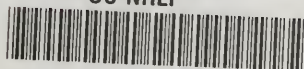


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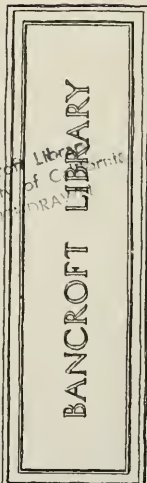
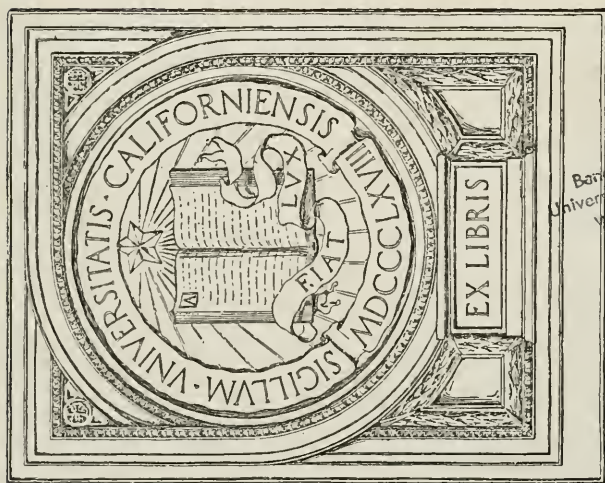


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THE PUTUMAYO

THE DEVIL'S PARADISE

W. E. HARDENBURG



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THE PUTUMAYO



CHAINED INDIAN RUBBER GATHERERS IN THE STOCKS: ON THE PUTUMAYO RIVER.

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J.E. P. 100000
Oct 10 1886
THE PUTUMAYO

THE DEVIL'S PARADISE

TRAVELS IN THE PERUVIAN AMAZON
REGION AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE
ATROCITIES COMMITTED UPON THE
INDIANS THEREIN

BY

W. E. HARDENBURG, 1886 -
Dec 1886

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By C. REGINALD ENOCK, F.R.G.S.

Author of "The Andes and the Amazon," &c.

TOGETHER WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF
SIR ROGER CASEMENT CONFIRMING THE OCCURRENCES

WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP

T. FISHER UNWIN
LONDON: ADELPHI TERRACE
LEIPSIC: INSELSTRASSE 20

19137

F 3451

.P 94 H2

First Published, December, 1912

Second Impression, January, 1913

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PREFACE

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THE extracts from Sir Roger Casement's Report, which form part of this work, are made by permission of H.M. Stationery Office. Acknowledgement is also made for assistance rendered, both to the Rev. J. H. Harris, Organising Secretary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society, and to the Editor of *Truth*. Portions of Mr. Hardenburg's accounts have been omitted, and some revisions necessarily made, but the statements of adventures and the occurrences remain as in the original and stand upon their own responsibility. The unpleasing task of editing this book—which stands as perhaps the most terrible page in the whole history of commercialism—has been undertaken in the hope that permanent betterment in the condition of the unfortunate aborigines of South America will be brought about.

THE EDITOR.

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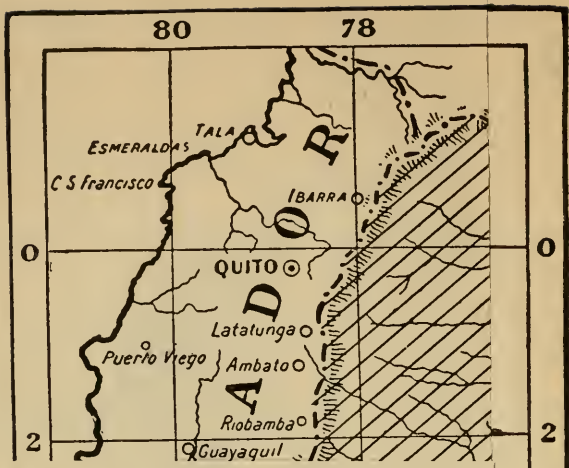
THE PUTUMAYO

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is something of a terrible irony of fate that in a land whose people for unknown centuries, and up to only four hundred years ago, lived under social laws "so beneficent as had never been known under any ancient kings of Asia, Africa, or Europe, or under any Christian monarch"—laws recorded by a reliable historian and partly capable of verification by the traveller and student to-day—should, in the twentieth century, have been the scene of the ruination and wholesale torture and murder of tribes of its defenceless and industrious inhabitants. Under the Incas of Peru, as recorded by the Inca-Spanish historian Garcilaso de la Vega * and other early writers, human blood was never shed purposely ; every inhabitant was provided for and had a place in a well-ordered social economic plan ; there was

* Garcilaso was born in 1540.



THE PUTUMAYO

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INTRODUCTION

It is something of a terrible irony of fate that in a land whose people for unknown centuries, and up to only four hundred years ago, lived under social laws "so beneficent as had never been known under any ancient kings of Asia, Africa, or Europe, or under any Christian monarch"—laws recorded by a reliable historian and partly capable of verification by the traveller and student to-day—should, in the twentieth century, have been the scene of the ruination and wholesale torture and murder of tribes of its defenceless and industrious inhabitants. Under the Incas of Peru, as recorded by the Inca-Spanish historian Garcilaso de la Vega * and other early writers, human blood was never shed purposely; every inhabitant was provided for and had a place in a well-ordered social economic plan; there was

* Garcilaso was born in 1540.

no such condition as beggary or destitution ; the people were instructed by statute to help each other co-operatively ; injustice and corruption were unknown ; and there was a belief in a Supreme Director of the Universe. Under the Peruvian republic and the regimen of absentee capitalism to-day, tribes of useful people of this same land have been defrauded, driven into slavery, ravished, tortured, and destroyed. This has been done, not in single instances at the command of some savage potentate, but in tens of thousands under a republican Government, in a Christianised country, at the behest of the agents of a great joint-stock company with headquarters in London : the “ crime ” of these unfortunates being that they did not always bring in rubber sufficiently fast—work for which they practically received no payment—to satisfy their task-masters. In order to obtain rubber so that the luxurious-tyred motor-cars of civilisation might multiply in the cities of Christendom, the dismal forests of the Amazon have echoed with the cries of despairing and tortured Indian aborigines. These are not things of the imagination, but a bare statement of actual occurrence, as set forth by the various witnesses in this volume.

The occurrences in the Amazon Valley which, under the name of the Putumayo * Rubber Atrocities of Peru, have startled the public mind and aroused widespread horror and indignation—atrocities worse than those of the Congo—cannot be regarded merely as an isolated phenomenon. Such incidents are the extreme manifestation of a condition which expresses itself in different forms all over the world—

* Pronounced *Put-oo-my-o*.

the condition of acute and selfish commercialism or industrialism whose exponents, in enriching themselves, deny a just proportion of the fruits of the earth and of their toil to the labourers who produce the wealth. The principle can be seen at work in almost any country, in almost every industry; and although its methods elsewhere are lacking in savage lust and barbarity, they still work untold suffering upon mankind. It is easy to condemn offhand the nation of Peru, under whose nominal control the foul spot of the Putumayo exists, and to whose negligence and cupidity the blame for the occurrences is largely to be laid, but the conscience of world-wide commercialism ought also to be pricked.

Leaving, however, that broader aspect of the subject, it is necessary to understand the local conditions which could have brought about such occurrences. The region of the Amazon Valley—a region nearly as large as the whole of Europe without Russia—was early divided between Spain and Portugal. Brazil to-day occupies the eastern and most extensive portion of the valley; and the various Andine republics, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Venezuela, cover the upper and western portion. The Amazon is the largest river in the world; the entire fluvial system, with perhaps an aggregate of a hundred thousand miles of navigable rivers and streams, gives access to an enormous territory of forests and plains, which neither road nor railway has yet penetrated.

It is to be recollected that the interior of South America is the least known of any of the continents at the present time. Large areas of territory are practically unexplored. The backward state of the

Amazon Valley is largely due to the fact that during three hundred years of Portuguese dominion it was closed commercially to the outside world. Slave-raiding by the Portuguese and the Brazilians went on unchecked. The colonists even fought against and destroyed the Jesuit missions which the devout and humane of their priests had established. The whole valley has existed under a dark cloud ever since the time when, in 1540, the first white man, Orellana, Pizarro's lieutenant, descended the Napo, Marañon, and Amazon from Quito to the Atlantic Ocean. In 1638 Pedro de Texiera performed his great feat of ascending the Amazon from the Atlantic to Quito, and descending it again in 1639, one of the most noteworthy explorations in history. Exaggerations of Indian savagery and dangers of climate have deterred settlers in later times. As for the Putumayo region, it was practically unknown until the last decade of the nineteenth century. The name "Amazon" was probably a result of the experiences of Orellana and his followers, who were attacked by a tribe of Indians, the Nahumedes, on the river of the same name, whose long hair and dress of chemises or shirts caused the explorers to think their attackers were women-warriors, or "amazons." There is no proof of the existence of any empire of women in South America, although there is a legend bearing on the subject.

The Putumayo River rises near Pasto, in the Andes of Colombia, and traverses a vast region which forms one of the least-known areas of the earth's surface. This river is nearly a thousand miles long, flowing through territory which is claimed both by Peru and Colombia, and enters the

main stream of the Amazon in Brazil. The river crosses the equator in its upper portion. The notorious rubber-bearing region upon the Putumayo and its affluents, the Igaraparaná and the Caraparaná, lies within a square formed by the equator on the north, the 2nd parallel of latitude on the south, and the 72nd and 74th degrees of longitude west of Greenwich. Like most of the Amazon tributaries, the Putumayo and its two affluents are navigable throughout the greater part of their courses, giving access by water up to the base of the Andes ; and the rubber traffic is carried out by means of steam-launches and canoes.

The Caraparaná and Igaraparaná rivers, both flowing from the north-west, run parallel for about four hundred miles through dense, continuous forests, discharging into the Putumayo, the first some six hundred miles and the second some four hundred miles above the confluence of that river with the Amazon. The accompanying map renders clear these conditions, and it will be seen that the region is a considerable distance from Iquitos, nearly a thousand miles by water, the small, intermittent river steamers of the rubber traders occupying two weeks in the journey ; and a part of the course lies through Brazilian waterway. A much more direct route can be made by effecting a portage from the Putumayo to the Napo River, which enters the Amazon about fifty miles below Iquitos. The Putumayo region, therefore, must be regarded as an extremely outlying part of Peru, with corresponding difficulties of access and governance.

The native people inhabiting the region are mainly the Huitotos, with other tribes of more or less similar character, but with different names.

These people, although known as *infieles* and *salvages*—that is, “un-faithed” and “savage”—cannot be described as savages in the ordinary sense of the term. They have nothing in common with the bloody savages of Africa and other parts of the world. Their weapons are not adapted for taking life so much as for hunting, and although the tribes of the Amazon Valley have always fought against each other and have reduced their numbers by inter-tribal strife, they are not generally a fortress-building people, and the noiseless blow-pipe takes the place of the blood-shedding weapons of the indigenes of other lands. The Agarunas of the Marañon, however, build war-towers for defence, as do some other tribes.* The *tunday* or *manguare*, the remarkable instrument for signalling or communicating by sound through the forest, is used by various tribes in the Amazon Valley. Most of the tribes live in great community-houses. The Indians of the Amazon Valley in general are docile and have good qualities; they are naturally free from immorality and disease; they have a strong affection for their women and children and a regard for the aged. They are well worthy of preservation, and might have been a valuable asset to the region. The particular people of the Putumayo region have decreased greatly since the advent of the rubber “industry,” as has been the case all over the Amazon Valley: on the Putumayo they have been reduced, it is calculated, from forty or fifty thousand to less than ten thousand, partly by abuse and massacre, partly by having fled to more remote districts away from their persecutors.

The local conditions which rendered possible the

* See “Peru” by the present writer, London, 1909.

Putumayo atrocities are to be found, first, in the character of the Iberian and Iberian-descended peoples of South America, and, second, in the topographical formation of the country. To take the last-mentioned first. The condition must be borne in mind that the region of the Amazon forests is in every way separate from the region of the mountains and that of the coast. The coast region of Peru, bordering upon the Pacific Ocean, is a rainless, treeless zone, upon which vegetation is only possible under irrigation, but upon which the modern Peruvian civilisation flourishes; Lima, the capital of the country, being situated only a dozen miles from the sea. To the east of this Europeanised region arise the mountain ranges of the Andes, which cut off the forest lowlands so completely from the coast that the two may be regarded as separate countries. The mountain regions embody vast, treeless tablelands, broken by more or less fertile valleys, and overlooked by snow-clad peaks and ranges, and are subject in general to a cold, inclement climate, with heavy rainfall. The uplands lie at an elevation of 12,000 ft. and upwards above sea-level, and the dividing ranges are crossed at 14,000 to 17,000 ft., with only one or two passes between Western and Eastern Peru, at a lower elevation. The line of tree-life begins at an elevation of about 10,000 to 11,000 ft., this forest region being known as the *Montaña* of Peru, merging by degrees into the great *selvas* or forests of Brazil. These topographical details serve to show how greatly Western and Eastern Peru are cut off from each other. The conditions similarly affect Colombia and Ecuador, and, to a certain

Montañas

extent, Bolivia, but the last-named country does not extend to the Pacific coast. It is in the isolation of the cis-Andine from the trans-Andine regions that Peru may claim some palliation for the offences on the Putumayo. The river port of Iquitos is from thirty to forty days' journey from Lima under existing means of travel. The easiest method of reaching the one from the other is by way of Southampton, or New York, and Panama. A system of wireless telegraphy is now in operation across the six hundred miles of coast, mountain, and forest territory separating the two cities.

The topographical conditions described had influenced the human inhabitants of Peru before the time of the Spaniards. The aboriginal race inhabiting the highlands and the coast lived then, as they do to-day, in a manner distinct from each other. The highland and coast people were those who formed the population under the Inca government, and under whose control they had reached a high degree of aboriginal civilisation; whilst the indigenes of the forests were more or less roving bands of savages, dwelling on the river banks, without other forms of government than that of the *curacas*, or petty chiefs of families or tribe. The influence of the Incas did undoubtedly extend into the forest regions in a degree, as evidenced by remaining customs and nomenclature, but the Incas did not establish order and civilisation in the forests as upon the highlands. The Incas and their predecessors built a series of fortresses which commanded the heads of the precipitous valleys leading to the forests, whose ruins

remain to-day, and are marvels of ingenuity in megalithic construction. After the conquest the Inca population of the highlands and coast became Christianised, and at the present time the whole of the vast territory of the Pacific coast and Andine uplands, extending throughout Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia for two thousand miles, is under the regimen of the Romish Church, and every village contains its *iglesia* and village priest. In very different condition are, on the other hand, the aborigines of the forests, who live neither under civil nor religious authority. But there was probably no fundamental or racial difference between the upland and forestal Indians, and they resemble each other in many respects, with differences due to climate and environment. Remains of ancient civilisations, in the form of stone ruins and appliances, are found east of the Andes, in the Amazon forest regions, and the Chaco plains, arguing the existence of prehistoric conditions of a superior character. Legends and customs among the forest tribes seem to refer in a dim, vague way to ancient conditions and happenings of other environments; and there can be little doubt that the archæology and origin of the South American people are far from being fully understood. Further exploration of this little-known region may produce much of interest, and unravel mysteries which the dense forest at present conceals.

One of the principal tributaries of the Amazon is the River Marañon, which flows from the south for a thousand miles between two parallel chains of the Andes, and breaking through a remarkable cañon, known as the Pongo de Manseriche, turns

suddenly to the east and forms the main Amazon waterway. Above the Pongo, or rapids, the river is navigable only for very small craft, but below it forms the head of steam navigation. The upper Marañon flows down through a high, difficult territory, with many fertile valleys, and upon its headlands and the adjacent slopes of the mountains are freely scattered the ruins of the Inca and pre-Inca peoples, who inhabited the region in pre-Hispanic times and even contemporaneously with the Spaniards.* From this district, and from the valleys to the west of Cuzco and Titicaca, it was that the Inca influence mainly entered the forest regions of the Peruvian Montaña.

It is interesting to note that the "Mongolian" resemblance to the Huitotos Indians of the Putumayo is again observed in Sir Roger Casement's Report.† The resemblance between the aboriginals of the Andine and Amazon regions of South America and Asiatic peoples is striking, as indeed it is with the natives in some parts of Mexico. The present writer has dealt fully with the matter, as bearing upon the possible peopling of America by Tartars in remote times, in a book recently published.‡ The subject is one of great interest. One school of thought denies any imported origin for early American culture, and considers the Aztec and Inca civilisations to have been autochthonous, a natural

* The present writer travelled extensively in this region, which he described in an address to the Royal Geographical Society, and in his book, "The Andes and the Amazon." London, 1907 : T. Fisher Unwin (4th edition).

† Foreign Office Reports, Miscellaneous, No. 8, 1912.

‡ "The Secret of the Pacific." London : T. Fisher Unwin, 1912.

reaction of man to his environment.; whilst the other points to the great probability, as adduced in archæological and other matters, of some pre-historic Asiatic influence.

The abuses connected with rubber-gathering in the Amazon Valley are not a new or sudden condition. The ill-treatment of the Indians in the rubber-bearing regions of Peru were brought to public notice in England and the United States in the book before mentioned, published in 1907, showing that the aborigines were being destroyed, sold into slavery, and murdered by the white rubber-gatherers or merchants several years before the matter culminated in the publication of the Putumayo atrocities. The present writer also wrote to various London periodicals in an endeavour to arouse interest in the subject, but none of the journals specially took the matter up.

The Peruvian Government and the Press of the Republic have long been aware that the Indians of the forest regions were brutally exploited by the rubber merchants and gatherers. Reports and articles have been made and published both by officials and travellers. That Indians were sold at Iquitos and elsewhere as slaves and that there was a constant traffic in Indian women has been known to the authorities ever since rubber-gathering began. In 1906, in Lima, the Director of Public Works, one of the most important of the Government departments, handed the present writer an official publication* dealing with Eastern Peru,

* Documentos oficiales del Departamento de Loreto, Lima, 1905, of which extracts were published in "The Andes and the Amazon."

which contained among other matters an account by a Government official of that region of the barbarities committed upon the Indians, a translation of a portion of which is given here. The present writer had undertaken to make a preliminary survey or reconnaissance on behalf of the Government of a route for a railway from the Pacific coast to the Marañon, which would give access to the interior and be of considerable strategic importance.

The following translation of part of a Report in the official publication, dated February, 1905, by a Peruvian engineer in the service of the Government* shows that the abuse of the Indians was a matter of current knowledge :—

“Marked changes have been produced among the savage tribes of the Oriental regions of Peru by the industry of collecting the ‘black gold,’ as the rubber is termed. Some of them have accepted the ‘civilisation’ offered by the rubber-merchants, others have been annihilated by them. On the other hand, alcohol, rifle bullets, and smallpox have worked havoc among them in a few years. I take this opportunity of protesting before the civilised world against the abuses and unnecessary destruction of these primitive beings, whom the rapacity of so-called civilised man has placed as mere mercantile products in the Amazon markets; for it is a fact known to every one that the native slaves are quoted there like any other merchandise. Throughout the forest region under the control of the Governments of Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, and

* Jorge von Hassel.

Brazil the natives are exposed to attack without protection of the law by the whites, who hunt and persecute them like animals of the jungle, recognising as their only value the sum represented by their sale. If protection is not afforded these unhappy beings, the just Judge of the doings of all will condemn the generation which annihilates without cause the indigenous races, the real owners of the soil."

The principal newspaper of Lima, *El Comercio*, a journal of high standing, has repeatedly drawn attention to the ill-treatment and exploitation of the Indians, not only in the regions of the Putumayo and Iquitos but much farther to the south—as, for example, in the district round Port Maldonado. This river port is nearly two thousand miles from the Putumayo region, southward across Peru, reached by launch and canoe upon a different river system, that of the Beni River. The upper courses of this river are known as the Madre de Dios, upon which Port Maldonado is situated, and whose lower course is the enormous Madera River, which runs into the Amazon in Brazil in latitude 59°, more than one thousand miles below Iquitos. At Port Maldonado is the confluence of the Tambopata River with the Madre de Dios, and farther upstream is the Inambari River. The whole of this region is rich in rubber forests, and several companies are engaged in rubber-gathering, including British, American, Bolivian, and Peruvian. The following translation from *El Comercio* of Lima in an edition of February, 1906, shows that more or less similar methods were employed at points so far apart as Maldonado and the Putumayo:—

“In the basin of the Madre de Dios and its affluents, where it is easy to navigate with the help of the ‘terrible’ Chunchos,* who in reality are good and hospitable, exist immense quantities of rubber, rich and abundant rubber forests of easy exploitation. It would appear that the new Commissioner is resolved to put a stop to the barbarous custom of the *correrrias* † organised by the authorities themselves or by the rubber-merchants, who carry on the repugnant business of selling the poor Chunchos. As labour and women are both scarce, and as there is a strong demand for the one and the other, bands of armed men are constantly organised for sudden descents upon groups or communities of the savages, no matter whether they are friendly or hostile, making them prisoners in the midst of extermination and blood. Urged on by the profit resulting from the sale of boys, robust youths, and young women (*frescas mujeres*), they tear children from mothers and wives from husbands without pity, and pass them from hand to hand as slaves. It were well to take the savages from their forests to use their labour and to cultivate their intelligence, but not for business purposes to make them victims of the knife and the lash.”

Thus the Press of the country itself shows that these things are done, not only with the connivance of the authorities but are “organised by the authorities themselves.” The expected improvements mentioned above took place very slowly, and in some cases not at all. To replace one Commissioner by another is insufficient. All are equally

* Name given to the Indians.

† Slave raids.



THE PERUVIAN AMAZON.

FREE INDIANS OF THE UCAVALI RIVER.

(Observe their robust appearance when not enslaved.)

venal or influenced, and King Log does but give place to King Stork. Barbarities committed by the rubber-merchants upon the Indians of the Ucayali and Marañon were brought to the knowledge of the Peruvian Government in 1903 and 1906 by Roman Catholic missionaries established there and published by the Minister of Justice.*

After extensive journeys in the interior of Peru, upon returning to the capital, the present writer wrote various articles, which were published in the Press of Lima and Arequipa, drawing attention to the miserable condition of life of the labouring Indian class. Among these evils is abuse by petty authorities and estate-owners, who employ the Indians and fail to pay them their agreed wages or pay them in goods of inadequately low value; the extortions of the village priests under the cloak of religious customs; and, most serious of all, the ravages resulting upon the consumption of *aguardiente*, or fiery sugar-cane rum, which is responsible for the ruination and decrease of the working population. This cane spirit is manufactured largely by the sugar-estate owners, and is often a more profitable product than the sugar, whose output is sacrificed thereto; but as the large estate-owners are often influential personages or politicians and members of the Legislature, the prohibition of the profitable sale of alcohol among the Indians is not likely to be brought about. The leading newspaper of Lima, *El Comercio*, in a leading article, of which the following is a partial translation, said:—

“It is not rare, unfortunately, in the Republic

* See Consul Casement's Reports.

that the authorities of all kinds raise up abuses as a supreme law against the villages of the interior. For the Indians of the mountains and the uplands there often exists neither the Constitution nor positive rights. It would be useless to seek in the indigenous race beings really free and masters of their acts and persons. It looks as though independence had only been saved for the dwellers of the coast. From the moment that the traveller's gaze ceases to observe the ocean and is directed over the interminable chain of the Andes it ceases also to observe free men, the citizens of an independent republic. To this condition, which is not abnormal because it has always existed, the ignorance of the Indian contributes, but also the abuses of the authorities, who, with rare exceptions, make of them objects of odious spoliation. Such depredations are aggravated when its victims are unfortunate and unhappy beings, towards whom there is every obligation to protect, and not to exploit."

The most remarkable fact about the maltreatment of the South American Indians is that—admitted and specially alluded to in the Peruvian Press, as the foregoing extracts show—abuses are carried out often by the petty authorities themselves. It is painful for a foreigner, one, moreover, who has enjoyed hospitality both from the authorities and from the village priests in the interior of Peru, to record these matters, but it is manifestly a duty. Moreover, it is a service to the country itself to draw attention to the evil. The extinction of the indigenous labour of the Andine highlands and of the rubber forests will render

impossible for a long period the internal development of the country. No foreign or imported race can perform the work of the Peruvian miner or rubber-gatherer. Due to the peculiar conditions of climate—the great altitude in the one case and the humidity in the other—no European or Asiatic people could take the place of these people, whose work can only be accomplished by those who have paid Nature the homage of being born upon the soil and inured to its conditions throughout many generations.* It might have been supposed that from economic reasons alone the exploiters of native labour would have endeavoured to foster and preserve it, even if it were simply on the principle of feeding and stabling a horse in order to use its powers to the utmost. But this is not the case. The economic principle of conserving the efficiency of human labour by its employer, remarkable as it may seem, has never been recognised even in the most enlightened communities, or only very recently and in a very few instances. It is not necessary to go to the tropics to seek instances; they are evident no farther afield than among the ill-paid mining, dock, manufacturing, and other labour in Great Britain and the United States. The very abundance of labour has been its own undoing; the supply has seemed exhaustless

* These abuses of the Upland Indians are constantly being carried out. Whilst this book was in press accounts were received of systematic ill-treatment, murder, and slavery of the natives in the Montaña of Cuzco and elsewhere, published in *El Comercio* of Lima under date of June and July, 1912. These districts are by no means remote from centres of government.

and the tendency has been to squander it. The question is one of degree rather than of principle in any community or industry and at any time in history. But in the persecuted districts of Latin America native labour is practically being hounded off the face of the earth.

The Putumayo atrocities were first brought to public notice by an American engineer and his companion, Messrs. Hardenburg and Perkins, and the interesting narrative by the former of their travels upon the Putumayo River forms a large part of the subject of this book. Mr. Hardenburg and his companion suffered great hardships and imprisonment at the hands of the Peruvian agents of the rubber company on the Putumayo, and barely escaped with their lives. For these outrages some time afterwards they were awarded the sum of £500 damages by the Peruvian Government, due to the action of the United States. Mr. Hardenburg came to London from Iquitos in financial straits, but only with considerable difficulty was able to draw public attention to the occurrences on the Putumayo. Messrs. Hardenburg and Perkins's account and indictment of the methods employed by the company's agents on the Putumayo, under the name of "The Devil's Paradise," was a terrible one. It was averred that the peaceful Indians were put to work at rubber-gathering without payment, without food, in nakedness ; that their women were stolen, ravished, and murdered ; that the Indians were flogged until their bones were laid bare when they failed to bring in a sufficient quota of rubber or attempted to escape, were left to die with their wounds festering with maggots, and their bodies

were used as food for the agents' dogs ; that flogging of men, women, and children was the least of the tortures employed ; that the Indians were mutilated in the stocks, cut to pieces with machetes, crucified head downwards, their limbs lopped off, target-shooting for diversion was practised upon them, and that they were soured in petroleum and burned alive, both men and women. The details of these matters were almost too repugnant for production in print, and only their outline was published.

The first result of the publication of the Putumayo atrocities in the London Press was denial. The Peruvian Amazon Company denied the truth of the matter: the Peruvian Government denied the existence of such conditions; whilst the Peruvian Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires in London denied them even more emphatically. In the minds of those acquainted with Latin-American methods denials would not carry much weight. To deny is the first resource of the Latin-American character and policy. It is an "Oriental" trait they possess, the curious obsession that efficient and sustained denial is the equal of truth, no matter what the real conditions. The Peruvian Consul in London wrote vehement letters of denial and re-denial to the London Press, among them the following, published by *Truth* in September, 1909 :—

"This Legation categorically denies that the acts you describe, and which are severely punished by our laws, could have taken place without the knowledge of my Government on the Putumayo River, where Peru has authorities appointed direct by

the supreme Government, and where a strong military garrison is likewise maintained.” *

Unfortunately, the statements of the representatives of certain of the South American republics in London cannot always be regarded as disinterested. Their Governments in some cases pay them no salary, and they are concerned in promoting and earning commissions from the flotation of rubber and mining companies in the particular regions they represent. Such a condition is often discreditable to the Latin-American republics. Officials who are shareholders in and recipients of commission from rubber company promoters with whom they are hand-in-glove are not likely to take an impartial view of the unfortunate native workers.

The Secretary of the Peruvian Amazon Company wrote in September, 1909, to the Anti-Slavery Society and *Truth* as follows :—

“ The Directors have no reason to believe that the atrocities referred to have, in fact, taken place, and indeed have grounds for considering that they have been purposely mis-stated for indirect objects. Whatever the facts, however, may be, the Board of the company are under no responsibility for them, as they were not in office at the time of the alleged occurrences. It was not until your article appeared that the Board were aware of what is now suggested.”

The publication of the Putumayo occurrences has revealed once more that tinge of hypocrisy in the British character of which other nations have

* The ignorance or hypocrisy of the Peruvian Legation in this connection was fully brought forward in *Truth*.

accused us. Or, rather than hypocrisy, it should perhaps be termed an intensive shopkeeping principle. Due to this spirit the exposure was greatly delayed. No one would publish the Hardenburg account, because as a book it might not have been a paying venture. Only when the way had been prepared for a successful book, by the public scandal which resulted after attention had been drawn to the matter, was it resolved to publish it. The London Press at first was equally negligent or timorous, with the exception of *Truth*. It showed little disposition to take the matter up, until that paper, whose business it is to expose scandals and abuses, exposed the horrors to public gaze. Then, when the matter had reached the stage of useful "copy," it appeared in all the papers—in some cases with startling headlines. The daily papers feared that they would incur risk of libel proceedings in attacking what was regarded as a powerful London Company, with a capital of a million pounds and an influential Board of Directors, and at first hesitated to take the matter up. Had it not been for the work of the philanthropic society already mentioned, the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society,* in London, and the courage of the Editor of *Truth*, to both of whom Hardenburg went, followed by the prolonged publications in *Truth*, the sinister occurrences of the Putumayo might have remained unrevealed, and the unspeakable outrages on the

* The general public are insufficiently aware of the extensive and valuable work carried on by this society (Denison House, London), in the protection of native races against slavery all over the world, nor of the public support it merits.

Huitotos Indians have gone on unhindered. The Anti-Slavery Society showed that "nothing reported from the Congo has equalled in horror some of the acts alleged against the rubber syndicate," and the reader of the present work will not dispute the truth of the statement. The Society brought the matter with such insistence before the Foreign Office that questions were asked in the House of Commons and inquiries set on foot by Sir Edward Grey, to whose everlasting credit it is that vigorous action was at length taken.

The Peruvian Amazon Company protested that the allegations were made by blackmailers. This was denied by Hardenburg, and by *Truth* on Hardenburg's account. There were, however, accusations of blackmail against others.*

The first reply to the letters of the Anti-Slavery Society, from the Foreign Office, was in December, 1909, when it was stated that the Foreign Office had the subject under consideration. In July,

* The most serious charge was one brought by the Peruvian director of the Company, Julio Cesar Arana, against an English army officer who had travelled on the Putumayo and witnessed the atrocities committed upon the Indians. According to this charge, which was supported by a document, recorded in a minute upon the Company's books and issued in a printed circular to the shareholders in December, 1909, this officer called upon Arana in London, entertained him at the United Service Club and Café Royal, and offered to suppress a Report he had made for the British Foreign Office upon the subject, which was, he stated, of a nature such as would ruin the Company, if Arana and the other directors would pay him £1,000 to cover his expenses on the Putumayo. The directors refused and the officer sent in the Report. The travels of this officer are mentioned in Mr. Casement's Report. The matter is mentioned here in the interests of common fairness.

1910, a British Consul, Mr. Roger Casement, well known for his investigations into the Congo atrocities, was instructed to proceed to the Putumayo, his *locus standi* being secured on the grounds that a number of British subjects, coloured men of Barbadoes, had been employed by Arana and the Peruvian agents of the company as slave-drivers. The securing of Mr. Casement for the work was due to the endeavour of the Anti-Slavery Society. The directors of the company, aroused at length by public opinion, or the representations of the Foreign Office, sent out a commission of inquiry at the same time.* Both the consul and the company's Commission faithfully carried out their task, and Mr. Casement handed in his report to Sir Edward Grey in January, 1911. The conclusions reached were terrible and damning. The worst accounts were confirmed in the words of Consul Casement: "The condition of things fully warrants the worst charges brought against the agents of the Peruvian Amazon Company and its methods on the Putumayo." †

The great delay in publishing this report, which was only laid before Parliament in July, 1912, a year after being made, caused some protest by the

* The present writer had been asked by the Company's directors in October, 1909, to head this commission, and was prepared to go, but no action was taken: and again in May, 1910, but being engaged on the publication of his book, "An Imperial Commonwealth," at that time, regretted he was unable to do so.

† In this connection it is to be recollected that the English directors of the company disclaimed previous knowledge of the subject, as they were deceived by their Peruvian colleagues.

Press. The Foreign Office had withheld it out of a desire to afford the Peruvian Government an opportunity of taking action to end the abuses, but, as this was not done, the report was made public as a means of arousing public opinion. The press of the whole civilised world then took the matter up.

It may well be asked how it was possible that such occurrences could take place in a country with a seat of government such as Lima, where dwell a highly civilised and sensitive people, whose public institutions, streets, shops, and churches are not inferior to those of many European cities. The reply is, first, in the remoteness of the region of the Putumayo, as explained, and secondly in political and international matters. Peru is constantly torn by political strife at home, and between the doings of rival factions, the outlying regions of the country are overlooked. But Peru was largely influenced by its own insecure possession of the Putumayo region; and it had greatly welcomed the establishing of the Peruvian Amazon Company, a powerful organisation, in the debatable territory. Under such circumstances few questions were likely to be asked about such matters as treatment of the natives. The existence of the company was a species of safeguard for Peruvian possession of the region. Furthermore, a central Government such as that at Lima might be well-intentioned, but if distances are vast and without means of communication, and distant officials hopelessly corrupt, the situation was extremely difficult for the Government. Another circumstance affecting the action of the Peruvian Government is

that, in the republican form of government, the judicial authorities are independent of the Executive. The educated people of the Peruvian capital and coast region must, in general, be exonerated from knowledge of the occurrences of the Putumayo.

The difficulties of Peru in the government and development of their portion of the Amazon Valley, known as the Oriente, or Montaña, must not be lightly passed over. The physical difficulties against what has been termed the Conquest of the Montaña are such as it is impossible for the European to picture. Nature resists at every step. Hunger, thirst, fever, fatigue, and death await the explorer at times, in these profound, unconquerable forests. Peru has sent forth many expeditions thereto ; brave Peruvians have given their lives in the conquest. The authorities at different points have frequently organised bands of explorers, and the Lima Geographical Society has done much valuable work in sending out persons to explore and map these difficult regions. Yet the possession of the Montaña is a heritage of incalculable value to Peru. It is a region any nation might covet. The Peruvians are alive to its value and possibilities, but they are poor. Days, weeks, months of arduous travel on mule-back, on foot, cutting *trochas*, or paths, through the impenetrable underbrush, by raft and by canoe, suffering all the hardships of the tropics, of torrential rain, burning sun, scarcity of food—all these are circumstances of venturing off the few trails into the vast and almost untravelled trans-Andine regions of Peru, divided by the lofty plateaux and snowy

summits of the Andes from the temperate lowlands where the Europeanised civilisation of the Pacific flourishes.

It is not to be supposed that the Indians are all pacific or docile in the Peruvian Montaña. Whole villages which were established in earlier times by the Spaniards and afterwards enlarged by the Peruvians, with buildings, plantations, and industries, have been wiped out by attacks of the Indians, probably in reprisals. In some districts the danger from savages prevents settlement, and the blow-pipe and the spear greet the traveller who ventures there incautiously. Tales of savagery have been told in which the white man has been the sufferer; and there has always existed an animus against the Indian, although less acute than that which the white settler in North America displayed against the "redskin" in earlier times, and without the same cause.

In the Peruvian Montaña, in its upper regions, Nature has been lavish of her products and opportunities. The rancher who should take up his abode there, with a small amount of capital, can rapidly acquire estates and wealth. Abundant harvests of almost every known product can be raised in a minimum of time. It is sufficient to cut down and burn the brush and scratch the soil and sow with any seed, to recover returns of a hundred for one. Sugar-cane, vines, maize, cocoa, coffee, and a host of products can be raised. The sugar-cane, once planted, yields perpetually, some existing plantations being more than a hundred years old. The cane frequently measures thirty feet in height, and is cut seven to nine months



AN AFFLUENT OF THE PERUVIAN AMAZON.

after sprouting. The whole Amazon Valley, when it shall have been opened up, will prove to be one of the most valuable parts of the earth's surface.

Apart from topographical considerations, the sinister occurrences on the Putumayo are, to some extent, the result of a sinister human element—the Spanish and Portuguese character. The remarkable trait of callousness to human suffering which the Iberian people of Portugal and Spain—themselves a mixture of Moor, Goth, Semite, Vandal, and other peoples—introduced into the Latin American race is here shown in its intensity, and is augmented by a further Spanish quality. The Spaniard often regards the Indians as *animals*. Other European people may have abused the Indians of America, but none have that peculiar Spanish attitude towards them of frankly considering them as non-human. To-day the Indians are commonly referred to among Spaniards and Mestizos as *animales*. The present writer, in his travels in Peru and Mexico, has constantly been met with the half-impatient exclamation, on having protested against maltreatment of the Indian, of “*Son animales, Señor; no son gentes.*” (“They are animals, Señor; they are not folk”). The torture or mutilation of the Indian is therefore regarded much as it would be in the case of an ox or a horse. This attitude of mind was well shown in the barbarous system of forced labour in the mines in the times of the viceroys of Peru and Mexico, where the Indians were driven into the mines by armed guards and branded on the face with hot irons. When their overtaxed strength

gave way under the heavy labour, which rapidly occurred, their carcasses were pitched aside and they were replaced by other slaves. These operations of the time of the Spaniards have their counterpart in the Amazon Valley to-day. There is yet a further trait of the Latin American which to the Anglo-Saxon mind is almost inexplicable. This is the pleasure in the torture of the Indian as a *diversion*, not merely as a vengeance or "punishment." As has been shown on the Putumayo, and as happened on other occasions elsewhere, the Indians have been abused, tortured, and killed *por motivos frivolos*—that is to say, for merely frivolous reasons, or for diversion. Thus Indians are shot at in sport to make them run or as exercise in *tiro al blanco* or target practice, and burnt by pouring petroleum over them and setting it on fire in order to watch their agonies. This love of inflicting agony for sport is a curious psychic attribute of the Spanish race. The present writer, when in remote regions in Peru and Mexico, has had occasion to intervene, sometimes at personal risk, in the ill-treatment of Indians and *peones*, who were being tortured or punished to extort confession for small misdemeanours, or even for purely frivolous reasons. The Indians of Latin America are in reality grown-up children, with the qualities of such, but the Spaniards and Portuguese have recognised in these traits nothing more than what they term "animal" qualities.

The indictment of Peruvian officials in the Hardenburg narrative is extremely severe, and they are contrasted unfavourably with the Colom-

bians. In reality there is little to choose between the methods of the representatives of any of the South American republics as regards the administration of justice in remote regions. Power is always abused in such places by the Latin American people, be they Peruvians, Colombians, Bolivians, Brazilians, Argentinos, or others. Tyranny is but a question of opportunity, in the present stage of their development. Justice is bought and sold, as far as its secondary administrators are concerned. The otherwise good qualities and fine latent force of the Latin American character are overshadowed by its more primitive instincts, which time and the growth of real democracy will eliminate.*

Furthermore, there are other rubber-bearing regions in the Amazon Valley where hidden abuses are committed, in the territory of other South American republics; and Peru does not stand alone, and atrocities are not confined to the Putumayo.

It was shown that many of the murders and floggings at the rubber stations were committed by the Barbadian negroes at the order of the Peruvian chiefs of sections. These negroes were forced at their own peril to these acts. But probably the savage depth of the negro is easily stirred, as all know who have had dealings there-

* The present writer has, in his books, endeavoured to show forth the possibilities of Peru, and the good points of its people, towards whom as a nation he retains feelings of friendship. But no service is performed by attempting to conceal the serious defects of character displayed in Peruvian individuals and governance.

with. There can be little doubt that the Peruvian rubber-agents knew the negro character and secured them for that reason. On the other hand, it is shown that some of these Barbadian negroes rebelled against going to the Putumayo—protested to the British Consul at Manaos, but were ordered on board by that official under police supervision.* When they reached the rubber stations on the remote Putumayo it was difficult to rebel against the orders of the Peruvian agents or chiefs of sections. In some cases, when they did so, they themselves received ill-treatment and were subjected to torture, for which they do not appear to have received any compensation as British subjects. The lack of advice and investigation into the conditions of their contract and service which appears to have befallen them at the hands of the British Consul at Manaos is a matter for reflection. The investigation carried out by the Consular Commission showed that some of these Barbadian negroes committed terrible crimes at the instigation of their superiors. The first contingent of these men, imported by Arana Brothers, reached the Putumayo at the end of 1904. These Barbadoes men generally term themselves "Englishmen" † rather than "British subjects." They are good workers generally, and to their labour it is that the work of the Panama Canal owes its speedy execution.

* See Consul Casement's Report.

† The present writer has, in South America, been hailed as a "fellow-countryman," by chance Barbadoes men, with that singular cordiality which is one of their characteristics. "How do you do, sir! I'm an Englishman too," they will say, with outstretched hand.

It is noteworthy that one of the worst criminal chiefs of sections was a Peruvian or Bolivian who had been educated in England, frequently referred to.

After the exposure of the scandals the Peruvian Government sent a commission of its own to the Putumayo, which confirmed all that had been published. The principal official of this commission was Judge Paredes, the proprietor of *El Oriente*, an Iquitos newspaper; and he made a full report "embodying an enormous volume of testimony, of 3,000 pages involving wellnigh incredible charges of cruelty and massacre" and "issued 237 warrants" against the criminals, as stated in Sir Roger Casement's Report. But between issuing warrants and actually making arrests and convictions, in South America, there is a wide gulf. Furthermore, Judge Paredes endeavoured, in a recent statement, to show * that the "English Rubber Company" was solely responsible for the atrocities, and that the English Consul at Iquitos has been aiding the guilty parties in keeping from the Peruvian Government an exact knowledge of what was taking place, is the contention of Peru. Mr. David Cazes, English Consul in Iquitos since 1903, would have been in a good position to find out about the management of the rubber plantation. All the rubber gathered in the Putumayo is shipped from Iquitos. And yet he always swore that he knew nothing. No one can enter the territory of the rubber company without the permission of the

* *American Review of Reviews*, September, 1912.

Company's representative in Iquitos. The twenty-one constables whom the Peruvian Government kept in the Putumayo in those days had all been bribed by the English traders and shut their eyes to what was happening in the jungle."

In this way the Peruvian Commissioner seeks to excuse his country, laying stress on the term "English company and traders," when he knows that the only representatives of the English company were its Peruvian directors and managers. The judge adds: "You must not imagine that the Indians are any less protected than the white man in Peru. Barring, of course, the times of the early Spanish conquerors, the native Indians have been treated very humanely in Peru." This latter statement, read in conjunction with the translations from official documents and *El Comercio* of Lima, previously given, about Peruvian treatment of the Indians, will enable this statement of the judge to be judged in its turn.

Señor Paredes, when asked by his American interviewer "to what he attributed the recent exposure of wrongs committed several years ago," replied, "It may be that certain Englishmen are a little jealous of the cordial relations existing between Peru and the United States." There is revealed here the somewhat singular situation of Peru's international relations, with its atmosphere of jealousies. Peru strives to look towards what it considers the dominant power in that hemisphere, and years past has been engaged in what might be termed a one-sided political flirtation with the United States. Peru has hoped to enlist the sympathy of the great northern republic, which

might strengthen her hands against her old enemy Chile, between whom and the United States there exists a veiled antagonism. The rankling question of Tacna and Arica has been at the base of the Peruvian attitude. The friendship of the United States would be more valuable, in Peruvian eyes, than that of Great Britain. Furthermore, questions between Peru and the Peruvian Corporation, the powerful company which controls all Peru's railways and which, though international as regards its shareholders and its capitalisation of £22,000,000 sterling, is operated and controlled from London, have often been acute. Each claims that the other has failed to fulfil its contracts, and whilst there have been faults on both sides, the Peruvian Governments of past years were those who first created the difficult situation. The Corporation has been accused of a sustained, unfriendly attitude towards Peru and of an endeavour to block outside foreign enterprise in the country. It is, however, in Paris that feeling among financiers against Peru has been most acute, and Peru has been in the past practically shut out from the French financial market owing to the unsettled claims of French creditors. In general terms the United States is considered to be the more desirable friend, not Europe, and thus it is that North American friendship is cultivated. There is, however, no unfriendliness between Peru and Great Britain, and the best Peruvian statesmen have done their best to cultivate good relations. But, like all American people, the Peruvians are sensitive, and they deeply resent outside criticism.

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The work of Messrs. Hardenburg and Perkins, to whom the exposure of the Putumayo atrocities is primarily due, has scarcely received sufficient acknowledgment. The risks they ran in obtaining evidence were considerable, and such as can only be understood by a traveller accustomed to Latin American ways. Human life is held cheap in such communities. Murder and treachery to secure personal or political ends are only repressed in the Latin American republics by the presence of collective opinion. Where that is absent or perturbed there is no restraining influence, such as the personal sense of fair play and hatred of treachery which the British character affords. It is not only a matter of education, but of soil, climate, race, and character. Those who arouse the antagonism of any person in power, where the law is weak, may expect anything, from charges of blackmail to the knife or bullet of the assassin. The terrible political murders constantly taking place in the Latin American republics indicate the ruthless spirit prevalent among certain classes in those communities. The trouble taken by Hardenburg to collect his evidence, and the repugnance displayed towards the authors of the crime, and the appeal to English justice are worthy of recognition.*

* The two American travellers were left without resources in Iquitos, and came to London under considerable difficulties. Hardenburg was accused by the company of attempted blackmail, in the laying of his evidence before the editor of *Truth* and the Anti-Slavery Society. By a fortunate coincidence there arrived at that moment a letter, announcing that the Peruvian Government, due to representation made by the United States, had agreed to pay over to the two travellers an

The British public might feel constrained to ask how it was possible that the British Consul at Iquitos—whence all the rubber is shipped—who has been stationed at that town since 1903, had never heard of nor investigated the abuses committed against the Indians ; that it remained for a chance traveller to bring them to general notice. Furthermore, the British Vice-Consul at Manaos appears to have had no knowledge of the subject. When the Peruvian Amazon Company imported foremen from Barba-dos—British subjects—and these men learned of the terrible nature of the duties they were to perform, which was that of slave-driving and flagellating the Indians, and complained to the Consul, asking for an annulment of their contracts, they were unable to obtain release by the official. The rubber from the Amazon Valley is all exported in English vessels, moreover. Notwithstanding the extensive British interests in Peru, no inkling of the treatment and fate of the unfortunate Indians had reached the outside world before.

It is to be noted that the American Consul at Iquitos appears not to have been able to afford any assistance to Mr. Hardenburg and his companion, and that action was taken by the American Government consequent upon the ill-treatment of its citizens, only after a considerable lapse of time. The ill-treatment of the two travellers afforded an opportunity for intervention by the United States Government, even if it had not been

indemnity of £500. The Peruvian Legation at the same time was publishing letters in the London Press actually denying that such occurrences had taken place.

aroused to action on grounds of humanity alone. It was only in July, 1911, a year after Consul Casement had been dispatched by the British Government to Peru, and after six months of telegraphic dispatches between the British Foreign Office and the British Minister in Lima—dispatches communicated to the Peruvian Government—that the United States Government, having been urged thereto by the British representative, consented to make “informal representations” at Lima. Again urged by the British Government to support their representations, as no progress was being made in bringing the criminals to justice, the United States Minister, six months afterwards, was instructed to support the British representative. Thus, had action not been taken by Great Britain none would have been forthcoming by the United States, a condition which, for a nation that has assumed and been granted the position of policeman in South America, must be regretted. The Monroe Doctrine carries with it a greater responsibility than has been exercised so far by the United States in Latin American affairs, and this is becoming plainer to the great body of well-meaning American people. The United States at the present time are actively engaged in increasing their commercial standing with their southern neighbours, but it is the case that these doubt the moral superiority of their neighbour, and naturally resent his right to interfere in their political and international affairs.

