed the numerical strength of the population of the island. Charmed by the promises of pleasure held out by the climate and the social system of Cuba, many Spanish hidalgos, and even nobles of higher rank, emigrated thither, and this class (which has ever been very considerable), and the Creoles, constitute the social and political antagonisms which now distract the island. The success of the commandants of fortresses in repelling invaders, gave these officials greater consequence than the civil governors possessed, and the imperial government, acknowledging that superiority, placed the supreme rule of the island in the hands of Captains-general. For more than a hundred and fifty years that most odious of all despotisms, *military rule*, has prevailed in Cuba. The Captain-general exercises vice-regal powers, and holds in his hand the dispensation of happiness or misery to the people of Cuba. For more than a century tax upon tax has been laid upon the industry of the island, for the ostensible purposes of revenue for the royal treasury, but really to fill the coffers of greedy resident officials. The Creoles groan under the burden, and sigh for deliverance. Commerce has made them acquainted with our happy republic; despotism has compelled them to study our institutions, to learn the way to emancipation, and the lash of extortion makes them stretch forth their hands imploringly to us, beseeching us to be bountiful almoners of that freedom which we so largely possess. That genuine sympathy which flows out toward the oppressed every where, makes us start in response to the call, but the hand of national faith, pointing to grave treaties, sealed by plighted honor, beckons us back to the seat of inaction.

I am neither historian nor philosopher, prophet nor politician; yet if I read history aright, and understand the philosophy of its teachings, it needs not the perception of a prophet to foresee the political condition of Cuba, perhaps ere the earth shall have made another circuit of the ecliptic. There appears to be a higher law than the savage enactments of selfish men, at work in the hearts of the Cubans, and this energy, aided by official stupidity, is rapidly deepening the grave of Spanish misrule over one of the most beautiful domains of earth. With free institutions and an intelligent people, Cuba, instead of presenting to the world the spectacle of a garden in ruins—its hedge broken down, and its shrubs and plants and fruitful vines crushed and ravished by "the wild boar out of the wood," might exhibit a garden in richest bloom and generous fruitage, the delight of its husbandman and the pride of the Western world.

Standing, like Janus, with a face toward the Past and toward the Future, and in absorbing

thought almost forgetting the Present, my pen has impolitely parted company with its pencil-companion, and wandered off among "the delectable mountains" of fact and speculation, whither I did not intend it should go. I gave it staff and scrip for a brief journey, with its companion, into the interior of the island, far away from the din of commerce and the wranglings of politics. The truant is recalled, chided for its errantry, and placed in the sober path of present reality.

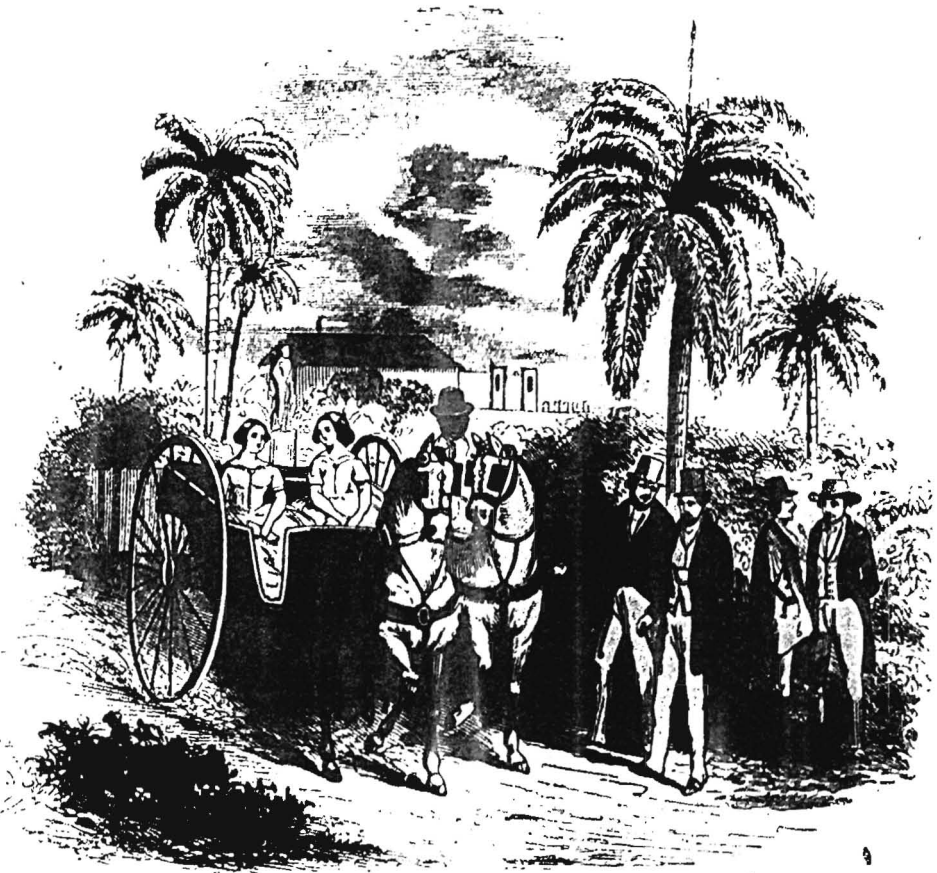
I first saw Cuba from the sea, at eight o'clock in the morning, and before noon we were upon the waters between Moro Castle and the Punta. Government officials speedily examined my passports, and measured, speculatively, the length of my purse. An hour afterward, having paid for personal and baggage permits to land, I was chatting with a resident friend at Madame Almy's, the most comfortable hotel in the Cuban capital.

I believe I am courageous even in the presence of danger, yet that

"Conscience which makes cowards of us all,"

gave my heart a slight ague as I strolled, during the afternoon, over the open space between the Punta Castle and the stately houses beyond, where Lopez was *garfoted*. I knew myself to be full of sympathy for the Cubans—a very magazine of rebellious thoughts and words, as fearful to a Spanish official just now as a lighted bomb-shell at his feet; and I involuntarily shuddered at the thought that one might explode in the midst of the excitement then prevailing in the city. Reflecting, however, that I had carefully buttoned my lips with prudent silence on ship-board, and had opened them only for food and conversation with my friend since my arrival, I passed the first night in Havana without disturbing dreams, and the fear that a careless word might come back in the form of a dark-visaged policeman.

At dawn the following morning I left for the interior. My friend had become surety for my good behavior while on the island, and in my pocket was a twelve-month's traveling license. I have it yet—a precious memento of the extortions and vexations to which strangers are subjected in Cuba. Havana is the paradise of official vultures. They meet you at every corner, and by the time a stranger is fairly lodged at a hotel, he possesses many dimes less than when he entered the harbor. If you desire to spend a night with a friend away from your hotel, a permit must be previously obtained, and if you wish to make a journey into the interior of the island, you must procure a license for fifteen days, to go and return from any given place, or one for a year, which will allow you to traverse any part of Cuba, unmolested by other extortioners. In each of these transactions, money—the *alpha* and *omega* of the official alphabet of Cuba—is required, and the stranger is reckoned among the fortunate ones if he gets *legally* seated in a railway car or upon horseback for the sum of twelve or fifteen dollars. It was thus "armed and equipped as the law directs," that I left my hotel in a *volante*, passed along the *Calle Muralla*



THE VOLANTE.