Under the most favourable conditions the collection of rubber is an arduous and generally unhealthy work. Years ago an estimate was made that every ton of rubber from the Amazon Valley,

cost two human lives, and although at that time the estimate seemed to be an exaggerated one, the methods of the Putumayo must have quadrupled it. If the native rubber-gatherer were treated as an ordinary labourer and paid a due wage, it is safe to say that it would not pay to gather wild rubber at all, or only by increasing its price in the world's market very considerably. As a cheap commodity it represents a definite ratio of human lives lost. In Sir Roger Casement's Report it is shown that for the twelve years 1900 to 1911 the Putumayo output of 4,000 tons of rubber cost 30,000 lives. Various rubber companies in Peru and Bolivia have been obliged already to suspend operations due to scarcity of labour. The remedy lies in planting, in conjunction with the wild rubber forests. The amount of rubber collected by the slave labour in the Putumayo district for the benefit of the company and its predecessors, for six years ending in December, 1910, was 2,947,800 kilogrammes, of the value on the London market of nearly £1,000,000. The output from Iquitos, however, has not decreased, which has been taken as a proof that native labour is still being hard-driven. The crop-year 1911-12 shows a considerable increase over that for 1910-11.*

Perhaps one of the most remarkable circumstances affecting the rubber company is the ease with which it was possible to float, in London, a property of which, to a large extent, possession was imaginary and without proper title. It is but another instance of the astute methods of company promoters and the gullibility of the British share-

* See *Board of Trade Journal*, September, 1912.

holder. It will be recollected that in 1909 shares in rubber companies to the amount of £150,000,000 sterling were taken up, a great part of which have proved useless or fraudulent. Laws seem inadequate against the combination of knave, fool, and victim which is so marked a feature of modern company-promoting finance.

The occurrences on the Putumayo accentuate a moral which is bound to be presented to the conscience of the investing British public. In South America, as in Latin America generally, and in many other parts of the world where aboriginal labour is cheap, great sums of British capital are invested, and a steady stream of gold turns its course therefrom towards the British Isles. But these numerous and complacent shareholders in their comfortable surroundings know nothing, and have not made it their business to care anything, about the conditions of life of the humble workers who produce the dividends. Do they know that their gains are often secured by the labour of ill-paid, half-starved, and often grossly abused brown and black folk? How long does the British shareholder of foreign enterprises expect to live upon the toil of distant "niggers," who themselves reap little or nothing from the soil upon which they were born? There are approximately £600,000,000 sterling of British money invested in bonds, stock, and shares in South American enterprises, quoted on the London Stock Exchange, which return in the aggregate a steady average dividend of nearly 5 per cent. per annum. Some of these enterprises pay 12, 20, and 25 per cent. interest. Much of this is the result of poor

native labour. In various instances what amounts to spoliation is practised upon the cheap labour by British-owned companies. Similar conditions hold good with American concerns—mining and rubber-gathering in Mexico and Central and South America. The Americans are often extremely oppressive to the Indian labourer. In the American-owned copper-mines of Peru serious outbreaks due to this cause have occurred of recent years. The white American foreman rapidly gets used to oppressing the Indian. The miserable conditions of native labour in Latin America ought to be brought home to the directors and shareholders of British and other foreign companies. There are hundreds of rubber, mining, oil, plantation, railway, and other companies with scores of noblemen—lords, dukes, baronets—as well as doctors of science, bankers, and business-men, and even ministers of religion, distributed among their boards of directors. What knowledge have these gentlemen of the conditions of the poor native labourers under their control? There is a grave responsibility, which has been very easily carried, about this system of absentee capitalism.

British investment in and trade with the Latin American countries is an important part of British commercial prosperity. But this trade is not increasing in nearly the same ratio as that of other countries, notably the United States and Germany. In some cases it is falling off. This is due partly to a lack of organisation, and is constantly pointed out in consular and trade reports.*

* The present writer has proposed at various times, in letters to the Press and to the Chambers of Commerce, the establishment

The occurrences on the Putumayo have at least tended to arouse the religious element, if not the commercial conscience, of the British people. A severe indictment of the directors of the Peruvian Amazon Company was made from the pulpit of Westminster Abbey, in August, 1912, in a sermon by Canon Henson. The English directors were denounced by name, and the demand made that they should be arrested and brought to public trial, the preacher stating that he chose that famous pulpit for delivering the indictment in order that the widest possible publicity might be given to the subject. The directors, in the public Press, then made through their solicitors an emphatic and indignant denial of their responsibility, alleging that in the first place they were ignorant of the occurrences, and that when these were shown to have some foundation in fact they voluntarily dispatched a commission to inquire into the matter.

Aroused by the revelations made, several religious missions started to being in London, asking for support by public subscription to enable missionary work to be carried out and stations established in the Peruvian Amazon region. There is a strong religious moral to be drawn from the occurrences.

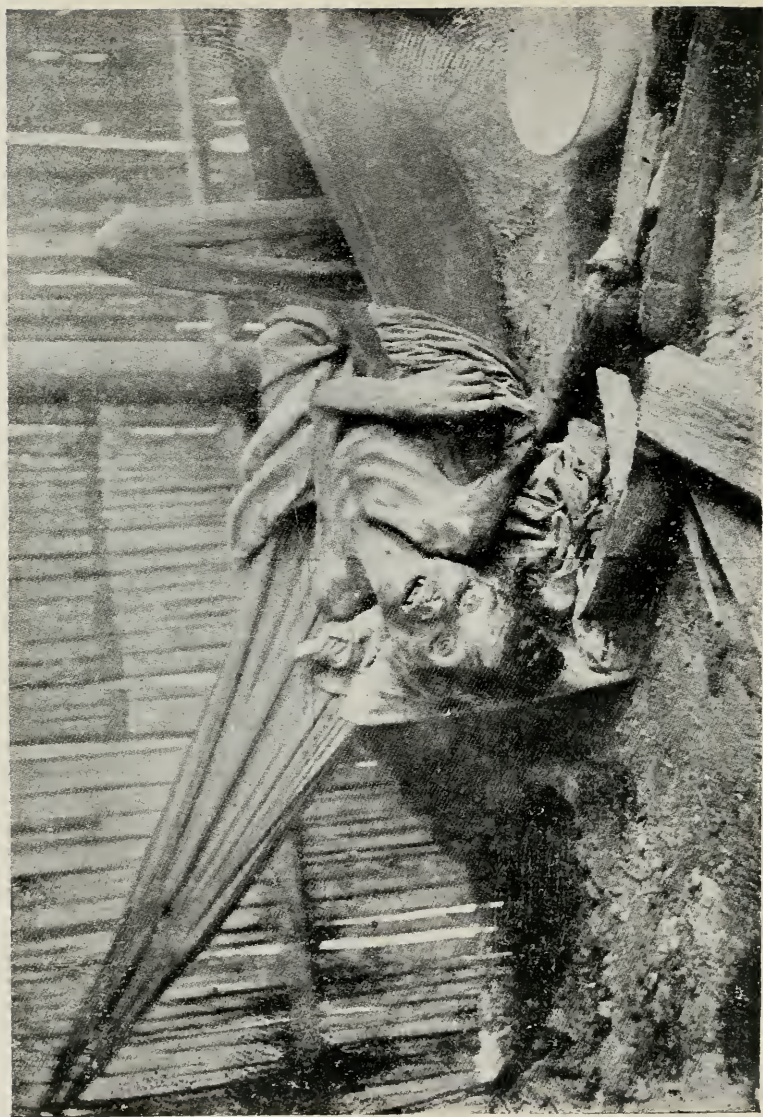
of a strong Latin American Bureau in London, for the purpose of fostering trade with those lands, of bringing forward their geographical possibilities and natural resources, and of insisting upon attention being paid to the condition of Latin American labour. In the United States a strong organisation exists in the Pan-American Union at Washington for dealing with the first two items here proposed, and due to its exertions the United States are securing a much larger share of Latin American trade than formerly.

In all probability, such a terrible situation would never have grown to being if the fine work of the old Jesuit and Franciscan friars in Brazil and Peru had been allowed to flourish. One of the greatest names associated with the Amazon is that of the famous Padre Samuel Fritz, a Bohemian by birth, who passed the larger part of his life in the service of Spain in Peru as a Jesuit missionary, working from 1686 to 1723, among the Indians of the Amazon forests. Living with the native tribes of the Huallaga, the Napo—which parallels the Putumayo—the Ucayali, and others of the great affluents of the Amazon, this devoted priest carried on his Christianising work, winning the natives to Christianity in a way, so remarkable as has never been equalled since. Venturing at length farther down the Amazon into Portuguese territory, Fritz fell ill, and was detained for two years at Para by the Portuguese, who were jealous and fearful of Spanish domination in the Amazon Valley. The Portuguese built forts at the confluence of the Rio Negro, where Manaus now stands, in order to assert their sovereignty over that part of the river, and dispatched armed bands upstream which destroyed the Christian missions and settlements Fritz had founded. The atrocious cruelties practised in these slave-raids, for such in effect they were, caused the tribes to flee to remoter regions, and a great diminution of the population followed in the first half of the eighteenth century. Thus the Portuguese conquistadores accomplished for the Amazon what the Spaniards had performed for the Andine highlands, and what the commercial conquest of rubber-gathering, nominally, conducted

from London, has accomplished in the twentieth century.

There can be no doubt of the value of religious missions in the Amazon Valley. A mission which should establish itself in these regions ought to be provided with well-appointed launches and motor-boats, and to be prepared to exercise a more or less "muscular" kind of Christianity. Between the rival claims that have been advanced for Roman Catholic and Protestant Missions it is difficult to judge. The existing Romish Church in the Andean highlands is a valuable restraining force, but its methods often partake of spoliation of the Indian under the cloak of religion, and of what, as regards certain of its attributes, is practically petty idolatry; whilst the moral character of the village priests leaves much to be desired. There seems little reason why both sects should not exercise their sway. Protestant public worship or proselytising is against the Peruvian laws, but is tolerated. Nevertheless, bitter hostility is shown to it in the upland regions, which are absolutely under priestly control. In the Amazon lowlands and rivers this obstacle would possibly be less formidable.

The occurrences of the Putumayo have aroused public feeling in Lima, where a *pro-indigena*, or native protection society, has been established, based upon a former, feebler association of similar character; for there has always existed a party protesting against the abuses practised upon the Indians. The change of Government in the Republic has brought promises of betterment. Telegraphic communications to the London Press have announced, on the one hand, that the Peruvian



AN INCIDENT OF THE PUTUMAYO.

INDIAN WOMAN CONDEMNED TO DEATH BY HUNGER : ON THE UPPER PUTUMAYO.

(The Peruvians state that this was the work of Colombian bandits.)

Photo reproduced from "Varietades" of Lima, Peru.

Chambers of Congress have "moved a resolution protesting against the attitude of Great Britain and the United States," and, on the other, "that inhumanity in the Putumayo has been absolutely abolished." Apart from electioneering devices, it cannot be doubted that the Government has been aroused. But those acquainted with social conditions in South America will greatly doubt if, apart from mutilations and assassination, the social condition of the Indian will yet be bettered or the ruinous system of peonage replaced by civilised labour conditions. If peonage and forced labour still exist in the more civilised upland regions, as they do, the conditions are not likely to be banished in the Amazon forestal lowlands. The subject must not be allowed to sink into oblivion, and the pressure of public opinion must be sustained.

If the occurrences which have been exposed lead to an awakening of the commercial conscience as regards investments in countries where poor native labour is employed, and to the consequent betterment of the lot of the humble worker in Latin America, the cruel sacrifice of the poor Indians in the dismal forests of the Putumayo will not have been in vain.

C. REGINALD ENOCK.

CHAPTER II

HARDENBURG'S NARRATIVE: SOURCE OF THE PUTUMAYO

Not far from the city of Pasto, in Southern Colombia, a small, swift-flowing mountain stream has its origin in one of the high peaks of the Colombian Andes. Here, plunging furiously down the steep, precipitous descents of the Cordillera Oriental, between the high, heavily wooded mountains, which rise almost perpendicularly to the clouds, it dashes itself into spray against the immense boulders that form its bed, and throws itself over the numerous precipices in its path with a deep, resounding roar like distant thunder.

This mountain torrent is the River Putumayo, which, leaving the towering Andes, flows in a southeasterly direction more than a thousand miles through the great fertile, wooded plains of the Amazon basin, finally entering the great river in Western Brazil.

The region traversed by this magnificent river is one of the richest in the world. In the Andes and its upper course it flows through a rich mineral section. At its source, near Pasto, numerous gold-mines are being discovered daily, and are changing hands rapidly, and there are immense deposits of iron and coal.

Having resigned our positions on the Cauca Railway, my companion W. B. Perkins and myself had set out upon our long-talked-of trip across South America, leaving the town of Buenaventura, on the Pacific coast of Colombia, on October 1, 1907, traversed the successive ranges of the Andes, and had arrived at the little Indian village of Santiago, in the level valley of Sibundoy.

The valley of Sibundoy—once the bed of an ancient lake—is situated in the Cordillera Oriental at an elevation of about 2,300 metres above sea-level, and is some 25 kilometres long by 10 wide. The Putumayo, here but a small, crystal mountain stream, flows through it, rising in one of the numerous peaks that surround the valley on every side. A part of the valley is low and swampy, but the rest is good, rich soil, quite suitable for agricultural purposes, and covered with a thick, short grass. Although all the encircling mountains are clad with forests, the valley is, at present, cleared and ready for cultivation.

In this beautiful Andean valley four distinct villages have sprung up—San Antonio, Santiago, Sibundoy, and San Francisco. Of the first, San Antonio, I can say but little, as it was out of our line of march and we did not have time to visit it; but I understand that it is an Indian village of approximately the same size and characteristics as Santiago. It is connected with Lake Cocha by an Indian trail, which is to be followed more or less by the location of a new mule-road.

Santiago is composed of about fifty houses and a mud church, thatched with palm-leaves, erected by the Capuchins for the conversion and instruc-

tion of the Indians. Except for the five or six fathers who conduct the services and an old white hag who had been the *compañera** of a certain ex-President in the eighties, when he was engaged in business here, the whole population is Indian, and amounts, all told, to probably five hundred. These Indians, although short and small, are tough and strong and are of an agreeable, reddish, coppery hue. The average height of the men seems to be about five feet; the women average from two to four inches less. They are nearly all bright and cheerful, and, as a rule, intelligent, although they sometimes feign stupidity when in contact with whites. Timidity and bashfulness, especially among the women and children, are very common.

Although all, thanks to the fathers, know a little Spanish, among themselves they use their own language exclusively, which seems to be derived from the ancient Quichua of the aborigines of Peru and Ecuador. This language is spoken in a sort of sing-song, soft and melodious, which is rather pleasing to the ear. These aborigines call themselves Incas or Ingas,† and their dialect is known as the Inca language, and is rather easily picked up by the whites, who are much in contact with the Incas.

These Indians live in large rectangular houses, the walls of which consist of upright sticks, tied together with bark, the roof being of thatch and the floor of hardened earth. The spaces between the upright sticks that form the walls obviate the necessity for windows. Sometimes, if the house

* Mistress.

† After the ancient Incas of Peru.—EDITOR.

is a large one, several families live in it together, each family having its own corner, fireside, and utensils. The furniture is very limited, and generally consists of benches of various sizes and, sometimes, a low table, all of which are carved out of solid wood, not a nail being used in their construction. Their domestic apparatus is composed chiefly of great earthen pots, which they are very skilful in making; gourds, which serve as plates, cups, &c.; and several large round stones with which they crush their maize.

The dress of the Incas is very picturesque. That of the men consists of a long cotton shirt, either blue or white, which reaches almost to the knees, nearly covering a pair of knee-pants of the same colour and material. Over this is thrown a heavy woollen poncho, always of a greyish-yellow colour, with thin, black stripes, which reaches almost to the feet. Their long, black hair, thick and abundant, takes the place of a hat, and is prevented from dangling in the face by a gaily coloured ribbon or a piece of the inner bark of the tree known to them as *huimba*, which passes around the crown of the head just above the ears. The women invariably wear a red shirt, the lower extremity of which is covered by a short black skirt, reaching to the knees. A bright red blanket, thrown over their shoulders, completes their costume, for, as a rule, they do not wear the headband used by the men. Both sexes are very fond of beads, and generally have an immense necklace of them, while smaller strings are worn on the wrists and ankles.

The chief, or *gobernador*, is elected with great

formality once a year. Then the retiring magistrate, in the presence of the whole tribe, hands over to his successor the silver-headed cane which has been since time immemorial the emblem of authority amongst the Incas. The chief's house is always distinguished by a decoration of palm-leaves over the door, for all business with the whites is done through him, disputes between Indians are settled by him, and he possesses the power of punishment. The punishment is generally a whipping or confinement in stocks, which are always kept in the chief's house.

The food of these aborigines consists chiefly of maize, collards, and game. From the maize they manufacture their peculiar *mazata*, which is their principal aliment, for they eat it morning, noon, and night, the collards and the game they shoot being merely auxiliaries. The maize is first scalded in one of the great earthen jars, after which, when cool, a certain proportion of it is thoroughly chewed until it is well mixed with the saliva. In this important operation the whole family, both young and old, takes part, seated in a circle around the huge pot of scalded maize, each one provided with a smaller gourd, into which they shoot the well-masticated mixture of maize and saliva. This operation concluded, the next step is to mix thoroughly the salivated maize with the other, and the whole mass is then deposited in the large earthen jars, where it is allowed to ferment for several days under the action of the organic principles of the saliva. The mixture is then preserved in this state, and when they wish to prepare their beverage they merely take out a handful of this

preparation, reduce it to a paste, stir it in water, and their drink is ready. This *mazata* has a sour, bitter taste, very palatable to the Indian, but disgusting to most white men.

Their arms consist chiefly of blow-guns or *bodo-quedas*, although at present shot-guns and *machetes* are beginning to be introduced among them. These blow-guns are not manufactured by the Incas, but are bought by them from the Indians of Mocoa, who obtain them from the Cioni Indians of the Upper Putumayo. The Cionis, in turn, are supplied with them by the Indians of the River Napo, who are the original manufacturers. This celebrated weapon is a hollow, tapering pole, from two to four metres long, pierced longitudinally by a hole some three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. The outside surface of the pole is wound around with thin strips of tough bark, over which is applied a smooth, black coating of gum-resin from the *arbol del lacre*, or sealing-wax tree, while the thicker end terminates in a mouthpiece, into which a small arrow, some twenty centimetres long and tipped with a little cotton instead of a feather, is introduced. The mouth is then applied to the mouthpiece, and with the breath the little arrow is shot out with great force to a distance of from thirty to forty metres.

These arrows, apparently so insignificant, are in reality awful in their effects, for their points are tipped with the celebrated *curaré*, made from the *Strychnos castelmœana*, called by them *ramu*, and from the *Cocculus toxicoferus*, known to these aborigines as *pani*. The points are often cut, so as to break off after penetrating the skin and stay

in the wound. A puncture of the skin by one of these arrows causes death within a minute, for I have seen a large dog struck by one of these little missiles drop dead before he could run five metres. Like the *bodoqueda* itself, these little arrows reach the Incas only after passing through the hands of several tribes, and are generally carried in a small bamboo quiver, to which is tied a little gourd filled with cotton. It is interesting to note that although the *curaré* with which the arrows are tipped is a deadly poison, it has absolutely no injurious effect upon the game killed by it. In many respects this weapon is superior to the shot-gun, but its great advantage is its noiselessness. Thus, a hunter can kill bird after bird without fear of their becoming alarmed and flying away. The Indians can shoot very accurately with the *bodoqueda* up to about thirty metres.

On the 16th the *gobernador*, with whom my companion Perkins and myself stayed, told us that the Indians had finished preparing their *habío* * and were ready to depart; so, after seeing them load up, we bade adios to the *gobernador* and at 11 a.m. started for Sibundoy. The road was tolerably good, consisting in many places of logs, laid transversely across the way, and skirted the edge of the surrounding mountains a little above the level of the valley, of which we would have had an excellent view but for the dense underbrush which interposed itself between the valley and us. On our march we crossed several beautiful little *quebradas*, whose clear, crystal waters

* Food for the journey.

glistened brilliantly in the sun ; but our appreciation of their beauty was somewhat diminished by the fact that as nobody in the whole valley wears shoes there were no bridges over them, and we were obliged to wade through their cold, icy waters, wetting ourselves up to the knees in doing so.

After a march of some three hours we entered Sibundoy, a village of about the same size and appearance as Santiago, where we made our way to the Capuchin convent, determining to wait here for our Indians. We were kindly received by the four priests here, as well as by the Padre Prefecto, the head of all the Capuchin establishments in the territories of the Caquetá and the Putumayo, who makes this place his headquarters. One of the fathers, Padre Estanislao de Los Corts, a Spaniard from Cataluña, was especially kind, and, after showing us around the new convent they were building, supplied us with the following data about the Indians of Sibundoy :—

The Indians of Sibundoy call themselves Cochas and speak a language of the same name, which is quite distinct from the Inca and much more complex and difficult. The Cochas are said to be lazier, more dishonest, and of a surlier disposition than the Incas, although resembling them very much in appearance, customs, dress, and mode of living. It is believed that these Indians were brought here long ago by the Spaniards from the River Vaupes as slaves for the goldmines of Pasto and that, escaping from their captors in this vicinity, they finally settled in the valley. They now number about 1,500, the greater part, however, living in lone huts in the mountains.

We remained at the convent waiting for the Indians all the afternoon, but as they did not appear we were glad to accept the Padre Prefecto's pressing invitation to stop here for the night. The priests told us that the *cargadores** had probably gone to their homes to enjoy a last farewell feast before beginning the trip to Mocoa, which we afterwards found to be the case. The convent was scrupulously clean and fitted up roughly and simply, for nearly everything had been made by the fathers themselves. The food was plain and coarse, but substantial and well cooked, one of the priests skilfully performing this important operation.

The next morning at eight o'clock the two Indians who were to carry our food, blankets, &c., put in their appearance, looking somewhat seedy and informing us that the others were coming later. They were accompanied by a pretty little Indian girl, carrying their *habío*, who they said was their sister. The *padre*, however, suspected immorality and, as a precautionary measure, bade them go to church. This over, we sent them on ahead in charge of Pedro, with orders to wait for us at the next village—San Francisco—while we stopped a little longer to take lunch with the *padres*.

Lunch concluded, we duly thanked the hospitable Capuchins for their kindness to us and once more set out. After a pleasant walk of about two hours we reached San Francisco, where we were cordially received by the head priest, whom we had met at Sibundoy, and installed in the convent, where we found Pedro and the Indians. San Francisco is a little, *triste* place of some two hundred inhabitants,

* Porters.

who claim to be whites, but, except for the fact that they wore hats and trousers, I could see but little difference between them and the *infielos*. There are two or three small shops and about twenty other houses, most of which were of *adobe*.

Bright and early the next morning we set out along the level valley, which we followed for some time until we struck the Putumayo, here a small, swift-flowing mountain torrent, about six feet wide. Crossing it, we continued along its heavily wooded banks until we came to a small affluent on the left, which we followed up to its source. Climbing to the top of the hill, we found ourselves upon a sort of divide, which we slowly descended by an almost perpendicular trail over huge, slippery rocks and rolling cobble-stones to the bottom of a deep, narrow cañon, formed by another small, torrential *quebrada*. All the rest of the day we followed the course of this stream, which we crossed no less than thirty-four times. Occasionally the cañon, always steep and narrow, became merely vertical walls of rock, rising from the edge of the stream upwards to a height of from fifty to a hundred metres. In these places we were compelled to wade down the bed of the stream, while on other occasions the trail, about six inches wide, passed along the perpendicular face of some wet, slippery rock, forty or fifty feet above the river. How the Indians passed such places, carrying the heavy *bultos** that weighed from eighty to a hundred pounds, is beyond my comprehension, nor have I any desire to make that day's journey again to find out.

At about six o'clock we reached the junction of

* Packages.

this stream with another of about the same size, where they combine to form the River Patoyacu. Here we stopped at a tolerable *rancho*, Perkins and I utterly exhausted, but the two Indians and the girl apparently as fresh as ever. Neither Perkins nor myself suffered from sleeplessness that night, although a large, flat rock was our only couch.

The next morning, as soon as our rather frugal meal of dry meat, coffee, and fried plantains was over, we crossed the Patoyacu and began the ascent of a monstrous mountain, the top of which we reached at about two o'clock in the afternoon. The rest of the day was spent in a constant succession of long, steep, painful ascents to the tops of the mountains, and immediately afterwards long, steep, painful descents to the bottoms, where, crossing some insignificant *quebrada*,* we would sit and rest a few minutes before starting on the next climb. While taking lunch at one of these streams, Perkins noticed some peculiar-looking rocks, which, upon examination, seemed to indicate the existence of a good quality of marble. We took along several specimens for further examination.

The scenery is magnificent, of a wild, savage splendour, rarely seen elsewhere than in the Andes. The high, heavily wooded mountains, rising almost perpendicularly to the clouds, are separated from each other by foaming, plunging *quebradas*, which, dashing themselves into spray against the immense boulders that form their beds, leap over the numerous precipices in their courses with a deep, resounding roar like distant thunder.

We endeavoured to reach a *rancho* † called

* Ravine.

† Hut.

Papagallos, but, when darkness overtook us, we were still far from it, according to our Indians, so we hastily made a rough *rancho* and, after about an hour and a half, succeeded in igniting a fire, for it had rained during the afternoon and everything was completely soaked. The fire, at last successfully started, was just beginning to flicker up and give out a little heat, when suddenly another heavy rain set in and, within fifteen minutes, our hard-won fire was out and we and all our belongings were wet through. As the rain continued steadily until morning and the cold all this time was intense, we did not pass a very enjoyable night.

The next day was only a tiresome repetition of the one already described—up and down all day. How many miles we made I do not know, but I can state that, whatever their number, they were mostly on end. At 9 a.m. we passed Papagallos and at about 2 p.m. we commenced a long, steep descent of nearly 2,000 metres, the bottom of which we reached at about half-past four. Here we found the two small *ranchos*, known as Cascabel, and stopped for the night. These two *ranchos* were situated upon the left bank of the River Campucana, a good-sized stream formed by the various *quebradas* we had crossed. We had now passed the last of the mountains, for from this place to Puerto Guineo, the port of embarkation, it is practically level. We had at last crossed the Andes, and were now upon the great Atlantic Slope.

In the morning we followed the left bank of the Campucana for some time, scaling successfully on

the way the famous "Carniceria,"* a very dangerous rock, high, slippery, and almost perpendicular, so-called because of the numerous people dashed to death down it. At ten o'clock, while crossing the river, we met Don Elias Jurado, Leonardo's brother, *en route* to Pasto—the first traveller we had met since leaving that city. Continuing our journey through the dense forest, at one o'clock we reached Piedra Lisa,† another dangerous rock, along whose smooth, unbroken front, which stood at an angle of about fifty-five or sixty degrees, the trail passed. The passage of this rock, which is about fifty metres long, is very perilous and would be impassable were it not for some overhanging branches which one can grasp and hold on by.

Piedra Lisa safely passed, the road continued fairly level, although very muddy on account of the thick undergrowth, and at three o'clock we entered Pueblo Viejo, a long string of scattered bamboo houses, intermingled with fields of maize, plantains and *yuca*, and large tracts of practically virgin forest. At one of these huts we stopped to take a few minutes' rest ; the people received us very affably and immediately brought out a large jug of *chicha*,‡ which we soon emptied for them. After a little conversation about the probability of our getting lost in the "city" (of Mocoa), we again pushed on, and at four o'clock in the afternoon of November 21st reached Mocoa in a state of complete exhaustion.

Here, after a great deal of inquiry, we secured a very dirty room in a still dirtier bamboo hut.

* Shambles.

† Slippery Stone.

‡ Native maize beer.

Leaving our effects here, Perkins and I went to the little crystal stream, known as the Quebrada Mulata, which dashes past the back of the town, and indulged in a good bath. By the time we had finished this operation, the indefatigable Pedro had ascertained the whereabouts of the "restaurant," to which we immediately wended our way, for we were starving. After we had finished our dinner, which did not take very long, for it was composed only of a quantity of unripe plantains, a still larger quantity of overdone *yucas*, and a little thin, tasteless coffee, we invested in a couple of bottles of wine and, retiring to our hut, Perkins, Pedro, and I duly congratulated one another on the successful termination of the first stage of our journey—the trip over the Andes. This duty performed, we retired to dream of our approaching descent of the Putumayo.

The next morning we called upon the *Intendente*, General Urdaneta, and presented to him the letter from Dr. Miranda. He received us very cordially and promised us that he would see that we had *cargadores* by Monday to take us to Puerto Guineo. After a pleasant conversation of almost an hour and a half, during which he supplied us with considerable information about Mocoa and the Putumayo, we left him and went out to take a look at the city. At noon we met him again at the restaurant, where he introduced us to Dr. Ricardo Escobar, the medical officer of the garrison here.

Mocoa is the capital of the territory of the Putumayo, an immense tract of land comprising the whole region between the Rivers Napo and

Putumayo from Mocoa to the Atlantic. This rich section is also claimed by Peru and Ecuador. The dispute between these two countries has been submitted to the King of Spain for arbitration; and the country that gains his decision will then have to arrange the matter with Colombia. There are no Ecuadorians established as yet in any part of this vast territory, the upper half of which, as far down as Remolino, is occupied by the Colombians, while the Peruvians are in possession from there to the Brazilian boundary at the mouth of the Cotuhué, for Brazil, with her usual astuteness, has seized a large triangular area at the confluence with the Amazon. The part of the territory at present occupied by Colombia is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Nariño, and all officers and officials are appointed from Pasto.

The capital of this huge territory is a small town of bamboo huts having a population of about five hundred. Until recently it was the place of confinement of political prisoners, but about a month before our arrival President Reyes had pardoned all but nine, who had been sent out of the country by way of the Putumayo, the Government's agent, Don Rogerio Becerra, conducting them as far as Remolino, where they had been released.

As the maintenance of these prisoners and the garrison had been the chief industry, the exile of the former and the withdrawal of the latter, which was taking place when we arrived, was causing a general exodus to Pasto. A small traffic with the rubber-collectors of the Upper Putumayo and the neighbouring Indians is, however, still carried on.

Agriculture, stock-raising, &c., are developed only sufficiently to supply the small local demands, for the inaccessibility of the place prohibits any large trade with outside markets.

The climate of Mocoa is agreeable and healthy, and the land, level and covered with thick forest, is fertile and well adapted to agriculture. The temperature is about 20° C. and the elevation above sea-level is approximately five hundred metres. One very attractive feature of this vicinity is the complete absence of mosquitos and gnats. From Mocoa one can see, blue in the distance, the mighty, towering peaks of the Cordillera Oriental, which, rising high above the unbroken wall of forest that surrounds the town, seem to pierce the very sky.

A good mule-road or highway connection with Pasto and La Sofía, the head of steam navigation on the Putumayo, would do much to awaken Mocoa from the torpor into which it is now plunged; for, in that way, this virgin region would have an outlet not only for the important forest products such as rubber, ivory, &c., but also for the valuable agricultural staples, as coffee, cotton, *yuca*, sugarcane, and the thousand other products of the *tierra caliente*,* which can be grown here. Besides, the opening of these means of communication would greatly facilitate immigration to this vast region, which is the most essential aid to its development.

An interesting plant, very much in evidence here, is the *achiote* † or *urucú*. This is a small tree, yielding a fruit, which is encased in a red berry, resembling in shape that of a chestnut. This fruit,

* Tropical lands.

† *Bixa orellana*.

when crushed, gives out a bright red juice, which is used by the whites to dye clothes with and to colour soups, meat, &c. The Indians, in addition to using it in this way, also employ it to paint themselves with.

The Indians of Mocoa are also Incas, the same as those of Santiago. They speak the same tongue, have the same customs, houses, arms, and utensils, differing only in the dress, which, on account of the heat, consists only of a long, black or white cotton shirt, almost concealing a pair of knee-pants of the same colour and material, and in their food, which is more diversified and comprises not only maize, &c., but also *yuca*, plantains, and many forest products. Like the Incas of Santiago, they also profess Christianity and have a limited knowledge of Spanish. These Indians are very ugly and do not possess the good features, clear skin, and physical endurance which so characterise their brothers of the mountains. Many of them suffer from the *carate*,* so prevalent in the Cauca Valley, and, consequently, present a most repugnant appearance.

The following incident illustrates the superstition of these aborigines. One day Pedro and I went to an Indian house to buy some souvenirs. Here, the aged owner of the hut had an old, worthless *bodoqueda* † that he wished to sell me, and insisted so strongly upon my buying it that I lost patience and spoke to him rather harshly. Instantly one of our Santiago Indians, who seemed to have taken rather a liking to me, called me aside and implored me not to offend the old Indian, who was a noted

* A skin disease.

† Blowpipe.

brujo or wizard, for, if I did, he would surely visit some fearful punishment upon me, such as making me blind or insane, or even worse. Although I laughed and explained to him that the wizard was nothing but an old fraud and could do me no harm, the good fellow could not be convinced, but still clung to his belief. Such superstitions are very common among all these aborigines.

During the next two days only three of our Santiago Indians showed up, thus delaying us in the same manner as they had done at Pasto and at Sibundoy. In this interval we made the acquaintance of Don Octavio Materón, a junior partner in a company, formed in Pasto, for the purpose of cultivating rubber on the Upper Putumayo. The manager, Don Gabriel Martínez, to whom Jurado had given us a letter of introduction, had, we learned, gone down in his capacity as *corregidor* to the Caraparaná, leaving Materón and the other partner, Gonzalez, in charge. Materón had come to Mocoa to bring down some *bultos* of merchandise that had been delayed here, and, finding that we were going his way, kindly decided to wait for us.

On Monday morning, November 25th, the Indians sent by the *Intendente* arrived, ready to take our effects to Guineo. As there were still two *bultos* lacking, we decided that Perkins and Pedro should go on with the five *bultos* that were ready and await my arrival in Guineo, while I remained in Mocoa to take down the other two *bultos* as soon as the *cargadores* should arrive with them. So, bidding goodbye to Perkins and Pedro and arranging with the remaining Indians to return

in three or four days, I resumed my weary task of waiting.

As we had been informed that it would be necessary to purchase a canoe here, I made several inquiries and at last was directed to one Bernardo Ochoa, a lean, bilious-looking *aguardiente**-merchant, a victim of the *carate*, who had a canoe in Guineo that he would sell. I did not fancy buying a canoe without seeing it, but, as both Materón and the *Intendente* assured me that it was large, well-preserved, and quite worth sixty dollars "hard," I began negotiations with the man, who at first asked one hundred dollars, but, after a great deal of haggling, finally sold it to me for eighty dollars "hard." At the same time I bought a small barrel of *aguardiente*, as I was told that it would greatly facilitate intercourse, not only with the Indians, but also with the "whites" who inhabit the region.

On Wednesday morning, at about 9 a.m., Dr. Escobar came in and informed me that a messenger had just arrived from Pasto with an order to arrest Pedro and send him back to Cali. Completely amazed by this intelligence, I went to the *Intendente*, who showed me the order and informed me that he had already sent two soldiers to Guineo to arrest the boy and bring him back. As we had taken Pedro from the railway and had stayed several days in Cali and Popayán and several weeks in Pasto, without any attempt having been made to arrest him, I could only think that it was some mistake, so I made a few guarded suggestions to the General, but without the slightest effect.

* Native alcohol or rum.

In the afternoon I set about hiring another boy to take Pedro's place, and after some time succeeded in engaging a stupid, torpid-looking youth, to whom I offered a couple of pounds to clinch the bargain. What was my surprise then to see him come back in a couple of hours and, with tears in his eyes and in a voice trembling with fear, beg me to let him off. Upon investigation, I found that some wretch had filled his weak head full of blood-curdling yarns about the cannibal Indians and the decimating fevers met with there. The poor fool was in such a miserable state of fear and dismay that, upon his paying back the money I had advanced him, I was glad to let him go.

On the following afternoon I was agreeably surprised to see the two *cargadores* from Santiago arrive with the two remaining *bultos*. Finding that they were intact—for the Indians often steal part of the contents of the *bultos*—I paid the two rascals and sent word to the Mocoa *cargadores* that four of them should come in the morning to take us to Puerto Guineo.

Shortly after I had arranged this matter the soldiers arrived with Pedro, who seemed to be quite knocked up with the long march and the gloomy prospects of the tedious journey before him. Shaking hands with the poor boy to encourage him a little, I asked what it was that he had done. He protested his innocence of any wrongdoing so stoutly that, convinced that there must be an error somewhere, I again went to the *Intendente*, but he was determined to carry out his orders, and I could do nothing with him. Returning to Pedro, I endeavoured to cheer him up a

little, but without much success. After writing him a good reference, I paid him off, and, with a last *adios* left the poor boy alone in his dismal cell. I never saw nor heard from him since.

In the morning, as soon as the *cargadores* put in their appearance, I loaded them up with the two *bultos*, the barrel of *aguardiente*, and our food and hammocks, &c., while Materón did the same with his, after which we took our leave of the *Intendente* and the *simpático* Dr. Escobar, and began the last stage of our overland journey.

The morning was fine and invigorating, and we pushed on rapidly, crossing many fine, sparkling *quebradas*, which wound their way softly through the dense, tropical forest that covers the Amazon Basin from the Andes to the Atlantic. As we made our way along the level path, we frequently stopped to examine some strange plant, to pursue some rare butterfly, or to shoot some new bird, whose brilliant plumage or sweet notes attracted our attention. Just before noon we passed a "cave," a great, long, overhanging rock, in some places of such a height as to permit us to stand erect under it, and reached a large, sparkling stream, where, seated on a great rock, overspread by the protecting shade of the forest, we had our lunch.

The traveller, entering for the first time these gloomy forests, as yet untouched by the hand of man, is bewildered by the splendour and magnificence of a superabundant vegetation. Indeed, it is impossible to give any exact idea of the immense variety of the thick-growing plants and of the incessant activity of Nature in their development.



VEGETATION ON THE PERUVIAN AMAZON.

The dense vegetation accumulates and piles up, forming, especially on the banks of the streams and rivers, opaque masses, perfectly impenetrable, through which the sun's rays never pierce. The high giants of the forest tower above everything, the smaller trees and the shrubs crowd under their branches, while the numerous vines and *bejucos* knit the whole into one solid mass.

In the afternoon we reached a cross which marked the divergence of our road into two trails, one going to Puerto Limon on the Caquetá, and the other to Puerto Guineo on the River Guineo, an affluent of the Putumayo. This cross is about six leagues from Mocoa and the same distance from Limon and Guineo. Some distance beyond, we stopped for the night in a couple of small *ranchos* built about a month before by the soldiers who escorted the exiles to the port. Here we passed a fairly comfortable night, well protected from the torrential downpour which took place shortly after our arrival here and continued all night.

In the morning we found the trail wet and muddy and the vegetation, through which we were obliged to wade, soaked us completely, so we removed our shoes and clothes and put on *alpargatas* and pyjamas. These we found lighter and much more comfortable, and in this garb we continued the rest of our journey. Soon the trail became worse and the small, shallow *quebradas* became rushing, brawling torrents, through which we were, in some cases, almost obliged to swim. The Indians, in these places, grasped hands and waded through together, carrying the *bultos* on their heads. At first I trembled for my poor possessions when

they did this, but I soon perceived that they knew their business, and did not interfere with them.

Towards the end of the journey the trail passed along the banks of the Guineo River, normally a quiet, meandering stream not over two feet deep, but now a swollen, dangerous torrent. We experienced some difficulty in crossing several of its numerous tributaries, but, after what seemed an eternity, we reached Guineo at one o'clock in a state of complete exhaustion.

Here we found Perkins comfortably installed in an old bamboo hut known as the "convent," where the priests from Mocoa generally stop when they come down to Guineo to preach to the Indians. We soon discovered our old railway enemies, the *moscas* or gnats, which made me feel quite at home. But a still worse misfortune was revealed to us when Perkins, who was preparing some food for Materón and me, informed us that all the bread was spoiled, having probably got wet on the Páramo of Bordoncillo. We braced up considerably, however, when he dished us out a hearty meal of fried *yuca*, plantains, sausage, and *panela*, and after a couple of hours' rest felt quite restored.

We then went out, and, through an Indian to whom I delivered a letter Ochoa had supplied me with, ordering the transfer of the canoe to me, had a look at our vessel. We found it to be a good river-going craft, about nine metres long and something over one metre wide, and in a tolerable state of preservation, being made of cedar, which is the best wood for the purpose.



TROPICAL VEGETATION ON THE AFFLUENTS OF THE PERUVIAN AMAZON.

[To face p. 76.

These canoes or *pituches*, which, as a rule, measure from six to ten metres in length, are made from a single log of wood, hollowed out by the adze, or, as with some Indians, by fire. Cedar * is the favourite wood, for it is light, easily worked, and very durable. When this cannot be obtained, however, various other kinds of trees are employed, such as *caoba* or *aguano*,† *palo-rosa* or *lauro-rosa*,‡ *palo-maria*,§ *catagua* or *assacú*,|| and *itauba*.¶ But none of these woods are equal to cedar, for either they do not resist the action of the water so well, or else are so heavy that they make the canoe cumbersome and dangerous to navigation.

We next bought a couple of paddles from the Indians, and our naval equipment was then complete. The paddles in use in this region by both whites and Indians are generally only about a metre and a half in length, with wide, rounded blades, which facilitate rowing in shallow water. Oars such as are used in oar-locks would be quite useless here on account of the numerous stumps and logs in the rivers and along their banks and chiefly the cargo, which often takes up nearly all the inside of the canoe. Many of these paddles are constructed of fine wood, well finished and painted and varnished to a degree.

The only other building at Puerto Guineo, in addition to the convent, is an old, dilapidated church, both of which stand on the bank of the river in a small clearing sowed with plantain-trees. As already stated, the priests of Mocoa often come

* *Cedrela odorata*.

† *Nectandra*.

|| *Hura*.

† *Swietenia mahogani*.

§ *Callophilum brasiliense*.

¶ *Acrodictidium itauba*.

down to Guineo for a few days at a time to preach to the aborigines, and the convent and church were built by the Indians, partly for the convenience of the *padres* and partly as a sort of monument to their own importance. Like the convent, the church is of bamboo with an earthen floor and a thatched roof, upon which some vegetation was beginning to present itself. Inside were a few crude pictures of saints, and behind the altar stood a cross with a ghastly figure of the Crucifixion upon it. A few cheap altar-cloths and the remains of several used-up candles completed the outfit, the whole of which was entirely covered and wound up with numerous cobwebs.

In the midst of the dense forest, surrounding these neglected relics of civilisation, live a tribe of Indians who call themselves Cionis and speak a language of the same name. They are quite distinct from the Incas, and occupy the whole region of the Upper Putumayo, living in small villages of from ten to fifty families along its banks. In all, they do not number over a thousand. But they all speak more or less Spanish, with the peculiarity that the only form of the verb they use is the gerund.

These Indians are short, broad, and strong, but generally lazy and shiftless. Like the Mocoa branch of the Incas, nearly all of them suffer from *carate*. The ugly and unusual custom of pulling out the eyebrows, eye-lashes, &c., and cutting the hair short is observed by both sexes. The women are, if possible, uglier than the men, which is saying a good deal, but the latter endeavour to compensate for this by painting their faces blue

and pink. The ordinary designs used for this purpose are geometrical figures and branches of trees, &c.

Another very common custom is that of piercing the ears and the dividing wall of the nose with small bamboo tubes coloured a bright shining black, and frequently from ten to fifteen centimetres in length and nearly one centimetre in thickness. They also generally wear upon each arm, just between the shoulder and the elbow, a sort of bracelet, made of fibres from the leaf of the *chambira* * palm, the loose ends of which reach almost to the wrist—this is supposed to ward off attacks of rheumatism and other similar complaints.

Their dress is very simple, and consists merely of a long shirt called *cushma*, of black or white cotton—although generally the latter—which is worn by both men and women. The only difference between the men's *cushma* and the women's is that in the former the opening that admits the head is vertical and runs down along the bosom, while in the latter it is horizontal and reaches from shoulder to shoulder. This garment resembles nothing so much as a night-shirt without sleeves.

The Cionis are also excessively fond of beads, and the amount of them they wear is astounding; in fact, they are so numerous as to totally conceal their necks, the lower parts of their ears, and most of their shoulders. These beads, which often weigh from ten to fifteen pounds, are only removed when the Indians go to bed, bathe, &c. Besides

* Atrocarium.

these they generally wear several necklaces of monkey or *danta* teeth and a string or so of the bright, red-spotted-with-black seeds of the *huairuro* or *quairor*,* which they wear as a sort of talisman.

The houses of these Indians are, like those of the Incas, large, rectangular structures, the walls of which are formed either of upright poles tied together with the bark of the *sacha-huasca* or the *tamshi*, or else of slabs of split bamboo or palms, such as the *chonta*,† the *camona* or *huacrapona*‡ and the *tarapoto*,§ whose thick, almost hollow trunks, when split, form large durable planks, quite suitable for different purposes. The roofs are of thatch, for which the leaves of the *yarina*|| or vegetable-ivory tree are generally used. Several families, as a rule, live in the same house, each, however, having its own corner, fireside, and utensils.

Their furniture is limited to hammocks of their own manufacture and little low stools either carved out of solid wood or else made from slabs of bamboo or the above-mentioned palm-trees. Overhead several light cross-timbers are stretched, upon which they hang their clothes, their arms, and many domestic utensils. As they generally eat with their fingers, knives and forks are unknown, while for spoons they employ certain shells or small gourds. As dishes they use the easily prepared fruits of the *totuma* or *cuyera*,¶ which, by the simple operation of cutting open and clean-

* *Abrus precatorius*.

† *Iriartea deltoidea*.

|| *Phitelephas macrocarpa*.

† *Bactris ciliata*.

§ *Iriartea ventricosa*.

¶ *Crescentia cuete*.

ing out, form convenient receptacles for their food. For cooking they employ the earthen pots similar to those of the Incas ; in the manufacture of these pots and the subsequent painting and varnishing of them the Cionis exhibit great skill.

Other utensils are—fans, various-sized baskets, rude drums, *chambira*-palm-fibre bags, little clay ovens to bake *fariña* in, fishing-nets, whistles made of the leg-bones of different birds, fifes made of bamboo, and torches of the heart of the *maguëy* or of *chonta*, impregnated with resin, &c. For washing their clothes, hair, &c., they use the inner bark of a tree called the *quillay* and a soapy substance known as *suyuyu*.

Each of their villages seems to be absolutely independent of the others, and, like the Incas, elects annually, with great solemnity, its chief or *gobernador*, who has about the same powers as among those aborigines. In addition to the *gobernador*, there is a sort of lieutenant-governor, called the *capitán*, who acts as a sort of auxiliary to the chief and takes his place when the latter is absent.

These Indians are now lazy and peaceful, and the inter-village wars, formerly frequent and sanguinary in the extreme, are now, thanks to the teachings of the priests and the Colombian settlers, a thing of the past. Their arms, which are now used only for hunting, consist merely of *machetes* and shot-guns, obtained from the Colombians, and the *bodoquedas* or *cerbatanas*, already described, which they get, in exchange for their hammocks, from the Indians of the Napo.

Their food is much more diversified than that

of the Santiago Indians, for, in addition to the numerous forest products, such as the *papaya*,* the *lime*,† the *caimito*,‡ the *marañon*,§ the *pishuayo*,|| bread-fruit,¶ the tender tops of the *chonta*, the *camona*, &c., hunting is excellent here, and many are the animals that fall victims to their skill. Among these we may mention, as the most important, the *danta* or *sacha-vaca*,** which lives in shady swamps; the *chancho del monte* or *huangana*,†† which is a kind of peccary that lives in herds in the depths of the forest; the *ronisoco* or *capivara*,‡‡ a large amphibious rodent; the *venado* or deer,§§ of which there are several species; several kinds of monkeys, such as the *guaribas*, the *cotomonos*, and the *maquisapas*; the sloth |||; the armadillo ¶¶; and various others. They also hunt wild birds of many different species and sizes, such as the *paujiles*, wild-ducks, partridges, wild-turkeys, various kinds of doves, &c. To all these we must add the numerous different kinds of fine fish, which they catch at all seasons of the year, especially in the dry season. Among the most important of these are *palometas*, *corbinas*, *bagres*, *boquichicos*, *gamitanas*, *cunchis*, *dorados*, &c.

For fishing they use nets made of *chambira*-palm fibre, spears and hooks manufactured from hard wood or thorns, which they bait with larvæ or with the fruit of the *setico* *** tree. Besides

* *Carica papaya*. † *Citrus limonum*. ‡ *Lucuma caimita*.

§ *Anacardium occidentale*. || *Guilielma speciosa*.

Artocarpus incisa. ** *Tapirus americanus*.

†† *Dicotyles labiatus*. ‡‡ *Hydrochœrus capibara*.

§§ *Cervus*. ||| *Bradypus*.

¶¶ *Dasypus*. *** *Cecropia peltata*.

these, they frequently employ the celebrated *barbasco*.* Selecting some pool or quiet corner of the river, they drop a quantity of the crushed leaves and root of this plant into the water, which shortly assumes a milky hue and soon poisons the fish, both large and small. Directly the whole surface of the pool becomes covered with the dead bodies of the fish, of which the largest only are selected, the rest, including the millions of tiny fish, thus being killed and left to rot without being utilised at all. On other occasions they often take advantage of the pools left when the river goes down in the dry season, the fish imprisoned in them being either speared or caught in nets.

Besides these sources of food, the women cultivate a few plantain-trees,† a little maize,‡ and the invaluable *yuca* or manioc, from which they manufacture their two most popular alimentary products, *mazata* and *fariña*. There are two kinds of *yuca*—the wild-*yuca* or *yuca brava*§ and the cultivated variety,|| both of which are very much used in the whole Amazon Valley. The former contains, however, besides its nutritive elements, a milky sap, which is one of the most virulent vegetable poisons known, its active principle being hydrocyanic acid, but, as the sap is volatile, it is easily removed from the farine by means of pressure and evaporation.

In the preparation of the *mazata*, the favourite beverage of these Indians, the *yuca* is peeled and boiled in but little water in one of their large pots, after which it is smashed to paste by means

* *Yacquinia armillaris*.

† *Musa paradisiaca*.

‡ *Zea maiz*.

§ *Manihot utilisima*.

|| *Manihot aypi*.

of a club. This process concluded, the next step is to take out a proper proportion of this mass and mix it with saliva, in the same manner as the Incas do with their scalded maize. The *yuca* thus prepared is then well mixed with the other, the pot is carefully covered, and the preparation is left to ferment several days, when it is ready for consumption. This *mazata* does not differ much in taste from the maize-*mazata* of the Incas.

The civilised inhabitants of this region prepare this beverage in a less repugnant and more hygienic way—that is, they add to the paste sugar-cane juice or the juice of a ripe plantain, in place of the saliva.

In preparing the *fariña*, the *yuca* is thrown into a trough filled with water and left there until it is in a state of semi-putrefaction, when it is taken out, peeled, and pulverised. If it is the cultivated variety, it is then dried and put through a roasting process upon hot plates, but if it is the *yuca brava*, the poisonous sap must first be removed. To do this, the *yuca*, already pulverised, is wrapped up in a good-sized piece of *llanchama*—the tough, inner bark of a tree of the same name—which is then twisted up and tightened with a stick, after the fashion of a tourniquet, until the sap is all pressed out and evaporated. It is then dried and roasted in the same way as the other *yuca*.

This *fariña* can be preserved for a long time if kept dry, and it forms one of the chief articles of food of many of the inhabitants of the Amazon, especially when they are travelling. It is eaten either dry with water or, best of all, with milk

and sugar, when it becomes an agreeable, as well as a wholesome, article of food.

The Cionis are very skilful in the manufacture of the light, durable, and beautiful hammocks, which they use in place of beds, from the strong fibres of the leaves of the *cambira*-palm. They often spend months upon the fabrication of a single hammock, first collecting the leaves, next extracting the fibres, then twisting them into long strings, and finally weaving the strings into a hammock. One of these hammocks can be rolled up until it occupies only the space of a fair-sized book, and it is so durable that it will last for years.

They also exhibit marvellous patience and skill in making the insect, feather, and shell ornaments that they wear on their feast-days. One especially interesting ornament is the *yacta*, a beautiful crown, composed of a great variety of fine large red and yellow plumes, inlaid with so many small feathers of so many different kinds and colours that it is a veritable work of art.

Another common ornament is a long string of brilliantly coloured feathers, which is worn around the neck. They also collect the bright green wings of a large insect, very common in these parts, of which, after a sufficient supply has been obtained, they make a similar string, which also encircles the neck. In addition to all these, which are worn only on special occasions, they generally have several bracelets, anklets, &c., of gaily coloured woollen yarns or locks of hair.

At their dances, the music of which is furnished by drums, whistles, and fifes of their own manu-

facture, they always wear a quantity of *cascabeles*, which are nothing more than strings of the dried fruits of the *schacapa*.* These *cascabeles* they attach to their legs and waist in such a manner as to produce a rattling, tinkling noise at every step they take.

Other very interesting products of the industry of these aborigines are the fine combs, made of carefully arranged and polished thorns, tied together with eccentrically coloured threads. Some of these combs are really splendid pieces of workmanship.

A thorough and extensive knowledge of the uses and properties of the countless products of the forest is also possessed by the Cionis. Thus, for example, the root of a certain *bejuco*,† which they call *yoco*, is their substitute for coffee; from another *bejuco* they extract a narcotic known to them as *ayahuasca* or *yajén*, the effects of which are similar to those of hasheesh and opium; the leaves of the *huitoc* or *jagua*‡ are used to cure itching and all erysipelatic diseases, as well as to protect them from the gnats and mosquitoes; and thousands of other trees, shrubs, and *bejuco*s supply them with almost everything they need or desire.

* Cerveza peruviana.

† Vine or creeper.

‡ *Genipa oblongifolia*.

CHAPTER III

THE UPPER PUTUMAYO

EARLY the next morning, Sunday, December 1st, we engaged two Cioni boatmen for our canoe, as did Materón for his; and, after constructing a platform of split bamboo to put in the bottom of the boat in order to prevent our effects from becoming damp, we began loading our little craft with its miscellaneous cargo.

In accordance with Materón's advice, we determined to stow away our trunks, books, and engineering instruments in the most inaccessible part of the canoe, while our food and the Indian trading stuff, as well as our arms, should occupy such parts as to render them quickly getatable. After a good deal of shifting about and changing, we succeeded in getting everything more or less as we desired it, and were by ten o'clock ready to start.

Thinking that this was an occasion worthy of a little celebration, Materón, Perkins, and myself then proceeded to lessen the contents of our barrel of *aguardiente* by a good drink each, after which we called up the Indian boatmen and, one by one, gave them a good bracer also, which they swallowed with great solemnity. Then we got in the little

space that had been reserved for us in the middle of the canoe—for the cargo was stowed fore and aft as much as possible—and gave the signal to begin the journey.

Materón had already informed us that the first couple of days' journey was somewhat dangerous, on account of the swift, roaring current, the powerful whirlpools, and the numerous stumps and logs that stud the whole course of the river; but we did not fully realise it until the canoe, shooting out into the middle of the stream, was caught by the current, almost before it could be turned bow foremost, and dashed with sickening speed among the stumps and logs that loomed up on every side.

We soon perceived, however, that our Cionis were used to their job, for they guided the flying canoe with the greatest skill as it continued its wild progress down the swift-running river. One of them, the *popero*, or pilot, always sits on the high, narrow seat in the stern, and, paddle in hand, steers the canoe and from time to time directs the manœuvres of the other, known as the *puntero*, who generally stands in the bow and calls out the obstacles, such as logs, stumps, &c., to the *popero*, in case the latter cannot see them from where he is seated.

In descending a river one *puntero* is sufficient, for the canoe is generally carried along rapidly enough by the current, and all the *bogas* * have to do is to keep the craft from striking against obstacles and from being thrust by the strong currents sometimes encountered into the unpleasant and often dangerous *remolinos* or whirlpools.

But when the river is to be ascended, known as

* Boatmen.

subida or *surcada*, several *bogas* are necessary. The route must then be close to the bank, where the current is not so strong, but where such obstacles as logs, stumps, salient rocks, overhanging branches, troublesome insects, and other similar inconveniences are numerous. Here the paddles are useless, except when crossing the river * in search of an easier route on the opposite bank, and the *bogas* must push the canoe along by main force, employing for this purpose long poles called *botadores* or *tanganas*.

In canoeing in the smaller rivers, especially in the dry season, bad places, caused by the shallowness of the water or the immobility of the huge logs that frequently form an impenetrable network on or near the surface of the water, are often met with ; in such cases the *bogas* either wade ashore and pull the canoe out of the bad place by means of a rope or else enter the water and shove and lift until it is free. If, however, the canoe is very heavy and these methods fail, they strip the bark from the *setico*-tree, which is always to be found on the banks of these rivers, and stretch it out on top of the obstacle. As this bark is very slippery and soapy, the canoe readily slides over it when they push.

Materón informed us that, as a general rule, one day's descent is equivalent to three days' *surcada* ; this, however, is subject to numerous circumstances and mishaps, such as the conduct of the boatmen, the condition of the river, the weight of the cargo, the cut of the canoe, the character of the travellers, the necessity of hunting and fishing for food, &c.

* *Chimbada*.

What a pleasant sensation it was to sit calmly in the canoe, while the swift current bore us steadily onwards, and to watch the thick, tropical vegetation, which lined the banks of the stream, swiftly recede until hidden from view by a bend of the river! How different it was from the monotonous climbing and descending of the Andes that had caused us so much toil!

Several times we passed through places that seemed to me perilous in the extreme, for the whirling current would dash us with frightful rapidity directly towards some huge stump or half-submerged log, while other obstacles of a similar nature appeared on every hand. We seemed to be almost upon it, when a deft turn of the *popero's* paddle would bring us to one side by a margin of three or four inches. Again, we would shoot some small rapid; the canoe would give a jump, and the next instant we would dash the water out of our half-blinded eyes, and, looking around, would see the rapid far behind us.

We saw plenty of wild turkeys, wild ducks, and monkeys on the trees near the bank, while occasionally a river seal, or *nutria*, would be seen curled up on a log or disporting itself near the shore. All these animals seemed quite tame, and would allow us to approach within a few metres, and then, just as we were taking aim, off they would go. Finally, after wasting a good many shots—for it is no easy matter to shoot from a rapidly moving canoe—I managed to kill a nice fat *pava*, or wild turkey, and one of Materón's men shot a duck.

At noon we stopped on a gravel *playa* for lunch, which consisted chiefly of *panela* and *aco*, and

took us only some fifteen minutes. Then we continued about two hours, when we entered the much-discussed Putumayo, much larger than when we saw it in the Andes, but still not a large river. It was low, and the high banks and the exposed islet were completely covered with the debris it had brought down in the wet season, such as huge logs, branches of trees, bamboo poles, &c.

During the afternoon we continued to observe large numbers of birds and monkeys, which made the whole forest resound with their ear-numbing howls. Great flocks of parrots and other gaily-plumaged birds flew overhead, their rather harsh voices being heard continually. We shot at several, but whether they were too high for our guns, or, as was probably the case, our aim was inaccurate, we did not get a single specimen. We did, however, kill two or three more ducks.

These ducks are generally to be seen perched up in the trees along the banks or else on some stump in mid-stream, although occasionally one perceives them floating with the current or swimming on the surface of the water. They dive with lightning-like rapidity, and very often succeed in getting away, even when hit severely. Their vitality is amazing, and they are not slow to bite one if they are not quite dead on being picked up.

At about 4 p.m. we reached the tiny Cioni village of San Diego, a small group of about ten little bamboo shacks on the right bank of the river. The whole village came out to welcome us as we rather stiffly climbed out of our canoes, for it seemed that Materón was very popular with them. They brought out a few fruits and a small jar of

the *yuca-nazata*, already described, which we respectfully refused. They are in all respects similar to those of Puerto Guineo, and each of the little huts contained two or three families. Materón informed us that they had but recently established themselves here, abandoning their old village on the other bank of the river on account of a severe epidemic that had broken out among them and killed nearly half their number.

We spent the rest of the afternoon trading with them, giving them some of our beads, harmonicas, mirrors, hats, handkerchiefs, &c., for a few of their manufactures, such as hammocks, *yactas*, strings of monkey and *danta* teeth, combs, and the like. They are no fools at bargaining, and have a pretty good idea of the value of the articles they are acquainted with; they are also rather clever at demonstrating what labour it has cost them and how much time they have spent in making any article that one fancies; so, on the whole, we did not get much the better of them.

At bedtime, which was about nine o'clock, the *capitán* and *gobernador* showed us the corner that we were to occupy in conjunction with a couple of Cioni families, and helped us fix up our hammocks. Following the example of our hosts, we did not trouble to undress very much, but soon fell asleep, and did not awake until time for *desayuno*.

Early next morning, after taking leave in a most affectionate manner of our hosts, who supplied us with several bunches of plantains and a quantity of *yucas* and an agreeable fruit known as the *papaya*, we set out on our easy and interesting journey. At about noon we passed the mouth of

the Guamués, the outlet of Lake Cocha, which seemed almost as large as the Putumayo itself. During the morning we succeeded in shooting a couple of wild turkeys and several ducks; one of the former was almost lost on account of having fallen in a lot of thick bushes some distance from the shore.

The vegetation is very dense all along the banks. The most common types are large bamboos; numerous palms, such as the *palma de la cera* or wax-palm, the *chonta*, the fragrant *sia-sia*, the royal, and others; *setico*-trees, already mentioned; the *palo de la balsa*, or raftwood-tree; the *yarina*, or vegetable ivory-tree; and a variety of others, intermingled with shrubs and bushes of innumerable kinds, and bound together into one tangled, impenetrable mass by the countless *bejucos* and climbers everywhere in evidence.

Nearly every tree of any size is covered with innumerable parasites, among which are to be found several varieties of orchids, whose brilliant flowers serve to diversify the universal green of the forest. The most common of these are different species of *Epidendrum*, *Oneidium*, *Peristeria*, *Catasectum*, *Sobralia*, *Cypripedium*, *Maxillaria*, *Stanopœa*, &c.

At about two o'clock we reached Materón's establishment La Sofía, where we were cordially received by the other partner, Gonzalez, and his wife. La Sofía is a good-sized, two-storied bamboo bungalow, with a fine wide veranda extending along its front, while around the building in every direction extend fields of maize, *yuca*, sugar-cane, &c., with the dark, silent forest in the background. As the place is built on a rather high bank, one can obtain

from the veranda an excellent view of the placid, smiling river as it slowly rolls past to join the mighty Amazon on its course to the Atlantic.

La Sofía was formerly the headquarters of General Reyes, ex-President of the Republic, when he was engaged in the collection of quinine in this region years ago. It is at the head of steam navigation on the Putumayo, and it was here that Reyes' steamer *Tundama* was lost. When Materón had arrived here, some eleven months before, he had found everything overgrown by the rank, tropical vegetation and all the old buildings almost completely destroyed. Reyes had named the place La Sofía in honour of his fiancée, and Materón and his partner had retained the name.

The company already had about ten *peons* engaged in clearing the land and cultivating the crops, and had advanced merchandise to all the Cionis, who had agreed to work out their indebtedness by planting rubber-trees, building houses, clearing land, &c. I was pleased to observe that strict morality was the rule, and that Gonzalez permitted no abuses against the aborigines either by taking away their women, by cheating them, or in any way at all. As to the *peons*, they seemed cheerful and contented.

There are two distinct kinds of rubber—that produced by a tree that must be cut down to extract the milk, which is called *caucho negro*, or black rubber, and is produced by the *Castilloa elastica*, and that which is the product of a tree that can be tapped indefinitely, which is known as *jebe* or *siringa*, and is collected from the *Hevea brasiliensis*. These two varieties of rubber are each subdivided

into several classifications, according to the quality of the latex or milk and the care and skill employed in their extraction and preparation. As a general rule, *siringa* is much more valuable than *caucho*, and is the best kind adapted for cultivation, although Materón was planting both sorts. After showing us some samples of each, he informed us that the whole region of the Upper Putumayo had once abounded in *caucho negro*, but that at the present date very little remained, owing to the fierce onslaughts of the *caucheros* many years ago.

The next day Materón had some of his men build a little *rancho* of palm-leaves over our canoe amidships to protect us from the sun and rain. This sort of awning is called a *pamacari*, and is in general use in the Amazon Valley ; it gave the canoe a very picturesque appearance, and, as we afterwards found, was very convenient.

We spent the rest of the day in inspecting the estate and taking down a Cioni vocabulary, in which language Gonzalez was very proficient and kind enough to give us the benefit of his knowledge. This vocabulary, which I had hoped to take back to civilisation with me, was, however, lost under particularly aggravating circumstances, which will be duly recorded in a succeeding chapter.

Although Materón and Gonzalez implored us to stay a week or so with them, we decided to resume our journey on the following day ; but in the morning, just as we were about to start, Perkins was attacked with a heavy fever, and so our departure was postponed. We dosed him up with quinine and put him to bed, where he soon began to perspire freely, which is to be desired in these malarial attacks.

Finding our patient better in the afternoon, Gonzalez, Materón, and myself took a little trip down to San José, a small Cioni town about a kilometre below La Sofía. This village and its inhabitants are very similar to Guineo and San Diego, only a trifle larger than the latter. Here we stopped some time, and I was able to obtain several souvenirs from the Indians, besides a shallow earthen pot, which I determined to fix in the canoe to cook in, thus avoiding the loss of time consequent to performing this operation on shore.

On our return, while pushing the canoe upstream between the numerous stumps along the shore, in the manner already described for *surcadas*, Gonzalez, although an excellent boatman, suddenly lost his balance and fell with a thud into the deep water. Fortunately, we succeeded in pulling him out, none the worse for his wetting, and in a half-hour reached La Sofía without further adventure.

Here we found Perkins somewhat better, so we fixed the pot in the fore part of the canoe in the manner I had planned and made arrangements to depart on the following day, for Gonzalez had decided to accompany us as far as Yocuropuí, the next Cioni village, to see the Indians there.

Perkins better, we accordingly bade goodbye to our kind friend Materón the next morning, Thursday, December 5th; and, lashing our canoe to Gonzalez', in order to keep together and to facilitate conversation, we once more resumed our journey. Materón had thoughtfully filled the canoe with *papayas*, bananas, &c., so what with them, the conversation, and the shooting, we were kept pretty busy.



CANOE VOYAGING ON THE AMAZON : A NOONDAY REST.

The river soon became much broader, owing to the numerous tributaries, and the current much gentler, while great sand and gravel *playas* began to appear with some frequency. Numerous beautiful birds, flying from stump to stump, lent an air of life to the otherwise silent river, while occasionally a group of monkeys could be seen making their way from tree to tree, almost hidden by the thick leaves and tangled creepers so characteristic of Amazonian vegetation. Soon the heat grew uncomfortable, so we all withdrew under the commodious *pamacari*, where it was quite agreeable.

At 11.30 we stopped for *almuerzo* on an immense *playa*, upon which were two or three dilapidated-looking *ranchos*, probably erected by the exiles about a month before. Having partaken of a fair lunch of fried *yuca*, sausage, rice, and coffee, we were about to get into the canoes when Perkins' eye fell upon a huge ostrich-like bird several hundred metres away. As he was such a fine specimen, Perkins endeavoured to get within range, but in vain; for the beauty, apparently as fond of his fine feathers as we were, soon disappeared into the forest and we saw him no more. This fine bird was probably a *nandu* or *ema*,* sometimes called the ostrich of America.

Resuming the journey, at about two o'clock we passed a large *playa* on the left bank, known as the Playa de Oro † on account of the supposed richness of its placer deposits. We did not examine it, however, owing to lack of time. A little later Perkins had the good fortune to kill a large duck, and Gonzalez almost got another, but it dived and

* *Rhea Americana*.

† The Golden Beach.

went up the river, and when next he appeared he had nearly reached the shore, so we did not pursue him farther.

At about 5.30 p.m. we reached an extensive sand island in the middle of the river, where we decided to stop for the night. After securing the canoes we started cooking, while the Indians crossed over to the thickly wooded river bank and soon returned with a load of palm-leaves and several short poles of *cana brava*,* or wild cane, from which, within ten minutes, they constructed two *ranchos*, where we were to sleep during the night. After the meal was over we sat around smoking, while the Indians washed the dishes, soon after which we all retired.

During the night I felt something pricking one of my fingers, as it seemed to me. Striking a match, I was amazed to see the blood pour from a smooth, round hole, about a quarter of an inch in diameter, on the first joint of my index finger. Thinking it might have been done by some poisonous reptile, I awakened Gonzalez, who, after a glance at the wound, informed me that it was the work of a vampire bat.

As I afterwards ascertained, these bats are very common in this region, in some parts becoming a veritable pest, attacking not only mankind but also cattle, pigs, &c., and often almost killing them by the constant loss of blood, while I have seen men who told me they had been obliged to flee from certain localities in order to avoid the pertinacious attacks of these midnight marauders. They always commit their depredations at night, and it is very

* *Gynerium segitatum*.

rare that they awaken their victims, for while their sharp teeth quickly burrow their way through the skin to the blood, their continually moving wings fan the wound in such a manner as to cause almost complete absence of pain, and the victim generally knows nothing of the midnight attack until he observes the wound.

The next morning, at about seven o'clock, we again set out, and in a few minutes we saw a fine *pava*, which promptly fell a victim to Gonzalez' aim. After a short stop for lunch, we saw some young peccaries at the bottom of the steep bank on our left. Approaching hastily, we succeeded, after a short struggle, in capturing them alive, as they were very young, and then disembarked to try for the mother, whom we heard grunting in the distance. We spent a good half-hour struggling through the thick, thorny underbrush, but all in vain; we could not find her. The young ones we put in the boat, for Gonzalez wished to take them back to La Sofía to see if he could domesticate them.

In about two hours more we reached Yocuropuí, a small village of about ten houses, situated on a high knoll on the right bank. Here we passed the afternoon in trading with the inhabitants, exchanging the various articles that we had bought in Pasto for Indian souvenirs, such as *bodoquedas*, quivers of poisoned arrows, pots of paint and poison, &c. Here we got a couple of splendid hammocks.

These Indians are Cionis, and in every way resemble those already described, except that they are, I think, a little crookeder. In accordance with

our custom, we had given them a gourdful of *aguardiente* on our arrival, but, not satisfied with that, several of them had sneaked down to the canoe while we were trading with the rest and had almost half-emptied the barrel before we discovered them. Gonzalez, who was *corregidor*—a sort of magistrate—during Martínez' absence, then made a long speech to them, emphasising their "base breach of hospitality to the two illustrious travellers," and wound up by threatening to put several of them in stocks. Completely abashed by this, they silently slunk out of the hut, and for the rest of our stay at Yocuropuí our barrel of *aguardiente* was left severely alone.

On the following day we bade *adios* to Gonzalez and set out alone, as the *bogas* of Guineo would go no farther, and those of Yocuropuí wished to delay several days in order to celebrate one of their *fiesta*, which was to occur in about ten days. We had already lost much valuable time in Pasto and Mocoa, and as Gonzalez had assured us that there were no falls nor rapids before us, we were rather glad to try our own skill as *bogas*.

Perkins, seated upon the high poop astern with his short Indian paddle in his hand, acted as *popero*, while I did the cooking up in the bow, at the same time keeping my eyes "peeled" for stumps and game with the gun in easy reach. The sun was very hot, but occasionally a gentle breeze helped matters a little. The current was now very gentle, and our progress was exceedingly slow.

As we were slowly drifting along the bank to get the benefit of the current, which was strongest there on account of a bend in the river, I dis-

cerned the dark outline of some large object lying upon an immense fallen tree-trunk. Approaching nearer, we found to our astonishment that it was an enormous boa-constrictor curled up fast asleep sunning himself. As our rifle was out of order I took deliberate aim with the shot-gun, and at a distance of some ten metres let fly at him. The hideous monster jumped up and, after lashing his tail wildly about two or three times, plunged with a splash into the water but a few metres from our canoe and was lost to sight. From our short view of him we perceived that he was of a dark-brown colour, except his belly, which was white and about ten inches in diameter; his length being, as near as we could judge, some twenty or twenty-five feet. These reptiles are fairly numerous on the Putumayo.

Along here we noticed that the river followed a regular system of long windings. First one bank would be eaten into by the strong current that swept past it, while the opposite shore would be protected by an extensive sand or gravel *playa*, often a kilometre or so in width. Then the current would in the course of a couple of kilometres reach the other bank and begin its scouring operations there, while the first would commence to accumulate a *playa*.

This system of long curves or windings extends along the whole course of the Putumayo, and it is to be observed in most of the large rivers of the Amazon basin. It is this that makes the Putumayo so wide and shallow and accounts for the numerous sand islands thrown up in midstream. In low water the channel cut out by these ever-

changing currents must be strictly followed by all steamers and launches in order to prevent grounding.

At eleven o'clock we stopped and had lunch, which I had cooked previously while Perkins was performing the rôle of *boga*, on a nice shady *playa* on the right bank. Here I managed to kill a good-sized turkey, and, after continuing about two hours, I got another, so that for dinner we had an excellent meal, the chief *pièce de résistance* being roast turkey. This operation concluded, we tied up the canoe securely, and instead of building a *rancho* both went to sleep in the canoe under the *pamacari*. It was a little crowded, but we got along all right and passed the night quite comfortably.

At about six o'clock the next morning we resumed the trip, and a couple of hours later passed the mouth of the Quebrada San Miguel, a large tributary, almost as large as the Putumayo itself, on the right bank. It was here that we first made the acquaintance of a gigantic buzzing bee that followed us for hours, flying about Perkins' head in such an irritating manner that he split our best paddle in a vain endeavour to kill it. This he finally succeeded in doing, but the deceased's place was soon taken by others, who kept at poor Perkins until nightfall. They did not trouble me, probably on account of the smoke from the fire burning in the pot I got in San José.

At midday Perkins took an observation for latitude, and found that we had just passed the Equator, being then a few minutes south of the Line. In order to celebrate this occurrence we both got outside of a good dram of *aguardiente*; we had made

a successful "dash" to the Equator, to employ the Polar term.

Soon we came to a place where the river divided into two arms, or *brazos*, a large and a small one. We chose the latter for the sake of the shade and the better chance of shooting game. As we slowly made our way through the narrow *brazo*, the branches in some places joining over our heads, the calm beauty of the luxuriant vegetation and the intense silence of the forest, broken only by the occasional shrill call of some brilliant bird or the howl of a distant tribe of monkeys, combined to make us think we were in some fairy land.

Emerging at last from the shady arcade of the *brazo*, we again entered the main river, and at one o'clock reached Montepa, the last village of the Cionis, situated upon a steep knoll on the left bank. It consisted of eight or ten little bamboo huts, very similar to the other Cioni villages already described. Here we stopped a couple of hours and had a long talk with the *capitán*, who seemed to think we were very brave in making the trip without *bogas*, and as a token of his admiration offered us each a drink of *mazata*. After collecting a few more souvenirs we were about to depart, when Perkins suddenly spied an enormous catfish, which, after the inevitable haggling, we purchased. This reminded us that we had plenty of fishing-tackle ourselves, so we resolved to test our angling abilities that very night.

Taking a most affectionate leave of the worthy *capitán*, whose extreme friendliness was doubtless inspired by our *aguardiente*, we resumed our

descent, and continued for a couple of hours, when, reaching a convenient island, we stopped for the night. While I prepared dinner Perkins shot a few small birds, which seemed to belong to a species of dove, as bait, and, after our meal was over, we rigged up a couple of lines and began fishing. Soon I felt a nibble at my hook, and when I thought the fish had it well digested I pulled and had the satisfaction of landing a fine big cat-fish. Perkins soon caught another, and presently we had a good number of the handsome big fellows.

In the morning we enjoyed an excellent breakfast of fried fish, after which we again set out. The river now became enormously wider on account of its division into several *brazos*, some of which covered great distances before rejoining the main channel. Large islands, covered with the prevailing dense vegetation, commenced to appear with great frequency, while tributaries of all sizes continued mingling their contents with those of the main river. In fact, the whole country was becoming a complete network of *brazos* and *quebradas*, so intermingled and so numerous that it was often difficult to distinguish the one from the other. This continued all the way to the mouth of the river, and is common to nearly all the great streams that empty into the Amazon.

Here we began to observe the *boto*, dog-fish or *pira-jaguar*,* of the Indians, a huge fish often more than two metres in length, which plays about in schools in many parts of the river. They would flop awkwardly about, close to the boat, appar-

Phœæna brasiliensis

* *Phœæna brasiliensis*.

ently quite at home with us. A rather peculiar custom of theirs is that of gasping and snorting violently, as though disgusted about something. Its flesh is not edible—at any rate, the Cionis will not eat it. This fish is also known as the dolphin of the Amazon.

During the whole day we suffered heavily from the suffocating heat, for the burning rays of the equatorial sun shot down upon our unprotected backs with a seemingly intentional fury, and not a breath of air stirred all day. Our thirst was astounding, but, luckily, Materon had insisted upon our taking along a quantity of limes, which now came in very handy to alleviate it.

The next day, Tuesday, the 10th, at about ten o'clock, we met a party of Indians, apparently returning to Montepa from a hunting expedition. We hailed them and asked what luck they had had, but they hurried off without replying, probably half-frightened to death at seeing two genuine, full-blooded white men.

In the afternoon we saw a *ronsoco*, or *capivara*,* a large amphibious animal somewhat resembling a hog, standing near the water on a small flat area at the foot of a very steep clay bank. As soon as we got within range I discharged the shot-gun at him, and then we both kept up a hot fire with our revolvers, wounding him in several places, as he made desperate efforts to clamber up the steep, slippery bank. Despairing of this, he suddenly plunged into the water, and we were just on the point of giving up pursuit of him when we saw his head as he came up to breathe. We emptied

* *Hydrochærus capibara*.

our six-shooters at him again, but again he dived, coming up in about two minutes, when at our once more taking a shot at him he disappeared for good and we saw him no more. I suspect that we killed him and his body sank.

This animal feeds on grasses and weeds on the banks of the river, and is generally about the size of a hog. His scanty coat, of a greyish colour, is hard and bristly, but his flesh is used as food by the Indians, although it is not very tasteful. The lard it furnishes is, however, very much esteemed in most parts. I believe that this is the largest rodent known.

This rather exciting conflict concluded, we kept on until six o'clock, when we tied up the canoe to a nice sand *playa*. After dinner we again went out on a nocturnal fishing expedition, and had fair luck, catching enough for breakfast, but not such big ones as on the preceding night. At about ten o'clock we retired to the canoe.

The next morning, at about half-past four, we were awakened by a sudden jar, so severe that we rolled all over each other. Climbing out from under the *pamacari* as quickly as possible, we found to our horror that *the canoe was adrift*. It had undoubtedly become released during the night from the stake to which it had been fastened and had drifted on downstream with the current. It was only by good luck or the hand of Providence that it had not capsized already.

As soon as we realised what had happened I immediately climbed out in the bow to ward off any other stumps that we might be about to strike, while Perkins hurried back to the poop and

endeavoured to get the bow foremost, for the canoe was floating broadside. Complete darkness prevented us from seeing more than two feet ahead of us, but Perkins succeeded in getting the bow pointing more or less ahead and keeping it there, while I stood up in front trying to make out the best course to avoid the stumps. After what seemed like an eternity—as we expected to capsize every moment—although really about an hour, day began to dawn and we began to breathe again. Soon a good-sized *playa* appeared and we stopped for breakfast, feeling rather surprised that we were alive to partake of it.

After a short rest and a long pull of *aguardiente* we pushed on again. Soon a gentle breeze began to blow, which was very agreeable, for the heat was scorching; it gradually increased, however, until it got to be quite a nuisance, raising waves nearly two feet high and blowing against the *pamacari* with such force that we were once more in danger of capsizing. Finally, the situation became so ticklish—for we did not dare to approach the bank on account of the dangers from falling trees, &c.—that, much to our regret, we were obliged to remove the *pamacari*, leaving nothing but the bare framework. Things went better then, and in accordance with our usual luck, the wind soon after ceased and within an hour all was calm again.

In some seasons of the year fierce tempests take place on the rivers of the Amazon basin, called *turbonadas*. These are generally accompanied by lightning, torrential rains, &c., and the wind, often attaining a velocity of from twenty to thirty metres per second, blows down trees and causes such large

waves and whirlpools that canoes are often overturned and lost unless great care is taken.

At two o'clock we unexpectedly reached Guepí, a scattered collection of three Colombian rubber-trading establishments, about a kilometre apart from each other. We stopped for an hour or so at the first house, belonging to one Señor Muñoz; this was a large split-palm bungalow, raised about six feet above the level of the ground in order to prevent flooding during the wet season, when the river overflows its banks. It appeared to be uncompleted, for there were no walls, although the roof and the elevated floor were finished, and the latter was covered with a miscellaneous collection of *bultos*, heaps of *yuca* and plantains, pots and kettles, *peons* in hammocks, pieces of rubber, and other things too numerous to mention. The inhabitants seemed to be taking life easily and not worrying about a rainy day, for they all knocked off as soon as we appeared and began simultaneously to talk and to fill themselves and us with *aguardiente*. They seemed to be a merry, jovial lot, and when we left insisted upon presenting us with a dozen eggs and a whole lot of *papayas* and plantains.

At about 3.30 we reached the settlement of Señor Fajardo, another bungalow, somewhat smaller than Muñoz', but on much the same style. Here we were also cordially received by the proprietor, a small, dark-complexioned man of about fifty, and his buxom wife. As they both pressed us to stop all night with them we gladly assented, and, accompanying them to the house, we were introduced to Drs. Ortiz and Hernandez, two of the recently exiled political prisoners from Mocoa, who, it appears,



A TYPICAL RIVER BANK CLEARING.

[To face p. 108.

had escaped from the escort at this place and were about to set out for Iquitos via the River Napo.

The two exiles seemed to be very decent fellows, and gave us a rather interesting account of their imprisonment and of their subsequent escape from the escort ; their companions, however, had elected to continue their journey to the Caraparaná and take a launch from there to Iquitos, as was our intention ; but these two gentlemen had thought it more interesting to ascend the River Guepí by canoe as far as possible, and then, crossing overland to the River Santa María, an affluent of the Napo, to descend that river and the Napo to their destination, the Peruvian town of Iquitos on the Amazon. As we were bound for the same place we promptly made an arrangement to the effect that the ones who reached there last were to regale the first-comers with a good dinner and half a dozen bottles of the best champagne. We then celebrated this compact with a drink of *aguardiente* each and retired for the night.

As the river had risen some two feet by morning the two exiles determined to take advantage of this fact to set out at once, for such small rivers as the Guepí can only be navigated conveniently for any distance when the water is high. In accordance with this resolution they immediately began to pack up and send for their *bogas*, and at eleven o'clock, everything being ready, the two voyagers, with a last *adios*, took their departure.

Returning to the house, we enjoyed an excellent lunch, during which we learned that our host had extensive rubber areas in the interior of the forest, several days' journey from the riverside and that

his *peons* were now at work there, extracting and preparing this produce for market; some of this rubber he sells at Mocoa, but his principal market is at Iquitos, which he described as the chief rubber centre of the Upper Amazon. In addition to his regular employees he had several Indians also at work collecting for him, whom he paid in merchandise.

Lunch over, we said goodbye and took our departure, loaded with a fresh supply of limes, *yucas*, &c. The river, muddy and swollen to a degree, took us along rapidly, and soon Guepí was left behind and we were again alone upon the river. At about five o'clock we began looking for a *playa* to stop for the night on, but none were to be seen—the river had covered them. We continued, however, in the hopes of finding some suitable place until it grew dark, when, fearing to go any farther, we tied up to a good, stout stump on the bank. Here we missed our *pamacari*, but, after some meditation, we hit upon the idea of hanging our ponchos over the framework, which, fortunately, we had left on. This scheme working satisfactorily, we had a couple of games of chess, and then retired.

CHAPTER IV

THE CENTRAL PUTUMAYO

At about seven o'clock the next morning I awoke, yawned, crawled out of our makeshift *pamacari*, and saw—a desert of wet, uneven sand. Perfectly stupefied, I awakened Perkins, and we stepped out to investigate. There stood—firm as a rock—the stump that had served as our sheet-anchor, and yonder—separated from us by a broad stretch of sandy beach—ran the river. At last we understood. The river had gone down some two feet during the night and had left us stranded on the enormous *playa* that was now revealed.

Awakening at last from the stupefaction that had overcome us, we endeavoured to push the canoe over the 150 metres of sand that lay between the river and us. We might as well have tried to move the river itself, for we could not shift it an inch. Still undismayed, we grasped our trusty *machetes*, cut down several *setico*-trees, peeled off the bark, and, after a severe struggle, got them under the canoe with the idea of sliding it over them. But it was useless, for they sank out of sight in the sand. The next attempt was still more laborious, for it was nothing less than building a track, composed of two parallel rows of logs and

then inserting rollers between the track and the canoe. This, too, proved unavailing. In despair we took out all our effects and tried it again, but in vain. Roused to desperation, we made one more effort by trying to overturn the craft, but it was so waterlogged that we could not lift it three inches.

Panting, perspiring, and cursing bitterly, we saw that we were in for it, so, taking a long drink of *aguardiente* each, we carefully put everything back in the canoe, and I cooked the breakfast while Perkins fixed up the two mosquito-bars over the framework of our late *pamacari*. Breakfast over, we sat down to consider the matter, calmly and judicially. We had tried everything our ingenuity could suggest, but without the slightest success. Thus we should be compelled to stop here until some one came along and helped us or until the river rose again. Judging by the fact that up to this point we had not encountered a single traveller, the first possibility seemed very remote; and in regard to the second, we now remembered that Fajardo had informed us that this was probably the last rise of the river until the beginning of the wet season, which is about the end of January. As it was now Friday, December 13th, it looked as though we were bound to stay here some time.

After lunch we set out upon an exploring expedition along the deserted *playa*, which proved to be some three kilometres in length. Through its southern extremity ran a small *quebrada*, which issued from the dense, impenetrable jungle and finally emptied into the river. In some of the deep pools of this stream we observed several enormous alligators swimming about, the tips of

their noses protruding from the water like the tops of logs.

Several species of Saurians are common in the Central and Lower Putumayo, such as the Alligator cynocephalus, which is frequently from eight to ten feet long; the Alligator palpebrosus, smaller but equally voracious; and the Crocodilus sclerops, or spectacled alligator, so called on account of his horrible red eyes, projecting outwardly like a pair of glasses on his snout. This brute, which attains a length of from twelve to fifteen feet, lays its eggs in the warm sand, where in due time they are hatched. These alligators, or *caymanes*, rarely attack man, and feed chiefly on fish and small animals, such as river-seals, capivaras, &c.

Returning to the canoe, we thought that it would be an excellent idea to remove our shoes and socks and go barefoot, for the sand was loose and soft and inconvenienced us by getting in the tops of the shoes. We had no sooner taken off these articles, however, than we discovered that the sand was burning hot from the blazing rays of the sun—so hot, in fact, that we hastened to put them on again at once.

While I busied myself preparing dinner Perkins went to work cleaning up our rifle, which we had neglected and allowed to become very rusty. By the time dinner was ready he had polished it up and it was as good as ever, which made us feel a little more at home, for we had heard most bloodcurdling tales of the ferocity of the jaguars and tigers so common in this region.

The jaguar, ounce, or American tiger,* is almost

* *Felis onca*.

as large and ferocious as the tigers of Asia, often measuring over six feet in length, exclusive of the two-feet-long tail. It attacks nearly all animals, and sometimes man himself. Its sleek coat is of a bright tan colour on the back and white underneath, and on its flanks four rows of black rings, surrounding small black dots, are to be observed. This is the most common kind met with.

Other species are: the black jaguar,* known to the Indians as the *jaguareté*, which is very ferocious; the puma, *cougar*, or American lion,† whose coat is of a uniform tan, and which often measures four feet in length; the grey tiger,‡ which is only about two feet long; and the *maracaja* tiger,§ which has a coat of different shades of black, white, and grey, and is still smaller than the preceding one.

The next morning we again went out hunting and exploring, and found numerous *danta*, or tapir tracks, from the forest to the river. They were very large, and we followed them until they disappeared into the inaccessible forest. Reaching the southern end of the beach, we observed several turtle tracks, but did not notice them closely, for just then we stumbled upon what looked like a jaguar trail, which we followed until it, too, disappeared in the depths of the forest. Somewhat discomfited at these repeated disappointments, we returned to the alligator pools and amused ourselves at taking pot-shots at the alligators until they discovered our game and promptly got away. A little later we shot a small bird, resembling a seagull,

* *Felis onca nigra*.

† *Felis concolor*.

‡ *Felis pardalis*.

§ *Felis tigrina*.

which we saved as bait for a fishing expedition we had planned for that evening.

Returning to the canoe, we had lunch ; and, then, as it was too hot to go out on another expedition, devoted the rest of the afternoon to chess : but I lost every game, although when we were on the Cauca Railway I used to beat Perkins easily. Whether my mind was distracted by our shipwreck, or whether Perkins had done some studying up, I cannot say ; the fact remains that during all the time we were shipwrecked I only won a single game, and we must have played over fifty.

At about seven o'clock in the evening we went down to the edge of the river and commenced fishing. At first we did not get a single bite, and we were just about giving it up in despair, when a school of enormous catfish appeared upon the scene, and in less than an hour and a half we had enough to last for a couple of days. Here we observed several more monstrous alligators, and soon so many appeared that we began to get a little nervous. They did not molest us, however, and we kept on fishing until nine o'clock, when we retired to our humble abode—the canoe.

Shortly after breakfast the next morning I went out on another expedition, taking my *machete* with me. After exploring the *playa*, without seeing anything more than tracks, I succeeded in penetrating a short distance into the forest, where I was lucky enough to kill a fine, large bird, known as the *paujil*. Returning to the canoe, I stumbled upon a large turtle track ; following it some distance, I observed that it had dug up the sand, probably

to deposit some eggs, so, excavating a little with my *machete*, I discovered the nest, which contained over eighty eggs. As these eggs are excellent eating, I took off my shirt, tied them up in it and carried them to camp, along with the *paujil*. At any rate, we were in no danger of starving.

There are two kinds of turtle common on the Putumayo, a large and a small species, known respectively as the *charapa* and the *charapilla*. The former is often two or three feet in diameter, and lays eggs almost as large as those of a hen and sometimes as many as a hundred in a nest. The latter is only about a foot or eighteen inches across, its eggs are only about half the size of the former's, and there are only from twenty to thirty of them in a nest. The flesh of both these Chelonians is succulent and nourishing; the shell, which, however, is not so valuable as that of a sea-turtle, is used in some places for different purposes. The eggs are very agreeable, and are eaten either fresh or smoked; in Brazil they extract from them an oil, which is employed for illuminating, like kerosene.

After lunch, which was composed of rice, turtle-eggs, fish, and *yuca*, we again took up chess, which we played steadily until about three o'clock, when, happening to glance up towards the river, I was overjoyed to perceive several canoes coming upstream. Rushing down to the water's edge, we saw that there were five canoes, each one containing about ten Indians. As soon as they came up to us, I told them of our misfortune and asked them to help us out, promising to reward them generously. The wretches merely smiled and

passed on, which so enraged us that, had I not observed that they were all well-armed, I should certainly have fired a couple of rifle-shots across their bows. As it was, we could do nothing but stand there and execrate them, which naturally was useless. When they finally disappeared, we returned with bitter thoughts to our chess, which we kept at until after dinner.

During this meal we were so upset over the malicious action of the Indians that we determined to have blood of some sort, so, after some deliberation, we decided that it should be the *danta's* whose track I had observed in the morning. Accordingly, at about nine o'clock, we set out on the warpath; Perkins carried the shot-gun and I the rifle, while we both had a revolver and a naked *machete*. Arriving at the spot where the trail disappeared into the forest, we selected a couple of well-concealed but comfortable seats and waited.

After spending several hours sitting there in absolute silence, our patience was finally rewarded by hearing the sound of snapping underbrush, and the next moment a large, awkward form waddled past us and out upon the moonlit sands. We fired almost simultaneously, and had the satisfaction of seeing the animal fall with a thud; the next instant, however, it was again upon its feet and dashing wildly and violently about. Meanwhile, we discharged our revolvers again and again, but without much effect; at last the gallant Perkins rushed up and with a few powerful blows of his *machete* ended the *mêlée*, receiving, however, a slight gash in the calf of his leg from a projecting tusk.

We dragged the heavy body of the vanquished *danta* to our canoe, and, after duly celebrating our victory, found him to be nearly six feet in length and close to three feet in height. We then proceeded to skin him and cut him up in small pieces for smoking, for this is the most common method of preserving meat in this region. This operation concluded, we immediately built a large fire, erected over it a *barbacoa*,* and then, salting the pieces one by one, we put them over the roaring fire until they were cooked through. This task was not finished until daylight, when, not troubling to get breakfast, for we had eaten an enormous quantity of the roasting tapir, we immediately retired, quite exhausted but happy.

The tapir, *danta*, or *gran bestia* is the largest mammal of the Amazon Valley, and somewhat resembles the hog. Its snout is, however, prolonged to a small, flexible proboscis and its brown skin is covered, not with bristles but with a few silky hairs. During the daytime the tapir generally remains hidden in the cool, swampy marshes, coming out only at night to feed on roots, nuts, &c. When startled, he rushes along at great speed, his head down and perfectly regardless of trees and underbrush, through which he passes like a whirlwind. The only sounds this animal makes are low grunts and short, shrill whistles, quite out of proportion to his large frame. The tapir—the most valuable of all the pachyderms—ought to be domesticated, for its flesh is excellent and its skin makes first-rate leather; in addition to this,

* A framework of unseasoned wood built over an open fire to suspend meat, &c., from.

it has been suggested that it would also serve as a beast of burden.

We did not awake until about 11 a.m., when we had breakfast or lunch—whichever it was—after which we set out on our usual stroll. Perkins elected to take the shot-gun and penetrate the forest a short distance, while I went down to the alligator-pool. I saw several turtle tracks on the way, but decided not to dig any eggs, as we had an ample supply of provisions. Arriving at the pool, I sat down in the sand awaiting for some of the Saurians to put in an appearance; I sat there for some time, and was just thinking of returning to camp, when the water swirled up and the head of a river-cow or *lamantin* showed up for an instant. I jumped to my feet and the Cetacean promptly disappeared; although I hung around the pool for an hour or more, I saw nothing more of the river-cow, and, quite disappointed, returned to our abode.

The manatee, *dugong*, *vaca-marina*, or *lamantin* is none other than the classical siren, and sometimes reaches a length of from twelve to fifteen feet. Its pisciform body terminates in a fan-shaped tail, while the two fins in front, although flat and membranous, consist of five claw-like projections, somewhat resembling human fingers. The females have breasts, similar in shape to those of a woman. Their flesh is excellent, and they generally yield large quantities of fat, which is often used as an illuminant. As the manatee has a very delicate sense of hearing, its capture is rather difficult, and the Indians generally conceal themselves in the thick rushes that surround the bank

of a pool and wait there for the victim to come up. As it feeds on certain plants that grow on the edge of the bank, it approaches the shore with some frequency. The Indians then watch their chance and, at a favourable moment, spring out and stab it before it can escape. This animal is becoming rarer every year, owing to the persecution it suffers.

In about half an hour Perkins arrived with three victims—a small dove, a little green lizard, known as the *iguana*, and a parrot. After making a brief examination of these trophies, of which he seemed very proud, I prepared dinner, after which we had a quiet smoke and then retired.

The next morning we were overjoyed to perceive that the river had risen nearly a foot during the night, but our hopes began to abate when it slowly commenced to go down again, and by eleven o'clock completely vanished, for the water was even lower than before. It certainly began to look as though we were to be detained here several weeks, possibly months.

In the afternoon we went out hunting, in spite of the suffocating heat. Coming to Perkins's trail in the forest, we followed it to the end, took out our *machetes*, and, cutting out some of the underbrush, proceeded for about a kilometre farther. Resting here for some time without seeing anything worth shooting, we were about to return when the crackling of twigs indicated that some large animal was prowling around in our vicinity. Approaching cautiously, we peered through the rank vegetation and perceived a herd of about fifteen peccaries, busily engaged in

devouring the fallen fruits of a group of palm-trees. As we had plenty of meat, we did not kill any of them, but, after observing them for a few minutes, started back to camp.*

The flesh of these pachyderms is excellent; if the animal killed is a male, it is necessary, however, to remove certain glands immediately, otherwise the meat will have a strong, disagreeable flavour. In some parts the natives take advantage of the natural pugnacity of this animal to encompass its destruction. The *modus operandi* is as follows: The hunter sneaks to them as they are feeding and excites them by imitating the barking of a dog; as soon as they perceive him they all make a rush in his direction; the hunter climbs a convenient tree and the enraged peccaries dash themselves against it in an endeavour to overturn it; the hunter then descends within reach of them, and, with his stout *machete* frequently kills numbers of the infuriated animals before they abandon their attack.

In the evening we again went fishing, but with indifferent success. The fish did not seem hungry, and it was not until after ten o'clock that we caught enough for breakfast. These were, as on the other occasions, all catfish. Other fish, however, abound in the Central and Lower Putumayo, most of which are already mentioned. One small fish, known as the *candirú*, is much feared in some parts on account of its fondness for entering the lower orifices of people in bathing.

On the following day Perkins did not feel very well, so I went out alone with the object of securing

* The travellers seem to have encountered a numerous *fauna*.—EDITOR.

some more turtle eggs. Reaching the vicinity of the alligator-pool, I found a small trail which led along the bank for some distance. Following it with my eyes on the ground, I suddenly stumbled over something and almost lost my balance. Looking around, I perceived that I had run up against an enormous spectacled alligator that had been sunning himself on the sands, and I assure the gentle reader that I lost no time in making my get-away. The hideous monster lost no time in pursuing me, and my blood ran cold when I looked around and saw his wide-open jaws not more than two metres behind me. Fortunately, the forest was close, and in less time than it takes to tell it I was up a tree and pouring down a hot revolver fire upon my disgruntled antagonist, who soon walked off in disgust. After some time I cautiously descended; needless to say, I did not follow up any more turtle trails in the vicinity of the pool, for I had no desire to enter those pearly gates that I had just escaped from so narrowly.

Perkins, better in the afternoon, went out, while I remained with the canoe; in about an hour and a half he returned with about twenty small eggs, having found a *charapilla's* nest and a large, beautifully plumaged bird, known as the *piurí*; this bird has a magnificent, black curled topknot and a yellow bill, tipped with black, and is about the size of a turkey. I believe this fine bird is rather rare.