(Wall Street), one of the busiest thoroughfares in the city, through a narrow arched gateway in the city wall, guarded by stupid sentinels, and emerged upon the beautiful *Paseo*, or public grounds, of Isabella II. There is the *Fountain of Havana*, surmounted by an Indian princess with a mural shield, and pouring forth clear waters from the distant hills through finely-carved dolphins. This *Paseo* is a favorite resort of the Habaneros on Sundays and other "cross days;" and there, toward evening, hundreds assemble daily for recreation. There may be seen long lines of *volantes*, often drawn by blood horses, richly caparisoned with silver-mounted harness, and driven by black mounted *caleseros*, whose boots vie in polish with their faces. In each of these two young ladies are usually seated, their heads bare, their hair tastefully interwoven with pearls and flowers, their arms and bosoms sparkling with jewels, and the ever-present fan gracefully aiding them in bestowing coquettish smiles upon the groups of young men who crowd the footpaths of the *Paseo*. Mingled with this gay scene are stern-featured mounted lancers, kept there for the purpose of preserving order and decorum, while at the same time they remind the

people, even in the midst of innocent enjoyments, that in military power they have a lord and master.

Passing from the *Paseo de Isabel*, and leaving the *Campo de Marte* on the left, we reached the railway station, and took a seat for Guanajay, on the western branch of the railway from Havana. After proceeding slowly along the *ferro carril*



RAILWAY STATION

among the wretched suburban population—a motley collection of all colors and ages, half-naked men and women and nude children—we passed the rich gardens of the Captain-general, the great reservoir, and one of the finest of the city cemeteries, and immediately penetrated the best cultivated portions of Cuba, where art, applying irrigation to a dry but generous soil, has produced great fertility. On every side were well-stocked farms, beautified by hedges of aloes with their magnificent candelabra of flowers, or the more modest lime-hedges, sprinkled with white blossoms, and redolent with perfume. The fields were covered with growing and ripening pine-apples and luscious bananas; and in every nook gorgeous flowers, such as we of the chilly North cherish in hot-houses, were springing into life and beauty. Beyond these plantations, designed as gardens for the supply of Havana market stalls, we traversed little valleys among the hills, covered by extensive sugar and coffee estates. The neat mansions of the proprietors, with their broad verandahs, were seen in the distance at the end of a colonnade of stately palms, or in glimpses behind large clumps of luxuriant bamboo. Here I first saw the *palma real* (royal palm) in its beauty. They are scattered over the fields, sometimes in groups, but often alone, standing like sentinels watching the wealth around them. They cast very little shadow, for the tall trunks are covered only with a tuft of long leaves, which tremble at the touch of every zephyr, and glisten like satin in the sun.

At Guanajay I mounted a horse, and accompanied by a single *arriero* with a pack mule, departed for that portion of the island lying between Mariel and Mangus, where the northern and southern shores of Cuba approach nearest each other.

The highways of Cuba are generally worse than the by-ways of New England. Although blessed with such a lofty name as Royal Road, they are always cursed with unmitigated roughness, especially those which traverse the mountains. Wheeled vehicles can not be used with either comfort or safety, and the horse and mule are universally used in traveling. Even this method is difficult upon the plains, in the rainy season, for the rich soil becomes a bottomless slough of mud; and in the dry season it is changed into a suffocating dust, which renders traveling very disagreeable. Journeying in the mountains upon the sure-footed beasts of burden, though rougher and more dangerous, is far more agreeable.

The taverns by the way-side afford very little attraction to the stranger, traversing the country for the first time. The bill of fare is exceedingly simple and brief, and almost every dish of prepared food is highly flavored with offensive garlic. The traveler may resort to a meal of bananas, rice, and eggs, if they can be procured, until his taste becomes "acclimated," which happy state is soon attained under the severe regimen of hunger and a keen appetite, and garlic loses a degree of its offensiveness to palate and nostrils. Sometimes the traveler may be favored with jerked-beef and codfish, and even with milk and chickens. These, however, are reckoned among rarities, and the tavern is a comfortable place only for the *arrieros* (pack-mule drivers) and the *carreteros*, the drivers of heavy carts used in conveying the produce of estates to market. The traveler finds comfort neither at table nor in bed, for the musical mosquito and the crafty flea vie with each other in their attentions to a stranger during the night.

The horse being almost the only conveyance for persons in the interior, the animal and his



FARM HOUSES

trappings often constitute the chief wealth and solicitude of the *guajiro* (peasant); in fact, the Cuban peasant is a sort of Centaur—the horse becomes a part of the man. The poorest of them manage to possess a horse; and even the beggars approach the traveler upon the road on horseback, and ride from one plantation to another, in careless ease, soliciting "entertainment for man and beast."

In the management of their horses, the poorer classes use a simple rope halter, and ride upon saddles made of palm leaves and straw, until fortune favors them with money sufficient to purchase an outfit more stylish. A good saddle, silver-mounted bridle, silver spurs, and a silver handled *machete* (a heavy straight sword) are prime objects of a *guajiro's* ambition. Possessing these, with the addition of gold shirt-buttons and silver buckles for his pantaloons, he is considered a favored child of fortune, and is ready to assume the grave responsibilities of married life. His wants are few, and his ambition is easily satisfied. He has no craving for a fine mansion and costly furniture, but is "as happy as a lord" beneath his shelter of dried palm-

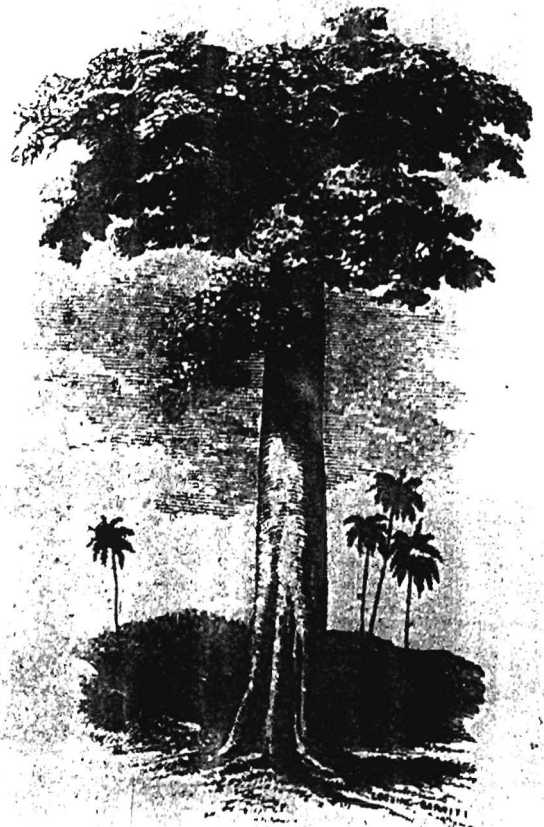
not in actual service, and a few wretched pictures of the *Virgin* and *Saints*, in every form of expression. Ignorant and indolent, with few incentives to do better, the *guajiro* labors only in response to the call of the physical necessities of himself and family. He cultivates *bananas*, *malangas*, and *yuca* as substitutes for bread, and sometimes raises pigs and fowls. Game-cocks are usually more numerous than hens in his brood, and command his chief solicitude, for they afford him exquisite amusement and while away many tedious hours of each day of his listless life. Thus thousands of strong men pass indolently, and almost uselessly, through life, upon a soil of marvelous fertility, beneath a sky of radiant beauty, and in a climate of surpassing amenity, chiefly because a crushing despotism, civil and religious, has sealed almost every avenue to distinction and every incentive to action, to the Creole, and thickly veiled the lamp of learning, whose light every despot, great and small, has sufficient acumen to perceive reveals the upward pathway from slavery to freedom. There are strong and willing hands; there are warm and generous hearts; there are intellects clear and powerful among the Creoles all over Cuba, which need only the promise of free institutions to be brought into efficient action in the broad field of human progress. They are now prisoners all—slaves all—and true Christian civilization weeps in pity, yet smiles in hope, for the day of jubilee is dawning.