The next morning Perkins and I set out on a forest expedition; following our previous trail to the end, we took out our *machetes* and hacked our way on a couple of kilometres farther. On

the way we saw a tribe of the monkeys known as the Barrigudos; they are hairy and pot-bellied, with large, bullet-shaped heads and well-formed limbs. As soon as they saw us they scampered off, and we did not take a shot at them. Finally, perspiring from every pore as a result of our exertions, we were about to sit down to rest a little while, when Perkins heard in the distance the hoarse, piercing call of the *toucan*.* Wishing to secure a specimen of this strange, queer-looking bird, he set out in the direction from whence the call seemed to come, while I remained at the end of our *trocha*, enjoying a smoke. After waiting there an hour or so I began to get alarmed for him, and halloed repeatedly at the top of my voice, but the deep silence of the forest was broken by no answering yell. Then I bethought myself to discharge my rifle, but nothing was to be heard in reply except the long-drawn-out echoes.

What could I do? I dare not set out in search of him, lest I, too, be lost, for in these dense solitudes people have perished from starvation and exposure, unaware that they were within a kilometre of a house. I sat there for hours, shouting and firing my rifle at short intervals and was just becoming desperate, when, faint in the distance, I thought I heard the dull report of a shot-gun. When the echoes of my answering discharge died away, I listened anxiously and, after a short interval, once more heard the muffled boom of the shot-gun, but a little louder than before. Keeping up a steady fire, in about three-quarters of an hour I was overjoyed to see Perkins, with

* *Ramphastas discolorus*.

the *toucan* in his arms, appear in quite a different direction than he had set out from.

After he had recovered himself somewhat by means of the small flask of *aguardiente* that I had with me, he informed me that the possibility of getting lost had never occurred to him until having shot the bird. After about an hour's pursuit, he started to return; then he had realised that he was lost, for he had not the slightest idea of which way to return, and wandered about for hours until he finally got within range of the report of my rifle. After that, the rest was easy, and in less than an hour he had found his way back.

Returning to the camp, we examined the *toucan* that had been the means of leading him astray. These birds are as a rule about the size of a pigeon; their huge yellow beak is almost as big as their entire body. It is, however, of a porous and cellular structure, and does not weigh much. Their plumage is brilliant and attractive, the back, tail, and wings being of a dark rich blue, while the breast is yellow. The *toucan* lives in hollow trees in the depths of the forest, and feeds on fruits and insects; as a rule, it lays only two or three eggs, which it often devours.

At about four o'clock I went out in search of some turtle eggs, and, after some half-hour's trailing, found a large nest containing over a hundred. Tying them up in my shirt, I was returning to camp when I heard the report of the rifle, which seemed to come from that direction; hastening onward, I turned a bend and saw three men get out of a canoe and approach our abode, where

they seemed to be cordially received by Perkins. Within a few minutes I joined them, and was overjoyed to see that they were a detachment of the Caraparaná police force of the *Corregidor*, Gabriel Martínez.

The officer in charge of the little band—*Alférez* Velasco—was very agreeable and courteous, and readily consented to lend a hand. So after dinner, which was a very pleasant affair, we removed all our effects from the canoe, collected our rollers, passed around the *aguardiente*, and in less than two hours our gallant craft was again afloat. The *Alférez* and his men then retired, completely exhausted by this task and the long day's poling up the river, and Perkins and I commenced our heart-breaking labour of carrying our baggage, &c., over the half-kilometre that separated us from the canoe—for it had not been convenient to roll the heavy craft to the nearest part of the river on account of the sand-hummocks that intervened, and to have taken the canoe up to this place would have meant two hours' hard work on account of the strong current and the long bend in the river.

It was truly a sickening task. We had had originally seven *bultos*, weighing about four *arrobas* each; now, in addition to this we had a barrel of *aguardiente*, our Indian souvenirs, Perkins's mineralogical specimens, our *danta*, &c. To add to our disgust the river commenced to rise rapidly, and soon we perceived that, if we had not been in such a hurry, there would probably have been no necessity for carrying our things, as the river would have relieved us of this task. Sweat fell from us in streams, the rough edges of the *bultos*

cut our shoulders mercilessly, and, to make matters worse, it began to rain in torrents. Still we stuck to it, and at about one o'clock in the morning Perkins staggered on board with the last load—the barrel of *aguardiente*—on his back. After lightening this part of our equipment by two good drinks each, we immediately retired and slept the sleep of the just.

The next morning it was as we had expected—the river had kept on rising, and the greater part of the *playa* was submerged. Making our way to the police detachment, we held a long chat with the officer, gave them a chunk of the smoked *danta*-meat, passed around the *aguardiente*, and thanking them heartily, took our departure. The swift current took us along rapidly, and soon the scene of our shipwreck faded away in the distance and became but a pleasant memory of the past.

Lunching in the canoe at about eleven o'clock, we steadily continued our descent. At about two I thought I would like to try my hand at being *popero*, so Perkins accordingly gave me a few hints on it and then retired under the *pamacari* to enjoy a short nap. I got along first-rate for an hour or so and was beginning to think myself almost the equal of a professional Indian *boga*, when, borne along at a tremendous rate by the rushing current, we ran into a log that stuck some six feet out of the water at an angle of about thirty degrees. The log was too high to strike the bow, and passed over it; it reached the *pamacari*, got caught fast in it, the canoe turned broadside, listed to port, water poured over the gunwale in torrents,

and I commenced to say my prayers. The next moment the *pamacari* snapped, the canoe veered around bow foremost again, the log, with the released *pamacari* still attached to it, raked the rear part of our craft, knocked me overboard, and the canoe was free. I hastily grasped the end of the log and hung to it like a tick to a nigger's shin, until Perkins struggled to his feet and threw me a rope, for no mortal man could have come up with the canoe in the teeth of the current. I grabbed the rope, and Perkins, after some delay, finally yanked me aboard, none the worse for my misadventure except a large bruise on my forehead. I did not play the rôle of *popero* again for some time.

At about five o'clock we stopped for the day at a large *playa*; I may say, however, that we spent some time in sounding the vicinity of the place where we tied the canoe, in order not to get stranded again. Taking a little walk to explore our neighbourhood, we stumbled upon several turtle trails, and, following them up, found some three large nests. Digging a little with our *machetes* at one of them, we unearthed about eighty eggs, which we conveyed to the canoe; some of these eggs we had for dinner in the shape of an omelette.

The next morning we again set out on our journey. As our *danta* was now getting spoiled, I kept an eagle eye on the trees along the bank in hopes of killing something, and shot at several monkeys, but with apparently no effect. Finally I perceived a large turkey, and as soon as we got within range drew a bead on him and fired. The

bird fell to the ground, we drew up, I got out and found the dead body of a buzzard or *gallinazo*.

This repugnant bird, also known as the *urubú* in Brazil, is about the size of the wild turkey, which it somewhat resembles at a distance. Its plumage, however, is a sort of dingy black, and its fairly large beak is of the same colour. They always emit an insufferable, carrion smell, and are the universal scavengers of the tropics. Indeed, in Colombia the killing of a *gallinazo* is punishable by a heavy fine. Of these birds the best known species are the *Cathartes foetens*, the *C. aura*, and the *C. jata*.

The white *gallinazo* is not so common, and is popularly supposed to be the king of the flock. While on the Cauca Railway I saw one feeding on a dead mule, while all the common *urubús* stood on one side, waiting until he had had enough. The Indians (as well as many of the "whites") are very superstitious in regard to this bird, and consider its appearance as a good omen.

Having shot nothing eatable, we reached a promising-looking *playa* at two o'clock and disembarked in search of some more turtle-eggs. We were busily engaged in excavating a nest, when Perkins saw a solitary canoe slowly making its way up-stream. Approaching the bank, we hailed the strangers, and they began to steer in our direction; as they came nearer we saw that they were all Indians, except one, who was a well-dressed, elderly white man. It was then that we became conscious of our clothes, or rather of our lack of them, for I was dressed only in a torn shirt, an equally torn pair of trousers, and a wide

Stetson hat, while Perkins was clad only in a long shirt and his flowing beard.

Mastering our embarrassment, we introduced ourselves to the old man, who proved to be none other than Don Rogerio Becerra, the gentleman who had escorted the exiles down to the Caraparaná, from whence he was now returning to Mocoa. He seemed to be a very pleasant and agreeable man, and we held quite a conversation with him, in the course of which he informed us that the *Corregidor*, Don Gabriel Martínez, to whom Jurado had given us a letter, was on his way up also with his police force, and that we might expect to meet him in a couple of days. After a little more conversation he presented us with a live *charapilla*, of which he had several, and slowly resumed his long and tedious journey.

After unearthing the rest of the eggs, we, too, set out and continued our trip without any further incidents until about half-past five, when we stopped at a large *playa*. While I was engaged in cooking the dinner here, Perkins went out for a prowl with the shot-gun and succeeded in getting a large duck.

The following morning, December 22nd, we got an early start at six o'clock and continued the trip without incident until ten o'clock, when, owing to the stifling heat, we drew up to a beach and put up a new *pamacari*-frame, over which we laid our mosquito-bars to make a little shade. No sooner was this accomplished than the sun disappeared behind a cloud, a strong wind arose, and it began to rain in torrents. This kept up for some two hours, and, of course, we got soaked ;

at the end of this time, however, the sun came out again as hot as ever, and in another two hours we were dry.

Shortly after this we met a group of four or five *capivaras* trying to scramble up the crumbling, four-foot-high vertical bank of an immense sand island covered with a tall, dense grass. As soon as we got within range Perkins let fly at them with his rifle, while I did the same with the shotgun; the only noticeable effect was to accelerate their frantic efforts to mount the bank. Then the swift current wafted us down opposite to them, and we opened up a hot revolver fire. One or two of them dived then, and another, with a desperate leap, got on top of the bank and instantly disappeared in the tall grass. By this time we were some distance past the spot where they had been, and as the current was very strong, we did not judge it worth while to go back, seeing that they had all disappeared.

On the following day we were again favoured, at about noon, with another heavy downpour. The wind was so strong as to cause large waves and make our progress exceedingly slow. When the storm passed, at about one o'clock, the sun again obligingly came out and dried our clothes for us, as on the previous day. A little after this we had the luck to shoot a turkey and find a large nest of turtle eggs; the *charapilla* that Don Rogerio had given us we still kept tied up on his back alive in the bow, intending to keep him for Christmas.

At about 3 p.m. we came in sight of a house, which, according to what Don Rogerio had told us, we surmised was Yaracaya, the rubber estab-

lishment of Señor Jesús López. Around the house was a little patch of clearing, planted with *yuca*, plantains, &c., while, surrounding this little piece of man's feeble handiwork rose the unbroken stretch of primeval forest and the island-studded river, rushing onward to join the mighty Amazon.

Keeping in towards the right bank—upon which the establishment is situated—we were so engrossed in taking stock of the place that we got stuck on a submerged sand-bar and some difficulty was experienced in getting off it. Then a tall, dark, bearded man, dressed in a pair of checkered blue trousers and a white shirt, who proved to be López himself, came down to the bank, accompanied by a *peon*, and gave us a cordial welcome.

Leading us up the gentle slope, he conducted us into the house, which was built on posts about six feet above the level of the ground. It was of bamboo and split-palm, large and ample, and had a porch running along the front, which faced the river. Presently a tall, rather pretty woman appeared, whom he introduced to us as the wife of his partner, now absent on a trip to Iquitos, via the River Napo. In the kitchen we observed a number of Indian women busily engaged in making *fariña*.

We had not intended stopping here for more than an hour or so, but shortly after our arrival Perkins was attacked by a heavy dose of fever, and as López pressed us to stay, we were glad to accept his invitation. I spent most of the time in conversation with our host, who kindly supplied me with considerable information about the region of the Caraparaná.

In the course of this conversation I learned that there was considerable ill-feeling between the Colombians of that section and the Peruvians on account of the boundary dispute and the aggressions of the latter, who are much more numerous than the Colombians and all employees of a large firm which has its headquarters in Iquitos and is known as the Peruvian Amazon Company. López informed me that this company, planning to get possession of the rubber estates of the Colombians of the Caraparaná, had influenced the Peruvian officials at Iquitos, in open violation of the *modus vivendi*, to send troops up to help expel them, and that, moreover, these troops had just arrived.

Somewhat taken aback at this rather interesting information and not wishing to get mixed up in any frontier disputes, I asked López if it were not possible to avoid passing through that region and cross over by some *varadero** to the River Napo, as his partner had done. He replied that there were several *varaderos* we could take, the best one being near an establishment known as Remolino—some five-days journey down the river—which belonged to the Colombian company of Ordoñez and Martínez. These gentlemen, López went on to inform me, had plenty of Indians in their service, and, in addition to lending us the necessary number of *cargadores*, would probably be glad to buy our canoe and such effects as we did not desire to take with us. This advice seemed reasonable, and I determined to act on it.

The next morning found Perkins no better, so

* Portage.—EDITOR.

we had to prolong our stay. In the course of my conversations with López, who seemed to take life pretty easily, I learned that all the rubber produced in this section of the Putumayo is an inferior kind of *jebe* or *siringa*, known technically as *jebe débil* or weak-fine rubber. Such large quantities of it are produced, however, and at such a small cost, especially in the Caraparaná and Igaraparaná districts, that its poor quality is more than compensated for. López furthermore told me that he had several *rationales* and a number of Indians employed on his inland estates. The former he paid a salary, while the Indians exchanged the rubber they collected for merchandise.

In the middle of the afternoon we perceived several canoes coming up the river ; finally reaching the port, they disembarked, and we saw that they were the police force that Becerra had told us of. López and I went down to the port to greet the *Corregidor*, Don Gabriel Martínez ; what was our amazement when the corporal in charge gave us the pleasing information that four or five days previously, while they had been stopping at an establishment known as Yubinete, a launch had appeared with about forty employees of the Peruvian Amazon Company on board, who had informed the *corregidor* that he must go to El Encanto, their headquarters, with them. Upon his refusal they had exhibited their arms, and declared that they would take him by force then. Seeing that resistance would be useless, Martínez had ordered his men to wait three days for him, and, if he did not appear at the end of that time, to proceed on up the river. They had not seen him

since, and naturally feared that he had been detained.

López asked them to stop over Christmas, and they gladly assented, for the poor fellows, of whom there were eight, were in a lamentable condition. Thin, weak, and emaciated, they looked more like ghosts than men. They were all in rags, without food, without medicines, and suffering from malarial fever of the worst kind. López gave them some food and assigned them quarters under the house, while I gave them the greater part of our quinine. They were accompanied by ten or twelve Cioni boatmen, who, curiously enough, looked quite plump and healthy.

The next day was Christmas, and Perkins was better, so we celebrated the occasion by killing the turtle Don Rogerio had given us. In addition to this delectable dish, the lady of the house made some plantain dessert and several other dainties, which we devoured ravenously. Then López brought out a small barrel of the indispensable *aguardiente*, and everybody, including the sick policemen, their Cioni boatmen, and Perkins and myself, got on more or less of a jag,* which lasted all day, and was not interrupted even by the death of one of López' Indians, who, it seems, had been ailing for some time.

The next morning at eight o'clock the policemen set out on their homeward journey. We saw them off, and, returning to the house, spent the rest of the forenoon in taking down a lot of Cioni words, which López was kind enough to furnish us with. This task completed at four o'clock, we had

* American slang term for a drinking bout.—EDITOR.

lunch, and after rendering the genial López a small return for his hospitality, Perkins and I set out once more upon our journey down the river.

During the afternoon we stopped on a large *playa* and dug up a quantity of turtle eggs. While engaged in this operation we observed a magnificent bird of a blackish colour, which we took to be the ibis. We endeavoured to drop him, but he was too wily for us, and we could not get within range. A little later I succeeded in killing a couple of wild ducks, which seemed to be very numerous in this vicinity.

On the following morning we set out at about six o'clock, being awakened at about half-past five by a numerous army of gnats or *moscos*. These little pests, described in the first chapter as being very prevalent on the Cauca Railway, had not afflicted us since leaving Puerto Guineo, the point of embarkation. They now became very aggravating, and such was their ferocity and perseverance that we were finally compelled to don the gloves and veils we had had made in Pasto for the purpose. Owing to the suffocating heat, these articles were inconvenient to a degree, but as they were undoubtedly the lesser evil, we endeavoured to put up with them.

At about 2 p.m. we reached Yubinete, the place where Martínez had been kidnapped. As soon as we reached the port a couple of *racionales* came down and conducted us up along a winding path to the little split-palm hut, which was situated on a high knoll on the right bank, some two hundred metres from the river. The place seemed desolate and neglected, for rank weeds and large bushes

arose on every side. The proprietor, it seemed, was absent, and the two *racionales*, who had been left in charge, took life very easy.

Here we had lunch with them, which was a rather meagre affair, after which we sold them some of our remaining Indian trading-stuff in order to get it out of the way. During the course of this deal, which was enlivened by a considerable amount of haggling and *aguardiente*, we learned that nothing more had been heard of the unfortunate Martínez, and the opinion of the two *racionales* was that he was being detained at El Encanto for some underhand purpose.

Bidding *adios* to the hospitable *racionales*, we resumed our descent at about 3.30, and continued it without incident until about six o'clock, when we stopped at a large *playa* near where the river—or at least the arm that we were following—divided into three *brazos*. Here we saw several ducks, but they would not let us get within range. With the darkness the gnats disappeared, but great blood-sucking mosquitoes soon took their place; it was out of the frying-pan into the fire.

After a night of torture we resumed our journey on the following morning, taking the left *brazo*, as the two *racionales* had informed us that it was the quickest. The gnats now relieving the mosquitoes, we again put on the paraphernalia of the previous day, but found it unendurable, for the narrow *brazo* was like an oven, being too wide to provide shade and too small for the breeze to enter.

Had it not been for these little wretches we should have enjoyed the passage through the *brazo*,

for on either side—almost within arm's length—towered up in magnificent confusion the luxuriant, impenetrable vegetation of the Amazon Valley. The calm beauty of the scene was from time to time enlivened by the numerous bands of gaily-coloured parrots and parroquets that, with shrill, hoarse cries, would circle about in the sky far above us. Again, we would perceive a group of monkeys leaping from tree to tree with the agility and quickness peculiar to them. At other times the silence would be broken by the splash of the large fish, which, intent on securing some delectable insect for their lunch, would leap out of the water in their eagerness.

At about two o'clock we emerged from the *brazo* and again entered the main channel, which along here averaged from one to two kilometres in width. Here there was a little wind, which served to relieve us a trifle, but, unfortunately, it did not last long, and the stifling heat and the clouds of gnats soon resumed their sway.

A little later, while keeping along the right bank to get the benefit of the current, we observed a band of the large *guariba** monkeys making their way along the bank. As we were in need of some meat, we hastily disembarked and set out in pursuit of them. Perceiving an especially large one, I let fly at him with the shot-gun; he fell, but, striking a branch in his descent, caught it with his tail and hung there head downwards. Finally, after shooting him six times more and spending over half an hour throwing sticks at him, he condescended to fall, and we took him in triumph to

* *Simia mycetes*.

the canoe. We had a fine dish of monkey-steak for dinner that night.

The *guaribas* are the largest and most interesting of the numerous species of monkeys that abound in the forests of the Putumayo. They average two feet in height, have well-developed fingers, and a heavy beard under the chin. Their long, prehensile tail is covered with hair on top, but the under surface is bald and horny. They are generally of a brownish colour, but this often varies, according to the age of the individual. The *guaribas* have powerful voices, and when they all get together and begin howling, the din is deafening. They feed on fruits and nuts, and the females carry their young on their backs like some Indian women.

The next day we got another early start; the river was high, and the current took us along rapidly. During the morning we shot at several splendid-looking parrots, but they were too far off for our fire to be effective. The gnats still hen-pecked us, though not so ferociously as on the previous days, because we now got along faster. We had intended digging some turtle eggs, but the river was so swollen that the greater part of the *playas* and islands were covered.

At noon a heavy rain set in, which soaked us through and through. Then the sun came out again in all its glory and dried us within an hour or so, while our enemies the gnats took their toll of us; they literally appeared around us in clouds, and we killed thousands of them at a time by simply clapping our hands together. Finally they became so numerous that I was compelled to make

a fire in the pot in the bow, which I rendered as smoky as possible by wetting the wood. This drove them off a little, but was as bad for us as it was for the gnats.

During the afternoon the river went down somewhat, and the beaches and *playas* were once more revealed. The water, however, had obliterated all tracks, &c., and consequently we were unable to find any nests. At five o'clock we stopped at the mouth of a little *quebrada*, where the fish actually swarmed. Every moment they would jump up out of the water, for some reason or other, and two of them even went so far as to leap into our boat. Nevertheless, our daintiest bait would not tempt them to bite.

The next morning, December 30th, we again set out on our journey. The river had gone down considerably, so we made rather slow progress, and, consequently, the man-eating gnats had us more or less at their mercy, for it was so hot that our armour was unbearable. At ten o'clock a slow, drizzling rain set in, which was peculiarly annoying, for it was not strong enough to dissipate the gnats, but sufficiently damp to soak us completely.

The wet season had apparently set in, and, owing to the gnats and rain, our trip had lost much of its charm, so we made up our minds to follow López' advice in regard to crossing over to the Napo by the Remolino *varadero* without delay. Besides, we rather wished to travel by an overland route, in order to see the country between the rivers. Above all, we did not wish to get mixed up in any backwoods frontier fighting.

In spite of the drizzle we got out upon reaching a promising-looking *playa*, and, after some trailing, found a large nest of eggs, which had apparently been laid during the previous night. We also had the luck to shoot a small duck, so our larder, at least, was provided for.

Turning a bend, we saw a house, surrounded by a large cleared area, perched upon the left bank. Approaching nearer, we perceived that the river—heretofore nearly two kilometres wide—narrowed down until, when opposite the house, it was not over a couple of hundred metres in width. Here the banks were high and vertical, and the river, rushing between them like a mill-race, formed an immense eddy, or *remolino*, on the other side. Then, turning at a sharp angle, it gradually spread out and soon attained its former width again. We had arrived at Remolino.

CHAPTER V

THE HUITOTOS

REACHING the port with some difficulty, we secured the canoe, climbed up the steep bank, walked through the clearing, which was sown with *yuca*, plantains, &c., and arrived at the house. Here we were received in a friendly manner by an old, tattered-looking *racional*, who upon our asking for Señor Ordoñez informed us that that gentleman was at La Unión, the principal establishment of the Company, which was situated on the banks of the Caraparaná, about three hours' march overland.

Somewhat annoyed at this *contretemps*, which made it necessary for us to go to that region, Perkins and I held a short consultation, during which we decided that on the following day I should cross over to La Unión and arrange with Ordoñez to lend us the necessary *cargadores* and buy what effects we wanted, to be disposed of afterwards as quickly as possible, while Perkins remained with the canoe at Remolino. The old *racional* did not have any authority to do business with me, but was sure that Ordoñez—who seemed to be the principal man—would arrange matters with us upon any reasonable terms.

During the rest of the day we stopped at Remolino to recuperate, but the devouring gnats made such pertinacious attacks upon us that we had no time for resting, being constantly employed in repelling their onslaughts. The old *racional* wrapped his feet, head, and arms up in rags and went to sleep, probably being accustomed to wearing this armour. On account of the excessive heat we could not endure ours.

At about four o'clock a party of six or seven *racionales* came over from La Unión, intending to return there on the following day with some stores, for it seems that the establishment of Remolino is merely a sort of receiving station and warehouse. This was a lucky circumstance for us, as I could accompany them, and thus avoid all danger of losing my way, for the trail, so our old host informed us, was a mere forest path, in some places almost impassable.

The next morning at about six o'clock I set out in company with the *racionales* through the dense forest. The ground was rolling and cut up into steep hillocks and precipitous valleys by numerous small *quebradas* on their way to join the Putumayo ; as the soil was mostly yellow clay our progress was not rapid. Presently we crossed two rather large *quebradas*, from twelve to fifteen metres in width, over bridges in each case formed by the large trunk of a single tree. These the *racionales* crossed readily, but I experienced some difficulty in doing so on account of my slippery shoes. At about ten o'clock a torrential rain set in, which drenched us within five minutes. Still, we pushed on, and soon, crossing a comparatively level area,

we arrived upon the right bank of the Caraparaná. We climbed into a canoe, rowed across the thirty-metre-wide river, and, clambering up the steep, cleared bank, were at La Unión.

Making my way to the principal house, a large structure of split-palms, similar to those already described, I entered the yard, ascended the steps to the porch, and asked for Señor Ordoñez. A young man, who introduced himself as Don Fabio Duarte, the assistant manager, then informed me that Ordoñez was out in the forest with his Indians, but that he was expected back on the following day; meanwhile he invited me to stop with him until Ordoñez came. A seat near the fire soon dried my wet clothes, and a good hot lunch braced me up considerably.

In addition to this principal house there were two or three smaller structures, standing at some distance from each other and from the large one. All the forest for some distance round the establishment was cut down, and upon the fresh, green grass that took its place numerous sleek cattle and horses grazed in peaceful quiet. Some parts of this cleared area were, however, fenced in, and here large plantations of *yuca*, plantains, maize, &c., were under cultivation, for which purpose the fifteen or twenty *racionales* that I observed about the house were employed. Under the principal house I observed about a thousand *arrobas* of rubber stored away, awaiting shipment.

Duarte, who was a very affable and communicative youth, informed me that all this rubber was collected by the Indians in the Company's service, who came in periodically with what they had col-

lected and exchanged it for merchandise, &c., sold to them at rather exorbitant prices. These aborigines, who belonged to the tribe known as the Huitotos, numbered about two hundred, and lived in villages of their own in the heart of the forest. Other Huitotos were employed by David Serrano, another Colombian settler, living some distance down the Caraparaná, while the greatest portion of them were in the service of the Peruvian Amazon Company,* which, Duarte informed me, treated them very harshly, obliging them to work night and day without the slightest remuneration.

I spent the rest of the day in getting data about the Huitotos and in collecting from the *rationales*—many of whom spoke the language perfectly—a short vocabulary of the most common Huitoto words. Among other interesting facts, I learned that this whole region had first been settled by Colombians, who had been afterwards squeezed out by the Peruvians, until now in the whole district of the Caraparaná and Igaraparaná there remained but three Colombian establishments—La Unión, La Reserva (Serrano's), and El Dorado, belonging to a negro called Ildefonso González.

Señor Duarte informed me, in response to my inquiries regarding the designs of the Peruvian Amazon Company against the Colombians, that the latter had long been aware of them, the said Company having frequently offered to buy them out; these proposals having been refused, the autocratic Company had commenced persecuting them in many ways, such as refusing to sell them supplies, buying

* This concern was, before October 1, 1907, a Peruvian Company, the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company.

their rubber only at a great discount, kidnapping their Indian employees, &c.

In regard to the possibility of an attempt by the Peruvians to dispossess the Colombians by force, Duarte did not consider it probable, for, although the Prefect at Iquitos had sent a number of soldiers up, it had only been done on the representation of the company that a large Colombian force was descending the Putumayo; the Peruvian detachment, seeing for themselves that this report was false, would not countenance any raid on the three Colombian establishments, much less take part in it, and would soon, without doubt, order the release of the unfortunate *Corregidor*, Martínez. If, on the other hand, they did attempt any such iniquitous proceeding, he continued, the Colombians would oppose them until the last extremity.

The next morning I was disappointed to hear from Duarte that he had just received a message from Ordoñez to the effect that he would not be able to return for several days. This was disheartening, and I did not know what to do until Duarte suggested that I should go down and see Serrano, who, he thought, would do business with us. As this advice seemed rational and as it was only a three-hours walk through the forest I determined to follow it. Accordingly, taking my leave of the hospitable Duarte, who thoughtfully provided me with a Huitoto guide, I set out on my new journey.

The guide seemed to be a fairly intelligent fellow, and gave me a quantity of information about the system of rubber-collection employed in this region. He also went on to inform me that the Peruvians

treated his countrymen "very badly"; and when I asked him what he meant by this he gave me to understand that in case the Indians did not bring in a sufficient amount of rubber to satisfy the Peruvians they were flogged, shot, or mutilated at the will of the man in charge. When I asked if the Colombians also indulged in these practices he replied that they did not, for they always treated them well. It is unnecessary to state that I took all this information with a grain of salt, for it seemed to me very improbable.

After getting soaked by another heavy downpour, similar to that of the preceding day, we emerged from the forest and entered a large cleared area, most of which was planted with maize, *yuca*, plantains, &c., the rest being a sort of pasture-land. Passing through this for some time, we presently came to Serrano's house, a fair-sized bungalow of the usual type, half concealed by a small orchard of fruit-trees.

Climbing the porch, I found myself in the presence of three men, one of them being a short, middle-aged, coffee-coloured gentleman, while the other two were white and had the appearance of travellers. Introducing myself, I was cordially welcomed by the dark man, who proved to be Serrano, as I had supposed. He, in turn, made me acquainted with the other two, who turned out to be two of the exiles brought down by Becerra, General Miguel Antonio Acosta and Don Alfonso Sánchez. The other exiles, it appeared, had gone down to the Peruvian establishment of El Encanto to catch one of the launches which was about to sail for Iquitos. These two, however, had decided

to stop with Serrano a few days on account of the illness of Sánchez, who was prostrated by a fierce attack of malarial fever.

As Serrano was about to set out for Iquitos himself on business within a week or so, accompanied by the exiles in case Sánchez was better, he readily agreed to take us with him and, moreover, to buy our canoe and anything else that we had for sale. Accordingly, I sent word to Perkins by means of an Indian that Serrano loaned me for the purpose to descend with the canoe from Remolino to Josa, Serrano's port on the Putumayo, and, arriving there, to leave the canoe and our personal effects—for we should pass Josa on our way to the *varadero*—and bring over to La Reserva everything we had for sale, for which purpose we would send some *cargadores* there to meet him.

This business satisfactorily arranged at last, I felt considerably relieved, and hoped that soon we would be on the *varadero* to the Napo and out of harm's way. Serrano then took me out and showed me the place. In addition to the large plantations already mentioned he had planted several thousand rubber-trees in the forest, which were now from two to four years old and in a very flourishing condition. Under the house he had 170 odd *arrobas* of rubber, which had been collected by his Huitoto employees, of whom he had about forty-five families, one or two of which were then at the house.

During the course of the evening I happened to make a remark about the Peruvians to the effect that they were probably not so bad as represented. This somewhat aroused Serrano, who thereupon

recounted to me one of the most diabolical deeds committed by the murderous employees of the Peruvian Amazon Company that I had ever heard of up to that time. The following is an outline of it :—

As Serrano had owed a small sum of money to the El Encanto branch of the Peruvian Amazon Company the manager of that establishment, one Miguel S. Loayza, had made this fact an excuse to send up a “commission” about a month before our arrival to abuse and intimidate him so that he would abandon his estate. As soon as the “commission” arrived the miserable wretches who formed it began their hellish labours by chaining Serrano up to a tree ; then these model employees of the “civilising company,” as they call themselves, forcibly entering his wife’s room, dragged the unhappy woman out on the porch, and there, before the tortured eyes of the helpless Serrano, the chief of the “commission” outraged his unhappy victim. Not satisfied with this, they took his entire stock of merchandise, amounting to some 10,000 *sols*,* together with his little son and the unfortunate woman who had just been so vilely outraged, embarked them on the launch, and took them to El Encanto. Serrano had never seen them since, but had heard that his wife was being used as a concubine by the criminal Loayza, while his tender son acted as servant to the same repugnant monster.

This horrible story, in conjunction with the other accounts of the ferocity of these employees that I had been given and the treacherous kidnapping of

* One sol (S.) is equivalent to about two shillings.

the unfortunate Martínez, combined to make me think that we had stumbled upon a regular Devil's Paradise in this remote corner of the world. Still, I reflected, I had as yet heard but one side of the case—the Colombian—and therefore was not qualified to come to any decision in regard to the matter.

Serrano then informed me that they were expecting the arrival of Don Jesus Orjuela, the newly appointed Police Inspector and Government agent from Bogotá, who, they expected, would do something to protect them against these outrages. Although this gentleman had no forces, nevertheless it was understood that he had authority to make some arrangements with the Peruvians, if possible, to provide for the protection of the Colombian settlers.

Early in the morning of the following day we dispatched three of Serrano's Huitotos to Josa, in order to aid Perkins in bringing over the effects we were to sell to Serrano. Our personal baggage could remain there during the five or six days that would elapse before our departure with Serrano and the two exiles for the *varadero*. The rest of the day I spent in preparing a part of the following essay on the Huitotos, the aboriginal inhabitants of the Caraparaná and Igaraparaná districts.

In the extensive area occupied by the "civilising company," between the Caquetá and the Napo, many distinct tribes of Indians, such as the Huitotos, the Boras, the Yurias, the Ocainas, the Yahuas, the Andoques, and the Andoqueros are found. Of these the largest and most important tribe is the Huitotos.

The Huitoto tribe is divided up into numerous sub-tribes, each having a distinct name, such as the Maynanes, the Aifugas, the Recígaros, the Yabuyanós, &c. Each of these sub-tribes has its own chief, called a *capitán* or *tuchaua*, and appears to be quite independent of the rest. A sub-tribe may vary in size from twenty-five to five hundred individuals and often more.

All these sub-tribes speak more or less the same language—Huitoto, of which I give a few specimen words. It is a very simple language, with but little grammar, employing neither conjunctions nor articles. The words in a sentence are pronounced slowly, with a prolonged and harmonious intonation.

HUITOTO VOCABULARY.

father	<i>mon</i>	man	<i>iima</i>
mother	<i>ño, ei</i>	God	<i>Usiñamu</i>
daughter	<i>riñoña</i>	shade	<i>apuehana</i>
infant	<i>muguro</i>	old (fem.)	<i>uikesero</i>
brother	<i>ama, iyo</i>	old (mas.)	<i>uikerama</i>
woman	<i>riñoña, ag</i>	foreigner	<i>oicomue</i>
friend	<i>cheinama</i>	much, many	<i>momome</i>
enemy	<i>igagnahe</i>	full	<i>monite, niba</i>
white (man)	<i>veracucha</i>	I	<i>cué</i>
wizard	<i>iatche</i>	thou	<i>O</i>
sleep.. ..	<i>cuiñacate</i>	we	<i>naga</i>
tobacco	<i>tue</i>	you	<i>naga abe</i>
monkey	<i>emueje</i>	they	<i>atchue</i>
tiger	<i>jecco</i>	this	<i>piee</i>
tapir	<i>suruma</i>	my	<i>cué</i>
watercress	<i>ecco</i>	thy	<i>oe</i>
sick	<i>tuico</i>	small	<i>yurete</i>
dead	<i>paide, feode</i>	cold	<i>rosirete</i>
white	<i>userede</i>	heat	<i>ecaside</i>
red	<i>iarede</i>	dry	<i>tajerede</i>
black	<i>ituide</i>	yes	<i>jé</i>
tree	<i>daipa</i>	morning, to-morrow	<i>icoíte</i>
maize	<i>pechato</i>	hat	<i>ipoico</i>
yuca	<i>maica</i>	soldiers	<i>hudarete</i>
meat.. ..	<i>chiceci, llucusa</i>	sugar-cane	<i>cononoque</i>

plantain	<i>ocoto</i>	mouth	<i>juca</i>
pepper	<i>ivico</i>	in the forest	<i>asicoma</i>
rubber	<i>isire</i>	attractive	<i>maranaño</i>
one	<i>taja</i>	ugly	<i>maruñete</i>
two	<i>mena</i>	young	<i>cómime</i>
three	<i>taje amani</i>	old, antique.. ..	<i>huatima</i>
four	<i>menajere</i>	paint.. ..	<i>hidora</i>
five	<i>tape cuiro</i>	hair	<i>ifotire</i>
ten	<i>nagape cuiro</i>	head	<i>ifote</i>
few, little	<i>chichanito</i>	nose	<i>dofo</i>
hen	<i>atava, atahúa</i>	ear	<i>efo</i>
hog, pig	<i>nasi</i>	teeth.. ..	<i>icido, nido</i>
paper	<i>rapi</i>	moon	<i>febuy</i>
sun	<i>itoma</i>	go	<i>jai</i>
devil	<i>taife</i>	more.. ..	<i>dame</i>
good	<i>mare</i>	water	<i>hnué</i>
farina	<i>alma</i>	there is	<i>ite</i>
delicious	<i>caimarete</i>	there is not	<i>uñete</i>
to forget	<i>feide</i>	enough	<i>macavaite</i>
to drink	<i>hide</i>	good weather	<i>mare mona</i>
to eat	<i>guna</i>	to take	<i>penojo cuido</i>
to fast	<i>gunuñete</i>	to be hungry	<i>naimede</i>
to work	<i>biefano</i>	to speak	<i>naitode</i>
to go.. ..	<i>rairemaca</i>	wind	<i>aifelhui</i>
to come	<i>benebi</i>	no	<i>uñete</i>
to laugh	<i>sateide</i>	deer	<i>dronde</i>
to weep	<i>edde</i>	near	<i>yanoré</i>
let us go	<i>maña cocoaide</i>	to move	<i>jetache</i>
shower	<i>hitoma</i>	he comes	<i>mateno moito</i>
lightning	<i>jairo</i>	to carry	<i>apuine</i>
thunder	<i>doirite</i>	give me	<i>até</i>
far	<i>aré</i>	pine-apple	<i>rosille</i>
oar	<i>yapü</i>	case	<i>ojo</i>
cacao.. ..	<i>muselle</i>	small	<i>muguro</i>
egg	<i>nobo</i>	jar	<i>diaré</i>
chief.. ..	<i>mon</i>		

PHRASES.

Let us go together	<i>Maña cue digo</i>
Where is your brother	<i>Menomo O iyo</i>
This is your mother	<i>Bei O ei</i>
This is my house	<i>Cue yomo</i>
I have come here	<i>Cue bito benoína bite</i>
Hurry up	<i>mayai</i>
I have a pain	<i>sirete</i>
That's good	<i>juigora</i>
I don't know	<i>uñe uñete</i>
Come here	<i>ve</i>

I am coming	..	..	..	..	<i>bitegué</i>
I am not coming	..	..	..	..	<i>bituñete</i>
I want	..	..	..	..	<i>ejocategué</i>
What is it?	..	..	..	..	<i>muneca</i>
That's bad	..	..	..	..	<i>juigoñete</i>
I like you	..	..	..	..	<i>O yacate cue</i>
You are handsome	..	..	..	..	<i>O tabo juogora</i>
I don't like you	..	..	..	..	<i>Ivide</i>
He comes at a distance	..	..	..	..	<i>Matemo moito ané ite</i>
Where are your people	..	..	..	..	<i>Bucu muine</i>
Where is your house	..	..	..	..	<i>Menomo O apa ite</i>
Where is your field	..	..	..	..	<i>Nemomo O huarayar ite</i>
Have you plenty of yuca	..	..	..	..	<i>Allué tañoje maica</i>
Show me through the forest	..	..	..	..	<i>Darite asicomo</i>
I want to drink some water	..	..	..	..	<i>Haino firaia cati</i>
I don't want to go	..	..	..	..	<i>Haini tegue</i>
Show me a tree to make a canoe	..	..	..	..	<i>Eroi daipa juinoca amena</i>

Note.—The letters should be pronounced as in Spanish.

The Huitotos are a well-formed race, and although small are stout and strong, with a broad chest and a prominent bust, but their limbs, especially the lower, are but little developed. Their hair, long and abundant, is black and coarse, and is worn long by both sexes. A peculiar custom is that of pulling out the eyebrows, eyelashes, and the fine hairs of the other parts of the body. That repugnant sight, a protruding abdomen, so common among the "whites" and half-breeds on the Amazon, is very rare among these aborigines.

Among the women the habit of carrying their young on their backs makes them adopt an inclined position, which they conserve all their life. Their feet are turned inwards, and when they walk their thighs generally strike against each other as though they were afraid. Notwithstanding these defects, it is not rare to find among these women many, really beautiful, so magnificent are their figures and so free and graceful their movements.



A HUITOTO INDIAN RUBBER GATHERER.

[To face p. 152.]

The men, on the contrary, walk with their feet turned outwards; but when crossing a log or a tree which serves as a bridge over a stream they turn them inwards, in this way obtaining greater stability and avoiding slipping. The big toes of their feet are endowed with great flexibility, and they use them to pick up things from the ground.

Among the men certain physical organs are compressed and tied up, and never reach their normal development. The women suffer few abnormalities; their breasts are periform and always prominent, even among the old, in which case they diminish in volume, but never hang down.

The custom of mutilation is very common among all the male Huitotos. Those of the Caraparaná and the Upper Igaraparaná—the two principal tributaries of the Central Putumayo—perforate the dividing wall of the nose, and stick through the orifice a tube of *junco*, often as thick as a lead-pencil, while the inhabitants of the central portion of the Igaraparaná pierce the whole lower extremity of this organ with variously coloured tubes and feathers, sometimes vertically traversing the lower lip with others. All have a long, thick rod, often adorned with curious carvings, stuck through the lobe of the ear.

These Indians are humble and hospitable to a marked degree, except a few of the more remote sub-tribes, who are still free and independent and not yet in contact with the rubber-collectors. Indeed, Serrano informed me that the first Colombian settlers in this region, who had arrived here penniless, ill, and despairing, had been warmly welcomed by the Huitotos, plied with food, given

women, and made far more comfortable than they had ever been in their own country. Serrano's Yabuyanós at La Reserva served us splendidly, for they were always cheerful, willing, and reliable. They called Serrano their father, and, indeed, treated him as such.

Few matrimonial formalities are observed among the Huitotos. The prospective bridegroom clears a small piece of land, builds a house—or secures quarters in one already built—gives a small quantity of coca or tobacco to the *capitán* to obtain his approval, and cuts a supply of firewood for his future mother-in-law. Shortly afterwards the girl is given to him, which is an occasion of considerable festivity, and they are man and wife.

These unions are considered binding among the Huitotos, and it is very rarely that serious disagreements arise between husband and wife. The women are naturally chaste, and it was not until the advent of the rubber-collectors that they began to lose this primitive virtue, so generally met with among people not yet in contact with white men. It is worthy of notice that among these aborigines polygamy does not exist, and only in extremely rare cases does the *capitán* or *tuchaua* have more than one wife.

Serrano informed me that when a child is born the mother takes it to the river, and, after washing it, covers the little new-comer with rubber-milk in order to keep it warm, while the father makes this an opportunity for lying in his hammock, claiming to be ill. Infant mortality is very large among the Huitotos, owing to the prevailing ignorance of the women and the hardships the little copper-complexioned strangers have to put up with.

A peculiar custom, very general among these Indians, is that of giving the name of a person who has just died to another member of the family—as a rule, to the one who has been the especial favourite of the deceased. The individual so honoured then drops his former name and assumes his new one.

When any one of their *capitánes* dies he is buried under his own house, wrapped up in a new palm-fibre hammock, together with all his weapons, utensils, &c. The hut is then abandoned and a new one is erected by the survivors and their friends. Ordinary members of the tribe, including women and children, are merely buried under the floor without more ceremony.

Upon the occasion of a *fiesta*, or to solemnise any agreement or contract, they have recourse to the celebrated *chupe del tabaco*, or tobacco-drinking. A numerous group of Indians congregate about a pot placed upon the ground, which contains a strong extract of tobacco. The *capitán* first introduces his forefinger into the liquid and commences a long discourse, which is from time to time interrupted by the rest with an emphatic yell of approval. Then they become more and more excited, until finally the pot is gravely passed around and each one in turn dips his finger into the liquid and then applies it to his tongue. This is the Huitoto's most solemn oath, and is said to have never been broken. Whenever the whites wish to enter into any important agreement with the Indians, they always insist upon this ceremony being performed.

The houses of these aborigines are generally large and circular in form, averaging about sixty or

seventy feet in diameter. They are covered with a well-woven thatch roof, capable of lasting for years, made from the leaves of the *yarina* or vegetable-ivory tree ; this roof often reaches almost to the ground. The framework, generally of *chonta*, or some other hard, durable wood, is held together by means of stout *bejucos* and ropes made from the tough inner bark of a tree known as the *sachahuasca*. As there are no windows and only a small opening that serves as a door, no light nor air can enter, and the smoke and heat are generally suffocating.

As a rule, several families live in one house, each, however, having its own particular fireplace, furniture, and domestic utensils, generally limited to a few small bamboo stools and benches, several earthen pots, some baskets, various kinds of paint, a quantity of gourds used as plates, &c., a few primitive musical instruments, such as rude drums, bamboo flutes, and bone whistles, torches made of the heart of the *maquey* or of *chonta*, impregnated with resin, and several similar articles.

Overhead a few light poles are stretched, from which they hang the articles just mentioned, their arms, &c., while a basket of dried fish or meat to be smoked may often be seen hanging in the smoke just above the fire. Here, too, there generally simmers a small pot of the celebrated *casaramanú*, a peculiar sort of gravy, composed of the blood, brains, and liver of the animals they kill, well seasoned with the fiery *aji*. This sauce or gravy seldom gives out, for as it diminishes day by day new portions of the ingredients are added.

Serrano's Indians generally slept in light cham-

bira-palm fibre hammocks, similar to those of the Cionis ; but the unfortunates employed by the Peruvian Amazon Company, are worked so hard by their taskmasters that the greater part of them are obliged to sleep on the ground, on account of not having time to make their hammocks. These hammocks, as well as most of the other interesting objects manufactured by the Huitotos, are now becoming extremely rare for the same reason.

The principal hunting weapon used by these Indians is the blow-gun or *bodoqueda*, known to them as the *obidique*. This is in all respects similar to that used by the Incas, which has already been described. The Huitotos, however, unlike the Cochas, Incas, and Cionis, manufacture this interesting weapon themselves, which is a long and laborious process. It is done as follows :—

From the *chonta*-palm two sticks, from two to three metres in length, are split and gradually elaborated, so as to have the section of a half-circle throughout their whole tapering length. Then, on the flat surface of each stick a small semicircular groove, some three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter, is cut, and the two pieces are cleverly joined together. The hole is then very skilfully finished and polished internally by means of a gummy cord, previously rolled in sand and dried. This operation concluded, the whole length of the weapon is then carefully wound around with strings made from the inner bark of the *huimba-quiro*, gummed together and covered with a thick coating of the resinous gum of the sealing-wax-tree. The mouthpiece is then attached, and this novel arm is ready for use.

Another important weapon is the *moruco*, a light spear, with a poisoned tip, about two metres in length. The Indians generally carry eight or ten of them together in a bamboo case, and handle them with the greatest skill, throwing them from the hand to a distance of twenty to twenty-five metres. Bows are not used by the Huitotos. These spears are equipped with different types of points, according to the purpose for which they are to be used. Thus a spear the sides of which are provided with barbs is for hunting large animals like the tapir; a round one with a sharp point is for war; a spear with a sort of blade of bamboo, with two sharp edges, is for fishing; while one having a dull, blunt point is used to kill birds without injuring their feathers. The points of most spears and arrows are of chonta.

The *macana* is a stout, heavy piece of hard wood, shaped like an oar, and is generally used only in combats at close quarters or between individuals. A well-delivered blow with this terrible weapon will spilt a man's head from crown to chin.

The methods of fishing employed by the Huitotos are similar to those of the Cionis, which are described in the chapter on those aborigines of the Upper Putumayo.

A peculiar apparatus, used by these Indians as a sort of wireless telegraph, is the *manguaré*, which is formed by two logs of hard wood about two metres long and about forty and seventy centimetres in diameter respectively. These logs are pierced longitudinally by a narrow hole of a rectangular section, burnt in by heated stones, and are then fastened side by side. Thus, each log has two

distinct sonorous surfaces, separated by this narrow, rectangular opening, and each surface gives out a different sound, for the longitudinal hollow is generally a little to one side of the centre of the log. One of these logs, being always thicker than the other, produces two grave tones, while the smaller trunk gives out two acute ones—in all, four notes. This instrument is generally suspended by a string from the roof timbers or from a high tree near the house, and, in order to prevent swinging, is tied by another string to a stick buried in the ground.

To communicate by this novel instrument the Indian steps between the two logs and with a stout club, tipped with leather, knocks alternately upon the sonorous surfaces of the two logs. A code is arranged, based upon the difference of tones and the length and number of the blows struck, so that all kinds of messages can be exchanged. I have distinctly heard messages sent from a distance of from ten to twelve kilometres—that is, on a calm day when there was no wind.

The dress of the men is very simple, being composed only of a broad belt of the tough, inner bark known as *llanchama*, from which another piece of the same material reaches down in front and, passing between the legs, is attached to the belt again behind. This garment is called *moggen* by the Huitotos. The tribes of the Upper Igaráparaná have simplified this costume, and merely suspend from the front of the belt a small sheet of the invaluable *llanchama*. They sometimes wear, in addition to this, several bracelets of *chambira* fibre on their wrists and ankles.

The garb of the women is still more primitive, for they are clothed only in their beauty and four bracelets, two of which they wear on their wrists and the other two on their ankles. I should state, however, that the Indians employed by Ordoñez and Martínez and Serrano wore European clothes. The unfortunate slaves in the service of the Peruvian Amazon Company—except the enormous number of involuntary concubines, &c.—are, however, clothed precisely as described above.

As those Huitotos enslaved by the “civilising company” are so constantly employed in the extraction of rubber, the only food they get—omitting the extremely meagre and irregular supplies furnished by the Company, which are not worthy of consideration—is the small quantity of *yucas* and plantains that their women have time to cultivate and a few products of the forest, such as certain large worms they extract from the bark of different trees, the tender tops of the *chonta*-palm, a few wild fruits, &c. The result is that many die of starvation. Serrano and the other Colombians, however, gave their Indians time to supply their food, and consequently the latter did not suffer from hunger as their unfortunate brothers do at present.

The only beverage of the Huitotos is the *cahuana*, a preparation of *yuca* and the pulp of a forest fruit known as the *aguaje*. It is of a dirty, brownish colour, and has an unpleasant, bitter taste, disagreeable in the extreme.

A custom very general, not only among the Huitotos but also among many of the “whites,” is the use of the coca. The leaves are picked from the tree and, after being well toasted, are

pulverised and mixed with the ashes of the burnt leaves of another plant—I could not ascertain its name—in order to take away the bitter taste observed when the coca is used alone. The drug is then ready for use, and, inserted into the mouth, is rolled up under the cheek, where they sometimes keep it for half a day at a time. The juice is swallowed.

It is well known that coca is a powerful stimulant, and the Huitotos when out in the forest collecting rubber find it very useful, especially as they often have to carry the rubber they gather several leagues on their backs with practically no food at all to sustain them. They claim that it takes the place of food on these marches, and it really does seem to enable them to perform wonderful feats of endurance. While at La Unión, Duarte gave me several doses of the coca, which at first affected me with a slight nausea; I soon became accustomed to it, however, and found it very useful on different occasions.

Sometimes the Huitotos hold one of their rare dances, which is an occasion of much festivity. It should be observed, however, that those poor wretches in the service of the “civilising company” are now so enslaved and oppressed that they have no time nor spirit to indulge in these amusements, which formerly, when they were free and independent, were, so Serrano informed us, carried out as follows:—

Preparatory to beginning the dances the Huitotos used to paint themselves all over in various colours, some of the designs representing branches of trees, animals, and geometrical figures, while both men

and women adorned themselves with their beautiful feather ornaments of many different colours and various necklaces of monkey and *danta* teeth. Around their bodies and legs they attached long strings of rattling shells, called *cascabeles*.

Then they began dancing with cadencious uniformity, marking time with their right feet, and at the same time singing in chorus their ancient songs, the peculiar and ear-splitting intonation of which was accompanied by blows upon the *manguaré*, the beating of drums, and the shrill whistle of their flutes. They generally imbibed during these dances a goodly quantity of *cahuana*, and the *chupe del tabaco* was always an important feature. The few who possessed clothes generally wore them on these occasions, painting those parts of the body not covered by them. These dances used to go on from one house to another for several days in succession, and the *manguaré* was hardly ever silent during this time.

The Huitotos often paint themselves on other occasions, one of the most common colouring matters being the *huitoc* or *jagua*, which also has the excellent property of being offensive to gnats and mosquitoes to such an extent that they will have nothing to do with persons painted with it.

The religion of the Huitotos is a confused mixture of several beliefs. Thus, they worship the sun and the moon and at the same time believe in the existence of a Superior Being, called *Usiñamu*, and an inferior potentate, named *Taifeño*, who is also supposed to be the Spirit of Evil. They also appear to believe in a future life to be spent in happy hunting-grounds, &c., but these ideas are



GUAMARES INDIANS, OF THE HUITOTO TRIBE, IN DANCE COSTUME.

vague and confused and mingled with the most ridiculous superstitions.

In the days when the Colombians were paramount in this district they used to bring down priests from Pasto and Mocoa to convert the Huitotos and introduce them to the ways and customs of civilisation and Christianity. Now that the Peruvian Amazon Company has monopolised the region priests are carefully excluded, and everything that tends to the instruction and enlightenment of the wretched aborigines is carefully done away with. Indeed, in order to frighten people and thus prevent them from entering that region, they have circulated most bloodcurdling reports of the ferocity and cannibalism of these helpless Indians, whom other travellers as well as Perkins and myself have found to be timid, peaceful, mild, industrious, and humble.

In conclusion, it is necessary to call attention to the fact that owing to the oppressions of the Peruvian Amazon Company—in whose service the greater part of the Huitotos, unfortunately, are—the numbers of these Indians are diminishing to an alarming degree, and, unless something be done to protect them, this noble race of aborigines will, in my opinion, soon disappear completely, as have so many others in the region of the Upper Amazon.

CHAPTER VI

THE DEVIL'S PARADISE

THE next morning, January 3rd, Serrano took me out for a stroll in the forest, and, after considerable meditation, surprised me by proposing to sell us a half-interest in his business. He then went on to explain his reason, which, briefly, was that he considered that the Peruvian Amazon Company would not dare to molest him were he not a Colombian, and that if some foreigners were interested in his business they would have to keep their hands off him in order to avoid complications. This point seeming reasonable, I asked him about his profits and the price he thought proper, both of which seemed very satisfactory. Returning to the house, I looked over his books, which corresponded with what he had told me, and, after some more conversation, I agreed to consider his proposition and talk it over with Perkins upon his arrival. To tell the truth I was greatly elated over this offer, for the price he asked was ridiculously low in comparison with the annual profits, as revealed by his books. His reason, too, seemed logical, for I could not believe that the "civilising company" would dare to play any such games with Perkins and myself.

At about 2 p.m. Orjuela, a white, handsome,

determined-looking man of about thirty-five, arrived, in company with another gentleman, who was introduced to me as Señor Gustavo Prieto. Both seemed very decent fellows, and we all took a liking to them at once. They had just come from La Unión, where they had learned of the capture of Martínez and the horrible raid on Serrano, already described. Orjuela then announced that he had come here on his way to see Loayza, the manager of El Encanto, the Peruvian Amazon Company's chief post on the Caraparaná, with a view of making some arrangement with him tending to put a stop to these occurrences.

The next morning we spent in discussing the situation. Orjuela was confident that if he saw Loayza and had a good, friendly, man-to-man talk with him they could come to some amicable agreement, while Serrano took a more pessimistic view of things, declaring that the Peruvians had for years tried to get possession of the Colombian establishments on the Caraparaná, and that now, having a force of Peruvian soldiers to back them, they would take more active measures to attain their ends. This view, however, was shared by none of the others.

In the afternoon Acosta and Prieto set out for La Unión in order to inform the Colombians there of the measures Orjuela had decided to take—viz., to demand an interview with Loayza, while Orjuela and Sánchez made preparations to set out on the following day for El Dorado, the last Colombian establishment, and there invite Loayza to the meeting. They intended going by canoe down the Caraparaná.

At about six o'clock, in the midst of a pouring rain, Perkins arrived with the *cargadores* carrying the effects that we were to sell Serrano. After he had changed his clothes and got outside of some food I told him of Serrano's proposal, which, after several gasps of amazement, he pronounced worthy of investigation. Then, after some more talk, we resolved that we should stop here with Serrano, look over the estate, and, if satisfied, come to an agreement with him, while I accompanied Orjuela to the conference with a view of informing the Peruvian Amazon Company's agent, Loyaza, that, as we were contemplating the purchase of a part of La Reserva, we should be obliged by their keeping their hands off it.

Assured by Orjuela that his mission was a peaceful one and that there was no probability of any conflict with the Peruvians, I asked permission to accompany him to the conference, which was readily granted; so I made preparations for an early departure on the following morning. Serrano approved of this idea, for he thought that the Peruvians would have some respect for a foreigner.

At six o'clock the next morning Orjuela, Sánchez, myself, a *peon* of Orjuela's, and three of Serrano's Indian boatmen set out on the trip to El Dorado. We made our way but slowly down the crooked, muddy course of the Caraparaná. This river is, I believe, one of the crookedest in the world, for it continually doubles on itself as it winds its way through the dense vegetation that rises up on either bank. At about 10.30 we reached Filadelfia, a deserted establishment formerly belonging to some

Colombians, who had sold it to the "civilising company," by whom it had been abandoned some time previously.

At about four o'clock we arrived at a station, which Orjuela informed me was Argelia, one of the chief centres of the Peruvian Amazon Company. As Orjuela wished to see the agent we disembarked, and, climbing the long hill that rose up from the bank, reached the house, a fairly large structure of unpainted boards, where we were received in a friendly manner by the man in charge, Don Ramiro de Osma y Pardo. We chatted for about half an hour on trivial subjects, had tea, and then took our departure.

When we had disembarked Orjuela had, somewhat to my surprise, ordered the boatmen to go on. I now saw the reason, for I perceived that the river wound around in the woods and formed an enormous peninsula, upon the narrow neck of which Argelia was situated. We then descended the opposite side of the hill and, reaching the river's bank again, waited several minutes before the men arrived with the boat.

Embarking again, we continued for an hour or so, and then, not finding any convenient *playa*, Orjuela, Sánchez, and myself stretched out in the bottom of the boat, while the men slept in the brush on the bank. The *monteria* was small, and we were three; consequently there was not much room, and we passed a veritable night of torture, cramped and rolling over each other in a manner hardly conducive to a night's rest.

The next morning the trip was resumed, and, after a tedious descent of several hours, we reached

El Dorado at 4.30 p.m. Here we were cordially received by Don Tobias Calderón, the man in charge, who informed us that Señor Gonzalez, tired to death of the continual raids, robberies, and other abuses of the Peruvians, had gone over on the right bank of the Putumayo to look for some other suitable place to establish himself, where he might be left in peace.

Immediately upon our arrival Orjuela dispatched a note to Loayza by an Indian, who would reach El Encanto within a few hours, travelling by an overland trail. This operation concluded, we took a look at the estate, which was situated on a gently sloping knoll on the left bank. The house was of good size and of the usual elevated construction. The space around it had once been cleared, but was now grown over with bushes and shrubs. I was informed that there were about thirty Indian families attached to the estate; one or two of these were employed at the house, while the rest lived out at their village in the heart of the forest.

The next morning we were surprised to see a number of canoes coming up the river; as they approached nearer Orjuela recognised several of the occupants as Colombian employees of the El Encanto branch of the "civilising company." Arriving at the house, they informed us that they had all resigned their positions on account of the ill-feeling exhibited towards them by the Peruvians and that they were going to Guepí. Another interesting piece of news was that sixty Peruvian soldiers had just arrived from Iquitos on the *Liberal*, one of the Peruvian Amazon Company's

launches. These ex-employees, although naturally kept in the dark as much as possible by their Peruvian employers, suspected some attack was about to be made on La Unión or La Reserva before long, as a Peruvian gunboat had also recently arrived. They had seen Martínez, the unfortunate *Corregidor*, whom they reported as being kept in close confinement at El Encanto.

This news was rather interesting, as it now looked as though we were in for it sure enough. We spent the rest of the day in discussing the different phases of this extraordinary affair and in waiting for Loayza, who did not turn up. This looked like another portent of the approaching storm; but, nevertheless, Orjuela decided to wait another day here. I began to wish that we had never set out on our trip down the Putumayo, if we were to be thus barbarously murdered by a band of half-breed bandits, as the employees of the "civilising company" now revealed themselves to be.

The next morning the eight ex-employees, their families, and boatmen took their departure at about nine o'clock. We waited all day at El Dorado for Loayza, but he never put in an appearance, so Orjuela decided to set out early on the following morning for La Reserva.

In accordance with this resolution, at an early hour we bade *adios* to our hosts and set out up the river. At about eight o'clock we overtook the ex-employees, who did not seem to be in any great hurry, and continued along with them all day. We made but slow progress, and the journey was tedious in the extreme. At 7 p.m. we stopped

to spend another hideous night huddled together in the canoe.

Perceiving that the ex-employees were travelling at a very leisurely pace and wishing to reach La Reserva as soon as possible, the next morning, Friday, the 10th, we passed on ahead of them and travelled more rapidly. At nightfall, in order to avoid another night of torture in the canoe, we disembarked and, clearing a small space on the bank of the stream, went to sleep there, tying the canoe up in the brush.

At about eleven o'clock I was awakened by Orjuela shaking my arm. Cautioning silence, he pointed with his finger at two rapidly approaching lights ascending the river. They were two launches. Passing us in a blaze of light, they quietly continued on upstream. Had the contemplated raid on La Unión and La Reserva actually begun? It certainly looked so, and we commenced to wonder if they would allow us to pass Argelia. They certainly had the "drop" on us.

Early in the morning we again set out on our tedious journey up the Caraparaná, and at about eleven o'clock passed without molestation the lower port of Argelia—where we had waited for our boatmen after our call on Señor De Osma y Pardo. There seemed to be nothing unusual taking place at the house, and our hopes that they would let us pass began to rise again.

Finally, at about 2.30 p.m., we reached the upper port, where we had disembarked. Then we opened our eyes; the agent and an armed *peon* beckoned and called us to approach. We continued on, pretending not to notice them. Then De Osma y

Pardo shouted that they would fire. The *peon* raised his Winchester to do so, and we started to approach.

As we slowly neared the bank I suggested to Orjuela that as there were only two of them we might drop them when we got up at close quarters and then get away, for we had arms, and the *peon* as soon as he saw us come towards the shore had let his rifle rest on the ground and was now leaning upon it in a negligent attitude; Orjuela, however, did not seem to think it good policy, so we pulled up at the shore and asked what was up. The agent then informed Orjuela that he was a prisoner, and he and the *peon* led us—boatmen and all—up to the house. Here he stated that he had received orders to detain Orjuela and two of the Indians; but, having had no instructions in regard to Sánchez and myself, he announced that we were at liberty to continue on upstream with the *peon* of Orjuela's—whom we passed off as my own—and the remaining Indian.

In reply to our protests and inquiries as to the reason for this high-handed proceeding he maintained an absolute silence. Seeing that nothing was to be done, we accordingly took our leave of the unfortunate Orjuela and resumed our journey up the river. We continued rowing until late that night, but were able to make but slow progress, owing to the absence of the other two boatmen. Meanwhile we indulged in many conjectures as to what would happen to us and the people of La Reserva and La Unión, completely at the mercy of these latter-day pirates, who seemed to stop at nothing in their greedy ambition to obtain possession of

the establishments of the Colombian settlers—Serrano, Gonzalez and Ordoñez, and Martínez.

The next morning we continued the journey, and in about an hour passed Filadelfia. At about nine o'clock we heard rifle-shots, apparently in the vicinity of La Unión or La Reserva; these lasted nearly an hour. Then they ceased and silence once more reigned over these vast solitudes, so we pushed on until 8 p.m., when, hearing the whistle of a launch coming down the river, we pulled up along the right bank to avoid the waves caused by the propeller.

Here our Huitoto, the moment we stopped, leaped ashore, and, with a brief remark that the "Peruvians were very wicked," disappeared in the bushes. I suggested to Sánchez that we had better follow the aborigine's example, but he thought that as he was an exile and I was a foreigner we would not be molested, as at Argelia. Against my better judgment I remained, and we sat there in the canoe, waiting for the approach of the marauders.

Soon, turning a bend, two launches appeared, and as soon as we were perceived we heard a voice shout out: "Fire! Fire! Sink the canoe! Sink the canoe!" Before this order could be executed, however, the first vessel, the *Liberal* of the "civilising company," had passed us, but the second, the *Iquitos*, a sort of river gunboat, in the service of the Peruvian Government, let fly at us, one of the bullets passing just between Sánchez and myself, and splashing into the water a little beyond. Then, at our cries of astonishment and protest, we heard a voice ordering us, in the most vile and obscene words, to approach the launch, and at the same

time commanding the soldiers to keep us covered with their carbines. We approached as quickly as possible, but, handicapped by the robbery of our Indian boatmen, were able to make but slow progress. Then we heard once more the order, "Fire ! Fire !" the click of the hammers being cocked, and I thought all was over with us. But at this moment an altercation arose between the two chiefs, one of them countermanding this order, while the other insisted upon its execution. Meanwhile, as rapidly as possible, we approached the vessel, and perceived some twenty-five or thirty soldiers all covering us, their rifles aimed over the rail, calmly awaiting the final order to launch us into eternity !

Fortunately, the altercation continued between the two bandits long enough to enable us, after what seemed like a century, to reach the side of the *Iquitos*. Here we were jerked on board, kicked, beaten, insulted, and abused in a most cowardly manner by Captain Arce Benavides of the Peruvian Army, Benito Lores, commander of the *Iquitos*, and a gang of coffee-coloured soldiers, sailors, and employees of the "civilising company," without being given a chance to speak a word.

As soon as they had finished their self-imposed task of outraging us in this brutal and cynical manner—defenceless as we were—I told them who we were, and demanded to be allowed to continue our journey, but all in vain, for they merely laughed at me and my protests. Then these conquering heroes, after searching our persons and our canoe and taking possession of the few things we had with us, put us under a sentinel.

This operation accomplished, Captain Benavides entertained us with a horrible account of the "victory" the Peruvians had gained at La Unión, the sounds of which we had heard in the morning. He informed us that as the two launches had arrived there that morning the Colombians had treacherously opened fire upon them, and that the Peruvian forces had gallantly repulsed the attack, under his leadership, and killed several of the assaulting party. A peculiar feature of the "battle" was, according to his version, that such Colombians as had not escaped had all been killed outright, there being no wounded.

As I afterwards ascertained, the two launches, upon reaching La Unión, had started to disembark the soldiers and employees—probably with the intention of playing the same game as they had played on Serrano a month or so previously—when Ordoñez ordered them off his premises. At the same time, Prieto unfurled the Colombian flag and the unequal conflict began. There were less than twenty Colombians against about a hundred and forty Peruvians—employees of the criminal syndicate and soldiers and sailors with a machine gun. The Colombians resisted bravely for about half an hour, when, their ammunition giving out, they were compelled to take to the woods, leaving Duarte and two *peons* dead and Prieto and another *peon* severely wounded. The latter two were then dispatched most cruelly by some of the "civilising company's" missionaries. Then the thousand arrobas of rubber were carefully stowed away on the *Liberal*, the houses were sacked and burned, and several Colombian women, found hiding in the

forest, were dragged aboard the two launches as legitimate prey for the "victors."

While in my enforced state of imprisonment on the *Iquitos*, I witnessed the cowardly and brutal violation of one of these poor women. Pilar Gutierrez, the woman of Rafael Cano, one of the *racionales* at La Unión, was one of the females found in the bushes after the "battle," and this poor victim, already in an advanced state of pregnancy, was allotted to Captain — — —.* This human monster, intent only on slaking his animal thirst of lasciviousness, and regardless of the grave state of the unhappy woman's health, dragged her to a place of privacy and, in spite of the cries of agony of the unfortunate creature, violated her without compunction.

A few hours later we reached Argelia, where both launches stopped for the night side by side. Here we were transferred to the *Liberal*, where, to my astonishment, I found Perkins and the youth Gabriel Valderrama, one of Serrano's employees. Perkins then informed me of the horrors committed at La Unión and of his own capture, which had been effected upon the return of these latter-day pirates from that sanguinary scene, when they had stopped at La Reserva, broken into and burglarised the house—for Serrano and his men, excepting Valderrama and Perkins, had fled to the forest—embarked the hundred and seventy arrobas of rubber on the *Liberal*, and destroyed everything they could not steal.

That night the four of us, Perkins, Sánchez, Valderrama, and myself, slept—or rather feigned

* The full name appears in the manuscript.

to sleep—on the deck of the *Liberal*, plunged in the most gloomy reflections and expecting to be shot or stabbed any moment, for our captors were drunk and in a most bloodthirsty mood. However, we passed the long night without being molested to any appreciable extent.

The next morning, Monday, the 13th, I saw Loayza, a copper-complexioned, shifty-eyed half-breed, who spoke a little pidgin-English, and protested against our imprisonment and demanded to be instantly set at liberty. Loayza listened very politely, and then informed me that he was acting for our own good, as the Colombians would certainly kill us if he did not conduct us to a place of safety. Thinking that possibly the man was—to use a bit of slang—up the pole, I explained that we had no fear of the Colombians, as we had been stopping with them some time, and, furthermore, the things we had heard about the Peruvian Amazon Company and the recent events that had taken place had not been such as to make us believe that this syndicate was a sort of life-saving station. Then, favouring me with a peculiar snake-like smile, he remarked that he would look after us all right and walked off.

At about nine o'clock Orjuela was brought on board under a heavy guard and put down below in a little cage. We were not allowed to speak to him, although several of the "missionaries" seemed to derive much fun by taunting and insulting their unfortunate victim. At about the same time De Osma y Pardo came on board, shook hands with Sánchez and myself, and explained that he had interceded with Loayza in our behalf, but unsuc-

cessfully. This gentleman did not seem to be much of a favourite with Loayza, and, as I afterwards ascertained, protested against the raid on the Colombians, and in this way incurred that chief's disapproval.

At about 9.30 the two pirate vessels set sail for El Encanto, and, after descending some five hours, reached El Dorado. Here the bandits, not content with the crimes they had already committed, stopped to execute one more. The criminal Loayza, in company with several more of these pirates, disembarked, entered the house, and, menacing the Colombians with death, compelled them to surrender all their arms. Then, after giving them a long harangue, couched in the most profane and vulgar words, and mingled with the most terrible threats in case they did not immediately abandon the establishment, this worthy "patriot" returned to the launch with the arms he had robbed.

At about six o'clock we reached El Encanto, a straggling group of houses situated upon a long, high hill, several hundred metres from the shore. Here we were not allowed to disembark at first, but were detained on the *Liberal*, while several of the "missionaries" who had not taken part in the raid came down to the edge of the river and proceeded to insult and taunt us in the most brutal and blood-thirsty terms. When they had finished this dignified task we were disembarked, taken up the hill to the establishment, which was composed of one large, elevated board structure and a number of small huts—these latter grouped together and separated from the former by a narrow courtyard—and crowded into a small, dirty room, which pos-

sessed neither beds, chairs, nor tables. No light was given us, and we had to undress in the dark.

Here we passed a night of torture, for we had been given no supper, and the floor, covered with dust and mould as it was, proved to be a far from comfortable couch. In addition to this physical discomfort, we were plunged in the most gloomy and melancholy reflections as to the fate that awaited us at the hands of these human beasts.

As a result of these meditations, we were convinced that they meant to assassinate us, so I determined to have an interview with Loayza at once. Accordingly, the next morning I insisted upon seeing him, and, after some delay, was ushered into his presence. Without wasting time on preliminaries, I told him that I was well aware of his intentions in regard to us, and, in spite of his protestations to the contrary, I went on to inform him that in murdering us he would be making a big mistake, for we had been sent out to explore this region by a huge American syndicate and that we were expected in Iquitos, where we were about to open a large mercantile establishment for the said syndicate.* Perceiving that this statement was having some effect on him, I went on to assure him that we were people of importance, and that, if we disappeared, our employers would certainly institute a most searching investigation, and, the truth once discovered, the American Government itself, owing to the great influence of the syndicate that employed

* This, of course, was all a gigantic deception, but I firmly believe that it saved our lives, for at the time it was rumoured that a big American syndicate was going to begin operations on the Upper Putumayo.

us, would see that those responsible received their punishment. Then I wound up by demanding our immediate release and permission to return to Josa to recover our baggage.

Loayza, apparently unnerved by this information, after a little more talk, told me that we could go to Iquitos on the *Liberal*, which was due to leave with the rubber stolen at La Unión and La Reserva in a few days, but that we could not go to Josa to recover our effects, for he himself would see to that. As we had but little faith in his word or that of the military officers, his accomplices, Perkins resolved to stay at El Encanto and see that he really did take steps to do this, while I went on to Iquitos with the *Liberal*.

As we were allowed to walk around the houses without being molested—although an eye was always kept on us by some one—we had the opportunity to witness the lamentable condition of the unfortunate *Corregidor* Gabriel Martínez and his men, who were confined, as though they were desperate criminals, in a small, dirty, eight-by-ten-foot room under the main house and guarded night and day by two soldiers. These poor wretches, in a starving condition, were insulted, taunted, and abused daily by word and deed in a most cowardly manner. Orjuela, all this time, was kept in close confinement on the *Liberal*.

Another edifying spectacle that we witnessed was the condition of the poor Indians who loaded and unloaded the vessels that stopped at the port. There were from fifty to sixty of these unfortunates, so weak, debilitated, and scarred that many of them could hardly walk. It was a pitiful sight to see

these poor Indians, practically naked, their bones almost protruding through their skins, and all branded with the infamous *marca de Arana*,* staggering up the steep hill, carrying upon their doubled backs enormous weights of merchandise for the consumption of their miserable oppressors. Occasionally one of these unfortunate victims of Peruvian "civilisation" would fall under his load, only to be kicked up on his feet and forced to continue his stern labours by the brutal "boss."

I noticed the food they received, which was given to them once a day, at noon; it consisted of a handful of *farina* and a tin of sardines—when there were any—for each group of four Indians, nothing more. And this was to sustain them for twenty-four hours, sixteen of which were spent at the hardest kind of labour!

But what was still more pitiful was to see the sick and dying lie about the house and out in the adjacent woods, unable to move and without any one to aid them in their agony. These poor wretches, without remedies, without food, were exposed to the burning rays of the vertical sun and the cold rains and heavy dews of early morning until death released them from their sufferings. Then their companions carried their cold corpses—many of them in an almost complete state of putrefaction—to the river, and the yellow, turbid waters of the Caraparaná closed silently over them.

Another sad sight was the large number of involuntary concubines who pined—in melancholy

* The scars on their backs from floggings, called so after Julio C. Arana, the organiser and chief stock-holder of the Peruvian Amazon Company.

musings over their lost liberty and their present sufferings—in the interior of the house. This band of unfortunates was composed of some thirteen young girls, who varied in age from nine to sixteen years, and these poor innocents—too young to be called women—were the helpless victims of Loayza and the other chief officials of the Peruvian Amazon Company's El Encanto branch, who violated these tender children without the slightest compunction, and when they tired of them either murdered them or flogged them and sent them back to their tribes.

Let us now take a glance at the system pursued by this "civilising company" in the exploitation of the products of this region—that is, the exploitation of the rubber and of the Indians. This system I afterwards ascertained to be as follows:—

The whole region under the control of this criminal syndicate is divided up into two departments, the chief centres of which are El Encanto and La Chorrera. El Encanto is the headquarters of all the sections of the Caraparaná and the right bank of the Putumayo, while La Chorrera is the capital of the sections of the Igaraparaná and those distributed between that river and the Caquetá. As already stated, the superintendent of El Encanto is Loayza, while that of La Chorrera is the celebrated Victor Macedo.

It is to these two centres that all the products are sent periodically on the backs of Indians, by canoe, or in small launches. Once here, it is shipped to Iquitos about every three months. At each of these centres all books are kept and all payments to the employees are made. The superintendents have the power of hiring and discharging all the men

employed under them, and their slightest whim is law.

These two departments, as already hinted, are subdivided into sections, at the head of which are placed chiefs, under the instructions of the superintendents. Each chief has under his control a number of *racionales*, varying from five to eighty, whose business it is to direct the Indians and force them to work. The chief of the section keeps a list of all the Indians resident in his section, and assigns to each worker—in some sections this term includes women and children—the number of kilos of rubber that he must deliver every ten days.

Armed with *machetes*, the Indians penetrate the depths of the forest, gashing frightfully every rubber-tree they can find, frequently cutting them so much and so deep, in their frantic efforts to extract the last drop of milk, that vast numbers of the trees die annually. The milk runs down the trunk of the tree and dries there. A few days afterwards the Indians return, and, gathering up the strings of rubber, place them in baskets, which they carry to their huts on their backs.

Here, in order to remove some of the pieces of wood, dry leaves, chunks of bark, sand, and other impurities, the Indians place the rubber in a *quebrada* and beat it well with clubs; in this way a few of the many foreign matters are removed and the rubber is made more compact. It is then wound up in big rolls, and, exposed to the air and the light, it soon becomes of a dull, blackish colour, and is ready for delivery.

At the expiration of the ten days the slaves start out with their loads upon their backs, accompanied

by their women and children, who help them to carry the rubber. When they reach the section-house, the rubber is weighed in the presence of the chief of the section and his armed subordinates. The Indians know by experience what the needle of the balance should mark, and when it indicates that they have delivered the full amount they leap about and laugh with pleasure. When it does not, they throw themselves face downwards on the ground, and in this attitude await their punishment.

As the rubber gets scarcer and scarcer the aborigines, in order to be able to deliver the full amount of rubber demanded from them, and thus to escape flagellations and tortures, frequently adulterate the rubber-milk with that of various other trees, in this way still further lowering the quality of the Putumayo rubber; for, as already remarked, all that produced in this section is what is technically known as *jebe débil*.

It will be easily seen that such a system—a system of organised robbery—of collection of rubber is likely to lend itself to abuse in a country where every man is a law unto himself, and there is absolutely no check upon the exercise of his most brutal instincts and passions. The probability of such abuse is increased immensely when—as in the present case—the earnings of the employees are made dependent on results, for Loayza, Macedo, and the chiefs of sections are paid, not salaries but commissions on the amount of rubber produced.

Thus it is to their advantage to extract the greatest amount of rubber in the least possible space of time, and to do this the Indians must either be paid or punished. If paid, the payment must

be great enough to tempt a placid, indolent Indian to continuous exertion ; if punished, the punishment must be severe enough to extract from his fears what cannot be obtained from an appeal to his cupidity. As the "civilising company" apparently does not believe in paying for what it can obtain otherwise, the rule of terror has been adopted throughout the company's dominions. Those who have studied the history of the Congo will see here precisely the same conditions which produced such lamentable results in the Belgian companies' sphere of operations. It would be strange indeed if, under such a system, some sort of abuse did not take place, and I am in possession of definite documentary evidence which, I think, justifies me in making the following statements as to the results of this system :—

1. The pacific Indians of the Putumayo are forced to work day and night at the extraction of rubber, without the slightest remuneration except the food necessary to keep them alive.

2. They are kept in the most complete nakedness, many of them not even possessing the biblical fig-leaf.

3. They are robbed of their crops, their women, and their children to satisfy the voracity, lasciviousness, and avarice of this company and its employees, who live on their food and violate their women.

4. They are sold wholesale and retail in Iquitos, at prices that range from £20 to £40 each.

5. They are flogged inhumanly until their bones are laid bare, and great raw sores cover them.

6. They are given no medical treatment, but are left to die, eaten by maggots, when they serve as food for the chiefs' dogs.

7. They are castrated and mutilated, and their ears, fingers, arms, and legs are cut off.

8. They are tortured by means of fire and water, and by tying them up, crucified head down.

9. Their houses and crops are burned and destroyed wantonly and for amusement.

10. They are cut to pieces and dismembered with knives, axes, and *machetes*.

11. Their children are grasped by the feet and their heads are dashed against trees and walls until their brains fly out.

12. Their old folk are killed when they are no longer able to work for the company.

13. Men, women, and children are shot to provide amusement for the employees or to celebrate the *sábado de gloria*, or, in preference to this, they are burned with kerosene so that the employees may enjoy their desperate agony.

This is indeed a horrible indictment, and may seem incredible to many. On the other hand, we all know the inhuman atrocities of the Congo, and it seems reasonable to suppose that the conditions that have made that region so notorious do not fail to produce precisely similar results in the vast and isolated region of the Putumayo. In addition to this, during my subsequent investigations in Iquitos I obtained from a number of eye-witnesses accounts * of many of the abominable outrages that take place here hourly, and these, with my own observations, are the basis for the indictment.

* Many of these have recently been published in *Truth*.
—AUTHOR.

This state of affairs is intolerable. The region monopolised by this company is a living hell—a place where unbridled cruelty and its twin-brother, lust, run riot, with consequences too horrible to put down in writing. It is a blot on civilisation ; and the reek of its abominations mounts to heaven in fumes of shame. Why is it not stopped? Peru will not, because this company is settling in and occupying the disputed territory in her name. Colombia and Ecuador cannot, for they are not in a condition to quarrel with Peru.

And it is all for—what? Merely to fill the pockets and gratify the passions of a handful of miserable, half-breed outlaws, who take advantage of their autocratic authority over the helpless Huitotos to commit the most horrible and unheard-of crimes, and to keep others, who share the responsibility of these horrors, in luxury and fine clothes away off across the seas.

The next morning—Wednesday, the 15th—the *Liberal* left for Argelia, taking three officers and about seventy men, probably to defend that establishment against the attacks of those terrible fellows, the Colombians. One officer and the rest of the men, about thirty, remained at El Encanto to garrison it, while two more remained here to go to Iquitos upon the return of the *Liberal*, in order to spread the reports of the “victory” gained over the Colombians at La Unión.

We spent the day wandering restlessly about the establishment and the large, rolling cleared area that surrounds it. In the afternoon we endeavoured to speak to Martínez, but were not permitted to do so, probably by orders of Loayza, who seemed

to spend most of his time taking Florida-water baths, drinking wine and whisky, and fooling around with his different concubines. The other upper officials followed his example more or less.

Early the next day the *Liberal* returned from Argelia, and lay at the port all day, waiting for the report that Loayza was writing up for his chief in Iquitos. This literary labour occupied him until nightfall, when, being concluded, it was given to the captain of the *Liberal*, the infamous Carlos Zubiaur, otherwise "Paiche," and we were told to get on board, as the vessel sailed early in the morning.

In accordance with these instructions, we went down and started to embark. At the gang-plank we were met by Zubiaur, who, with an enormous stick of firewood in his hands, demanded £17 each for our passage money. As Loayza had informed us that he would give us free passages as a slight compensation for what we had gone through, both Sánchez and myself were considerably surprised at this demand, and protested loudly against it. Zubiaur was inflexible, however, and whirled his stick of firewood about our heads so violently while he informed us that nobody travelled gratis on his launch, that we were finally compelled to pay the wretch what he asked for.

Once on board, where Perkins accompanied us to say goodbye, we found that we had been done out of our dinner, for, when we finally asked for it, we were told that this meal had already been eaten and that we were too late. So after a last farewell to Perkins, who, in accordance with our decision, had decided to remain behind in order

to recover our effects, Sánchez and I again made our way to the ferocious Zubiaur and asked to be conducted to our cabin.

The pirate stared at us in amazement for fully a minute before he proceeded to inform us that there were no cabins for us and that we were to sleep on the deck. Upon our remonstrance that we had paid first-class fare and a request to pay us back the difference between that and the third-class that he was giving us, he reached for his ever-present stick of firewood, and, this once in his hands, took the trouble to explain to us that he was only taking us as a favour, that the few cabins were already occupied, and that if we did not like it we could get off his launch. So saying, he turned clumsily on his heel and strode off.

Fortunately, when we had started for El Dorado, we had taken our hammocks along, so we proceeded to hang them up in out-of-the-way corners by the advice of one of the two officers. As the pirate-captain raised no objection to this, we climbed in them and were trying to forget our lost dinner, when the fiend came up again and told us that they were in an inconvenient place and must be shifted. This made me so angry—for I knew it was done only to henpeck us—that I absolutely refused to budge an inch, and when he threatened to call up some of his men, I was so wild that I told him that if he dared molest us again during the trip, I should beat his brains out with a club the instant we got off the launch at Iquitos. The pirate drew back, stared at me for fully a minute, and then slowly retired. I imagined that perhaps he would try some other game, but he was quite

cured for all the rest of the trip, and did not molest us once.

This affair settled, we had just got asleep, when suddenly we were awakened by a number of loud shouts, jeers, and laughs. Thinking that possibly it might be a midnight murder, or something of the sort, I rushed to the side of the launch and perceived that Martínez and his men were being escorted by a number of "missionaries" to the vessel. Descending to the lower deck, I saw them shut him and his seven men up in the same cage with Orjuela ; here the wretches continued to insult and abuse their unfortunate victims for more than half an hour. I observed, before retiring to my hammock, that the cage was so small that there was scarcely room enough for the nine prisoners to sit down together, and dirty in the extreme.

The next morning, the 17th, we left El Encanto at about five o'clock, and by seven we had entered the Putumayo, which was very wide and dotted with large, heavily wooded islands. Along the banks numerous sandy *playas* appeared from time to time. It was like seeing an old friend again, and I commenced to think of the time we were shipwrecked and subsisted chiefly on turtle-eggs.

This made me think of breakfast, so awakening Sánchez, we sat down at the table, where the pirate-captain and most of the passengers were already beginning. The meal was execrable, being composed only of watery tea, a quantity of extremely stale bread, and some evil-smelling butter. We all munched this unpalatable fare in

silence until we had eaten all we could of it, when we left the table.

During the rest of the forenoon Sánchez and I got acquainted with the other passengers. One of the officers, Lieutenant Ghiorzo, an extremely stout, dark-complexioned man, turned out to be under arrest for refusing to take part in the raid on La Unión, and was in charge of the other one, a tall, blonde, cadaverous-looking man, named Lieutenant Albarracin, who proved to be none other than the brother of the Peruvian whom we had met in Pasto, and who had given us a letter of introduction to his brother, whom he thought to be in Iquitos. Although the letter had been left in our trunks with the rest of our effects, I told the Lieutenant about it, and he was very cordial towards me during the whole trip. Ghiorzo also seemed very affable.

Another passenger was a young, copper-coloured Colombian merchant named Patrocínio Cuellar, who it appears had brought some merchandise down from Colombia for the "civilising company," which had been lost or destroyed about the time of the raid on La Unión. He was going to the headquarters of the company at Iquitos to see if they would reimburse him. Cuellar associated, as a rule, with an individual named Bartolomé Guevara, a short, *carate*-covered man, to whom I took an instinctive dislike. He was a chief of section who had recently resigned his position at El Encanto, and was now *en route* to Spain to spend some of the money he had extracted from the tears, the bitter agony, the very life-blood of the unfortunate Indians under his control. I after-

wards ascertained that he was one of the most noted of the Putumayo "missionaries."

Another person whom I regarded with almost equal abhorrence was a copper-complexioned rascal named César Lúrquin, the Peruvian *Comisario* of the Putumayo. This miserable wretch was openly taking with him to Iquitos a little Huitoto girl of some seven years, presumably to sell her as a "servant," for it is a well-known fact that this repugnant traffic in human beings is carried on, almost openly, there. His position was a sinecure, for, instead of stopping on the Putumayo, travelling about there and really making efforts to suppress crime by punishing the criminals, he contented himself with visiting the region four or five times a year—always on the company's launches—stopping a week or so, collecting some children to sell, and then returning and making his "report."

The remaining "first-class" passenger was a Brazilian custom-house inspector, who always travelled with the company's launches in order to see that they did not discharge any cargo while passing through Brazilian territory. He seemed a very quiet chap, I imagine because he did not know Spanish. This gentleman spent most of his time in his hammock, for, like Sánchez and myself, he had no cabin.

Lunch and dinner were very similar to breakfast, for we had the same watery tea, the same stale bread, and the same stinking butter, the only additional dish being a repugnant preparation of codfish. The pirate-captain and his chum, the *comisario*, however, as I ascertained later, after eating a little of this miserable stuff, adjourned to

the former's cabin and enjoyed a magnificent spread, all by themselves.

We continued running all night, for the river was swollen and there was no necessity to follow the main channel. At about two o'clock in the afternoon we reached the mouth of the Igaraparaná, which is considerably larger than the Caraparaná and also on the left. Near the junction was a small, cleared area on the high left bank of the Putumayo, and to this we directed our course. Anchoring close to the bank, I perceived that the place was a military post, for, as soon as we approached a number of soldiers—about twenty—and two officers emerged from an old tumble-down structure that sheltered them, and came on board. They all looked ill and emaciated, and their faces and hands were done up in rags to keep off the gnats.

For over two hours we stopped here, fighting these little fiends, which swarmed about us in perfect clouds, while the pirate and the *comisario* related to the two lieutenants a full account of the "brilliant victory" gained at La Unión. Meanwhile, I learned that the name of the place was Arica, and that it was situated about 1° 43' 9" south of the equator and 71° 53' 36" west of Greenwich.

At last the enthralling tale of the "victory" was finished, and we set out up the Igaraparaná, for, it seemed, the worthy Zubiaur had been so complimented upon his bravery by the two officers that he resolved to go and inform some other friends of his up that river of the same gallant deed. We were all glad to set out in some direction,

for the gnats did not trouble us much when the launch was in motion.

The *Liberal* continued the ascent until a late hour, when we retired. The next morning when I awoke, I perceived that we were anchored off another establishment, which I was informed by Albarracín was Santa Julia, one of the chief sections of the "civilising company" in Igaraparaná district. The two or three small huts were of split-palm with a thatched roof, while the clearing around them was small and neglected-looking. Santa Julia, Ghiorzo informed me, is the shipping-port for the section Abisinia, some twelve hours' walk inland.

As we were taking on a quantity of firewood, another launch, the *Cosmopolita*, appeared and came up alongside of us. Here Sánchez was overjoyed to meet once more with his companion exiles, who had left El Encanto about a month previously on this launch, bound for Iquitos. Instead of going there, however, the *Cosmopolita* had gone up to La Chorrera, stopped there all this time, and was now about to accompany the *Liberal*. Although we saw them only for a few moments, the meeting cheered up Sánchez immensely, while I took an instant liking to them.

La Chorrera, the headquarters of the Igaraparaná district, they described as being larger than El Encanto, and situated on the borders of a little lake at the head of navigation on the Igaraparaná. They furthermore informed me that La Chorrera was about twenty-four hours' run above Santa Julia.

At Santa Julia, La Chorrera, and the other

stations along the banks of the Lower and Central Igaraparaná, the victims are a tribe of aborigines known as the Boras, several of whom I saw in a practically naked condition at Santa Julia. These Indians are distinct from the Huitotos, and speak a dialect of their own called Bora. They are of a lighter colour and much more intelligent and fierce than the former; thus they do not submit so sheepishly to the persecutions and atrocities of the "civilising company," and many of them have escaped to the left bank of the River Caquetá, out of reach of their *verdugos*.*

The other sections between the Igaraparaná and Caquetá have as victims several other tribes of aborigines, chief of which are the Andoques, the Yurias, the Ocainas, and the Yaguas. All these tribes speak a distinct dialect of their own, although closely resembling the Huitotos in habits, customs, &c. The Andoques are the largest tribe, but none are so numerous as the Huitotos.

The firewood at length on board and the gallant Zubiaur's tale of the "victory" finally terminated, at about eight o'clock we set out down the Igaraparaná, accompanied by the *Cosmopolita*. After a not unpleasant journey of several hours, we again reached Arica at about 3 p.m., where we stopped for the rest of the day. Here we were again tortured by the gnats, which soon became so ferocious that I was obliged to don my veil and gloves; the heat, however, was so suffocating that I had to take them off again shortly.

After a tedious journey of several days, made in

* Executioners, torturers.

company with the celebrated criminal Bartolomé Guevara and Lieuts. Albarracín and Ghiorzo of the Peruvian Army, the jailers of Orjuela, Martínez, and their men, who were confined in the small and loathsome cage, previously mentioned, which was so diminutive that there was not sufficient space for them all to sit down at the same time, we at last arrived at Iquitos on February 1st.

Here I informed the dentist Guy T. King, acting American Consul in this place, of the events already narrated to the reader ; but this gentleman, considering solely and exclusively his own interests and forgetting the duties that his position as Consul incurred upon him, contented himself with congratulating me upon my narrow escape from death at the hands of the assassins of Arana and informing me that, owing to various circumstances, he could do absolutely nothing for us !*

Towards the end of April Perkins arrived without our baggage ; for the miserable murderers of El Encanto, their cupidity aroused by the idea of getting something for nothing, had stolen it while Perkins was held prisoner at that place. Thus they became aware of the deception I had practised upon them in regard to the American syndicate, and so great was their anger that they were upon the point of murdering Perkins, but their fears getting the better of them, they contented

* It is to be noted that, although a year and a half has elapsed since these outrages were committed, the American Government, in accordance with its immemorial custom and in spite of our appeals, has so far done absolutely nothing on our behalf.—AUTHOR. [Later on the two travellers received £500.—EDITOR.]

themselves with keeping him a close prisoner and abusing him, as is their custom.

Although the effects we had been robbed of were of considerable value and the hardships and perils through which we had passed while in the hands of the employees of this syndicate were distinctly unpleasant, nevertheless I consider that on the whole we were extremely fortunate in making our escape from the sanguinary *selvas* of the River Putumayo and from the tender mercies of those human hyenas, the assassin-employees of Arana.

From the horrors described in the following chapter the reader will be in a position to form a faint idea of the hellish and wholesale crimes committed upon these unfortunates ; not a complete one, for in order to do that it would be necessary for him to come here and see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears what really takes place in these gruesome forests ; but nevertheless he will, I repeat, be able to get some glimmering of the awful truth.

In making these exposures I have obeyed only the dictates of my conscience and my own sense of outraged justice ; and now that I have made them and the civilised world is aware of what occurs in the vast and tragic *selvas* of the River Putumayo, I feel that, as an honest man, I have done my duty before God and before society and trust that others, who are in a position to do so, will take up the defence of these unfortunates and the prosecution and punishment of the human hyenas responsible for these crimes.

As will be shown, over the whole length and breadth of this vast region reigns one



NATIVE WOMEN AND HUT AT IQUITOS.

perpetual and devilish carnival of crime ; in short, words are unable to convey any idea of this gruesome field of blood and crime and bleached skeletons, rotting under the falling leaves of the forest trees. It is a living hell. No wonder that the vegetation is so luxuriant here, for the soil has been deluged with the blood of so many innocent victims of the bestial greed and rapacity of these vile monsters that it should be the richest on earth !

Tribe after tribe of the peaceful and hospitable Indians of these forests has disappeared before the onslaughts of Peruvian "*civilisation*." Colombian after Colombian has been foully murdered by these miserable criminals, until at last they were exterminated and their establishments, so long coveted by the syndicate of crime, passed into its unclean hands.

As we shall see in the subsequent pages of this catalogue of horrors, the Peruvian authorities of the Department of Loreto, thanks to an unparalleled system of wholesale bribery—for in this way only can we explain their conduct—do absolutely nothing to put a stop to this state of affairs. We observe a type of the *comisarios* * of this region ; and also the attitude of the Prefect † in regard to these horrors ; and we are aware that the denunciations of Saldaña were neglected, passed over and finally pigeon-holed by the judicial authorities of Iquitos. From this it is evident that justice cannot be looked for from that quarter.

I venture to state that within four or five years

* The bandit Burga.

† The celebrated Zapata.

more—if this awful butchery is allowed to continue (which I do not believe)—these immense forests, formerly occupied by tens of thousands of peaceful, industrious Indians, quite capable of civilisation and Christianity, will be but huge and silent sepulchres, sown with the unburied bones of the unfortunate victims of an exploitation without parallel in history.

But is this to be permitted? Although we are too late to save the larger part of these victims, who have already passed out of existence, let us rescue the few we can and mete out punishment to the fiends who are filling their pockets with the gold produced by the very life-blood, the sweat, the tears, the agony of these unfortunates. Let us do what we can, at this late hour, to release the helpless Indians of the Putumayo from the cruel and inquisitorial yoke that these human hyenas have riveted upon them.

Think of nine-year-old girls torn from their homes, ravished, and afterwards tortured or flogged to death; of sucking infants snatched from their mothers' arms and their heads smashed against a tree; of a wife having her legs cut off merely for refusing to become one of the concubines of these bandits; of men flogged until . . . * or of old fathers shot to death before their sons' eyes merely because they were old and could work no longer!

The poor Indian, in spite of the diabolical "*civilisation*" of the Peruvians, has never been taught to read or write, has no friends to protect him, and, notwithstanding his *thirteen* years of

* This account cannot be printed.—EDITOR.

contact with this "civilising company" of Arana, has never even heard of the existence of God, and his untutored mind is seared and benumbed by the long years of cruel suffering at the hands of these monsters. Heathen and Indian they are, but they are human, just as we are; they have souls; they have affections and love and cherish their dear ones just as we do ours; they are our brothers. And if they are stupid, heathen, ignorant, whose fault is it? Is it not the fault of these fiends who for years have taken advantage of their ignorance and helplessness, exploited their meekness and humility, and fastened upon them the iron chains of the shocking slavery in which they are now held? And when we see that they are ignorant, heathen, and helpless and cannot protest against their horrible fate, is it not our duty, for that very reason, to defend them the more energetically?

The origin and history of the Peruvian Amazon Company are as follows:—

In the latter eighties of the last century Julio César Arana arrived at Iquitos barefooted, hawking Panama hats; but soon, by good luck and a certain low cunning with which he is endowed, he succeeded in building up a small business in peddling along the rivers. This business, confined at first only to hats, &c., he afterwards extended to a variety of articles and did fairly well at it.

Learning of the rich rubber forests of the Putumayo, which were then being exploited by several small Colombian companies established there, he entered the Putumayo in 1896, and soon afterwards formed a partnership with Benjamin and

Rafael Larrañaga,* owners of the establishments of La Chorrera. Subsequently he also associated himself with other Colombian companies there, and these enterprises proving profitable, in 1898 he opened a house in Iquitos, and in 1903, together with his brother Lizardo,† and his brothers-in-law, Pablo Zumaeta‡ and Abel Alarco,‡ founded the celebrated J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company, with a branch house in Manaos, Brazil.