The mansions of the sugar and coffee estates present an agreeable contrast to the rude domicils of the peasantry. Formerly, the cultivation



PEASANT'S HOUSE.

leaves laid over rafters of bamboo, which scarcely protects his household from the heat of the tropical sun and the drenching rains. His carpet is the native clay; his table is of rough boards, and his chairs are seated with raw dried cow-hides. These, with the shells of the *guira* (calabash), of various sizes, and a bed of dried palm leaves and straw, constitute the bulk of his furniture. The chief ornaments of his house are the trappings of his horse, hung in a conspicuous place when



CEIBA TREE

of sugar cane was confined to districts near large towns upon the coast. Within a few years they have extended to the interior among the rich plains and intervalles of the *vuella arriba* (upper country). I halted at one of the finest *ingenios*, or sugar estates, in the district of St. Marc, about forty miles from Havanna. The country in that vicinity is thickly settled and well cultivated; not too hilly, watered by fine streams, and beautified by the luxuriant vegetation which gives such a charm to Cuban landscapes. Next to the delicious perfumes which greet the senses at early dawn, and the enchanting brilliancy of the atmosphere just before sunrise, nothing arrests the attention of the stranger in Cuba more forcibly than the wealth of its vegetation, exhibiting an almost endless variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers. Among the former, the *ceiba*, the Anak of Cuban forests, challenges special attention. The powerful trunks of some of these rise to an altitude of eighty, and even one hundred feet, before stretching out their brawny arms and covering their delicate fingers with the rich velvet-like foliage which forms a superb canopy many yards in circumference. Its stately trunk, like some castle tower, is supported by huge buttresses, and over the whole surface of its branches,

parasites creep in serried lines or depend in graceful festoons, brilliant with flowers. This section of the island exhibits, also, a great variety of palms, all of one general family, with points of near resemblance, yet all distinctly marked by differences. These mingle with the great variety of other trees, and all being interlaced with vines and creeping parasites give a density to the shadows of Cuban forests and groves, unknown in northern latitudes. The parasites every where abound. They creep and twine around the stems and branches of almost every tree, loading them with floral ornaments in profusion. They also creep over barren rocks and dead trunks of trees, and like the drapery of the gums and cypresses of our southern swamps, appear to derive all nutriment from the air.

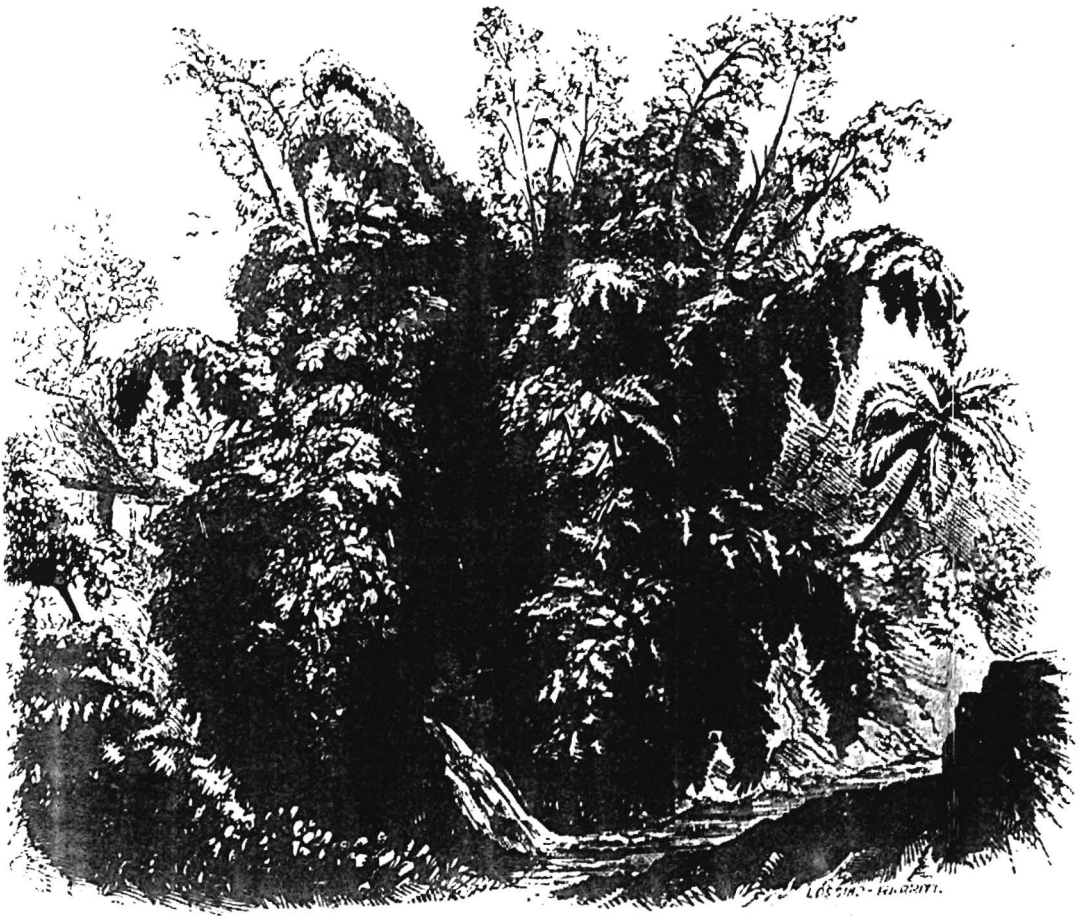
One of the most remarkable specimens of the parasite family is the *jaguey-marcho*, very properly called the *parricide tree*. Its growth sometimes commences upon the trunk of the palm or the *ceiba*, and sometimes among the branches. Rapidly extending its tendrils in every direction and increasing its bulk and strength, it at length wraps its serpent folds in deadly embrace around the parent tree. A conflict for mastery may be carried on for years, but the parasite is sure to

be the victor. The parent tree dies and decays, and there stands the parricide, with its distorted, hollow trunk, a striking emblem of filial ingratitude. Our picture represents a palm in the embrace of a *jaguey-marcho*.

The *caña brava*, or bamboo, is the queen of vegetation in Cuba. Grace, delicacy, richness of form and color, every element of vegetable beauty appear combined in this luxuriant dweller by the streams of the tropics. Nothing is more cheering to the eye of the heated and weary traveler than the deep rocky basins formed by mountain streams when filled with water and overshadowed by clumps of bamboo. They often lean over the stream upon one side, and arch the pathway upon the other, excluding almost every ray of sunlight from the cool recesses below. Their delicate brittle leaves are stirred by the tiniest zephyr, and bend to the pressure of the butterfly and the bee. Sometimes clumps of bamboo stand on either side of the roads and form long vaulted passages, as if by fretted Gothic arches, with here and there bunches of rich flowers and leaves hanging down like beautiful corbels. When the gale or the hurricane comes.



PARRICIDE TREE.