In 1904 this company bought out the Larrañagas' holdings at La Chorrera, taking advantage of their ignorance and stupidity to rob them scandalously. Thus they remained sole masters of the whole Igaraparaná. A little later they also acquired the establishments of Calderón Hermanos at Encanto and that of Hipólito Pérez at Argelia, robbing them also, according to their custom. They were now the principal company in the whole Putumayo.

Not content with this, however, and urged on by the rapacity of Julio César Arana and his accomplices, they forced José Cabrera, owner of Nueva Granada, to sell out to them at an insignificant price by threats of killing him, by shooting at him from ambush, by forcibly taking away his Indians, and by the other methods for which this company is known.‡

* The first settlers in the Igaraparaná.

† These three monsters are jointly responsible with Julio César Arana for the hellish crimes of the Putumayo to be described later. Alarco is now managing director of this syndicate of crime, and at present is busily engaged in swindling the public.—AUTHOR.

‡ It was in this epoch that Cecilio Plata and his employees

The next step in the progress of the syndicate was the beginning of a systematic persecution of the three remaining Colombian establishments of Ordoñez, Serrano, and Gonzalez, with the object of making them abandon the region and then taking possession of their properties. This persecution took the form of robberies of their merchandise, rubber, and Indians, murders of their employees, refusals to sell them supplies, and all other vile expedients that cunning could suggest. The Colombians held on, however, in spite of these persecutions, and it was not until 1908 that the black flag of this criminal company, planted over their dead bodies, finally waved over the whole of this unfortunate region.

In 1905 Julio César went to England and succeeded in interesting some London gentlemen in the "possessions" of the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company in this region. An accountant was sent out to examine the *books*, which were apparently found to be satisfactory, and on October 1, 1907, the Peruvian Amazon Rubber Company, Ltd., was formed, with a capital of £1,000,000 sterling, divided, according to the prospectus, into 300,000 7 per cent. participating preference shares at £1 each and 700,000 ordinary shares, also at £1 each. In 1908 the word "Rubber" was stricken out, and this syndicate of crime is now known as the Peruvian Amazon Company, Ltd.

Having failed in their attempt to foist upon the were murdered on the banks of the Caquetá for having dared to enter into relations with the Indians of that region, who were afterwards enslaved by the criminal syndicate.—AUTHOR.

public their worthless shares, they decided to increase the assets of the company. This was done in 1908* by the simple process of collecting a small army of their assassins and murdering the already mentioned Colombians and their employees and taking possession of their establishments. Serrano, Gonzalez, and their employees were murdered in cold blood, their women were added to the harems of the employees of the company, their Indians were enslaved, their rubber and merchandise stolen, and their establishments taken possession of. Ordoñez succeeded in escaping with his life, but had to abandon everything else—his rubber, his house, his Indians—to the agents of the company, who are now in full possession of everything and are exploiting the properties of their unfortunate victims.

Let us now take a glance at the system pursued by this "civilising company" in the exploitation of the products of this region—that is, the exploitation of the rubber and of the Indians.

The whole territory is divided up into sections, at the head of which are placed chiefs, each one with a gang of bandits, varying in number from five to eighty, to control the Indians and force them to work. The chief of the section keeps a list of the Indians and assigns to each one the number of kilos of rubber he must deliver every ten days. The prettiest of the women are taken away from the Indians and become concubines of the chief of section and his band, the chief generally

* About this time Matías Pérez on the River Napo was forcibly ejected from his estate, which, with all its appurtenances, passed into the possession of the company.

having from three to twelve and the others in proportion.

La Chorrera, the chief of which is the celebrated Victor Macedo, is the centre to which the products of all the sections of the Igaraparaná and those distributed between that river and the Caquetá are sent periodically. Here all the books, &c., are kept and all payments to the employees are made. Macedo is the chief of all the employees in this territory, and has the power of employing or discharging men, the fixing of salaries, &c.; and it is with the knowledge, consent, and approval of this wretch that these incredible crimes are carried out. This torturer and assassin is the justice of the peace of the Putumayo.

El Encanto is the chief centre of the Caraparaná, exactly as La Chorrera is of the Igaraparaná, and its manager, Miguel S. Loayza, has similar powers to those of Macedo. This is the individual who superintended the murders of Serrano and Gonzalez and the other crimes committed upon these two unfortunates, upon Ordoñez, and upon their women and children, Indians and employees.

All the rubber produced in the whole region now being exploited by the "civilising company" is transported upon the backs of Indians, in canoes, or in small launches to these two centres, from whence it is shipped to Iquitos about every three months.

Macedo, Loayza, and the chiefs of sections are paid, not salaries but commissions upon the amount of rubber produced. Thus it is to their interest to extract the greatest amount of rubber in the least possible space of time, and to do this it is neces-

sary to force the Indians to work night and day. The best method of obliging them to do this is to impose certain amounts which they should deliver in a fixed time. Once this rule is made it must be enforced, and if the Indian does not deliver as much as he has been ordered to he must be punished. The punishment must be severe enough to strike terror into the hearts of the other Indians, so that they will not follow the example of the culprit.

The Indians collect all this rubber gratis: the only compensation they receive is flagellation, torture, and death if they should lack half a kilo of the amount imposed upon them; a mirror, a handkerchief, an ounce of beads if they deliver the full amount. They are doomed and defenceless victims of an exploitation unparalleled in the history of the entire world.

Should the unfortunate Indian lack even half a kilo of rubber, he is mercilessly flogged, being given from five to two hundred lashes, according to the enormity of his crime. As the poor wretches receive absolutely no medical treatment, within a few days these wounds putrefy, maggots make their appearance, and the miserable victims of this form of Peruvian "civilisation" die a lingering and repulsive death. Their bodies are left to rot where they fall, or else the well-trained dogs of their "civilisers" drag them out into the forest. Indeed, in some sections such an odour of putrefying flesh arises from the numerous bodies of the victims that the place must be temporarily abandoned.

Often when some poor Indian, seeing that he

could not deliver at the fixed time the amount of rubber imposed upon him, has fled, they take his tender children and torture them until they disclose the whereabouts of their unhappy father. Their favourite mode of torture is by suspending them from a tree and building a fire beneath them, by using the celebrated "water cure," and by suspending them from four posts, piling logs of wood, &c., on their tensioned bodies until they are forced to speak. Besides the methods already mentioned they frequently employ others,* so revolting that it is impossible to describe them.

Another common form of *punishment* is that of mutilations, such as cutting off arms, legs, noses, ears, penises, hands, feet, and even heads. Castrations are also a popular *punishment* for such crimes as trying to escape, for being lazy, or for being stupid, while frequently they employ these forms of mutilation merely to relieve the monotony of continual floggings and murders and to provide a sort of recreation. The victims generally die within a few days, or if they do not die they are murdered, for it is said that in 1906 Macedo issued an order to his subordinates advising them to kill all mutilated Indians at once for the following reasons: first, because they consumed food although they could not work; and second, because it looked bad to have these mutilated wretches running about. This wise precaution of Macedo's makes it difficult to find any mutilated Indians there, in spite of the number of mutilations; for, obeying this order, the executioners kill all the Indians they mutilate,

* A *hint* regarding these methods is given subsequently.

after they have suffered what they consider a sufficient space of time.

By way of amusement these employees of the company often enjoy a little *tiro al blanco*, or target-shooting, the target being little Indian children whose parents have been murdered. The little innocents are tied up to trees, the murderers take their positions, and the slaughter begins. First they shoot off an ear or hand, then another, and so on until an unlucky bullet strikes a vital part and puts an end to their sport.

Often on holidays and *fiestas*, in order to see the weak, starving, and cadaverous Indians run, these people fire into a group of them, and generally manage to bring down several before their victims have got out of reach.

When one of these agents sees a girl he wants he takes her, and her father or husband dare not protest, for he would be tortured to death at once. After he is satisfied, if he still likes the woman, he adds her to his harem; if not, he either lets her go or, as has happened, has her flogged to death. As I have before remarked, nearly all these agents possess a harem of two to twelve Indian girls, varying in age from eight to fifteen years. These defenceless children are violated without the least compassion, and when they tire of one she is either brutally kicked out of the house and sent back to her tribe or else murdered on the spot.

Murders and assassinations are so common here that some of the chiefs of sections and their subordinates do not pass without killing in cold blood from one to five, or even more, of the helpless Huitotos. Any pretext serves, as when the Indian

does not understand them or when he is not punctual to the minute; and, indeed, they often kill them for amusement, to fill the other Indians with a fear of the "whites," or to practise target-shooting. These murders, let it be understood, are not confined entirely to the slaughters of Indians, for many are the *civilizados*, Peruvians as well as Colombians, who have incurred the ill-will of these bandits.

Extortions are practised continually in this part of Peru by the company and its employees. Apart from the robberies of the rubber extracted by the Indians, the lesser employees are robbed of a part or of all their salary balances. The profits from these thefts generally go to swell the pockets of the chiefs of sections and those of the higher employees.

As I have before remarked, the unhappy Indians, far from getting paid for the rubber they deliver, are not even given food to eat while they work, and what appears more incredible is that they are given no opportunity to cultivate food of their own; for such is the criminal rapacity of this company that they not only compel the Indian women to cultivate the food for their men and themselves, but also for their oppressors, who help themselves to all they want and waste and destroy as much as they please, the little that is left constituting, with a few forest products, the food of the unfortunate and starving Indians.

The dress of the Huitotos has already been described, and, after thirteen years of close contact with the company, we find these people still stark naked.

But most remarkable are the *correrías* which

the agents of the company carry out periodically. The crimes of the Spanish Inquisition are pale compared with the deeds committed in this vast den of crime. Upon the occasions of these *correrías* the operation is as follows: The chief of section orders his subordinates to arm themselves and set out for the village of the Indians to receive the rubber, which, as we have observed, should be delivered every ten days. They make their way to the principal house, where the Indians should be assembled ready to deliver the rubber. Once here they call the roll, on which is noted the number of kilograms each Indian should have ready.

As each Indian's name is called he steps up and delivers the rubber he has collected, which is weighed on the spot. Occasionally a kilogram or two are lacking, and in this case the Indian is given from twenty-five to one hundred lashes by the Barbados negroes, who only for this purpose—that is, as executioners—have been brought here. At about the tenth blow the victim generally falls unconscious from the effects of the intense pain produced.

Sometimes two or three Indians and their families do not appear at this assembly on account of not having been able to collect the amount of rubber assigned to them. In this case the chief of the *correría* orders four or five of his agents to collect ten or twelve Indians of a tribe hostile to the fugitives and to set out in pursuit of the poor wretches, their *capitán* being dragged along, tied up with chains, to act as guide to reveal their hiding-place, and being threatened with a painful



INDIANS OF THE PERUVIAN AMAZON REGION : RIVER UCAYALI.

and lingering death in case he does not find them. After some search the hut where they have taken refuge is found, and then takes place a horrible and repugnant scene. The hut constructed by the refugees is of thatch, of a conical form and without doors. The chief orders his men to surround the house, and two or three of them approach and set fire to it. The Indians, surprised and terrified, dash out, and the assassins discharge their carbines at the unfortunate wretches. The men killed, the bandits turn their attention to the rest, and the old, the sick, and the children, unable to escape, are either burned to death or are killed with *machetes*.

Another method of exploiting these unfortunate Indians takes the form of selling them as slaves in Iquitos, and this business in human flesh yields excellent returns to the company or its employees, for they are sold in that capital at from £20 to £40 each. Every steamer that goes to Iquitos, loaded with the rubber from the Putumayo, carries from five to fifteen little Indian boys and girls, who are torn, sobbing, from their mothers' arms without the slightest compunction. These little innocents, as we have already said, are sold at wholesale and retail by this "civilising company" in Iquitos, the capital of the Department of Loreto, the second port of a country that calls itself Christian, republican, civilised, and, let it be well understood, with the knowledge, consent, and approval of the authorities there.

But to relate all the crimes and infamies committed in this tragic region by this company and its employees in its almost incredible persecu-

tion and exploitation of the Indians, would prove an interminable task, so many are the crimes committed in this devil's paradise.

The following are the directors of the Peruvian Amazon Company * :—

HENRY M. READ, 4 Lancaster Gate Terrace, Hyde Park, London, W.

SIR JOHN LISTER KAYE, Bart., 26, Manchester Square, London, W.

JOHN RUSSEL GUBBINS, Esq., 22, Carlton Hill, London, N.W.

BARON DE SOUSA DEIRO, Chairman of Goodwin, Ferreira Company, Ltd., Manchester.

M. HENRI BONDUEL, Banker, Rue d'Aumale, Paris.

SEÑOR JULIO CÉSAR ARANA, Iquitos, Peru.

SEÑOR ABEL ALARCO, Salisbury House, London, E.C., managing director.

The secretary is Walter Bramall, F.C.I.S., and the registered office of this Christian and humanitarian syndicate is at Salisbury House, London Wall, London, E.C.

Of these seven directors, there are at least two who are well aware of the state of affairs in their "possessions," who are far better informed than I am of the murders, the robberies, the flagellations, the violations of little eight and ten year old girls, the tortures, the incredible mutilations, and the other stupendous crimes committed by this company and its employees in the terrible Putumayo. These criminal employees are not restrained

* It is difficult to think that the European directors of the company were really cognisant of the crimes. As to the charge of culpability of negligence, and of their liability to shareholders under company law, these matters are being investigated, both before the Courts and by a special Commission in the House of Commons.—EDITOR.

by Julio César Arana and the manager in Iquitos, his brother-in-law, Pablo Zumaeta, but, on the contrary, are actually aided and encouraged by these monsters in their horrible work.

The other five directors are either dupes who have been taken in by the slick tongues of Julio César Arana and his accomplice, Abel Alarco, and who are not aware of the awful and appalling crimes committed in their names by their employees in the sanguinary Putumayo, or else they are hardened ruffians, who deliberately pocket the products of slavery, torture, and crime.

This criminal syndicate has endeavoured to unload its million of worthless shares upon the British public at £1 each. In their prospectus they make such extraordinary statements, mis-statements, and omissions that they make themselves liable to the law to answer to the charges of swindling, obtaining money under false pretences, and various others.

In a prospectus published by this company in the *Sunday Times* of London, December 6, 1908, I note among others, and denounce as deliberate lies, the following statements:—

1. That they have any *legal* rights or *legal* titles in regard to their gruesome “possessions” in the Putumayo.
2. That their rubber collection centres *are surrounded by cultivated lands*.
3. That these “cultivated lands” have a population of about 40,000 Indians.
4. That these Indians are being taught to improve the crude methods that were formerly used of treating the rubber.

5. That the "rubber-trees are the same as those which produce Para Fine."

6. That the territory in their possession "contains valuable auriferous quartz and gravel and deposits of coal and other minerals."

7. That "the exportation of rubber from the Putumayo is increasing."

8. That "the boundary question, even should it affect politically a portion of the Putumayo territory, will not affect the legal rights of the settlers."

The following statement, made by the Minister of Foreign Relations of the Republic of Colombia, which I translate from the *Jornal do Comercio* of Manaos, Brazil, of June 3, 1908, gives an idea of how Colombia views the proceedings of the "civilising company":—

"The companies that are exploiting the adjacent regions of the Putumayo to-day have no legal existence in Colombia, but, on the contrary, are violating many of our legal dispositions and are even committing crimes for which our laws provide penal punishment. When the time comes, the Government of Colombia will not only refuse them protection, but will punish the agents of those companies that are responsible for criminal acts with all the rigours of the law."

They also omit to state the following important and interesting facts:—

1. That their Pevas estate is practically exhausted.

2. That the Nanay estate, utterly neglected and abandoned, is now, and has been for nearly two years, in the possession of Muniz & Co.

3. That their "large staff" of European employees in the sanguinary Putumayo does not exceed eight or ten men at the most.

4. That the "extensive plains" are all covered with the thick, dense forest of the tropics, and that it is a tedious and expensive task to clear even a few acres of land there.

5. That in the short space of three or four years the Putumayo rubber will be completely exhausted.

6. And that "they force the Pacific Indians of the Putumayo to work day and night at the extraction of rubber, without the slightest remuneration; that they give them nothing to eat; that they keep them in the most complete nakedness; that they rob them of their crops, their women, and their children to satisfy the voracity, lasciviousness and avarice of themselves and their employees, for they live on the Indians' food, keep harems and concubines, and sell these people at wholesale and retail in Iquitos; that they flog them inhumanly, until their bones are visible; that they give them no medical treatment, but let them die, eaten up by maggots, or to serve as food for the chiefs' dogs; that they castrate them, cut off their ears, fingers, arms, legs; that they torture them by means of fire, of water, and by tying them up, crucified, head down; that they burn and destroy their houses and crops; that they cut them to pieces with *machetes*; that they grasp children by the feet and dash their heads against walls and trees, until their brains fly out; that they have the old folks killed when they can work no longer; and, finally, that to amuse themselves, to practise shooting, or to celebrate the *sábado de*

gloria *—as Fonseca and Macedo have done—they discharge their weapons at men, women, and children, or, in preference to this, they souse them with kerosene and set fire to them to enjoy their desperate agony.” †

And all this, let us remember, is done by a gang of human beasts, who, consulting exclusively their own evil interests, have had the audacity to form themselves into an English company and put themselves and their gruesome “possessions” under the protection of the English flag, in order to carry out more conveniently their sanguinary labours in the Putumayo and to inspire confidence here.

People of England! Just and generous people, always the advanced sentinels of Christianity and civilisation! Consider these horrors! Put yourselves in the place of the victims, and free these few remaining Indians from their cruel bondage and punish the authors of the crimes!

* *Sábado de gloria*, literally *Saturday of Glory*, is the day following Good Friday.

† From *La Sanción* of Iquitos, Peru.

CHAPTER VII

HARDENBURG'S INVESTIGATIONS

THE CRIMES OF THE PUTUMAYO

FOLLOWING are sworn statements of those who, as agents or sufferers, participated in the outrages on the Peruvian Amazon Company's estates, together with translations from various Peruvian newspapers of Iquitos, and statements of Peruvians, who, to their credit, endeavoured to expose the conditions existing in the Putumayo region :—

*Translation from "La Felpa," of Iquitos, of
December 29, 1907.*

Notice is hereby given to persons who intend going to the rubber possessions of the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company in the Putumayo, not to do so, for the following reasons :—

Everything is sold there at about four times the prices here. The food consists of beans, without salt or lard, and the contents of one tin of sardines for each twenty persons. Generally only boiled *airambo* is supplied, especially when they go out on *correrias*—that is, wholesale slaughter of Indians. The Company does not pay salary balances in full; they steal part of them and sometimes the whole! They do not permit their employees to come here, except when the chiefs

please. They beat, put in stocks, club, and even murder employees who do not do everything the chiefs order, and what is even worse they teach them to be assassins, to flog, to burn Indians, to mutilate them—that is, to cut off their fingers, arms, ears, legs, &c. As is evident, it is a horror to go to the Putumayo. I should prefer to go to hell. If any one thinks that I am trying to deceive him, let him come to the printing-office of *La Sanción*, No. 49, Morona St., and I will give him details and, at the same time, show him authentic documents, proving the truth of my assertions. Do not forget, see me before going to the Putumayo. I do this for the sake of humanity and to save many from crime. The Putumayo is a school of the most refined and barbarous crimes! Honest men! Avoid the Putumayo!

BENJAMIN SALDAÑA ROCCA.

Translated from "La Felpa," December 29, 1907.

THE INDIANS OF THE PUTUMAYO.

All the indigenous inhabitants of those selvas are of mild character, industrious, meek, hospitable, humble, and obedient. This assertion may seem untrue to more than one person, for we have always heard that the natives there are ferocious, indomitable, and even cannibals, but this is false and exaggerated.

The Indians are divided into nations, and each one of these has a chief, whom they denominate the *capitán*. They are enemies of polygamy, and

both men and women are jealous in the extreme. The latter cultivate fields, while the men dedicate themselves to hunting, fishing, and rubber collection.

These poor people, "simple," not cannibal, lived there happily until Arana and his brigands invaded them. Then began the Tantalus for all of them—men, women, children, and aged folk.

The chiefs of sections, such as the famous bandits, Norman, Agüero, the two Rodríguez brothers, and others, already known and enumerated, all impose upon each Indian the task of delivering to them 5 *arrobas** of rubber every *fabrico*.† When the time comes to deliver the rubber, these unhappy victims appear with their loads upon their backs, accompanied by their women and children, who help them to carry the rubber. When they reach the section the rubber is weighed. They know by experience what the needle of the balance should mark, and when it indicates that they have delivered the full amount required, they leap about and laugh with pleasure. When it does not, they throw themselves face downwards on the ground and, in this attitude, await the lash, the bullet, or the *machete*. This is at the option of the chief of section, but they are generally given fifty lashes with scourges, until the flesh drops from their bodies in strips, or else are cut to pieces with *machetes*. This barbarous spectacle takes place before all the rest, among whom are their women and children.

When they deliver the full amount of rubber

* One *arroba* is equivalent to 15 kilos or just over 30 lbs.

† *Fabrico*, a period of a little over three months.

required from them, they are given a mouth-organ, worth 30 centavos*, a coloured cotton handkerchief, worth 50 centavos, a few beads, or similar trash. This they receive with great pleasure, for, on the contrary, they are flogged or shot to death.

They do not worry about the Indians' food, and as to the clothes of these unfortunates, they have none, for both men and women live in the most complete nakedness.

All these tribes, fifteen years ago, amounted to over twenty thousand persons ; to-day they do not reach ten thousand. Desolation invaded these selvas together with the Aranas, worse even than the *cholera morbus* and the bubonic, terrible and awful plagues that from time to time leave Asia to traverse other parts of the globe, sowing panic, pain, death, and mourning.

Now, as there are but relatively few male Indians left, they have the cruelty to oblige the women to work at the extraction of rubber. Nor does their sex protect them from the punishments that these barbarous bandits of Arana inflict upon them, for they flog them, torture them, and cut them to pieces.

A certain periodical, subsidised by this criminal company, speaking of some memoirs of the explorer Robuchon,† states that he mentions that these Indians are hospitable. From this it is

* One centavo is equal to one farthing in English money.

† Robuchon was a French explorer, commissioned in 1904 by the Peruvian Government to make explorations, maps sketches, &c., and take photographs of the region of the Putumayo. He spent about two years there, traversing nearly the whole of the district occupied by the "civilising company," when in 1906 he suddenly disappeared in the vicinity of a

clear that we are not the first to make this assertion, and persons who have been in Puerto Bermudez can form an idea of what these Indians are like by comparing them with the Campas, which is the fiercest tribe. Nevertheless, there in Puerto Bermudez these Campas are in intimate contact with all who pass there, and furnish the traveller with everything in their power.

The appearance of the unfortunate Indians of the Putumayo is ghastly and horrible; thin, cadaverous, and attenuated, they look more like ghosts than human beings. And nevertheless, they go out to meet the employees when these latter pass through their villages, and give them what few fruits they have. These gifts have been rewarded by death, on more than one occasion.

Only very rarely have they rebelled; but this rebellion consists only in fleeing from their villages to emigrate far off, trying to get out of reach of their executioners. They do this only when they are murdered, flogged, burnt, tortured, mutilated, and robbed of their wives and children with more than usual frequency. This is the crime of the Putumayo Indians—trying to hide themselves from their murderers. Well, these villains, enraged beyond all bounds, collect in parties of fifty or more and start in pursuit of the fugitives. They

point called El Retiro. As he is known to have taken several photographs of the horrible crimes committed there, it is thought by many that he was victimised by the employees of Arana. Considering the character of these miserable criminals and certain other peculiar circumstances that are said to have taken place, it would not be strange if such were really the case.—AUTHOR.

fall upon them at midnight, and after surrounding the huts in which their victims are asleep, set fire to them and shoot all who try to escape.

Is it not reasonable that these unfortunates should defend themselves and their dear ones when attacked in their last possessions? It is here that sometimes, not always, desperate struggles take place, the criminals with their rifles and the Indians with clubs and *machetes*. As is natural, the latter are always defeated and once more the victims of their torturers, who burn them by hundreds or else again reduce them to slavery.

We believe it right to make known that the rubber there is becoming exhausted, and that to collect even one ounce of it means real sacrifices. It would be well if the English purchasers who have formed a syndicate in order to exploit that region could see that its resources are all imaginary, for Arana & Co. sell what does not belong to them, as slavery does not exist in Peru.

We shall treat of other points in regard to this matter later, for the unfortunate syndicate that has embarked in this adventure should be informed of the real state of affairs and in what difficult conditions things are in, for certain international treaties exist with Colombia which have, at the present time, assumed a most serious and bellicose aspect.

*Translated from the "Jornal do Comercio," of
Manaos, September 14, 1907.*

In accordance with our promise to our readers, we give the following news, as complete as possible,

of a barbarous deed, the theatre of which was a point close to one of our frontiers.

This narrative, detailed and horrible, we believe to be true, for it was related to us by one of the victims, who is at present in this city, the Colombian Roso España, a young man twenty-one years of age, of low stature and agreeable features.

In the last days of 1906 Aquileo Torres, Felipe Cabrera, Feliciano Muñoz, Pascual Rubiano, José de la Paz Gutiérrez, Bonifacio Cabrera, Jorge Carbajal, Carlos María de Silva, Heleodoro X—, Crisanto Victoria, Roso España, and two women, all employees of the firm of Urbano Gutiérrez, set out from Florencia, Dept. of Tolima, Republic of Colombia.

They embarked in six canoes, with a large quantity of merchandise, for the River Caquetá or Japurá, where they were going to extract rubber and begin traffic with the Indians, so that the latter would help them in this work. After a tedious journey of thirty-five days, they reached the Lower Caquetá, where a tribe of Indians called the Andoques live. Here they were well received by the indigenes of this Colombian territory. In order to gain the friendship of these natives, the Colombians presented them with various trifles and received from them in return manioca and bananas. Thus the first difficulty was conquered, for within a few days the Indians yielded themselves up completely to the new-comers.

As the construction of a house for the shelter of the *personal* * and the merchandise was of urgent

* *Personal*, a gang of men.

necessity, the chief of the party, Felipe Cabrera, ordered some of the men to begin this operation, with the help of the Indians, while the rest proceeded to burn the brush, in order to make the necessary plantations.

A few days afterwards, when the clearing was finished and the construction of the house well advanced, a group of nearly 20 Peruvian *caucheros*,* all armed with rifles, appeared upon the scene. Two Barbados negroes formed part of this band. The Peruvians first encountered a group of eight persons—four men and one Colombian woman, two Indian men and one Indian woman, all of whom were apart from their companions, engaged in the fabrication of mandioca flour. Of this inoffensive group the two Indians fell, shot dead. Then the Peruvians sent a letter to one Señor Norman, an agent of the Arana Company, who arrived on the scene three days later, accompanied by another group of individuals. Norman, questioning the prisoners, learned that Felipe Cabrera, the chief, was among them, and forced him, with threats, to send an order to José de la Paz Gutiérrez, who was absent with the rest of the men, to deliver up all the arms they had.

The prisoner, in fear of his life, wrote the order, which Norman took to its destination.

The guide was the Colombian prisoner, Roso España.

Then, in possession of the arms, they began another butchery. The Peruvians discharged their weapons at the Indians who were constructing the roof of the house. These poor unfortunates,

* *Cauchero*, rubber-collector.

pierced by the bullets, some dead, others wounded, rolled off the roof and fell to the ground.

The bandits, for it is only by that name that they can be called, not content with these cowardly murders, for they had already killed twenty-five, took the Indian women of advanced age, threw them into the canoes of the Colombians and conducted them to the middle of the river and discharged their rifles at them, killing them all.

What they did with the children was still more barbarous, for they jammed them, head-downwards, into the holes that had been dug to receive the posts that were to support the house.

The Peruvians, after taking possession of the merchandise, conducted the Colombians, the *tuchaua* of the Andoques, two Indians, and an Indian woman, to Matanzas, the dwelling-place of the criminal Norman, the journey taking two days. Here the prisoners were tied up with cords and afterwards shut up in one of the houses, where they passed a night of torture. In the morning the *tuchaua* and the two Indians were taken out to an adjacent knoll and clubbed to death.

At about mid-day those who had escaped with their lives were taken to La Sabana, where the chief is Juan * Rodríguez, arriving there at about 10 p.m. and stopping for the night. In the morning they were sent to Oriente, the chief of which is a Peruvian named Velarde.

Here still more barbarities were committed, the Colombians suffering horrors, for on the day after their arrival they were chained up by the neck

* An error of España's. *Aristides*, not *Juan Rodríguez*.

and by the legs. As they were unable to endure such cruel treatment, the unhappy prisoners appealed to their jailers, who took off the chains, but in exchange put their legs in stocks.

In the house that these poor people were imprisoned in there were also a large number of Indians in chains, who received daily violent castigations, flagellations, and clubbing. Some of these Indians suffered from awful wounds, many of them produced by firearms. Five days afterwards the chiefs of the Colombians, Messrs. Felipe Cabrera, Aquileo Torres, and José de la Paz Gutiérrez, were taken to the section known as Abisinia. It is not known what fate has been meted out to them.

The other prisoners remained nearly two months in Oriente, until it was known that the steamer *Liberal* was in the Igaraparaná, an affluent of the Putumayo. Here the principal branch establishment of the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company in the Putumayo is situated.

The Colombians were then embarked in the *Liberal*, which was to take them prisoners to Iquitos. They remained on board this vessel four days, but just before they reached the Brazilian fiscal port at Cotuhué the commandant, fearing that the Brazilian officials might discover the prisoners when they visited the vessel, disembarked the victims, abandoning them in a canoe in midstream, with a few tins of sardines and a little *farinha*. The victims, rowing with all their might, started for the fiscal port, but did not reach it until after the *Liberal* had left for Iquitos. Here they presented themselves to Señor Nestor, the chief of the

port of Cotuhué, and narrated to him what had passed. In Brazilian territory the unfortunates were kindly received and well treated.

As the Colombians had to make their living, they asked Señor Nestor for work, and the Brazilian official, taking pity on these poor men, gave them work at fair pay. When the Governor of the State and General Marques Porto visited that port on the *Virginia*, the Colombians were still there.

Some days afterwards the war-launch *Amapá*, under Lieut. Olavo Machado, while *en route* to the frontier to relieve a sergeant and some soldiers, stopped at Cotuhué. Then Roso España, who has given us this narrative, approached that official of our navy and asked him for passage to this city. Lieut. Machado, after learning of his misfortunes, gave Roso España a passage on the *Amapá*, and the officials afterwards employed him as servant, giving him 50 *milreis* per month.

*Translated from "La Sanción," of Iquitos,
August 22, 1907.*

I certify that in one of the establishments of La Chorrera, in the section Matanzas, the chief, Armando Norman, applies two hundred or more lashes, which are given with rough scourges of crude leather, to the unhappy Indians, when they—to their misfortune—do not deliver punctually the number of rolls of rubber with the weight that Norman desires. At other times, when the Indian, fearful of not being able to deliver the required amount of rubber, flees, they take his tender children, suspend them by their hands and feet,

and in this position apply fire, so that under this torture they will tell where their father is hidden.

On more than one occasion, always for lack of weight of the rubber, the Indians are shot, or their arms and legs are cut off with *machetes* and the body is thrown around the house; and more than once the repugnant spectacle of dogs dragging about the arms or legs of one of these unfortunates has been witnessed.

At port Tarma, four hours from La Chorrera, section Oriente, of which Fidel Velarde is chief, the Colombian Aquileo Torres is held prisoner, with an enormous chain around his neck. This unhappy wretch lives in a dying condition in the cellar of the house where he was taken from the Caquetá. When the higher employees of the company get drunk—which occurs with great frequency—they make the unfortunate Torres the target of their cowardly attacks, for they spit on him, beat him, and abuse him vilely.

I have also witnessed another scene, excessively inhuman and repugnant. Juan C. Castaños embarked in the *Liberal* for this place, and wished to take along with him his Indian woman Matilde, which was not permitted, for Bartolomé Zumaeta had taken a fancy to the beauty of the unhappy woman; Castaños, upon seeing that they refused to let him take her with him, in spite of all Matilde's pleadings to be allowed to accompany him, had to abandon her, and, in his presence, the unfortunate woman was given to Zumaeta. The Indian woman fled from this repugnant and diseased wretch, who continued his journey to El Encanto,

and, upon her return to La Chorrera, she went to sleep on board one of the vessels anchored in that port, where, it is said, all kinds of excesses were committed upon her, and, not content with what they had already done to the unhappy woman, they delivered her to the company; here she was inhumanly scourged with twenty-five lashes, and her body was almost cut to pieces by the effects of the lash. She was shut up in a warehouse, where she remained at the time of our departure from La Chorrera.

Finally, two well-known Colombians, who are under the orders of the agency of El Encanto, flogged the *Capitánes* Cuyo, Guema, and Nampí, of the Yaquebuas tribe, and *Capitán* Acate, of the Nuisayes; the first was flogged to death and the others, after the flagellation, were kept chained up for several months, all for the "crime" of their people in not delivering the number of kilos of rubber fixed by the company. Just before these occurrences one of the men in reference murdered three Indians, stabbing them with his own hands.

These are the actual deeds that are carried out constantly in the Putumayo, and for the lack of one kilogram in the weight of their quota of rubber they murder, mutilate, and torture the people.

The relation which I have just made of some of the many crimes committed in this tragic territory of the Putumayo is made only for the sake of the suffering and defenceless Indians in the hope that a stop will be put to the crimes. It is inconceivable that within two steps of Iquitos, where

there are political authorities * and a superior court of justice, crimes of the class I have described are committed.

(Signed) JULIO F. MURIEDAS.

Translated from "La Sanción," August 29, 1907.

IQUITOS, August 7, 1907.

SEÑOR BENJAMIN SALDAÑA ROCCA,—I have heard that you are about to begin a legal action denouncing the criminal deeds committed in the Arana "possessions" on the tributaries of the River Putumayo, and as I was an eye-witness of many of these tragedies I will recount to you what I have seen.

We had scarcely arrived at La Chorrera when Señor Macedo ordered us to the section of José Inocente Fonseca, who was then on a *correría*. The food given us was a little *fariña* and water, but Fonseca and his numerous concubines ate abundant viands. We stopped at night at one of the many *tambos* † in this region, the hammocks were slung, the sentinels were posted, and those who did not mount guard lay down to sleep. Within a few hours I heard people arriving, and three Indians entered, each one carrying on his back several small bundles, wrapped up in what looked like baskets. The chief was awakened, and he told them to unroll what they had brought.

I thought they were fruits or something of that sort, but what was my horror when on unwrapping the coverings there appeared first the head of an

* We shall see later how the Iquitos authorities proceeded in this matter.—AUTHOR.

† *Tambo*, small, empty hut of thatch.

Indian, second that of a woman, and third that of an infant, and so on for the rest. The emissary as he unwrapped the heads explained, "This is that of So-and-So, this other that of his wife, the third that of his son," and so on. Fonseca, with the utmost unconcern, as though they were coconuts or other fruits, took them in turn by the hair, examined them, and then threw them away. I do not record the names of the victims, Señor Saldaña, for they were Indian names, difficult to remember. This took place in Ultimo Retiro, among the nation or sub-tribe of the pacific Aifugas Indians, in March, 1906.

On the *sábado de gloria* Fonseca observed several Indians going out of the house to fetch water. Taking his revolver and carbine, he turned towards them, saying to us (there were present Juan C. Castaños, Pérez, Alfredo Cabrera, Miguel Rengifo, Ramón Granda, Sparro, Lorenzo Tello, and many others whose names I do not recollect now), "Look, this is how we celebrate the *sábado de gloria* here," wantonly let fly at the Indians, killing one man and hitting a girl of fifteen years. This girl did not die immediately, being only wounded, but the criminal Miguel Rengifo, *alias* Ciegadiño, finished her with a carbine bullet.

When Fonseca returned from the *correría* and went to his section-house, Victoria, one of his nine concubines was accused of infidelity in his absence. Enraged, Fonseca tied her up to a tree by her opened arms and, raising her skirt to her neck, flogged her with an enormous lash, continuing until he was tired out. He then put her in a hammock inside a warehouse, and as the scars received no

treatment in a few days maggots bred in them ; then by his orders the Indian girl was dragged out and killed. Luis Silva, a Brazilian negro, who is at present in the section Unión, is the man who executed this order. After murdering Victoria as I have described they threw her body into the banana plantation.

The floggings of Indians were carried out daily, and from time to time some Indians were killed.

(Signed) ANACLETO PORTOCARRERA.

(Sworn before) FEDERICO M. PIZARRO,
Notary Public.

Translated from "La Sanción," October 10, 1907.

IQUITOS, September 28, 1907.

SEÑOR BENJAMIN SALDAÑA ROCCA,—By the articles published in your worthy newspaper, *La Sanción*, I understand that you accept the voluntary statements of those who, like myself, have witnessed some of the awful crimes committed in the Putumayo by the brigands of Arana Hermanos. I shall now relate to you what I have seen and what they do there to-day.

In the year and fifteen days that I have been in El Encanto in Macedo's section—Monte Rico—and in Artemio Muñoz' section—Esmeraldas—I have seen them flog Indians in a most barbarous manner, generally leaving them dead or nearly so. The executioner in Monte Rico was Belisario Suárez, the second chief ; in the two months and a half that I was in his service I have seen more than three hundred Indians flogged, each one receiving from twenty to one hundred and fifty or two hundred

lashes, this latter number being given when they wish to kill him on the spot by flogging. Other Indians are given one hundred or more lashes and are then thrown out in the forest to die there, full of maggots, for even their own companions flee from them in horror. In this section all the employees are obliged to do the floggings: among them were Andrés Guerra, Gonzalez, and others whom I cannot remember now, but will cite later.

In Esmeraldas similar crimes are committed. The chief is Artemio Muñoz, another barbarian. In this section I remained three months and a half, and they flogged over four hundred, among men, women, children of eight years, and even old folks, six of whom they killed in this way. There was one Indian who endured two hundred lashes, and, seeing that he was not yet dead on the second day, the chief ordered an Italian, named Ernesto Acosta, to kill him with the butt of a carbine, which he did, the unhappy Indian dying in this barbarous way.

In both sections, after the flagellation, a chain is tied around the Indian's neck, and in this way many of them die. Señor Loayza knows all this perfectly well, for he himself gives the order to flog all who do not bring in the amount of rubber they impose upon them. In Esmeraldas, Don Bartolomé Guevara, inspector of sections, killed two *capitánes*; this is the individual who introduced the method of having men tied to four stakes and flogging them. When he makes his *correrías* and orders the floggings he says that the Indians must either work or die, for he does not wish to return to his country poor. This terrible man must have flogged over five thousand Indians during the six

years he has resided in this region. He has also, I am told by people who have seen him, shot many whites to death.

Don Luis Alcorta had a mistress named Carolina Diaz, who had a little son by a German. Alcorta, the stepfather of this little boy, who was three or four years old, could not bear the sight of him, and almost daily this wicked wretch kicked and clubbed him; when the mother intervened she, too, was clubbed. The poor woman has become consumptive and lives here now, but as to her little son, this Alcorta killed him in two months with the numerous clubbings he gave him.

When this same man killed Faustino Hernandez, shooting him to death with the help of Belisario Suárez, they made a great feast, in which, among others, Miguel S. Loayza, Luis Alcorta, Belisario Suárez, Olivarez, and Dagoberto Arriarán took part, celebrating the graces, valour, and courage of the assassins. It is worthy of note that the Barbados negro, King, and the white, Olivarez (the one-eyed man), were the ones who shot the unfortunate Hernandez in the head; these also took part in the festivity, which terminated in drunkenness and scandal, all with the consent and approval of the manager of El Encanto, Señor Loayza.

This, Señor Saldaña, is what I know and have witnessed, and I am ready to maintain this statement anywhere.

Make any use you deem convenient of this declaration, in favour of those sufferers.

CARLOS SOPLÍN.

(*Sworn before*) FEDERICO M. PIZARRO,
Notary Public.



A SIDE STREET AT IQUITOS.

Translated from "La Felpa" of Iquitos, January 5, 1908.

Note.—For obvious reasons the author of the following letter does not sign his name in full.

IQUITOS, *July 16, 1907.*

SEÑOR BENJAMIN SALDAÑA ROCCA,—I write you this to inform you about the horrible crimes, such as murders, robberies, floggings, tortures, &c., that are committed in the possessions of Señores J. C. Arana and Hermanos on the River Putumayo.

The principal criminals are the following chiefs of sections: Armando or Felipe Norman, José Inocente Fonseca, Abelardo Agüero, Augusto Jiménez, Arístides Rodríguez, Aurelio Rodríguez, Alfredo Montt, Fidel Velarde, Carlos Miranda, and Andrés O'Donnell. With the exception of O'Donnell, who has not killed Indians with his own hands, but who has ordered over five hundred Indians to be killed, all the rest—every one of them—have killed with their own hands, the least criminal, like Jiménez, ten in two months; others, like Fonseca, more than a hundred in one year.

I have served two months in Abisinia, of which Abelardo Agüero is chief, and during that time I have seen three Indians flogged; one of them was a pregnant woman. After flogging her they cut her throat with *machetes* and then burnt her up. Afterwards they flogged, during the two months I spent here, about one hundred Indians, giving them ordinarily one hundred and fifty lashes. This chief robbed me of one month's pay, which amounted to S.50.

Afterwards, Señor Saldaña, I served in Matanzas,

under the orders of Norman, for the space of one month and five days. In this time I saw ten Indians killed and burnt and three hundred were flogged who died slowly, for their wounds are not treated, and when they are full of maggots they kill them with bullets and *machetes* and afterwards burn some of them. Others are thrown aside and, as they rot, emit an insupportable stench. This section stinks so that at times it is impossible to remain here on account of the rotting flesh of the dead and dying Indians.

Here in Matanzas, Armando Norman ordered me to kill a little Indian about eight or ten years old who had been cruelly flogged for running away, and who, in consequence of this barbarous punishment, was full of maggots and dying, his back being completely torn to pieces from the lashes he had received. I refused, Señor Saldaña, to kill the boy, but Norman, enraged beyond all bounds, grasped his carbine and aimed at me to kill me, and, as I had seen him kill so many people and had nobody to appeal to, I had to kill the little Indian.

In Ultimo Retiro I served nearly a year, and the chief was José Inocente Fonseca. During my stay here they killed about two hundred Indians, among men, women, and children. The bones of the victims are scattered about over the ranches and everywhere else.

Here they made me commit one crime more. There was in this place an Indian woman called Simona, whose lover was a boy, named Simón; Argaluz, the sub-chief, said that I had had relations with her, and for this reason they gave Simona twenty-five lashes, which were applied by the

Barbados negroes Stanley S. Lewis and Ernest Siobers. The Indian woman was left with her back literally torn to pieces, and in four days, when she began to stink and had maggots in her rotten flesh, Fonseca came and ordered me to kill her. Upon my refusal he put me in the stocks and threatened to kill me. Then, terrified and helpless, I had to kill Simona.

I was also in Porvenir six months, the chief being Bartolomé Guevara. Here I saw only about ten Indians flogged.

I also wish to inform you, Señor Rocca, that they take away from the Indians their women and children.

Every Indian is obliged to deliver to the company every three months 60 kilos of rubber, and in payment they are given a knife or a small mirror, worth 20 centavos, or a harmonium or a string of beads, weighing one ounce. To all who deliver 5 *pagos*—each *pago* being composed of 100 kilos—or, in other words, to those who deliver 500 kilos or bind themselves to do so, they give a shot-gun of the value of \$15. The Indians are never given food; they themselves furnish it. To those who do not deliver the 60 kilos every three months—a part of which must be ready every ten days—and to those who lack even half a kilo five or ten lashes are applied.

The Indian is so humble, that as soon as he sees that the needle of the scale does not mark the ten kilos, he himself stretches out his hands and throws himself on the ground to receive the punishment. Then the chief or a subordinate advances, bends down, takes the Indian by his

hair, strikes him, raises his head, drops it face downwards on the ground, and, after the face is beaten and kicked and covered with blood, the Indian is scourged. This is when they are treated best, for often they cut them to pieces with *machetes*.

In Matanzas I have seen Indians tied to a tree, their feet about half a yard above the ground. Fuel is then placed below, and they are burnt alive. This is done to pass the time.

When Señor Castaños was in Porvenir, Fonseca ordered him to kill two Indians with the Boras, Remigio and Buchico, and to bring, tied up, three Indian women that Fonseca wanted as his concubines: these were Josefa, with her little child by Carlos Lemus, A—— and Z——. As Castaños would not obey this order, he was taken to Ultimo Retiro, and there they wished to kill him, but when Fonseca pulled out his revolver, Castaños defended himself in an energetic attitude with his carbine. Castaños took the Indian women to La Chorrera and Fonseca had the Indians killed in the forest, and, to take revenge on Castaños, had his Indians taken away, also his woman, Isabel, who was pregnant and about to give birth, and a boy named Adolfo. I heard afterwards that Fonseca ordered Isabel to be killed, when she was with her tribe, the Noruegas.

The Indians are tame and humble, and bring us food. Often, after these unfortunates bring food to the chief of the section, he has them murdered.

Declaration made by Señor João Baptista Braga, a Brazilian citizen, thirty-eight years of age, of the State of Pará, before Lieutenant José Rosa Brazil, Commandant of the detachment of Constantinopolis.

In the year 1902 I was contracted as fireman of the launch *Preciada*, which ran from Iquitos to the River Putumayo and belonged to Messrs. J. C. Arana and Hermanos. About one year, more or less, after this, I resigned and began work on the launch of Mr. David Cazes, British Consul in Iquitos, where I worked for the space of one year.

On December 6, 1904, I was again engaged by the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company to direct a band of sixty-five men (Peruvians), with a salary of S.80 per month, besides a gratification of S.100. My chiefs were Abelardo Agüero and Augusto Jiménez.

Immediately after my arrival Señor Agüero called me in order to show me the method of proceeding with the prisoners they have there; so taking eight Indians out of the *cepo* where they had been barbarously martyred, he had them tied to eight posts in the *patio*, and, after drinking a bottle of cognac with his partner Jiménez, they began to murder these unfortunates, who perished, giving vent to horrible shrieks, helpless victims of the ferocious instincts of their masters. The crime they had committed was that of having fled to escape the horrible treatment to which they were subjected.

About three months after this, Señor Agüero, the chief of the section, ordered me to shoot thirty-five

men, whom he had in chains for the same crime as the others had committed. As I refused to commit such a hellish crime, he insulted me and threatened to have me shot if I did not obey this order.

In spite of this menace, I roundly refused to carry out this order, telling him that I was a Brazilian citizen and would never be an assassin.

"Well, then," he replied, "if you won't obey my orders, I have another who will," and calling the second chief, Augusto Jiménez, ordered him to "kill those worthless wretches at once!" Those thirty-five unfortunates, still in chains, were thus murdered in cold blood, and from this instant forward they began to persecute me, making me endure all kinds of miseries. They began by refusing me food to such an extreme that I was frequently obliged to eat *airambo* (a leaf resembling the Brazilian *vina-grera*), *caguana*, *palmito*, &c.—the few things that they gave us to prevent our dying from hunger being quite insufficient for the numerous band.

In these conditions, and seeing that at any moment I might become the victim of the ferocity of the chiefs of the section, I resolved to resign my position, and wrote asking for permission to return to Brazil. This I repeated four times, always receiving the reply that, as they had no other employee to take my place, they could not let me go.

Thus I remained without anybody to appeal to, without resources, and without means of transportation, for there was no canoe in which I could escape.

At last I understood that they did not mean to let me leave there, for, naturally, they feared that I would relate the series of monstrous crimes committed there.

During these three years and eight months of prison I had the opportunity of seeing an infinity of atrocities, the like of which could hardly have been committed in the Inquisition.

One day a *tuchaua* called Iubitide, arrived with seventy Indians and gave an Indian woman of his tribe to Jiménez, the chief of the section; but Jiménez, not satisfied with this gift, asked the *tuchaua* for his own woman. The refusal of the latter was sufficient for Jiménez to order him to be tied up and shot to death.

It would be an endless task to relate the innumerable crimes that I have seen committed during my stay in this section. Here, recently, in the month of July, the *tuchaua* known as Tiracahuaca and his wife were held prisoners in chains. When Jiménez—who had been temporarily absent—arrived, he had them brought into his presence and told them that if their tribe did not appear within the space of eight days, he would show them what he would do with them.

The eight days passed, and as the tribe did not come, he ordered a can of kerosene to be poured over them, and then, striking a match, he set fire to these unfortunates, who fled to the forest uttering the most desperate cries.

Naturally, upon seeing such an awful crime committed, I expressed my horror at it to Jiménez, who replied that if there were anybody who wished to protest against the orders he gave, he would be

served in the same manner, and that if the company kept him as chief, it was because he knew how to do his duty.

Then I perceived that my life was in more danger every day, and I resolved to escape at any risk.