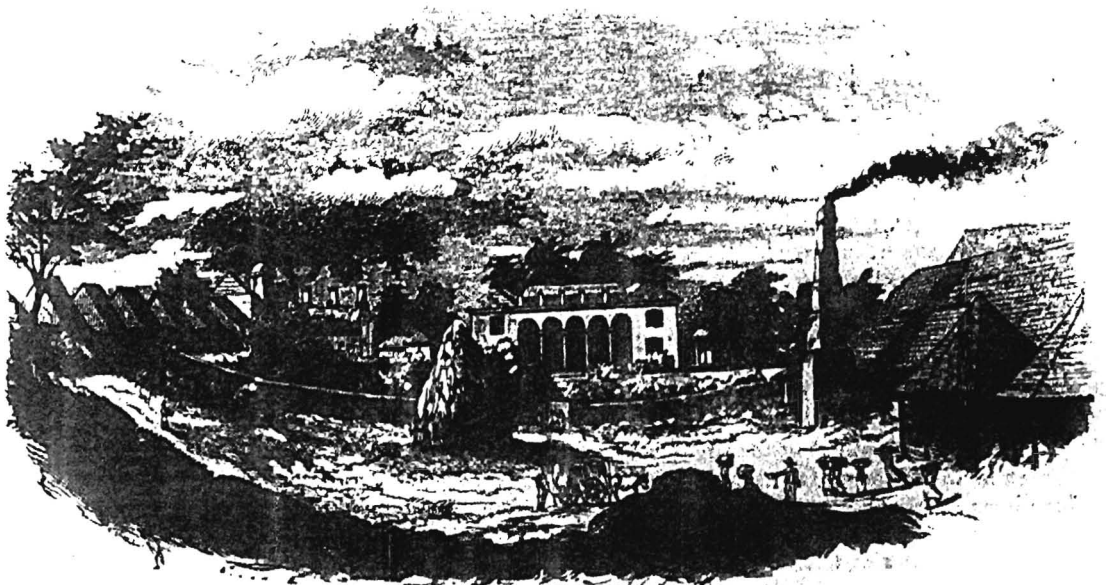


BAMBOO.

these groves of bamboo exchange an aspect of beauty for that of grandeur. They are heaved and tossed like the billows of the sea, and their rich foliage, driven in every direction, appears like surges breaking on the rocks.

It was late in October, at the beginning of the cane harvest, when I enjoyed a week of pleasant recreation upon the *ingenio* of a wealthy Spaniard. The roads in the vicinity were much su-

perior to any I had seen after leaving Guanajay, and the appearance of unthrift, every where else abounding, was here unperceived. As we approached the *ingenio* long lines of the royal palm skirted the highway, and hedges of the aloe and lime beautified the margins of broad fields covered with the tender sugar cane. Passing through a delicately wrought iron gateway, and along a lane studded with two rows of palms on either

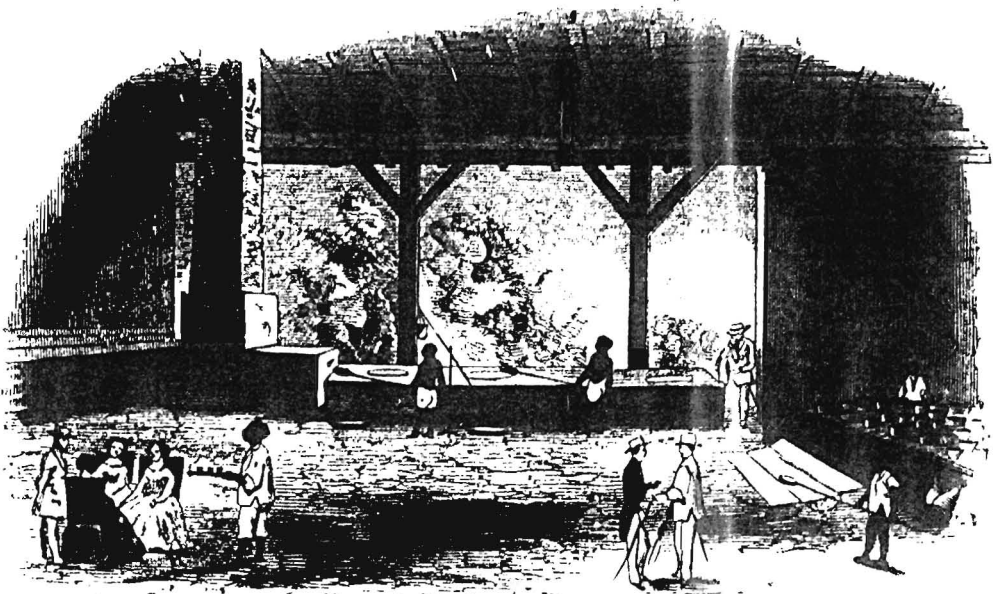


A SUGAR ESTATE

side, we reined up before the mansion of the proprietor, who was at home and gave us a cordial welcome. He was a man of fifty, of pleasing address, and appeared to be desirous of making my visit agreeable. After resting, and partaking of some refreshments, we visited the various buildings devoted to the manufacture of sugar from the cane. These consisted of the mill, where the sugar is crushed, the boiling-house, where the sirup is prepared for crystalization, the purging-house, where the sugar is refined, and the drying-house, where it is finished for market. Every process was new to me, and as they may be also to many readers, I will here give a brief account of the manufacture of sugar. The cane is cut while yet tender, brought from the fields, and passed between heavy wooden or

iron rollers, by which the juice is pressed out. This juice or sirup is then exposed to evaporation until the liquid has acquired the proper consistency for crystallizing. During the time of evaporation, lime-water is added to the sirup to facilitate the separation of vegetable matter and neutralize certain free acids. The vegetable matter rises to the surface, and is skimmed off. The sirup is then placed into shallow wooden coolers, where it concretes. It is then put into barrels with numerous holes in their bottoms, through which a quantity of molasses gradually drips, while the remainder granulates. This process completed, the sugar is put in hogsheads, and sent to market. This is the common *raw* or *muscovado* sugar.

The refined sugar of commerce is not manu-



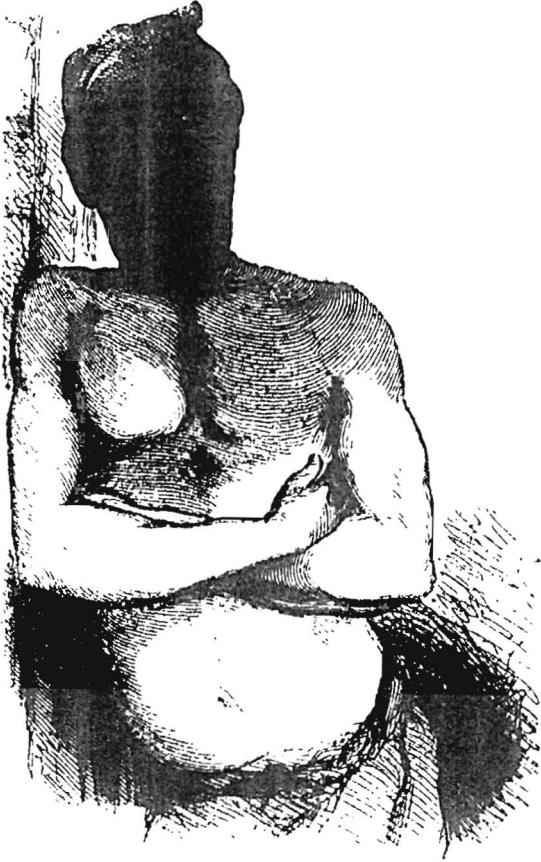
SUGAR BOILING.

factured in Cuba. The *muscovado* often receives a certain degree of purification by the operation of "claying," employed in making the best refined sugar. After being properly prepared by vigorous agitation in coolers, with wooden oars, it is placed in inverted cones of unglazed earthen ware, which had been previously soaked in water. The apex of the cone is open, for the egress of molasses. Upon the exposed base of the loaf in these moulds, a layer of pipe-clay, an inch in thickness, and made of the consistency of cream, by water, is placed. The water from the clay percolates through the sugar, and carries impurities with it out at the orifice. The loaf when taken out of the mould, exhibits three degrees of purity, that toward the apex being the most impure. They are separated and put up for market as three distinct qualities of common white sugar.

The season for gathering the sugar cane commences at the close of October, and continues, sometimes, until March. It is a season of severe labor for the negroes, and many of them, compelled to work at least eighteen hours each day, suffer much from being overtasked. The larger portion of the active slaves are natives

of Africa, and are extremely indolent. There exists in Cuba none of that family feeling so prominent on the plantations in our Southern States, and they are treated with far less humanity. Impressed with a belief that extreme rigor is necessary, and regarding the slaves as mere brutes, the lash, so seldom used in our Southern States, is there a potential instrument in governing them. Fear of, not affection for their masters, makes them humble and respectful; and on a plantation where there are from three to five hundred negroes, there are seldom more than a dozen white men to manage them. The lash is laid on without stint, for the most trivial offenses, and often only as a spur to labor. One general overseer, called *mayoral*, governs all the labor upon an estate. He has subordinate overseers, who parcel the negroes into gangs, and place black drivers over each group. These drivers are furnished with whips, which they often use without mercy, for each knows that if certain work assigned to his gang, is not completed at a given time, he will receive the lash himself. Selfish, like civilized man, he prefers to let his brother suffer in his stead.

The wants of the negro, which are purely physical, are extremely few in Cuba. They live almost exclusively on the abundant fruits of the island, of which they receive a stated daily allowance. The climate is so mild during



A FIELD NEGRO.

the whole year, that clothing is almost unnecessary for comfort, except in case of rain, or on windy days in winter, when they are provided with coarse woolen overcoats. The men work naked in the fields, except coarse linen pantaloons, and the children generally go entirely naked, until they are ten years of age. The whole race in Cuba are less intellectual in appearance than those of the United States where the African blood has a large portion of European alloy. They also have their peculiar vices, which appear to be inherent. The crime of theft is universal among them, and they often steal apparently for the love of the thing. Those who have been imported directly from Africa are expert in the use of vegetable poisons and often use them to compass certain selfish ends. I remember one negress, of forbidding features, who poisoned her children to secure her own ease. She claimed to be the daughter of a Lucumi king, and was brought to Cuba fourteen years ago. Her aversion to labor was so strong that it subverted her maternal feelings, and she kept three of her children, in succession, sick from their birth, with slow poison, until they died, in order that she might be con-



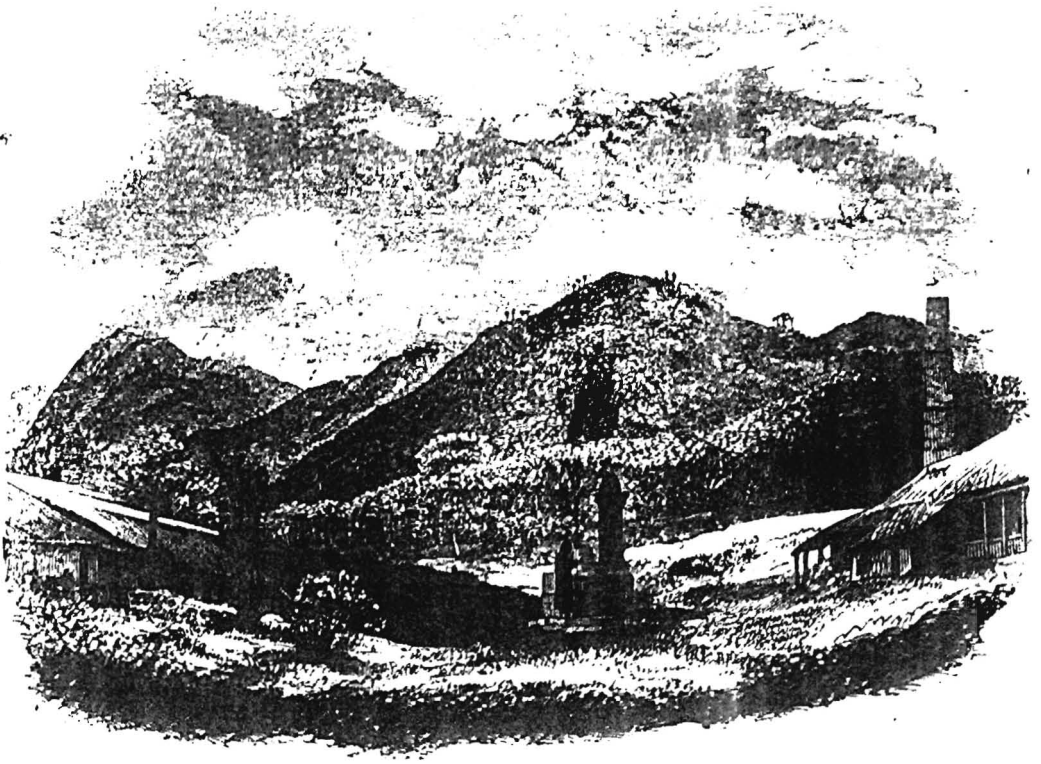
A NEGRO MARTRICIDE.

fined with them in the plantation hospital, and thus avoid work.

I saw another pure African, of marked character and hideous aspect. He claimed to have been a priest in his native country, and he was shrewd enough to practice his sacerdotal functions in Cuba, to his own personal advantage. He was a most consummate hypocrite, perfectly loathed labor, and yet he commanded the reverence of his race on the estate. He managed to bow to the ground, kneel, utter unintelligible prayers, and perform all sorts of gesticulations so frequently, that when the sun went down each day, the priest had worked but little. He frequently made his antics profitable, for after



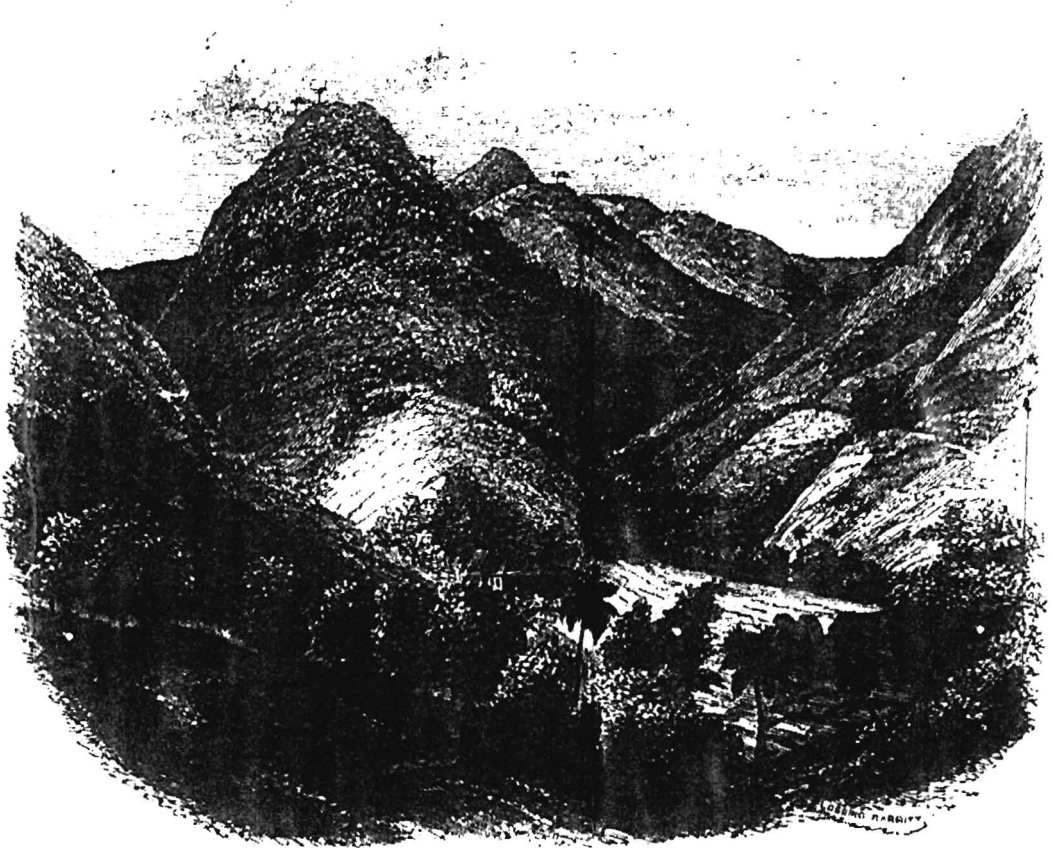
AFRICAN PRIEST.