On the 28th of July, the Peruvian Independence Day, I took advantage of the orgy in which I found the chiefs of the section engaged, and embarked in an Indian canoe that I found in the port, at 4 a.m.

My companions were Felipe Cabrera, a Colombian, who had been a prisoner for eighteen months, and a Peruvian, Melchor Sajamín, who was in the same condition as myself, having been flogged several times.

This is the truth of what passed and of what I have witnessed, and I appeal to the authorities of my country, who will, I trust, demand an explanation from the Government of Peru of the abuses and crimes committed upon Brazilian citizens and those of other nations by the employees of the J. C. Arana and Hermanos Company.

I present the person who signs this declaration with me as a witness of my signature.

JOÃO BAPTISTA BRAGA.

CONSTANTINOPOLIS, *October 6, 1908.*

(Signed in my presence) JOSÉ R. BRAZIL.

Letters to Hardenburg—Translation.

IQUITOS, *June 6, 1908.*

SEÑOR W. E. HARDENBURG,—As you have written to me, I shall give you a full account of all the

deeds I have witnessed in the region of the Putumayo in the year 1903.

On the 4th of August of that year I began work on *correría* service in the section Abisinia, where they sent us to guard the poor Indians and see that they brought in the rubber that the chief demanded.

On the 20th of the same month Agüero committed a most savage murder, cutting off an Indian's head. He is just the sort of man to commit all kinds of atrocities, such as cutting Indian women's limbs off, burning their houses, setting fire to their dead bodies, &c. On the 10th of the same month he had some fifty Indians put in stocks, and as he gave them neither water nor food, the poor Indians began to dry up like pieces of wood, until they reached such an extreme as to be quite useless and dying. Then he tied them up to a post and exterminated them by using them as targets for his Mauser revolver.

On the 15th of this month this same man went out on a *correría* with eight men. At one of the houses where they stopped to rest they found two Indian women who were ill of smallpox. The two poor sufferers begged Agüero for some medicine to cure themselves. Agüero replied that he would see that the fever continued no longer, and so saying, grasped a *machete* and cut off the heads of the two women.

On the 20th of September I began work at the section Morelia, where Jiménez was the chief, and on the 30th a commission arrived, bringing fifteen Indian prisoners, who were put in stocks. When on the point of dying of hunger, one of the victims

told the chief that it would be better to kill them at once and not make them suffer such cruel agonies, whereupon he took a *machete*, cut off the man's leg, and then ordered him to be dragged away, killed, and burned.

On the 4th of the following month a commission of whites under Jiménez set out on a *correría*. When they had journeyed for two days, they met a young Indian, whom they asked as to the whereabouts of the other Indians, and as soon as they had received a reply Jiménez cut off his head with a *machete*.

Four days after this terrible crime they came across two Indian women, planting *yuca* in a *chacra*, and asked them where their men were. Enraged at not obtaining a clear answer, they threatened the women with death, and as the latter refused to say anything, these wretches began to cut them to pieces. About five days after the execution of this crime they met with a number of *infieles*, and proceeded to kill them all. These crimes took place in the section Morelia, the chief of which was this Jiménez, and I can vouch for them, as I saw them with my own eyes.

In the year 1904 I was employed in Santa Catalina, where lives Aurelio Rodríguez, the chief of this section, who ordered the employees out on *correrías*, from which they returned ill and decimated by hunger, for the *infieles* endeavoured to emancipate themselves from the work on account of the cruel punishment given them, as those who unfortunately fell into the hands of this chief were killed in a most barbarous manner.

Finally, a commission of ten men went out on

a *correría* and committed the most savage outrages, killing all the poor *infielos*, big and small, that they met on their march. On their return they brought some forty Indians as prisoners, whom they put in stocks, where an epidemic of small-pox arose among them. Although they were in a most pitiable condition, Rodríguez took them out, one by one, and used them as targets to practise shooting at.

About nine days after this an Indian woman fell into his hands, but as she became ill of the same disease, Rodríguez ordered them to kill her. She begged for her life, but in vain, for he had her killed as he did not care for her.

As my time is limited and the crimes I have witnessed are numerous, I will conclude this statement by informing you that the vicinity of the house where this man lives is sown with skeletons.

O'Donnell, the chief of Entre Ríos, compels the *infielos* to bring him a certain quantity of rubber, and if they do not do so, he submits them to most cruel punishments, mutilating them and then ending by murdering them.

For all legal purposes and for the good of the country, I give you the present statement, which I sign in the presence of two witnesses.

(Signed) JUAN ROSAS.

(Witnesses to
the signature) { JULIAN VÁSQUEZ.
 { NICANOR DE LA MESA.

IQUITOS, *May* 15, 1909.

SR. W. E. HARDENBURG.

DEAR SIR,—I have just received your letter of yesterday asking for information about the rubber

possessions of the Peruvian Amazon Company in the Putumayo and its tributaries, and I have pleasure in answering it, narrating voluntarily some of the things I have witnessed in that ghastly region, and authorising you to make any use of this letter that you deem convenient.

On March 6, 1908, I left Iquitos on the small steamer *Liberal*, bound for El Encanto, from where we descended to La Chorrera. Here I began work as an employee on April 1st of the same year.

As soon as I had landed at this port I noticed the unfortunate Indians, who loaded and unloaded the small steamers at the port—thin, hungry, weak, and covered with great scars produced by the lash and the *machetes*—I saw that they were the helpless victims of excessively barbarous system of forced labour. When any of these wretched beings fell down, overcome by weakness, or sat down to rest, their taskmasters, the employees of the Peruvian Amazon Company, clubbed them cruelly and brutally with sticks of firewood and huge, raw-hide scourges, laughing at the cries and moans of agony emitted by the unfortunate victims.

I also saw Dancurt, the official executioner of La Chorrera, flog the poor Indians almost daily for the most trivial faults: all with the knowledge and approbation of Victor Macedo, manager of La Chorrera and *Justice of the Peace* of the Putumayo.

Abelardo Agüero, who had just arrived in the war-launch *Iquitos*, asked me to go with him to Abisinia, a section he was in charge of, assuring me that they did not flog the Indians there, that they had good food, and that he would pay me

80 dollars per month. Believing in his good faith, and, above all, not wishing to witness any more crimes, I accepted his offer, and within a few days we began the journey, going in a launch as far as Santa Julia. From here we continued the journey on foot to a place called Araras, where I was overcome by weakness, owing to lack of food. But Agüero and his companions, who had offered me so much, left me in the forest without medicines or a grain of food.

In this state, and seeing that death was certain unless I got something to eat, I started to crawl painfully about in search of herbs to eat, and found a tree called *huava*. I picked some of its fruit and ate it, but shortly afterwards had terrible pains in the stomach, and vomited up all the fruit that I had eaten.

After acute sufferings I managed to reach Abisinia, without having eaten anything during the two days and a half of the journey.

In Abisinia I saw the eight concubines of Agüero. Some of these were of the Boras tribe, and others were Huitotos, all of different ages—for this group of unfortunates was composed of girls from nine to sixteen years. Agüero kept his eight women separated from each other, the Boras on one side and the Huitotos on the other, so that they would not quarrel, on account of the antagonisms that exist between the different tribes.

One day I witnessed an excessively atrocious scene, the barbarous flogging of three unfortunate Indians, who, for the mere fact of not having brought in all the rubber that Agüero had required, were scourged with such fury that their backs and

hips were completely cut to pieces, the blood rushing from their wounds. Upon seeing this barbarity, I withdrew, for I could not endure it nor the diabolical jokes and laughter of those fiends upon seeing the desperate agony of their victims.

I also saw the two unfortunates, Paz Cutierrez and one Cabrera, who were prisoners, shut up in a small, dirty room under sentinels; to these unhappy wretches they gave almost no food at all, and abused and insulted them vilely and cowardly. One of them at last succeeded in escaping, but the other still remained in the hands of his jailers at my departure from Abisinia.

In May of the same year I went to Morelia. I arrived there also after a very tedious journey, and had hardly reached this section when I witnessed the cruel flogging of seven Indians for the usual crime—that of not delivering enough rubber to satisfy the ambitions of the company's agents. Two of these victims were mere boys, and I heard their cries of agony and saw the lash cutting into their flesh. All this I saw, but could not defend them from their murderers, as I knew that if I tried to do so they would kill me in an instant.

After a stay of eight days in Morelia I returned to Abisinia, in accordance with orders. A few days afterwards the syphilitic Bartolomé Zumaeta, the brother-in-law of Julio C. Arana, and notorious among the criminals of the Putumayo, arrived, together with the famous Augusto Jiménez, the author of various violations, arsons, floggings, and homicides. The arrival of these two men was the occasion for a drinking-bout, comparable only to the orgy of a horde of savages.

The day after this debauch Agüero ordered one of his concubines to be flogged for having held a conversation with one Alberto Urdinibia. They suspended the poor woman from a rafter of the roof and lashed her for two hours without compunction, and then, regardless of her sex, they removed her garment and exhibited her naked body, bruised and cut to pieces by the lash. When this unfortunate woman fainted, they shut her up in a dirty room without treating her wounds! Urdinibia also had to receive his punishment; they put him in stocks, where he remained two days, practically without food.

Seeing that an honest man neither could nor should remain here, I resolved to escape in company with Urdinibia; but as those fiends noticed our absence, they sent in pursuit and took us back to Abisinia.

Impatient at my continual complaints, Agüero at last gave me permission to go to Santa Julia. On this journey I suffered greatly, as I made it alone and without food, for they gave me no food whatever for my trip. After considerable suffering I arrived at Santa Julia, where the chief, Manuel Aponte, in spite of seeing me sick and in a state of complete misery, began to annoy me, in accordance with the instructions he had received from Agüero, making me labour from early morning until late at night—all this in spite of the fact that the company had promised me food and medicines gratis when ill. Unfortunate is the poor wretch who lets himself be deceived by the smooth words of the “civilising” company!

During the fifteen days that I stayed in Santa

Julia I saw three Indian women flogged most barbarously, without the slightest reason, by order of this notorious Manuel Aponte. Here a negro who served as cook played the rôle of executioner, and this miserable wretch, whose conscience was as black as his skin, seemed to take pleasure in his disgusting task, for a devilish smile distorted his blubber lips at seeing the blood spurt out at each blow of the lash. This flogging, like all the rest I have seen in this awful region, was excessively inhuman ; but, not content with this, these fiends, after flogging the poor women, put salt and vinegar into their wounds so as to increase the pain.

At last I embarked in the launch for La Chorrera, where I found that Agüero had deceived me ; for instead of paying 80 *soles* per month, as had been promised me, they paid me at the rate of only 50 *soles*, and deducted from this sum the food and the few medicines they had supplied, so that after three months of hard work and sufferings I had only 71 *soles* to the good.

I was badly received in La Chorrera, above all by one Delgado, who was the accountant, for Agüero had written him a letter discrediting me slanderously. As I was not able to continue on to Iquitos, I secured employment in the so-called apothecary-shop from Dr. Rodríguez, where I remained some months. Here I had the opportunity to observe that the free medicines that this company so generously offers to its employees are reduced to a little Epsom salt. They also occasionally dole out a few grains of quinine.

During the time I was employed here I saw many gruesome cases. The criminal Dancurt,

during all the time that I remained in La Chorrera, continued his work of scourging and other excesses upon the helpless Indians, with the full knowledge and authorisation of Macedo, who thinks of nothing more than his bottle of whisky.

Now that I have mentioned drink, I will say that in La Chorrera, as well as in the other sections, the vice that dominates the employees of this company is drunkenness, which, added to their criminal instincts, turns them into regular human panthers and the Putumayo into a veritable hell.

With regard to the pay they give the Indians for the rubber that these poor wretches extract, this is the most shameless system that can be imagined. In La Chorrera, which is the principal branch of this company in the Putumayo, I saw them give some Indians a few caps, matches, mirrors, and other trifles, the value of which did not amount to five *soles*, in return for a large quantity of rubber that they had delivered. The Indians, humble and resigned, took this trash and disappeared into the forest, seeing, reflected in the mirrors they received in exchange for their labour, the scars that the infamous hands of the Peruvian Amazon Company's employees had made all over their weak bodies.

The Indians of the Putumayo are more than slaves of the "civilising" company, as this syndicate of crime has the barefacedness to call itself, for it exploits them in all ways, and the poor Indians can reckon neither with their lives, their women, nor their children: the company is the absolute owner of life and property.

My belief is that the slavery of these Indians

will terminate only, when the rubber is exhausted here, which will not be very distant; for even now the Indians, in their desire to collect all the rubber demanded by their owners, and not finding it near, mix the juices of other trees with it, and it is for this reason that the rubber extracted in the Putumayo at present is of such a poor quality. When the rubber gives out, the detestable slavery of the Indians will end. But which will be exterminated first, the Indians or the rubber-trees, it is hard to say.

In conclusion, I will state that if there were no Indians in the region of the Putumayo to work free, the company would have nothing to deal in, and consequently would fall to the ground, for its assets are acquired by pillage.

Trusting that this will help you somewhat in the task you have undertaken of unmasking these wolves.

CELESTINO LÓPEZ.

(*Sworn before*) FEDERICO M. PIZARRO,
Notary Public.

IQUITOS, *May* 17, 1909.

SR. W. E. HARDENBURG,—In reply to your letter of the 16th inst., I give you the following exact and reliable information of what I have witnessed during my stay on the River Putumayo, to be used for any purpose that you deem proper:—

On the 15th of June, 1907, I arrived at the section Matanzas, which is under the orders of the sanguinary and criminal Armando Norman, the chief of this section. As soon as I arrived he ordered a commission, composed of twenty-five



RIVER ITAYA, NEAR IQUITOS.

men, to go out on a *correría* and to bring in chained up, all the Indians they might find, together with their women and children. The bandit Norman furnished to this commission, as food for the twenty days they would be absent, fifteen tins of sardines, at the same time ordering that nobody should carry any more clothes than he wore on his back, in order to avoid the extra weight, for in this way they would be better able to carry out the orders he imparted to them.

At the end of about twenty days the commission returned, bringing in, among men, women, and children, about thirty Indians, all in chains, who, as soon as they arrived at the house, were delivered to Norman. Then Norman stepped up and asked three old Indians and two young women, their daughters, where the rest of the Indians were. They replied that they did not know, as several days before they had all dispersed in the forest, owing to the fear they had of him. Norman then grasped his *machete* and murdered these five unfortunate victims in cold blood. Their bodies were left stretched out near the house and Norman's dogs took charge of them, for he has them well trained; so well trained are these animals that the morning is rare that they do not appear with an arm or a leg of a victim at the bedside of this monster.

The rest of the Indians brought by this commission were, by the orders of Norman, secured in the *cepo*, which, as a rule, exists in all the sections. As Norman had given the order not to give the poor wretches any food, it was not long before they began to fall ill and utter cries of pain and desperation; whenever this occurred, Norman

grasped his *machete* and cut them to pieces, leaving the remains of these victims, for the space of from four to six days, at the side of their companions, who were doomed to a similar fate. Whenever these remains—already in a state of putrefaction—became offensive to this bandit, he compelled the Indian prisoners to put them in heaps and set fire to them.

About twenty days after this event Norman ordered another commission of ten criminals to go out and bring in a *capitán*, with all his family. This order was strictly carried out, the criminals returning in five days, bringing the *capitán*, his wife, and two children, all in chains. As soon as they arrived Norman submitted them to a cross-examination, asking them why they did not bring in the amount of rubber that he required from them and that his superiors had ordered him to get, to which the *capitán* replied that as the quantity he demanded was very large, sometimes it was impossible to collect it all. This answer was sufficient to cause Norman to tie up his hands and feet with a chain and to order three armfuls of wood to be placed about the unfortunate victim, he himself bringing half a tin of kerosene and, with his own hands, setting fire thereto. When the poor wretch's wife saw this horrible act of cruelty, she implored Norman not to murder her husband in such a barbarous manner; this sufficed for Norman to cut off her head and throw her on the funeral pile of her husband. After this he took the two children and, after dismembering them with his *machete*, threw their remains on the same fire.

To terminate with this repugnant criminal, whom

I have seen commit crimes so horrible that perhaps they are unequalled in the history of the entire world, it is sufficient to say that I have seen him repeatedly snatch tender children from their mothers' arms, and, grasping them by the feet, smash their heads to pieces against the trunks of trees.

I have also seen him commit another most barbarous crime. This was on the 11th of July, 1907, at about 4 p.m. The victim was a poor Indian woman whom he had ordered to serve as a concubine for one of his adjutants. The woman refused to obey this order as she already had an Indian husband. This was sufficient for Norman to cut off her legs and leave her in a field near the house, where she remained a night and a day, until he himself went out to finish her with his Mauser revolver.

For the same reason Norman suspended another Indian woman from four stakes by her hands and feet, and, after giving her one hundred lashes, he took a Peruvian flag, which happened to be handy, and tearing it to pieces and sousing it with kerosene he wound it around her feet and set fire to it. As soon as the woman started to run off, crazed with the awful agony, he grasped his Mauser and practised target-shooting with her until he brought her down.

To convince oneself of the truth of these statements, it is sufficient to approach the neighbourhood of Matanzas, for on all sides one sees the ground sown with skulls and other human remains. If I were to relate all the crimes I have seen committed in this devilish Putumayo, it would be

nothing less than writing a whole book. I will, however, give particulars of the doings of some other chiefs, no less criminal than the bloodthirsty Norman.

After three months I applied for a transfer from this horrible depot. This application was granted, and they sent me to the depot known as La Sabana, where I found as chief Arístides Rodríguez. About two weeks after my arrival at this place Rodríguez had four Indians of the Recígaros tribe brought in. As soon as they arrived he asked them why they had not brought any rubber, and the unfortunates, fearful of what awaited them, lowered their humble glances to the ground and did not answer a word. Then Arístides ordered one of his secretaries, who to-day walks freely with him about the streets of Iquitos, to take four more employees and to cut off the heads of those Indians and burn them, which order was at once carried out at the side of the house.

Shortly after this Rodríguez went out in charge of a commission of fifty men to a point called Cahuinarí. Once there, he proceeded to murder a hundred and fifty Indians, men, women, and children. These murders were carried out with rifles and *machetes*. Afterwards they arrived at some Indian houses and fired them by order of Rodríguez. In these houses there were at least forty families, according to an individual who accompanied Rodríguez, who went in first to ascertain what Indians there were inside. Here a most horrible spectacle was witnessed, and it was appalling to hear the groans and laments of the Indians enwrapped in the devouring flames of the fire.

About twenty days after this occurrence Rodríguez started for Santa Catalina, and on the journey he met four Indians of the Maynanes tribe, who were *en route* to put themselves at his service. Rodríguez, instead of receiving them, placed his carbine to his shoulder and shot them to death.

This infamous agent has a brother *, who is chief of Santa Catalina, called Aurelio Rodríguez, a wretch no less criminal than his brother, for in the month of March of the year 1908, when I was at Santa Catalina, a commission arrived, bringing four Indians in chains. This Aurelio Rodríguez then remarked that he felt anxious to test his shooting, and, without more ado, took his carbine and began to shoot at those poor Indians, with the result that in a few minutes they fell shot to death ; afterwards he had them burned.

After all these events I made all possible exertions to get away from this awful region, and, after some work, I succeeded in getting transferred to El Encanto, where another monster, Miguel S. Loayza, is chief. On one occasion this other repugnant criminal gave orders to his confidential secretary, the negro, King, to go with several other employees and take a poor Colombian, whose name I do not now recall, prisoner. As soon as they brought him to El Encanto, Loayza had him

* Both of these copper-complexioned monsters were formerly barefooted *peons* of Chachapoyas, Peru. Going to the Putumayo, they began their career of butchery, and by dint of continual crime have succeeded in amassing a small fortune. Arístides has since retired and now lives in Iquitos, a proud member of the *aristocracia* of that place, but Aurelio still continues his sanguinary labours in Santa Catalina.—
AUTHOR.

assassinated by the negro, King, and afterwards thrown into the river.

All these deeds occur with great frequency in the Putumayo. Would to God that the weight of justice would fall over this awful region!

For GENARO CAPORO,
JOSÉ ANTONIO.

(*Sworn before*) FEDERICO M. PIZARRO,
Notary Public.

IQUITOS, *May 17, 1909.*

SEÑOR W. E. HARDENBURG,—I have just received your letter of yesterday, in which you ask me for information about my residence on the River Putumayo, and especially concerning the things that I have witnessed. I will inform you that during a stay of seven years up there I have witnessed crimes, floggings, mutilations, and other outrages.

In 1902 I went to the Señores Arana of this city and asked them for work in the rubber business which I was told they had in the Putumayo. My application was at once accepted by Julio C. Arana, who promised me S.40 per month good food, medicines, and passage there and back. I will state that these promises were not carried out, but were disregarded to such an extreme that I became almost a slave of this company.

When I arrived at La Chorrera they gave me a position as fireman on the launch *Mazán*, where I remained seven months. At the end of this time Victor Macedo ordered me to leave my position on this launch, for he wished me to start on a journey through the forest to enter the service of Elías Martenegui; but as I was already aware of

the crimes that they carried out in the centre of the forest I refused.

This was sufficient for them to treat me brutally. For this reason I was tied up with an enormous chain around my waist and put in solitary confinement in one of the cells of La Chorrera. Here I remained ten days, guarded by the sentries, who had orders to shoot me if I attempted to protest against this imprisonment. Once I tried in my agony to speak to this Victor Macedo, but upon hearing my complaints he ordered them to give me a hundred lashes and to cover my mouth so that I could not cry out.

Thanks to some of those who were aware of my innocence and who protested, I was enabled to obtain my release at the end of ten days, but with the condition that I should leave at once to enter the service of the criminal chief of the section Atenas, Elías Martinengui.

The day after being released I set out for the section, accompanied by the chief Martinengui and his colleague O'Donnell. After a journey of two days we arrived at Atenas, and as Martinengui was aware that I would not serve as an instrument for the commission of crimes he ordered me to serve in the house. On the second day I became ill with rheumatism, which was probably caused by the imprisonment I had suffered in a damp and dirty cell of La Chorrera a few days before. This disease kept me prostrate for seven months, and had it not been for two Colombian employees who took pity on me and gave me something to eat whenever they could, I should have died for lack of food.

During my stay in this section I have seen them murder some sixty Indians, among men, women, and children. These poor wretches they killed by shooting them to death, by cutting them to pieces with *machetes* and on great *barbacoas* (piles of wood), upon which they secured the victims and then set fire to them. These crimes were committed by Martinengui himself and various of his confidential employees. I have repeatedly heard this monster say that every Indian who did not bring in all the rubber that he had been ordered to was sentenced to this fate.

About eight days after this occurrence Martinengui ordered a commission to set out for the houses of some neighbouring Indians and exterminate them, with their women and children, as they had not brought in the amount of rubber that he had ordered. This order was strictly carried out, for the commission returned in four days, bringing along with them fingers, ears, and several heads of the unfortunate victims to prove to the chief that they had carried out his orders.

After all these events I succeeded in getting permission to leave this section and return to La Chorrera, which I reached after a painful journey of four days. As I arrived completely disabled, owing to my illness and the journey, they ordered me to occupy one of the cells there.

About three days after my arrival some forty Ocaina Indians arrived as prisoners, who were shut up and enchained in another large cell. About 4 a.m. on the next day Victor Macedo, the chief of La Chorrera, had about eighteen employees brought in from La Sabana, and

when they arrived he ordered them to flog the unfortunate Ocainas, who were imprisoned and in chains, to death. This order was at once carried out, but as many of these unhappy Indians did not succumb to the lash and the club, Macedo renewed the order, telling them to take the Indians out of the cell where they were, drag them to the bank of the river, shoot them there, and then set fire to them. These orders were strictly obeyed.

At about 9 a.m. they began carrying the fuel—wood and kerosene—that was to be used for the cremation, and at about 12 a.m. one Londoño, by order of the criminal Macedo, set fire to the unfortunate victims of the Ocainas tribe. This smouldering pile of human flesh remained there until about 10 a.m. on the next day. It was on one of the days of carnival in 1903 that this repugnant act of cruelty was committed, and the place was at some 150 metres from La Chorrera, almost exactly where the building of the “club” of La Chorrera is situated to-day. The higher employees of this company when they get drunk toast with glasses of champagne the one who can count the greatest number of murders.

A few days after this event I went up to the chief and manager of this establishment, Victor Macedo, and asked him for my account, telling him that I did not wish to work for this company any longer and that I wanted to return to Iquitos. The reply this miserable criminal gave me was to threaten me with more chains and imprisonment, telling me that he was the only one who gave orders in this region and that all who lived here were subject to his commands.

In accordance with this I had to leave La Chorrera for Santa Julia, the chief of which was the criminal Jiménez, who ordered me to set out at once for Providencia, where I again met Macedo. Macedo ordered me to begin work at Ultimo Retiro, where I found as chief José Inocente Fonseca. A few days after my arrival this chief had the Chontadura, Ocainama, and Utiguene Indians called, and about twenty-four hours later hundreds of Indians began to appear about the house in accordance with this order. Then this man Inocente Fonseca grasped his carbine and *machete* and began the slaughter of these defenceless Indians, leaving the ground covered with over 150 corpses, among men, women, and children. This operation he carried out in company with six of his confidential secretaries, some of whom used their carbines, while others used their *machetes*. Fonseca, with his extra large chief's *machete*, massacred right and left the defenceless wretches, who, bathed in blood, dragged themselves over the ground, appealing in vain for mercy.

This tragedy over, Fonseca ordered all the bodies to be piled up and burned. This scene was still more horrible, for as soon as this order was obeyed and they were being burned cries of agony and desperation proceeded from those victims who were still alive. Meanwhile the monster Fonseca shouted out, "*I want to exterminate all the Indians who do not obey my orders about the rubber that I require them to bring in!*"

Some time after this Fonseca organised a commission of twenty men (by order of Macedo), under the command of one of his criminal confidential

secretaries * called Miguel Rengifo, with orders to go to the Caquetá and to kill all the Colombians they found there. He also told them to bring the fingers, ears, and some of the heads of the victims, preserved in salt, as a proof that they had carried out these orders. After some seven days the said commission returned, bringing the remains that had been asked for. These were sent to the celebrated chiefs of this company, Victor Macedo and Miguel S. Loayza, so that they could see for themselves the success that the commission had met with.

The secretary, Rengifo, also informed Fonseca that one of the Indian guides whom he had taken along with him to discover the whereabouts of the Colombians had not behaved well. This sufficed for Fonseca to have him hung up by one leg, together with his little son, a boy about ten years of age. In this position they were given fifty lashes each, after which he had the chains by which they were suspended loosened at the top so that they would fall to the ground, striking their faces against the floor. As soon as this was concluded Fonseca ordered one of his employees to take his rifle, drag the unfortunate victims to the bank in front of the house, and to shoot them there, which was done immediately.

While this was being done an Indian woman arrived from Urania to put herself at the orders of Fonseca, but, horrified at this shocking spectacle, she started to run away. Fonseca then ordered four of his employees to arm themselves rapidly and kill her. When the woman had run about fifty metres,

* The chiefs of section call their criminal assistants *secretaries*.—AUTHOR.

fleeing from the danger, she fell dead, pierced by the discharge that the four marksmen fired at her, the bullets burying themselves in the head of the innocent victim.

To terminate my already long narration of the great crimes of the Putumayo that I have witnessed during the seven years that I stayed there, I shall give you the names of some of the other monsters who dwell there, as I am ready to do if called before a court of justice. These diabolical criminals are: Arístides Rodríguez, Aurelio Rodríguez, Armando Norman, O'Donnell, Miguel Flores, Francisco Semanario, Alfredo Montt, Fidel Velarde, Carlos Miranda, Abelardo Agüero, Augusto Jiménez, Bartolomé Zumaeta, Luis Alcorta, Miguel S. Loayza, and the negro, King.

For lack of time, it is impossible for me to relate all the crimes that these criminals have committed. But I think that if I were called some day before a tribunal of justice I could tell the places, days, and hours in which they deluged the region of the Putumayo with these crimes, unequalled in the history of the entire world and committed upon men, women, and children of all ages and of all conditions.

To bring this narrative to a close I will mention some of the crimes committed in Santa Catalina by the chief of that section, Aurelio Rodríguez. On the 24th of May of last year this man ordered a *compadre* of his, called Alejandro Vásquez, to take nine men and go to the village of the Tiracahuaca Indians and make prisoner an Indian woman who had formerly been in his service; as soon as they had captured her they were to kill her in the cruellest way possible.

Having received these orders, the commission set out at once and, arriving at the village, took the Indian woman prisoner. After proceeding a few minutes on the return journey, they tied her to a tree alongside the road, where Vásquez had three sticks of wood, with sharp points, prepared . . . then they killed her by strangling her with a rope around the neck.*

Such are the crimes constantly committed on the Putumayo by the chiefs of sections and their assistants whose names I have mentioned. Trusting that this account may help you in drawing the attention of justice to this region.

DANIEL COLLANTES.

(*Sworn before*) ARNOLD GUICHARD,
Notary Public.

A number of documents of a similar character complete Hardenburg's account, not included in this book, with a description of the Peruvian attack on the Colombian rubber station of La Unión and the destruction of its people, the Peruvians believing, or professing to believe, that the Colombians were descending the river to attack them.

* It is impossible to print the whole of this description.—
EDITOR.

CHAPTER VIII

CONSUL CASEMENT'S REPORT

THE history of the Putumayo occurrences after the exposure by Messrs. Hardenburg and Perkins, due to the persistence of the Anti-Slavery Society and the courage of the editor of *Truth*, who alone incurred the risk of libel proceedings attaching to such exposures, so performing a notable service to humanity,* is contained in the Blue Book, or Foreign Office Report, already quoted. The proceedings leading to the sending of Consul Casement to the Putumayo by Sir Edward Grey and the Report itself are worthy of wider notice than that received by an official pamphlet. The Report itself is of much geographical and ethnological value and of general interest as a work of travel, apart from its purpose of confirming the existence of the terrible and almost incredible abuses.

Mr. Casement went to Peru in July, 1910, and transmitted his Report in January, 1911.† The result was transmitted by the Foreign Office to the British Consul in Lima, with instructions to lay

* Although full accounts appeared in *Truth* in 1909, it was not until long afterwards, when the accounts had been confirmed, that the London daily Press took the matter up.

† Mr. Casement received the honour of knighthood after his return.

particulars before the Peruvian Government, and to the British Minister at Washington in order that the United States Government should be informed of the action of the British Government. The British Foreign Office repeatedly urged upon the Lima Government that the criminals, whose names had been immediately transmitted by cable, should be arrested. The Peruvian Government promised to take action and sent a commission to Iquitos, but failed to arrest the criminals. In July, 1911, they were informed that the Report would be made public, but the chief criminals were not arrested. Further promises to the same effect made by the Peruvian Government were unfulfilled, and the British Government asked for the support of the United States Minister at Lima, which was accorded in October, 1911. After repeated communications had passed, during which the Peruvian Government had not prevented the escape of several of the criminals, or taken adequate steps to protect the Indians, the British Foreign Office laid the correspondence before Parliament in July, 1912, and published the Report.

In the preliminary Report received in January, 1911, by Sir Edward Grey at the Foreign Office, Consul Casement said :—

“My conclusions are chiefly based on the direct testimony of Barbados men in the company's service, who brought their accusations on the spot, who were prepared to submit them to investigation, and to make them in the presence of those they accused, and whose testimony, thus given to me, was accepted without further investigation by Señor Juan Tizon, the Peruvian Amazon company's

representative at La Chorrera, on the ground that it was sufficient or could not be controverted. It was equally potent with the members of the Peruvian Amazon Company's commission, who expressed themselves as fully convinced of the truth of the charges preferred, they themselves being often present when I interrogated the British witnesses. There was, moreover, the evidence of our own eyes and senses, for the Indians almost everywhere bore evidence of being flogged, in many cases of being brutally flogged, and the marks of the lash were not confined to men nor adults. Women, and even little children, were more than once found, their limbs scarred with weals left by the thong of twisted tapir-hide, which is the chief implement used for coercing and terrorising the native population of the region traversed. The crimes charged against many men now in the employ of the Peruvian Amazon Company are of the most atrocious kind, including murder, violation, and constant flogging. The condition of things revealed is entirely disgraceful, and fully warrants the worst charges brought against the agents of the Peruvian Amazon Company and its methods of administration on the Putumayo. I append to my Report a list of those agents of the company against whom the worst charges were preferred and against whom the evidence in my possession is overwhelmingly strong. The prefect of Loreto again and again assured me that his Government was determined to deal with the criminals and protect the Indians. The charges brought by the Barbados men were of the most atrocious kind, and, added to the accumulating

weight of evidence that we had gathered from station to station, and the condition of the Indian population as we had opportunity to observe it in passing, they left no doubt in our minds that the worst charges against the company's agents were true. Many of the acts charged against agents whom we met were of the most revolting description, and the Barbados men bringing these charges did not omit, in several cases, to also accuse themselves of shocking crimes, committed, they averred, under compulsion."

"Names of some of the worst Criminals on the Putumayo, all of them charged with atrocious Offences against the Indians.

"Fidel Velarde: a Peruvian, chief of Occidente. Alfredo Montt: a Peruvian, chief of Atenas. Charged with atrocious crimes. Augusto Jiménez: a Peruvian. Is a half-caste. Age about 26. Has been for years the lieutenant of Agüero, under whom he has committed appalling crimes upon the Boras Indians in the section Abisinia. He was sub-chief of Morelia, and is often mentioned in the *Truth* charges. He begged me to listen to his statement, and said he could prove that *one* of the charges against him in *Truth* was not true. On the other hand, the evidence against him is overwhelming. Armando Normand: a Bolivian, I believe of foreign parentage. Largely educated in England. A man of whom nothing good can be said. The crimes committed by this man are innumerable, and even Peruvian white men said to me that Normand had done things none of the

others had done. If any one on the Putumayo deserves punishment this man should be made an example of. He was under sentence of dismissal, and would have left Chorrera by the *Liberal* with me only I objected to travel with him, and begged Señor Tizon to send him by another vessel. José Inocente Fonseca: a Peruvian, about 28 years old. Has committed innumerable crimes upon the Indians. Abelardo Agüero: about 35 or 36 years of age. Chief of Abisinia, of which section he has had charge for years. Has committed innumerable crimes. Elias Martinengui: The charges against him are many. Aurelio Rodríguez: a Peruvian, whose crimes were vouched for by many and are widely known. A. Vasquez Torres, or Alejandro Vasquez. Rodolfo Rodríguez: a Colombian, charged with many murders. Miguel Flores: a Peruvian. Armando Blondel. Aquiléo Torres: a Colombian. Innumerable crimes against this man. He was made prisoner by Normand in January, 1907, and kept chained up for a year by Velarde and others, and then released on condition he joined them, and was first employed in flogging Indians. He improved on his masters, and has killed scores, and cut ears off, and done things that even some of the worst Peruvians say they could not tolerate. He was once a Colombian magistrate, and was captured by Macedo's orders along with a lot of other Colombians because they were 'poaching' on the company's territory, and trying to get Indians to work for them. Jermin, or Filomene, Vasquez. This man is charged with many crimes. The latest of them only in August, 1910, when he had thirteen Indians—men, women,

and children—murdered on the road between the Caquetá and Morelia. He boasted on his return to Abisinia ‘he had left the road pretty.’ Simon Angúlo: a Colombian black man. Is the flogger or executioner of Abisinia under Agüero. Has flogged many to death. There is also a Barbados man named King, calls himself Armando King, who is at Encanto under Loayza. I believe King to be as bad as any of the others almost. There are a great many others charged with crimes whose names will be submitted.”

In his detailed Report, submitted in January, 1911, Consul Casement says:—

“The true attraction from the first to Colombian or Peruvian *caucheros* was not so much the presence of the scattered *Hevea braziliensis* trees throughout this remote forest as the existence of fairly numerous tribes of docile, or at any rate of easily subdued, Indians. The largest gathering of these people was a tribe termed the Huitotos, a mild and inoffensive people subdivided into many sub-tribes or families, each dwelling apart from its neighbour, and ruled by its own hereditary cacique or *capitán*.

“The Huitotos chiefly dwelt along the courses of the Caraparaná and Upper and Middle Igaraparaná, and occupied all the country between these two rivers. On the north of the Igaraparaná they extended some distance, in various settlements, into the thick forest towards the great Japurá (or Caquetá) River until they merged in the Andokes, Ricigaros, and Boras, tribes doubtless of a kindred far-off origin, but wholly differing to-day in speech from the Huitotos, as also from each other. While

these tribes were in each case of one family, speaking the same language, little or no cohesion existed among the scattered sub-tribes into which they were split. On the contrary, enmity more often than friendship ruled the relations between neighbours.

“Thus the 30,000 Huitotos, instead of uniting as one people, were split up into an infinity of ‘families’ or clans and inter-clan fighting and raids perpetuated for generations disputes of obscure and often trivial origin. So with the Boras, the Andokes, or other agglomerations inhabiting the neighbouring regions. While, collectively, each of these tribes might have put large numbers of men into the field, they were so divided by family quarrels that no one cacique probably could ever count on more than 200 men, and in the majority of cases on very many less.

“They were therefore an easy enough prey to the ‘civilised’ intruders, who brought to their conquest arms of precision against which the Indian blow-pipes or throwing-spears could offer but a paltry resistance.

“The object of the ‘civilised’ intruders, in the first instance, was not to annihilate the Indians, but to *conquistar*—i.e., to subjugate them, and put them to what was termed civilised, or at any rate profitable, occupation to their subduers.

“These subduers formed themselves into bands and parties, dubbed ‘commercial associations,’ and, having overcome the resistance of the Indians, they appropriated them to their own exclusive use along with the rubber-trees that might be in the region they inhabited. Henceforth to the chief of the

band they became 'my Indians,' and any attempt by one of his civilised neighbours to steal, wheedle, or entice away his Indians became a capital offence.

"Thus where the primitive savage raided his savage neighbour for reasons that seemed good to him, the white man who came on an alleged mission of civilisation to end this primal savagery himself raided his fellow white man for reasons that seemed to the Indian altogether wrong, viz., his surer enslavement. Constant thefts of Indians by one *cauchero* from another led to reprisals more bloody and murderous than anything the Indian had ever wrought upon his fellow-Indian. The primary aim of rubber-getting, which could only be obtained from the labour of the Indian, was often lost sight of in these desperate conflicts.

"When the first contingent of Barbados men reached the Putumayo at the end of 1904 the firm of Arana Brothers had not complete control of the region in which it carried on its dealings with the Indian dwellers in the forest. The majority of those who then exploited the Indians and obtained rubber from them were Colombians, men who had come down the Putumayo from that republic and established themselves on different sites along the banks of these two tributaries. In some cases these Colombian settlers appear to have held concessions from their Government. As it was not easy to obtain supplies from Colombia owing to the mountainous nature of the country in which the Putumayo rises, and as the market for the rubber obtained lay down-stream, where the Amazon forms the natural outlet, it was more profitable to open up relations with traders in

Brazil or Peru, and to obtain from them what was required, than to seek supplies over the distant and difficult route from Pasto, in Colombia. The Iquitos house of Arana Brothers had at an early date entered into relations with these Colombian settlers, and, by means of steamers between Iquitos and the two tributaries of the Putumayo named, had supplied their wants and brought their rubber to be disposed of in the Iquitos market. Little by little these relations changed, and from being merely intermediaries the firm of Arana Brothers acquired possession of the majority of the Colombian undertakings in these regions. These transfers were sometimes effected by sale and purchase and sometimes by other means.

“Throughout the greater part of the Amazon region, where the rubber trade flourishes, a system of dealing prevails which is not tolerated in civilised communities. In so far as it affects a labouring man or an individual who sells his labour, it is termed *peonage*, and is repressed by drastic measures in some parts of the New World. It consists in getting the person working for you into your debt and keeping him there; and in lieu of other means of discharging this obligation he is forced to work for his creditor upon what are practically the latter's terms, and under varying forms of bodily constraint. In the Amazon Valley this method of dealing has been expanded until it embraces, not only the Indian workman, but is often made to apply to those who are themselves the employers of this kind of labour. By accumulated obligations contracted in this way, one trader will pledge his business until it and him-

self become practically the property of the creditor. His business is merged, and he himself becomes an employee, and often finds it very hard to escape from the responsibilities he has thus contracted. At the date when the Barbados men were first brought to the Putumayo, the methods of exploiting the Indian population in the interests of the Colombian or Peruvian settlers were mainly confined to the river banks. They were more or less haphazard methods. An individual with two or three associates squatted at some point on the river-side, and entered into what he called friendly relations with the neighbouring Indian tribes. These friendly relations could not obviously long continue, since it was to the interest of the squatter to get more from the Indian than he was willing to pay for. The goods he had brought with him in the first case were limited in quantity, and had to go far. The Indian, who may correctly be termed 'a grown-up child,' was at first delighted to have a white man with attractive articles to give away settling in his neighbourhood, and to bring in exchange india-rubber for these tempting trifles seemed easy. Moreover, the Amazon Indian is by nature docile and obedient. His weakness of character and docility of temperament are no match for the dominating ability of those with European blood in their veins. Yielding himself, first, perhaps, voluntarily, to the domination of these uninvited guests, he soon finds that he has entered into relations which can only be described as those of a slave to a master, and a master, be it observed, who can appeal to no law that recognises his rights. The system is not merely illegal in civilised

parts of the world, but is equally illegal in the Amazon forests, since those regions are all claimed by civilised Governments which absolutely prohibit any form of slavery in their territories. The Barbados men on being brought into these regions found themselves face to face with quite unexpected conditions and duties. Already at Manaos, on their way up the river, some of them had been warned by outsiders that in the countries to which they were going they would not be employed as labourers, but would be armed and used to force the Indians to work for their employers; they were further told that the Indians, being savages, would kill them. Several of them, taking alarm, had protested at Manaos, and had even appealed to the British Vice-Consul to interfere so that they might be released from their engagement. This was not done. They were assured that their contracts, having been lawfully entered into in a British colony, would be faithfully observed in Peru, and that they must fulfil them. In some cases the men were not reassured, and had to be taken on board the river steamer waiting to convey them to the Putumayo under police supervision.*

“The first party to disembark in the Putumayo consisted of thirty men with five women. They were landed at La Chorrera, on the Igaraparaná, the headquarters station of the Arana Brothers, in November, 1904. Here they were armed with Winchester rifles and a large supply of cartridges for these weapons, and, headed by a Colombian named Ramón Sanchez, with a man called

* This has been commented upon in the Introduction.—
EDITOR.

Armando Normand, who served as interpreter, and several other white men, Colombians or Peruvians, they were dispatched on a long journey through the forest to open up what were styled trade relations with an Indian tribe called the Andokes. This tribe inhabits a district between the Igaraparaná and the Japurá, but lying closer to the latter river. On arrival in this region the men were employed at first in building a house, and then on raids through the surrounding forests in order to capture Indians and compel them to come in and work for Señor Sanchez. They were also used on what were termed 'punitive expeditions' sent out to capture or kill Indians who had killed not long before some Colombians who had settled in the Andokes country with a view to enslaving that tribe and forcing it to work rubber for them. These men had been killed by the Andokes Indians and their rifles captured, and it was to recover these rifles that many of the first raids of the Barbados men were directed by Sanchez and Normand. In this way the station of Matanzas was founded, and the man Normand soon afterwards, on the retirement of Sanchez, became its chief. At the date of my visit to the Putumayo he was still in charge of this district as representative of the Peruvian Amazon Company. The station at Matanzas was founded at the very end of 1904. I visited it on foot in October, 1910. It lies some seventy miles by land from La Chorrera, and the route followed by the Barbados men would occupy some four to five days of hard marching. The forest tracks in the Putumayo present innumerable obstacles. Owing to the very heavy rain-

fall, water and mud accumulate, many streams—some of them even rivers—have to be crossed either by fording or upon a fallen tree, roots of trees and fallen tree-trunks innumerable bar the path, and the walker either knocks his shins against these or has to climb over obstacles sometimes breast high. No food is to be obtained on these routes except from the few Indians who may be dwelling in the neighbourhood, and these poor people now have little enough for themselves. For several years after its foundation all the rubber collected at Matanzas was carried down this route by Indian carriers to La Chorrera. The Indians were not supplied with food for this journey. They were guarded by armed men both going and returning, and Barbados men frequently were employed for this work, just as they were used, in the first instance, in forcing the Indians to collect the rubber in the forest and bring it into Matanzas. During the last three years the journey from Matanzas to Chorrera has been shortened by the placing of a small launch on the river above the cataract which blocks river navigation at Chorrera. Rubber from Matanza still goes under armed escort a distance of forty-five or fifty miles through the forest to be shipped in this launch at a place called Puerto Peruano for conveyance thence to Chorrera by water. The duties fulfilled by Barbados men at Matanzas were those that they performed elsewhere throughout the district, and in citing this station as an instance I am illustrating what took place at a dozen or more different centres of rubber collection.

“At the date of my visit there were only two

Barbados men left in Matanzas, one of whom had been there six years from the foundation of that station. I found the twenty men still remaining in the company's service when I was on the Putumayo scattered at various points. With the exception of three men at La Chorrera itself, whose duties were those of ordinary labour, all the men still remaining at the time of my visit were employed in guarding or coercing, or in actively maltreating, Indians to force them to work and bring in india-rubber to the various sections. The men so employed at the time of my visit were two men at Matanzas, one man at Ultimo Retiro, four men at Santa Catalina, three at Sabana, one at Oriente, and three at Abisinia, and two others temporarily employed on the river launches who had just come in from forest duties. Another man was employed at the headquarters station of the Caraparaná at the place called El Encanto. This man was sent for to Chorrera while I was there, and I interrogated him. In addition to La Chorrera, the headquarters station, I visited in succession the following among its dependent stations, or *succursales*: Occidente, Ultimo Retiro, Entre Ríos, Matanzas, Atenas, and Sur, the latter practically an outpost of La Chorrera, being situated less than two hours' march away. With the exception of La Matanzas, which is situated in the Andokes country, all these stations are in the country inhabited by the Huitoto tribe. This tribe, formerly the most numerous of those inhabiting the so-called Putumayo region, at the date of my visit was said to have considerably diminished in numbers. One informant assured me that there were now

not more than 10,000 Huitotos, if, indeed, so many. This decrease in population is attributed to many causes. By some it is stated to be largely due to smallpox and other diseases introduced by white settlers. The Indians themselves in their native state are singularly free from disease. From trustworthy evidence placed before me during my visit I have no doubt that, however high the deaths from imported diseases may have been, the deaths from violence and hardship consequent upon the enforced tribute of rubber required from these people have been much higher.

“Statements made to me by the Barbados men, and which could not be controverted on the spot, made this abundantly clear. Many, indeed all, of the men had been for several years in the closest contact with the Indians, and their duties, as they averred, chiefly consisted in compelling the Indians to work india-rubber for the white man's benefit, and otherwise to satisfy his many wants. It would be tedious to go through statements made by these different British witnesses, and it may be sufficient to say that they left no doubt in my mind or in the minds of the commission sent out by the Peruvian Amazon Company that the method of exacting rubber from the Indians was arbitrary, illegal, and in many cases cruel in the extreme, and the direct cause of very much of the depopulation brought to our notice. The Barbados men themselves complained to me that they too had frequently suffered ill-treatment at the hands of agents of the company, whose names were given to me in several cases, and several of whom were still employed on the Putumayo in the service of

the company at the date of my visit. On closer investigation I found that more than once these British employees of the company had been subjected to criminal ill-treatment."

"These men had been tortured by being put in the stocks for misdemeanours, or for refusing to maltreat the Indians, under the orders of Normand, Rodríguez, Sanchez, and other chiefs of sections. Normand and others afterwards attempted to bribe them into lying or concealment of facts in their testimony before the Consul. The stocks are described by Consul Casement:—

"The accused man was hung up by the neck, beaten with *machetes*, and then confined by the legs in heavy wooden stocks, called locally a *cepo*. Each station is furnished with one of these places of detention. The stocks consist of two long and very heavy blocks of wood, hinged together at one end and opening at the other, with a padlock to close upon a staple. Leg-blocks so small as just to fit the ankle of an Indian are cut in the wood. The top beam is lifted on the hinge, the legs of the victim are inserted in two of these holes, and it is then closed down and padlocked at the other end. Thus imprisoned by the ankles, which are often stretched several feet apart, the victim, lying upon his back, or possibly being turned face downwards, remains sometimes for hours, sometimes for days, often for weeks, and sometimes for months in this painful confinement. Prisoners so detained are released from these stocks only to obey the calls of nature, when for a few moments, guarded by armed men, they enjoy a brief release. Some of these implements

of torture that I saw ready for use had nineteen leg-holes. In one case I counted twenty-one. The stocks at Ultimo Retiro, where Dyall was confined, were, in my opinion, the cruellest of those I actually saw. The ankle-holes were so small that, even for an ordinarily well-built Indian, when closed the wood would often have eaten into the flesh. For an ordinary-sized European or negro the top beam could not close upon the leg without being forced down upon the ankle or shin-bone, and this was what happened to Dyall. He and men who had witnessed his imprisonment assured me that to make the top beam close down so that the padlock could be inserted in the staple two men had to sit upon it and force it down upon his legs. Although more than three years had passed since he suffered his punishment, both his ankles were deeply scarred where the wood (almost as hard as metal) had cut into the ankle flesh and sinews. The man's feet had been placed four holes apart—a distance, I should say, of from three to four feet—and with his legs thus extended, suffering acute pain, he had been left all night for a space of fully twelve hours. When released next day he was unable to stand upright, or to walk, and had to reach his quarters crawling on his belly propelled by his hands and arms. I have no doubt of the truth of this man's statement. I saw the stocks just as they had been used to confine him. I caused a man of ordinary stature, a Barbados man, to have his legs enclosed before me. The stock did not close upon the legs, and to have locked the two beams together at the end could only have been done by great pressure and

weight exerted upon the top beam so as to force it down upon the leg and thereby undoubtedly, to inflict much pain, and cause lasting wounds.