LA TUMBA.

exhibiting his ludicrous performance to visitors, he would receive from them a *medio* (five cents) or *peseta* (twenty cents) in exchange for the fun he had afforded them. Bowing reverently, he would say, "Muchissimas gratias a su mercea" — Many thanks to your honor.

I must not omit the bell, a prominent object upon every estate. It is generally hung be



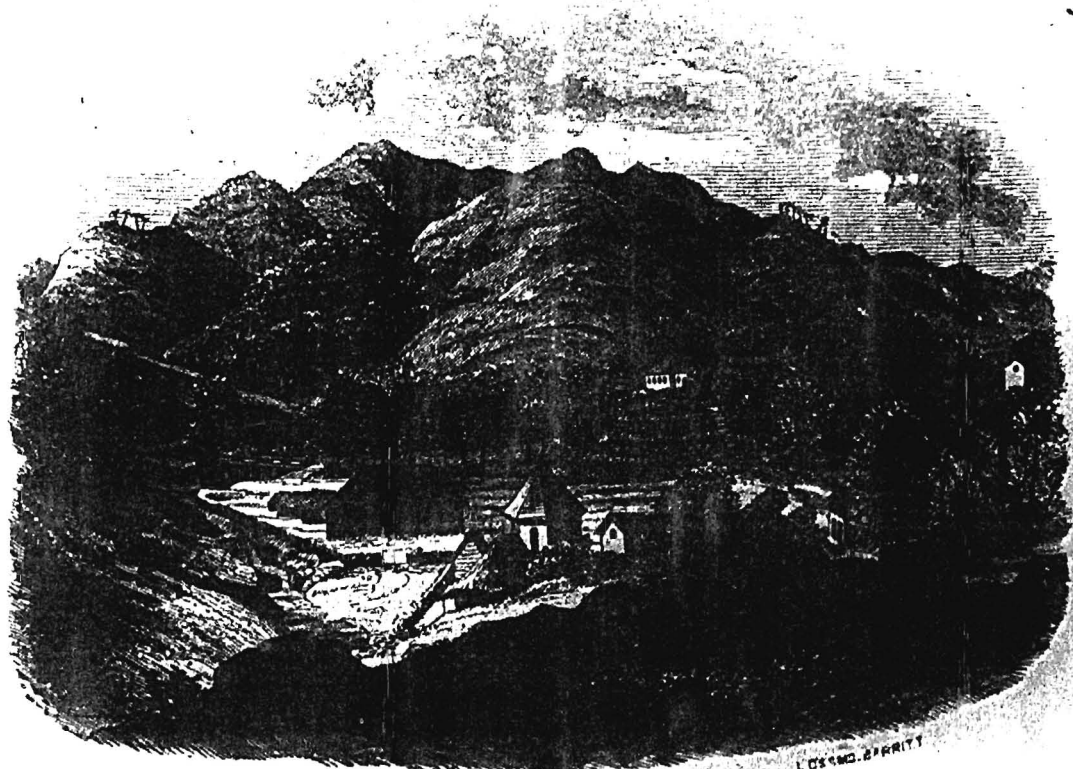
THE HERMITAGE

tween posts at a considerable height, so as to be heard in every part of the plantation. It is used to announce the time for rising in the morning, going to work, meals, to call the negroes from the fields on the approach of a thunder storm, or, in the event of a fire or other calamity, to summon the neighbors to assemble. It awakens the negroes at dawn, and at eight in the evening it calls them from the fields, to bed, in the village of huts which surround the mansions. They are all locked in at night, and the keys of each building are placed in the hands of the *mayoral*. They are thus kept, night and day, from interchanging thoughts, or forming combinations for any purpose.

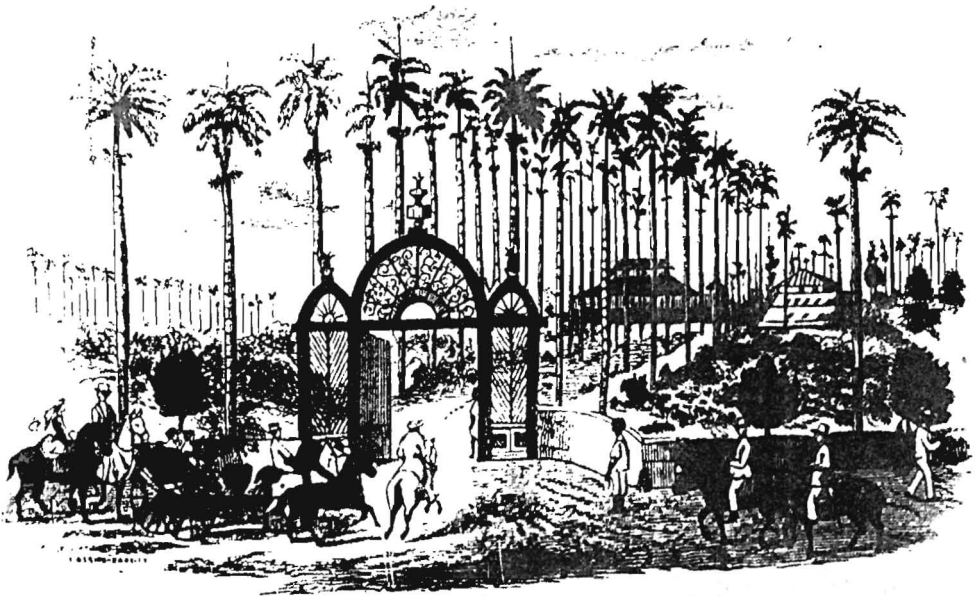
Leaving the hospitable mansion of the *ingenio*, I turned my face toward the beautiful mountains which loomed up in the west, a dozen miles distant. Among the lovely intervals at their base is the *ingenio* of *La Tunba*, one of the finest on the island a few years ago, but now almost a desolation. We tarried long enough to quaff some sweet water at a spring near its entrance gate, and to make a sketch of the surroundings of the dilapidated mansion, from its porch, and then penetrated the recesses of the mountains by a steep and rugged bridle path. For several hours we traversed the rough road, filled at almost every step with boulders. It sometimes coursed along the margin of a rocky abyss, sometimes in the deep shadows of dense trees, and frequently crossed and recrossed rapid mountain streams, and through yawning chasms. It was a fatiguing journey, but full of excitement, such as nature in her grand and beautiful exhibitions, inspires. We finally emerged from

the amphitheatre of rough mountains into an open country, broken but exceedingly fertile, where *cafetals* (coffee estates) once flourishing, but now in ruins, were seen on every side. They were planted by French refugees from St. Domingo. Political disturbances in Cuba, a sudden decline in the price of coffee, and a succession of bad crops, discouraged the planters, and they abandoned the country and went to Jamaica. The ruins of many of their once gay dwellings, preached sadly to us of misrule, from their beautiful shaded pulpits on the hill slopes. One fine estate, called the *Hermitage*, yet preserves some of its former attractions, and is partially cultivated. It belongs to the proprietor of *Angencro*, and is kept as a pleasant resort among the hills during the hot months of summer. There we found a substantial meal of chickens, eggs, cakes, and bananas. It is a lovely spot. Every hill is crowned with verdure, springs gush from their bosoms, and clear mountain streams wind through the little valleys and gather in broad basins, where the angler's sport or the luxuries of a bath may be enjoyed.

Proceeding two or three miles beyond the *Hermitage*, the rugged hills disappeared, and gentle elevations rising one above another, crowned with palms and clothed in coffee-shrubs, fruit-trees, and flowering plants, presented a prospect truly enchanting. Here were some fine coffee estates, where nature and humanity assumed a gentler aspect. The coffee districts are much more agreeable to the traveler and philanthropist than the more fertile and profitable regions where the sugar-cane is cultivated. The field labor bears no comparison with that upon the *ingenios*, and



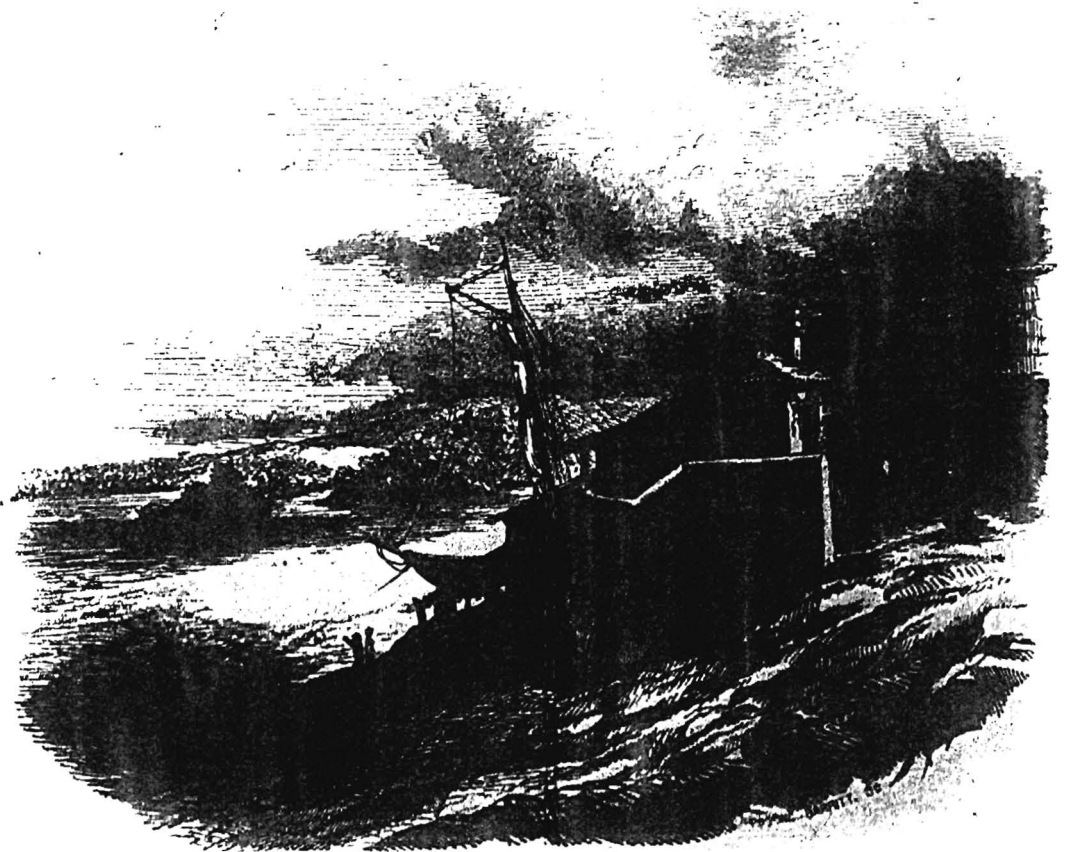
A CAFETAL OR COFFEE ESTATE.



ENTRANCE TO A COFFEE ESTATE.

much of the work is performed under shelter. For a long time the cultivation of this plant rapidly increased, and coffee promised to become one of the staple products of the island. The revolution in St. Domingo at the close of the last century, when the island passed into the possession of its half million of negroes, caused many of the French planters who fled to almost every island in the archipelago, to settle in Cuba.

They were chiefly coffee-growers, and this immigration gave an impetus to that branch of agriculture. In the year 1800, there were but eighty *cafetals* on the island; in 1827, there were between twenty and thirty thousand, averaging from thirty to forty thousand trees each. Many of them had seventy and eighty thousand shrubs. The cultivation of coffee, owing to causes before hinted at, is far less profitable than that of sugar.



LANDING-PLACE OF CAVANAS.

and many *cafetals* have been changed, and are continually changing, to *ingenios*.

Comfort and thrift appear among the *cafetals*. The mansions are pleasantly situated near running streams, and in the midst of fruit-trees and flower gardens. The manners of the proprietors are more refined, and their treatment of the negroes are more humane than on the sugar estates; and that utter brutality in the feature of most of the field slaves of the *ingenios*, is seldom seen on the *cafetals*. Here is less material life, and social intercourse is far more delightful. I enjoyed the hospitality of one or two American coffee planters in this district, and with them and their highly intelligent families I passed a few days most agreeably. Books, music, embroidery, and a variety of light employments keep them busy, when not engaged in social pleasures; and these isolated families, having sources of enjoyment within their own little circles, and surrounded by the ever-beautiful works of nature, have no cause to sigh for the brilliant or less satisfactory excitements and pastimes of city life.

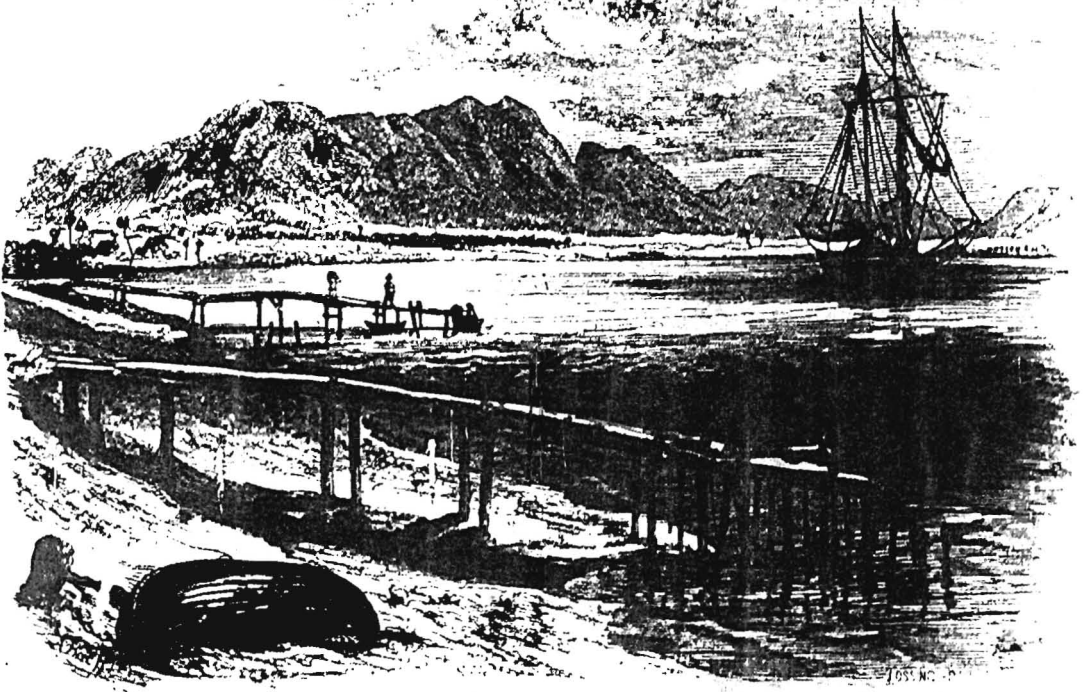
In this vicinity rises one of the loftiest elevations on the island. It is very steep on every side, and access to its summit is exceedingly difficult. Assured of a glorious prospect from its pinnacle we climbed it, when a panorama, worth a voyage to Cuba, burst upon the vision. Looking northward, beyond the range of broken hills at our feet, a rich plain was spread out, dotted with forests, groves, and isolated *ceibas*, and

bounded in the far distance by the sea. Turning southward, there again was the ocean, with the Isla de Pinos (Isle of Pines) lying like a dim cloud upon its heaving bosom, while westward hills appeared piled on hills, in wild confusion, and the vast forests of the Western Department stretched away to the extent of vision.

About three leagues northwest from this grand observatory, was spread out the beautiful Bay of Cavañas, which affords several fine landing-places, from whence the planters ship their produce for Havana and other markets. The most important of these little ports is that of the villages of Cavañas and Amiota, delineated in the engraving. Eighteen miles farther westward, on this northern shore of Cuba, is Bahia Honda, with the village of that name. This location has been made familiar in name to the people of the United States by its connection with the ill-fated expedition of General López and his followers, in their attempt at Cuban liberation, in the summer of 1851. It is surrounded by a rich country, abounding in sugar and coffee estates, and peopled chiefly by the better class of Creoles. Still farther west, about twelve miles from Bahia Honda, is *La Murillo*, the place where López and his troops landed from the Steamer *Pampero*, on the night of the 11th of August, 1851. It was the intention of López, when he left New Orleans, to pass round to the southern side of Cuba, and land upon the coast of the Central Department, where, it was understood, disaffection was most rife. On touching at Key West,



BAHIA HONDA



PLACE WHERE LOPEZ LANDED.

Lopez was assured that a revolt had broken out in the *Vuelta de Abajo*, south of Havana, and he resolved to land on the shore of that district. By some fatal mistake, the place of their destination was missed, and they landed at *La Murillo*. There no man welcomed them, for the timid inhabitants had fled to the hills. Lopez marched immediately to the little village of *Las Pozas*.



LAS POZAS

on the borders of the wilderness, leaving Colonel Crittenden and about one hundred Americans at *La Murillo*. These were attacked on the following day by a large body of Spanish troops. Perceiving further resistance to be in vain, Crittenden and his men retreated to the coast, procured some small boats, and left Cuba for the United States. They were captured on the 15th, by the Spanish Steamer *Habanero*, taken to Havana, and on the 17th were shot at the Punta, by order of the Captain-general.

Las Pozas (the Wells or Cisterns), is a charmingly-situated village on the verge of cultivation toward the west. Beyond it are vast forests, where the hunter seldom disturbs the wild deer, and where deep solitude is broken only by the noisy voices of immense flocks of parrots and other kinds of songless birds. These forests afford secure retreats for runaway negroes, who become brutal desperadoes. The traveler seldom has courage to pass into the solitary wilderness beyond the line of charcoal-burners, upon its eastern verge. Indeed there is little to entice him thither, and after remaining a day at *Las Pozas*, I turned my face toward Havana.

It was at *Las Pozas* where Lopez was first attacked by the Spanish soldiers under General Emma. He repulsed them, but lost about fifty men. Among these were the brave Hungarian, General Pragay, who, with three or four Americans, was slain near the village, in sight of Guajaybon, the highest mountain in the western department. Thus weakened, perceiving no disposition on the part of the inhabitants to aid him, and knowing his inability to withstand another attack, he attempted to take refuge in the mountains. While breakfasting, on the morning of the 24th of August, he was surprised, and his little band was scattered to the winds. With six others, Lopez attempted to reach the coast, but was betrayed, and made a prisoner on the 29th. He was taken to Havana, and on the morning of the first of September he suffered death by the *garrote vil*, at the Punta.

I was seated in a car at *Guanajay* just a fortnight after leaving that station for the west; and at the close of one of those brilliant days at the beginning of November, for which Cuba is famous, I again entered Havana. Great excitement prevailed there, for rumor was rife that the United States Government, commending the conduct of Captain Porter of the *Crescent City*, and seconding his manly protest against the arbitrary refusal of the Captain-general to allow him to land his passengers and mails, was not only about to send a squadron to enforce a satisfactory apology, but had given unqualified permission for its citizens to invade Cuba on private account. Full credence was given to these deceptive rumors, and all was alarm, uncertainty, and confusion. Every foreigner was watched by the police with eager suspicion, and all his actions were scrutinized with keen vigilance. I did not escape. My portfolio was subjected to the severest scrutiny by two sub-officials, when my sketches of *Cabañas*, *La Murillo*, and *Las Pozas*, were regarded as

evidences of my secret connection with the *fili-dustieros*. Through the agency of my resident friend, who was of good repute "at court," I soon convinced the authorities that I was a plain, unsophisticated artist, with no ambition above a pallet, without a political sentiment in my heart, or the shadow of a jurisprudential maxim in my head—in a word, a perfect innocent. Doubtful whether I could maintain that simple character long, I hastened my departure, indulging the hope and belief that when I visit Cuba again, some other flag, more suggestive of freedom and progress than that of Old Spain, will be waving over the battlements of the *Moro*.

NAPOLÉON BONAPARTE.

BY JOHN S. C. ABBOTT.

ULM AND AUSTERLITZ.

AMERICANS have derived their views of Napoleon from the Tory historians of England. The strongest of earthly motives have urged, and still urge, these historians to misrepresent his character. Thus only can they rescue the government of England from the condemnation of mankind. For years Europe was deluged with blood. These wars were caused by the incessant attacks and vast alliances with which the Tory government of England endeavored to crush the republican Emperor. What inspired England to a strife so protracted, so terrific? Was it ambition? Was it philanthropy? She awaits her verdict before the tribunal of the world. Her historians plead her cause. They are not impartial judges. They are ardent advocates, hungering for the liberal reward which attends their successful defense.

In France the reputation of Napoleon has been exposed to influences almost equally adverse. Upon the downfall of the republican Emperor, the Bourbons re-ascended the throne. Their claims to the sovereignty of France could be defended only by representing the exile of St. Helena as an usurper and a tyrant. Again the people drove the Bourbons from the throne. The Orleans branch of the family received the sceptre. The motive to withhold justice from Napoleon continued with unabated strength. Louis Philippe, during all his reign, trembled at the name of Bonaparte. The historian who should have dared to vindicate the character of the great idol of the populace, would have been withered by the frowns which would have darkened upon him from the saloons of Versailles, St. Cloud, and the Tuileries. All the despots of Europe have been equally interested to misrepresent the career of Napoleon. He was the great advocate of the rights of the people against the arrogant assumptions of haughty nobles and feudal kings. By their combined power they crushed their foe. Now they traduce him.

So potent have these influences of misrepresentation been, that one can hardly find in the United States a man, who has passed sixty years of age, who does not think that Napoleon was almost a demon. The public mind has been so