“By Rodríguez’ direction a special *cepo*, or stocks, for the confinement, or torture rather, of the recalcitrant india-rubber workers was made. Not satisfied with the ordinary stocks to detain an individual by the legs alone, Rodríguez had designed a double *cepo* in two parts, so formed as to hold the neck and arms at one end and to confine the ankles at the other. These stocks were so constructed that the leg end could be moved up or down, so that they might fit any individual of any size. For a full-grown man they could be extended to the length of his figure, or contracted to fit the stature of quite a child. Small boys were often inserted into this receptacle face downwards, and they, as well as grown-up people, women equally with men, were flogged while extended in this posture. Crichlow, quite an intelligent carpenter for an ordinary labouring man, had faithfully carried out the design of his master, and this implement of torture remained in use at the station at Santa Catalina until the early part of 1909. In May, 1908, Crichlow had a dispute with one of the other employees, named Pedro Torres. The quarrel was of no importance, but Torres was a white man and Crichlow was a black man. The former appealed to his chief, and Rodríguez at once took the part of his Peruvian fellow-countryman. He struck Crichlow over the head with a loaded revolver, and called other white employees to seize him. Crichlow tried to defend himself with a stick, but was overpowered, and his hands were tied behind his back. He

was then beaten by many of them and put in the *cepo*, or stocks, to spend the night. When released next day for a few moments for an obvious reason he was 'chained round the neck, one end of the chain being held in the hand of a guard. The same day, with his hands tied and this chain padlocked round his neck, he was dispatched under guard to the neighbouring station of La Sabana, a full day's march. A certain Velarde was at the time the chief of this section, and at the date of my visit I found him chief of the section Occidente. Velarde put Crichlow in the stocks at his station with his legs five holes apart—an almost insupportable distance—in which posture he remained all night. Next day a Señor Alcorta, employed at a neighbouring section, who was on a visit to La Sabana, interceded for him and he was released from the stocks, but was sent down to La Chorrera as a prisoner. Here he was again confined in the stocks by the sub-agent, Señor Delgado, and was finally only released through the friendly intervention of the captain of the port of Iquitos, who happened to be on a visit to the Putumayo at the time. No compensation of any kind was ever offered to these injured men. On the contrary, they had been forced to buy at their own expense medicines, in addition to many other things required (when ill from this bad treatment), that, by the terms of the original contract, should have been supplied free by their employers. Not only were they not compensated, but no reproof or punishment of any kind had been inflicted upon the agents so grossly maltreating them. With one exception, that of Rodríguez, these agents were still

in the service of the company at the time I was on the Putumayo, and I met all three of them. I have dealt at length with these cases of assault upon the British employees because they are typical of the manner of dealing of so-called white men with inferiors placed under their orders in that region. The Barbados men were not savages. With few exceptions they could read and write, some of them well. They were much more civilised than the great majority of those placed over them—they were certainly far more humane.

“The man Dyall, who had completed nearly six years’ service when I met him at Chorrera on the 24th of September, appeared to be in debt to the company to the sum of 440 *soles* (say, £44) for goods nominally purchased from its stores. Some of this indebtedness was for indispensable articles of food or clothing, things that the working-man could not do without. These are all sold at prices representing often, I am convinced, 1,000 per cent. over their cost prices or prime value. Much of the men’s indebtedness to the company was also due to the fact that they were married—that is to say, that every so-called civilised employee receives from the agent of the company, on arrival, an Indian woman to be his temporary wife. Sometimes the women are asked; sometimes, I should say from what I observed, their wishes would not be consulted—they certainly would not be consulted in the case of a white man who desired a certain Indian woman. With the Barbados men it was, no doubt, a more or less voluntary contract on each side—that is to say, the agent of the company would ask one of the numerous Indian women kept

in stock at each station whether she wished to live with the new arrival. This man Dyall told me, in the presence of the chief agent of the Peruvian Amazon Company at La Chorrera, that he had had nine different Indian women given to him as 'wives' at different times and at the various stations at which he had served. When an employee so 'married' leaves the station at which he is working to be transferred to some other district, he is sometimes allowed to take his Indian wife with him, but often not. It would depend entirely upon the goodwill or caprice of the agent in charge of that station. As a rule, if a man had a child by his Indian partner he would be allowed to take her and the child to his next post, but even this has been more than once refused. In Dyall's case he had changed his wives as often as he had changed his stations, and always with the active approval of the white man in charge, since each new wife was the direct gift or loan of this local authority. These wives had to be fed and clothed, and if there were children, then all had to be provided for. To this source much of the prevailing indebtedness of the Barbados men was due. Another fruitful cause of debt was the unrestricted gambling that was openly carried on up to the period at which I visited the district. The employees at all the stations passed their time, when not hunting the Indians, either lying in their hammocks or in gambling. As there is no money in circulation, gambling debts can only be paid by writing an I O U, which the winner passes on to the chief agency at La Chorrera, where it is carried to the debit of the loser in the company's books.

“The wild forest Indians of the Upper Amazon are very skilful builders with the materials that lie to their hands in their forest surroundings. Their own dwellings are very ably constructed. Several Indian families congregate together, all of them united by close ties of blood; and this assembly of relatives, called a tribe or ‘nation,’ may number anything from 20 to 150 human beings. In many cases such a tribe would live practically in one large dwelling-house. A clearing is made in the forest, and with the very straight trees that abound in the Amazon woods it is easy to obtain suitable timber for house-building. The uprights are as straight as the mast of a ship. The ridge-pole will often be from thirty to forty feet from the ground, and considerable skill is displayed in balancing the rough beams and adjusting the weight of the thatch. This thatch is composed of the dried and twisted fronds of a small swamp palm, which admirably excludes both rain and the rays of the sun. No tropical dwelling I have ever been in is so cool as one roofed with this material. The roofs or thatches of Indian houses extend right down to the ground. They are designed to keep out wet and sunlight, not to bar against intruders. They afford no protection against attack, and are not designed for defence, except against climatic conditions. The white settlers in the forest, from the first, compelled the Indians to build houses for them. The plan of the house would be the work of the white man, but the labour involved and all the materials would be supplied by the neighbouring Indian tribe or tribes he had reduced to work for him. All the houses that I visited outside the

chief station of La Chorrera in which the company's agents lived, and where their goods were stored, were and are so constructed by the surrounding Indians, acting under the direct supervision of the agent and his white or half-caste employees. This labour of the Indians goes unremunerated. Not only do they build the houses and the stores for the white men, but they have to keep them in repair and supply labour for this purpose whenever called upon. The Indian in his native surroundings is satisfied with quite a small clearing in the forest around his own dwelling, but not so the white man who has come to live upon the Indian. These decree that their dwelling-houses shall stand in the midst of a very extensive clearing, and the labour of felling the forest trees, and clearing the ground over an area of often two hundred acres, or even more, falls upon the surrounding Indian population. Here, again, neither pay nor food is supplied. The Indians are brought in from their homes, men and women, and while the men fell the trees and undertake the heavier duties, women are put to clearing the ground and planting a certain area of it. Those of the stations I visited outside La Chorrera—viz., Occidente, Ultimo Retiro, Entre Ríos, Matanzas, Atenas, and Sur, in addition to a large and extremely well-built dwelling-house for the white man and his assistants, as well as suitable dependencies for servants, women, &c., were each surrounded by immense clearings, which represented a considerable labour in the first case, and one which had fallen wholly upon the Indian families in the vicinity. Sometimes these clearances were put to economic use



HUITOTOS AT ENTRE RIOS AND BARBADOS NEGRO OVERSEER.

[To face p. 296.

—notably that at Entre Ríos, where quite a large area was well planted with cassava, maize, and sugar-cane; but this was the only station which can be said to maintain itself, and all the work of clearing and of planting here had fallen, not upon the employees of the company but upon the surrounding Indian population. At other stations one found the dwelling-houses standing in the midst of a very extensive clearing, which apparently served no other purpose beyond giving light and air. At Atenas, for instance, the station houses are built on a slope above the River Cahuinari, and an area of fully two hundred acres has been cleared of its original forest trees, which lie in all stages of decay, encumbering the ground, but scarcely one acre is under any form of cultivation. At Matanzas a somewhat similar state of neglect existed, and the same might be said in varying degree of the stations of Ultimo Retiro and Occidente. Large areas of fairly fertile cleared ground are lying waste and serve no useful purpose. Food which might easily be raised locally is brought literally from thousands of miles away at great expense, and often in insufficient quantity.

“The regular station hands—that is to say, the employees in receipt of salaries—do no work. Their duties consist in seeing that the surrounding forest Indians work rubber and supply them so far as may be with what they need. For this purpose the principal requisite is a rifle and a sufficiency of cartridges, and of these there are always plenty.”

A further Report was transmitted by Consul Casement to Sir Edward Grey in March, 1911, giving a general description of methods of rubber-

collecting and treatment of Indians on the Putumayo by the Peruvian Amazon Company, containing the following information :—

“The region termed ‘the Putumayo,’ consisting principally of the area drained by two tributaries of the Iça or Putumayo River, the Igaraparaná and the Caraparaná, lies far from the main stream of the Amazon, and is rarely visited by any vessels save those belonging to the Peruvian Amazon Company. The only other craft that penetrate that district are steamers of the Peruvian Government sent occasionally from Iquitos. Brazilian vessels may ascend the Japurá, known in Peru and Colombia as the Caquetá, until they draw near to the mouth of the Cahuinari, a river which flows into the Japurá, flowing in a north-easterly direction largely parallel with the Igaraparaná, which empties into the Putumayo after a south-easterly course. The region drained by these three waterways, the Caraparaná, the Igaraparaná, and the Cahuinari, represents the area in part of which the operations of the Peruvian Amazon Company are carried on. It is impossible to say what the Indian population of this region may be. Generally speaking, the upper and middle courses of these rivers are, or were, the most populous regions. This is accounted for by the greater absence of insect pests, due to the higher nature of the ground, which rises at La Chorrera to a level of about 600 feet above the sea, with neighbouring heights fully 1,000 feet above sea-level. The lower course of the Igaraparaná, as well as of the Putumayo itself, below the junction of the Igaraparaná down to the Amazon, is through a thick forest region of

lower elevation, subject largely to annual overflow from the flooded rivers. Mosquitoes and sand flies and the swampy soil doubtless account for the restriction of the Indians to those higher and drier levels which begin after the Igaraparaná has been ascended for about one hundred miles of its course. In this more elevated region there are no mosquitoes and far fewer insect plagues, while permanent habitations and the cultivation of the soil are more easily secured than in the regions liable to annual inundation.

"In a work officially issued by the Peruvian Government at Lima in 1907, entitled 'En el Putumayo y sus Afluentes,' by Eugenio Robuchon, a French explorer who was engaged in 1903 by Señor Julio C. Arana in the name of the Government to conduct an exploring mission in the region claimed by the firm of Arana Brothers, the Indian population of that firm's possessions is given at 50,000 souls. M. Robuchon lost his life near the mouth of the Cahuinari in 1906, and the work in question was edited from his diaries by Señor Carlos Rey de Castro, Peruvian Consul-General for Northern Brazil. The figure of 50,000 Indians is that given by this official as 'not a chance one.'

"In the prospectus issued at the formation of the Peruvian Amazon Rubber Company in 1908, Señor Arana is represented as claiming that there were then 40,000 Indian 'labourers' dwelling within the area of his Putumayo enterprise.

"Whatever the true figures may have been, it is certain that the region laying between the Putumayo and the Japurá (or Caquetá) was for many years known to be prolific in native life, and fur-

nished therefore the most attractive field for slave-raiding in the earlier years of the last century. No civilised settlements would seem to have arisen in this region until towards the close of the nineteenth century, and the Indian tribes continued to dwell in their primitive state, subject only to visits from slave-searching white or half-breed bands until a quite recent period.

“The four principal tribes were the Huitotos (pronounced *Witotos*), the Boras, the Andokes, and the Ocainas, with certain smaller tribes, of which the Ricigaros and the Muinanes are frequently mentioned. These tribes were all of kindred origin and identical in habits and customs, although differing in language and to some extent in feature, complexion, and stature. The Huitotos are said to have been the most numerous, and may at one time recently have numbered 30,000 individuals, although to-day they amount to nothing like that figure.

“The Huitotos, although the most numerous, were physically the least sturdy of the four chief tribes named. The name ‘Huitotos’ is said to signify ‘Mosquito,’ I know not with what truth, and to have been applied to these people by their stouter neighbours in derision of their attenuated extremities, for neither their arms nor legs are shapely or muscular. The Boras are physically a much finer race than the Huitotos, and, generally speaking, are of a lighter hue. While some of the Huitotos are of a dark bronze or chocolate complexion, I have seen Boras little, if at all, of darker skin than a Japanese or Chinese. The Mongolian resemblance was not alone confined to similarity of colour, but was often strikingly apparent in

features as well as in stature, and in a singular approximation of gait to what may be termed 'the Asiatic walk.' So, too, with the hair and eyes. Both are singularly Mongolian, or at least Asiatic, in shape, colour, and, the former, in texture, although the Indian hair is somewhat less coarse and more abundant than either Chinese or Japanese.

"A picture of a Sea Dyak of Borneo using his *sumpitan*, or blow-pipe, might very well stand for an actual presentment of a Boras Indian with his *cerbatana*. The weapons, too, are identical in structure and use, and in several other respects a striking similarity prevails between two races so widely sundered.

"These Putumayo Indians were not only divided tribe from tribe, but within each tribe more or less constant bickerings and disunion prevailed between the various 'families' or *naciones* into which each great branch was split up. Thus, while Huitotos had a hereditary feud with Boras, or Ocainas, or Andokes, the numerous subdivisions of the Huitotos themselves were continually at war with one another. Robuchon enumerates thirty-three sub-tribes or families among the Huitotos, and he by no means exhausts the list. Each of these, while intermarriage was common and a common sense of origin, kinship, and language prevailed as against all outsiders, would have their internal causes of quarrel that often sharply divided neighbour from neighbour clan.

"Such conflicts led to frequent 'wars,' kidnappings and thefts of women being, doubtless, at the bottom of many disputes, while family grievances

and accusations of misuse of occult powers, involving charges of witchcraft and sorcery, made up the tale of wrong. As a rule, each family or clan has its great central dwelling-house, capable often of housing two hundred individuals; and around this, in the region recognised by tribal law as belonging to that particular clan, individual members of it, with their families, would have smaller dwellings scattered at different cultivated spots through the neighbouring forest. The wars of those clans one with another were never bloodthirsty, for I believe it is a fact that the Amazon Indian is averse to bloodshed, and is thoughtless rather than cruel. Prisoners taken in these wars may have been, and no doubt were, eaten, or in part eaten, for the Amazon cannibals do not seem to have killed to eat, as is the case with many primitive races, but to have sometimes, possibly frequently, in part eaten those they killed. More than one traveller in tropical South America records his impression that the victims were not terrified at the prospect of being eaten, and in some cases regarded it as an honourable end. Lieutenant Maw mentions the case of a girl on the Brazilian Amazon in 1827 who refused to escape, to become the slave of a Portuguese 'trader,' preferring to be eaten by her own kind.

"The weapons of the Putumayo Indians were almost entirely confined to the blow-pipe, with its poisoned darts, and small throwing-spears with poor wooden tips, three or more of which, grasped between the fingers, were thrown at one time. The forest must have been fairly full of game up to quite recently, for the Indians seem to have had

a sufficiency of meat diet ; and, with their plantations of cassava, maize, and the numerous fruits and edible leaves their forest furnished, they were not so short of food that cannibalism could be accounted for as a necessity. They were also skilled fishermen, and as the forests are everywhere channelled with streams of clear water, there must have been a frequent addition of fish diet to their daily fare.

“No missions or missionaries would seem to have ever penetrated to the regions here in question. On the upper waters of the Putumayo itself religious instruction and Christian worship appear to have been established by Colombian settlers, but these civilising influences had not journeyed sufficiently far downstream to reach the Huitotos or their neighbours. Save for the raids of slavers coming up the Japurá or Putumayo, their contact with white men had been a distant and far-off story that in little affected their home life, save possibly to add an element of demoralisation in the inducements offered for the sale of human beings.

“Lieutenant Maw, an officer of the British Navy who crossed from the Pacific to the Atlantic by way of the Amazon early in the last century, in his work speaks of the Putumayo in the vaguest terms, and it is clear that then, in 1827, and later on in 1851, when Lieutenant Herndon, of the United States Navy, went down the Amazon in a canoe, nothing was really known either of the river or of its inhabitants. They were practically an untouched, primitive people when the first Colombian *caucheros*, coming down the Putumayo from the settled regions on its upper waters, located them-

selves at different points along the head waters of the Caraparaná and Igaraparaná, and entered into what are termed trade dealings with those unsophisticated tribes.

"This first Colombian invasion of the Putumayo regions took place, I am informed, in the early eighties, some of my informants stated about 1886. The earliest of these *conquistadores* were Crisóstomo Hernandez and Benjamin Larrañaga, who entered the region in search of the inferior kind of rubber there produced, known as *sernambi* or *jebe debil* (weak, fine rubber). The banks of these two rivers, and the whole of the region inhabited by the Huitotos, the Andokes, and the Boras Indians, are fairly well stocked with trees that furnish the milk out of which an inferior rubber is elaborated. The Putumayo Indians merely gash the tree with a knife or *machete*, and, catching the milk as it exudes in little baskets made of leaves, they wash it in their streams of running water and pound it with wooden pestles into long sausage-shaped rolls, termed in Peruvian rubber parlance *chorizos*, which ultimately are put upon the market just as the Indian carries them in to whoever may be locally exploiting him and his neighbourhood. That these wild Indians welcomed the coming into their country of Hernandez, Larrañaga, and the other Colombians who succeeded these earliest of the modern *conquistadores* it would be absurd to assert. They were, doubtless, glad to get *machetes*, and powder and caps for the few trade guns they possessed, with the prospect even of acquiring more of these priceless weapons themselves, along with such trifles as beads, mirrors, tin bowls, fish-hooks,

and tempting tins of sardines or potted meats—all of them articles of little intrinsic value, but of very attractive character to the Indian dwelling in so inaccessible a region. Had any form of administrative authority accompanied the early settlers or searchers for Indians, as they should rightly be termed, their relations with these wild inhabitants of the forest might have been controlled and directed to some mutually useful end. But the *caucheros* came as filibusters, not as civilisers, and were unaccompanied by any executive officers representing a civilised control. The region was practically a no-man's land, lying remote from any restraining authority or civilising influence, and figuring on maps of South America as claimed by three separate republics.

“Those who came in search of rubber had no intention of dwelling longer in the forest than the accumulation of the wealth they hoped to amass necessitated. They wanted to get rich quickly, not to stay and civilise the Indians or make their homes among them. The rubber-trees of themselves were of no value ; it was Indians who could be made or induced to tap them and to bring in the rubber on the white man's terms that all the invading *conquistadores* were in search of. Generally a leading man fitted out an expedition with a few companions, partners in effort and initial expenditure ; and with a gang of hired *peons*, or, as they are called in that region, *racionales* (half-breeds mostly who can read and write to distinguish them from the *Indios*, who are ignorant of all save forest lore), he journeyed to some part of the forest in search of tribes of wild Indians—*infieles* or “infidels”—who

could be easily subdued and reduced to work the wild rubber-trees in the territory they inhabited. An Indian would promise anything for a gun, or for some of the other tempting things offered as inducements to him to work rubber. Many Indians submitted to the alluring offer only to find that once in the *conquistadores'* books they had lost all liberty, and were reduced to unending demands for more rubber and more varied tasks. A cacique or *capitán* might be bought over to dispose of the labour of all his clan, and as the cacique's influence was very great and the natural docility of the Indian a remarkable characteristic of the Upper Amazon tribes, the work of conquering a primitive people and reducing them to a continual strain of rubber-finding was less difficult than might at first be supposed. Their arms of defence were puerile weapons as opposed to the rifles of the *blancos*."

The terrible floggings practised upon the Indians are lengthily described by Consul Casement, and it is said that 90 per cent. of them, men and women, bear scars therefrom.

Further describing the outrages committed, Mr. Casement quotes from the Annual Report of the Minister of Justice, presented to the Peruvian Congress in 1907:—

"Coming to more distant regions, where executive authority is necessarily weaker, the missionary brother informs the Minister of Justice of the state of things on the Putumayo itself:—

"'River Putumayo. In this river it is not possible to establish any mission owing to the abuses of the *caucheros* against the Indians (los

infielos), whom they maltreat and murder for no reason (*por motivos frívolos*), seizing their women and children.' (P. 782 of the Ministerial Report.)

"Lest this may be thought a vague indictment, I append a further extract from the same Report, this time directed by the Apostolic Prefect of the district of San Francisco de Ucayali to the Minister of Justice. It is dated from Contamana, on the Ucayali, the chief place of the province, on the 27th August, 1907, and deals at some length with the condition of religion and education on that great river, the main feeder and source of the Amazon, and one that has been largely occupied and in civilised hands for the better part of the last century:—

"Before speaking of the region of the Ucayali I wish to draw the attention of the Supreme Government to the infamous trade in buying and selling boys and girls which for years has been practised in these parts of the montaña (*i.e.*, the forest region), in spite of the repeated prohibitions of the Government, just as if these poor savages were irrational beings (*seres irracionales*), or, to be still more clear, just as if they were sheep or horses. This is intolerable in such an illustrious country as Peru. This trade excites and foment the hunting (*correrías*, literally "chasings") so frequently indulged in of these poor savages, so as to seize them in their houses in the moment when they least expect it. This is done by different traders (*comerciantes*) by means of their *peóns*, particularly some of those of the Upper Ucayali. I could cite many examples in confirmation of this, but

I will cite one alone which took place last year (1906). Here it is :—

“‘The Campas Indians of the River Ubiriqui were dwelling peacefully in their houses when suddenly, as is reported, there fell upon them men sent on a *correría* by one of the traders of the Upper Ucayali, who lives near Unini. These, without warning, attacked the innocent Campas, seizing those whom they could, killing many of them so that few escaped their cruelties, so that even up to now the number of their victims is not known. It is certain that many bodies have been found in a state of putrefaction, and that all the houses of the Ubiriqui are burnt. These deeds have exasperated the Indians (*los infieles*), and if no effective remedy is applied, later on we shall not be safe even in the mission villages (*pueblocitos de la misión*), nor shall we be able to spread our winning over and civilising of the savages who dwell in our forests.’ (P. 783 and following of the Report.)

“I do not know what steps were taken to deal with this state of things on the Upper Ucayali, but no steps of any kind followed on the Putumayo the notification, as quoted, made to the Minister of Justice by Frei Prat. That the representations of these Peruvian missionaries had not escaped the eyes of the Minister himself is clear from his own remarks. In his prefatory address to the members of Congress the Minister of Justice states in his Report (p. 48 of the Part *Instrucción y Culto*) as follows :—

“‘The apostolic prefectures have continued their work of civilisation and evangelisation of the

Indians of the Oriente, and in their reports, which are inserted as an annex, will be found detailed accounts of its progress.' ”

Consul Casement continues :—

“ Before my visit ended more than one Peruvian agent admitted to me that he had continually flogged Indians, and accused more than one of his fellow-agents by name of far greater crimes. In many cases the Indian rubber-worker—who knew roughly what quantity of rubber was expected of him—when he brought his load to be weighed, seeing that the needle of the balance did not touch the required spot, would throw himself face downwards on the ground, and in that posture await the inevitable blows. An individual who had often taken part in these floggings and who charged himself with two murders of Indians has thus left on record the manner of flogging the Indians at stations where he served. I quote this testimony, as this man's evidence, which was in my possession when I visited the region, was amply confirmed by one of the British subjects I examined, who had himself been charged in that evidence with flogging an Indian girl whom the man in question had then shot, when her back after that flogging had putrefied, so that it became ‘full of maggots.’ He states in his evidence—and the assertion was frequently borne out by others I met and questioned :—

“ ‘The Indian is so humble that as soon as he sees that the needle of the scale does not mark the 10 kilos he himself stretches out his hands and throws himself on the ground to receive the punishment. Then the chief or a subordinate advances, bends down, takes the Indian by the hair,

strikes him, raises his head, drops it face downwards on the ground, and after the face is beaten and kicked and covered with blood the Indian is scourged.'

"This picture is true; detailed descriptions of floggings of this kind were again and again made to me by men who had been employed in the work. Indians were flogged, not only for shortage in rubber, but still more grievously, if they dared to run away from their houses, and, by flight to a distant region, to escape altogether from the tasks laid upon them. Such flight as this was counted a capital offence, and the fugitives, if captured, were as often tortured and put to death as brutally flogged. Expeditions were fitted out and carefully planned to track down and recover the fugitives, however far the flight might have been. The undisputed territory of the neighbouring Republic of Colombia, lying to the north of the River Japurá (or Caquetá), was again and again violated in these pursuits, and the individuals captured were not always only Indians.

"The crimes alleged against Armando Normand, dating from the end of the year 1904 up to the month of October, 1910, when I found him in charge of this station of Matanzas or Andokes, seem wellnigh incredible. They included innumerable murders and tortures of defenceless Indians—pouring kerosene oil on men and women and then setting fire to them, burning men at the stake, dashing the brains out of children, and again and again cutting off the arms and legs of Indians and leaving them to speedy death in this agony. These charges were not made to me alone by Barbados

men who had served under Normand, but by some of his fellow-*racionales*. A Peruvian engineer in the company's service vouched to me for the dashing out of the brains of children, and the chief representative of the company, Señor Tizon, told me he believed Normand had committed 'innumerable murders' of the Indians.

"Westerman Leavine, whom Normand sought to bribe to withhold testimony from me, finally declared that he had again and again been an eye-witness of these deeds—that he had seen Indians burned alive more than once, and often their limbs eaten by the dogs kept by Normand at Matanzas. It was alleged, and I am convinced with truth, that during the period of close on six years Normand had controlled the Andokes Indians he had directly killed 'many hundreds' of those Indians—men, women, and children. The indirect deaths due to starvation, floggings, exposure, and hardship of various kinds in collecting rubber or transferring it from Andokes down to Chorrera must have accounted for a still larger number. Señor Tizon told me that 'hundreds' of Indians perished in the compulsory carriage of the rubber from the more distant sections down to La Chorrera. No food is given by the company to these unfortunate people on these forced marches, which, on an average, take place three times a year. I witnessed one such march, on a small scale, when I accompanied a caravan of some two hundred Andokes and Boras Indians (men, women, and children) that left Matanzas station on the 19th of October to carry their rubber that had been collected by them during the four or five preceding months down to a place

on the banks of the Igaraparaná, named Puerto Peruano (Peruvian Port), whence it was to be conveyed in lighters towed by a steam launch down to La Chorrera. The distance from Matanzas to Puerto Peruano is one of some forty miles, or possibly more. The rubber had already been carried into Matanzas from different parts of the forest lying often ten or twelve hours' march away, so that the total journey forced upon each carrier was not less than sixty miles, and in some cases probably a longer one. The path to be followed was one of the worst imaginable—a fatiguing route for a good walker quite unburdened.

“For two days—that is to say, from Matanzas to Entre Rios—I marched along with this caravan of very unhappy individuals, men with huge loads of rubber weighing, I believe, sometimes up to 70 kilos each, accompanied by their wives, also loaded with rubber, and their sons and daughters, down to quite tiny things that could do no more than carry a little cassava-bread (prepared by the mothers before leaving their forest home), to serve as food for parents and children on this trying march. Armed *muchachos*, with Winchesters, were scattered through the long column, and at the rear one of the *racionales* of Matanzas, a man named Adan Negrete, beat up the stragglers. Behind all, following a day later, came Señor Normand himself, with more armed *racionales*, to see that none fell out or slipped home, having shed their burdens of rubber on the way. On the second day I reached Entre Rios in the early afternoon, the bulk of the Indians having that morning started at 5.15 from the place where we had slept together in the

forest. At 5.15 that evening they arrived with Negrete and the armed *muchachos* at Entre Rios, where I had determined to stay for some days. Instead of allowing these half-starved and weary people, after twelve hours' march, staggering under crushing loads, to rest in this comparatively comfortable station of the company, where a large rest-house and even food were available, Negrete drove them on into the forest beyond, where they were ordered to spend the night under guard of the *muchachos*. This was done in order that a member of the company's commission (Mr. Walter Fox), who was at Entre Rios at the time along with myself, should not have an opportunity of seeing too closely the condition of these people—particularly, I believe, that we should not be able to weigh the loads of rubber they were carrying. I had, however, seen enough on the road during the two days I accompanied the party alone to convince me of the cruelty they were subjected to, and I had even taken several photographs of those among them who were more deeply scarred with the lash.

Several of the women had fallen out sick on the way, and five of them I had left provided for with food in a deserted Indian house in the forest, and had left an armed Barbados man to guard them until Señor Tizon, to whom I wrote, could reach the spot, following me from Matanzas a day later. An opportunity arose the next day to weigh one of these loads of rubber. A straggler, who had either fallen out or left Matanzas after the main party, came into Entre Rios, staggering under a load of rubber, about mid-day on the 21st October, when Mr. Fox and I were about to sit down to

lunch. The man came through the hot sun across the station compound, and fell before our eyes at the foot of the ladder leading up to the veranda, where, with the chief of the section (Señor O'Donnell), we were sitting. He had collapsed, and we got him carried into the shade and revived with whisky, and later on some soup and food from our own table. He was a young man, of slight build, with very thin arms and legs, and his load of rubber by no means one of the largest I had seen actually being carried. I had it weighed there and then, and its weight was just 50 kilos.*

"This man had not a scrap of food with him. Owing to our intervention he was not forced to carry on his load, but was permitted the next day to go on to Puerto Peruano empty-handed in company with Señor Normand. I saw many of these people on their way back to their homes some days later after their loads had been put into the lighters at Puerto Peruano. They were returning, footsore and utterly worn out, through the station of Entre Rios on their way back to their scattered houses in the Andokes or Boras country. They had no food with them, and none was given to them at Entre Rios. I stopped many of them, and inspected the little woven string or skin bags they carry, and neither man nor woman had any food left. All that they had started with a week before had been already eaten, and for the last day or two they had been subsisting on roots and leaves and the berries of wild trees they had pulled down on the way. We found, on our subsequent journey down

* Equal to about 105 lbs.—EDITOR.

to Puerto Peruano, a few days later, many traces of where they had pulled down branches and even trees themselves in their search for something to stay the craving of hunger. In some places the path was blocked with the branches and creepers they had torn down in their search for food, and it was only when Señors Tizon and O'Donnell assured me that this was done by 'Señor Normand's Indians' in their hungry desperation that I could believe it was not the work of wild animals.

"Indians were frequently flogged to death. Cases were reported to me where men or women had died actually under the lash, but this seems to have been infrequent. Deaths due to flogging generally ensued some days afterwards, and not always in the station itself where the lash had been applied, but on the way home to the unfortunate's dwelling-place. In many cases where men or women had been so cruelly flogged that the wounds putrefied the victims were shot by one of the *racionales* acting under the orders of the chief of the section, or even by this individual himself. Salt and water would be sometimes applied to these wounds, but in many cases a fatal flogging was not attended even by this poor effort at healing, and the victim, 'with maggots in the flesh,' was turned adrift to die in the forest or was shot and the corpse burned or buried—or often enough thrown into the 'bush' near the station-houses. At one station—that of Abisinia (which I did not visit)—I was informed by a British subject who had himself often flogged the Indians that he had seen mothers flogged, on account of shortage of rubber by their little sons. These boys were held to be too small to chastise,

and so, while the little boy stood terrified and crying at the sight, his mother would be beaten 'just a few strokes' to make him into a better worker.

"Men and women would be suspended by the arms, often twisted behind their backs and tied together at the wrists, and in this agonising posture, their feet hanging high above the ground, they were scourged on the nether limbs and lower back. The implement used for flogging was invariably a twisted strip, or several strips plaited together, of dried tapir-hide, a skin not so thick as the hippopotamus-hide I have seen used in Africa for flagellation, but still sufficiently stout to cut a human body to pieces. One flogger told me the weapon he used was 'as thick as your thumb.'

"After the prohibition of flogging by circular I have referred to, at some of the less brutal or more cautious centres of rubber-collection defaulting Indians were no longer, during the months of 1910, flogged with tapir-hide, but were merely chastised with strokes of a *machete*. These *machetes* are almost swords, and shaped something like a cutlass. They are used for gashing the trees in tapping them for rubber milk, and they also serve as weapons in the hands of the Indians. Blows with these laid across the shoulder-blades or back might be excessively painful, but would be unlikely to leave any permanent scar or traces of the beating. At the station of Occidente this form of beating had in June, 1910, been varied with a very cowardly torture instituted by the chief of that section, a Peruvian named Fidel Velarde. This man, who was found in charge of that

section when I visited it in October, 1910, in order to still inspire terror and yet leave no trace on the bodies of his victims, since Occidente lay close to La Chorrera and might be visited unexpectedly by Señor Tizon, had devised a new method of punishment for those who did not bring in enough rubber to satisfy him. Their arms were tied behind their backs, and thus pinioned they were taken down to the river (the Igaraparaná), and forcibly held under water until they became insensible and half-drowned. One of the Barbados men related circumstantially how on the 20th of June, 1910, only a few hours after Señor Tizon had quitted Occidente on a visit of inspection proceeding up-river to Ultimo Retiro, four Indian youths had been ordered by Velarde to be taken down to the river, their arms tied together, and to be then held under water until they filled—or, as James Mapp, the Barbados man put it, until ‘their bowels filled with water.’ Mapp had been ordered to perform this task, and had point-blank refused to obey, declaring he would not lay a finger on the Indians, where-upon a *racional* employee, by name Eugenio Acosta (whom I had met at Occidente), had carried out Señor Velarde’s orders. The four Indians, with their arms tied, had been thrust into the river by Acosta and an Indian he forced to help him and held forcibly under water. The whole station and the kinsmen of the four Indians were gathered on the high bank to witness this degrading spectacle, the Indian women weeping and crying out. One of the young men in his struggles had kicked free from the grasp of the man holding him down, and as his arms were fastened he had been unable to

save himself by swimming, and had sunk in the deep, strong current at the spot described.

"Indians were often flogged while confined in the *cepo*, this notably in the special flogging *cepo*, with movable extremities, made by order of Aurelio Rodríguez at Santa Catalina, and referred to by its maker, Edward Crichlow, in his testimony to me. Sometimes the most abominable offences were committed upon Indians while held by the legs or leg in this defenceless position (see particularly the statement of James Chase, borne out by Stanley Lewis, as to the crime committed by José Inocente Fonseca at Ultimo Retiro upon a young Indian man). Some of the British subjects I questioned declared to me that they had known Indian women to be publicly violated by the *racionales* while in this state of detention. As an added punishment, the legs of a man or woman would be distended and confined several holes apart in the stocks—some of the Barbados men asserted that they themselves had been confined with their legs 'five holes apart,' a distance, I should say, intolerable to be borne for any length of time. The Ultimo Retiro stocks were the worst I saw, for the leg-holes were smaller, and the beams to have locked on any ordinary sized leg must have forced down into the flesh.

"An individual confined with his legs 'five holes apart' would have had them extended almost a yard at the extremities, and if confined for a few hours in this posture, he must have been in acute pain. Indians who spent long periods in the stocks were sometimes confined by only one leg. Whole families were so imprisoned—fathers, mothers,

and children, and many cases were reported of parents dying thus, either from starvation or from wounds caused by flogging, while their offspring were attached alongside of them to watch in misery themselves the dying agonies of their parents. One man at Ultimo Retiro, himself a living witness to the enforced starvation he denounced, in the presence of Señor Jiménez and his subordinates, related before me and the members of the commission on the 8th of October how, in Señor Montt's time, a year previously, many of his countrymen and women had been so starved to death or flogged to death in the station *cepo* that we were then inspecting and experimenting with.

"Some of these agents drew fully £1,000 a year from the rubber they forced by this means and by other lawless methods from the surrounding native population.

"Flogging was varied with other tortures designed, like the semi-drownings of Velarde, to just stop short of taking life while inspiring the acute mental fear and inflicting much of the physical agony of death. Thus, men and lads, rubber defaulters or fugitives from its collection, were suspended by a chain fastened round the neck to one of the beams of the house or store. Sometimes with the feet scarcely touching the ground and the chain hauled taut they were left in this half-strangled position until life was almost extinct. More than one eye-witness assured me that he had seen Indians actually suspended by the neck until when let down they fell a senseless mass upon the floor of the house with their tongues protruding.

"Several informants declared they had witnessed

Indians, chained round the arms, hauled up to the ceilings of the houses or to trees, and the chain then suddenly loosed so that the victim fell violently to the ground. One case of this kind was circumstantially related to me where the Indian, a young man, dropped suddenly like this from a height of several feet, fell backwards, and his head hit the ground so violently that his tongue was bitten through and his mouth full of blood.

"Deliberate starvation was again and again resorted to, but this not where it was desired merely to frighten, but where the intention was to kill. Men and women were kept prisoners in the station stocks until they died of hunger.

"These starvations, as specifically related to me by men who witnessed them and were aware of the gravity of the charge they brought, had not been due to chance neglect, but to design. No food was given to the Indians, and none could be given save by the chief of the section. One man related how he had seen Indians thus being starved to death in the stocks 'scraping up the dirt with their fingers and eating it'; another declared he had actually seen Indians who had been flogged and were in extremity of hunger in the stocks 'eating the maggots from their wounds.'

"Wholesale murder and torture endured up to the end of Aurelio Rodríguez' service, and the wonder is that any Indians were left in the district at all to continue the tale of rubber-working on to 1910. This aspect of such continuous criminality is pointed to by those who, not having encountered the demoralisation that attends the methods

described, happily infrequent, assert that no man will deliberately kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. This argument would have force if applied to a settled country or an estate it was designed to profitably develop. None of the freebooters on the Putumayo had any such limitations in his view, or care for the hereafter to restrain him. His first object was to get rubber, and the Indians would always last his time. He hunted, killed, and tortured to-day in order to terrify fresh victims for to-morrow. Just as the appetite comes in eating so each crime led on to fresh crimes, and many of the worst men on the Putumayo fell to comparing their battues and boasting of the numbers they had killed.

"Every one of these criminals kept a large staff of unfortunate Indian women for immoral purposes — termed by a euphemism their 'wives.' Even *péons* had sometimes more than one Indian wife. The gratification of this appetite to excess went hand in hand with the murderous instinct which led these men to torture and kill the very parents and kinsmen of those they cohabited with.

"The Indian communities had been everywhere deprived of their native weapons. Perhaps a greater defence than their spears and blowpipes even had been more ruthlessly destroyed. Their old people, both women and men, respected for character and ability to wisely advise, had been marked from the first as dangerous, and in the early stages of the occupation were done to death. Their crime had been the giving of 'bad advice.' To warn the more credulous or less experienced

against the white enslaver and to exhort the Indian to flee or to resist rather than consent to work rubber for the new-comers had brought about their doom. I met no old Indian man or woman, and few had got beyond middle age. The Barbados men assured me that when they first came to the region in the beginning of 1905 old people were still to be found, vigorous and highly respected, but these had all disappeared, so far as I could gather, before my coming. At Entre Rios I learned of an Indian chief named Chingamui, who at Señor O'Donnell's arrival in 1903 had exercised a widespread influence over all the Huitotos in that district. This man had fallen at the hands of a Colombian named Calderon, who then directed the neighbouring district of Atenas, but not before he had shot at and wounded his murderer. So, too, I learned of an 'old woman' who was beheaded in the station of Sur by order of its chief, and whose crime had been the giving of 'bad advice.' Her head had been held up by the hair in the presence of my informant as a warning to the assembled Indians of the fate they too would incur if they did not obey the white man.

"Perhaps the bravest and most resolute opponent the murderers had encountered had met his death only a few months, or even weeks, before my arrival in the district. This was a Boras cacique, or *capitán*—often referred to in the depositions of those I examined—named Katenere. This man, who was not an old man, but young and strong, lived on the upper waters of the Pamá, a small stream that empties into the Cahuinari not far from its mouth in the Japurá. My interpreter, Bishop,

had seen this chief in 1907, when Normand had gone to find him in order to induce him to work rubber. He had, from necessity no doubt, consented to bring in rubber, and for some time had worked voluntarily for Normand, until, through bad treatment, he, like so many others, had fled. He had been captured later on, along with his wife and some of his people, and confined in the stocks of the Abisinia district, to undergo the taming process. While thus himself a prisoner, his wife, so I was informed by a Peruvian white man holding a well-paid post in the company's service, had been publicly violated before his eyes by one of the highest agents of the Syndicate, a Peruvian whose name and record was frequently brought forward in the course of my inquiry. This man had been obliged to fly from the Caraparaná agency on account of his crimes in that region in 1908.

"As a rule, the criminals who controlled the Indian population of the Putumayo were chary of robbing an Indian husband of his wife. The harems were maintained mainly by orphans, generally girls whose parents were 'dead.' Asking once why it was that the wives of the Indians seemed usually to be spared this contamination, a reliable witness answered me: 'Because, sir, if they takes an Indian's wife, that Indian don't work rubber.' I urged that since these men stuck at no act of terrorisation to make Indians work rubber, a husband could be forced, even if robbed of his wife, to go and get rubber. "No, sir," my informant said, 'the Indians loves their wives, and if she is taken they won't work rubber. They

can kill them, do anything they like to them, but the Indian won't work rubber.'

"This assertion was made more than once by men who, like this man, had taken an active part in making Indians work rubber, and I believe that this obstinate prejudice of the Indian preserved a native marriage from invasion more surely than any respect the *cauchero* has for its sanctity. An Indian marriage is not a ceremony, but a choice sanctioned by the parents of the bride, and once a child or children result from the union there is rarely infidelity or separation. The very conditions of Indian life, open and above board, and every act of every day known to wellnigh every neighbour, precluded, I should say, very widespread sexual immorality before the coming of the white man. Certain it is that immoral intercourse among Indians, leading their natural lives, is rare, and as polygamy scarcely existed, only a few of the bigger men having more than one wife, the affection that grew up between an Indian man and his wife was very often sincere and deep-rooted, just as the love of parents for their children was.

"The Indians often displayed a fortitude in the face of impending torture and death that speaks for itself of the excellence of some of their qualities. Thus, it will be seen in the depositions accompanying this Report how, on more than one occasion, men had refused to betray the hiding-place of fugitives under terrible threats of torture if they did not point out the retreat of the runaways. Normand is charged with having cut the arms and legs off a chief he captured and questioned, who preferred to suffer such a death

to betraying the refuge of those who had fled. I learned of more than one case of the kind, and have no doubt of the truth of the accusation against the white man as of the fortitude of the Indian. The tribes of the Putumayo in the hands of good men could be made into good men and women, useful and intelligent workers under an honest administration. Trained to be murderers, with the worst example men ever gave to men daily held up for imitation, with lust and greed and cruelty so often appealed to, I daily wondered that so much goodness still survived among the remnant we encountered. That that remnant itself would soon be gone I became convinced. A Peruvian who spoke good English, having spent some years in England, confessed as much to me two days before I left Chorrera. I said to this man that under the actual régime I feared the entire Indian population would be gone in ten years, and he answered, 'I give it six years—not ten.'

"The unrelieved barbarity of this Report does not rest alone on the testimony of the Barbados men whose depositions accompany it. I had other evidence to go by at the outset, and this was found to be in more than one instance amply confirmed by the independent statements of the British witnesses and again and again borne out by the evidence of our own eyes and the general conditions of the Indians. Could these people have been themselves fully interrogated, the weight of testimony would have been far greater, but could not have been more convincing.

"A magistrate was said to be residing at one of the company's stations on that river, but I never

heard him once referred to, and when peculiarly atrocious crimes were dragged to light, admitted, and deplored, the criminal charged with them would be sitting at table with us, and the members of the company's commission and myself were appealed to to give no indication of our disgust lest this man 'might do worse things' to the Indians or provoke an impossible situation with the armed bandits under his orders. The apology for this extraordinary situation was that there was 'no authority, no administration, no one near to whom any appeal could be made,' and that Iquitos was 1,200 miles away. Every chief of section was a law unto himself, and many of the principal agents of this British company were branded by the representative of that company, holding its power of attorney, in conversation with me as 'murderers, pirates, and bandits.'"

A considerable part of Consul Casement's Report is taken up with the depositions, sworn before him, of the Barbados men; one of these, by name Stanley Lewis, stated:—

"I have seen Indians killed for sport, tied up to trees and shot at by Fonseca and the others. After they were drinking they would sometimes do this. They would take a man out of the *cepo* and tie him to a tree, and shoot him for a target. I have often seen Indians killed thus, and also shot after they had been flogged and their flesh was rotten through maggots."

This man also described terrible barbarities committed on and murder of two Indian girls by Fonseca. James Chase, another Barbados man, gave a long account of Indians being flogged to

death, starved, or shot, and describes the terrible occurrence connected with the murdering of the family of Katerene as follows:—

“They were also to hunt for a Boras Indian named Katenere, a former rubber-worker of the district of Abisinia, who had escaped, and, having captured some rifles, had raised a band of his fellow-Indians, and had successfully resisted all attempts at his recapture. Katenere had shot Bartolomé Zupaeta, the brother-in-law of Julio C. Arana, and was counted a brave man and a terror to the Peruvian rubber-workers. The expedition set out from Morelia, and at the first Indian ‘house’ they reached in the forest they caught eight Indians, five men and three women. They were all tied up with ropes, their hands tied behind their backs, and marched on farther. At the next house they reached they caught four Indians, one woman and three men. Vasquez, who was in charge, ordered one of the *muchachos* to cut this woman’s head off. He ordered this for no apparent reason that James Chase knows of, simply because ‘he was in command, and could do what he liked.’ The *muchacho* cut the woman’s head off; he held her by the hair of her head, and, flinging her down, hacked her head off with a machete. It took more than one blow to sever the head—three or four blows. The remains were left there on the path, and the expedition went on with the three fresh male prisoners tied up with the others. The date would be about May, 1910.

“They were then approaching the house where they believed Katenere to be living. He was the chief of the Indians in whose direction they were

going—the fugitives from the rubber-work. At a point about half an hour's walk from this Indian house Vasquez ordered him, Ocampo, and two of the *muchachos* to remain there to guard the prisoners, while he himself (Vasquez) went on with the rest of the expedition. This party, so Vasquez told them when he had returned, reached the house of Katenere about six in the evening. Katenere and his wife, or one of his wives, were in the house—only these two persons. Vasquez caught the woman, but Katenere got away. Vasquez stayed there and sent four of the *muchachos* into the forest to find and capture the rifles that Katenere had got. When the *muchachos* got to this other house in the forest they found several Indians in it, whom they captured, and four rifles. The Indians were tied up with their hands behind them, but after a time the head *muchacho*, a Boras Indian, nicknamed Henrique, ordered them to be released. He then sent on his three *muchachos* to another house to bring in some Indians whilst he stayed with the men whom he had just released. These Indians, it should be noted, were all Boras Indians, Henrique as well as the rest of the *muchachos*. Whilst Henrique was with these men he found amongst them an Indian girl of whom he was very fond and who had probably joined them in their flight. He endeavoured to seize this girl, and in a quarrel that followed he was killed. The three *muchachos*, on their return with two prisoners, found their leader killed and his rifle in the hands of the released Indians, with the four guns they already had belonging to Katenere. Each party fired at the other, the forest Indians without effect. The three

muchachos killed two of the Boras Indians and then returned to the house where Vasquez was spending the night and where he held the wife of Katenere prisoner. In the morning Vasquez returned to Ocampo and Chase, bringing only this woman with them. It was then that Chase learned from Vasquez' own lips what had happened. They had then, Chase states, twelve Indians as prisoners, who included Katenere's wife, and also of the original party that left Abisinia two Indians, who were in chains, who had been brought as guides to point out where Katenere and his fugitive people were living. These were some of Katenere's men who had not succeeded in escaping when he got away. The whole party set out to return to Morelia through the forest, having lost Henrique and his rifle. Soon after they began their march in the morning they met in the path a child—a little girl—who was said to be a daughter of Katenere by another wife he had once had, not the woman they now held as prisoner. This child, Chase states, was quite a young girl, some six or eight years of age. She was frightened at the sight of the armed men, the Indians in chains and tied up, and began to cry as they approached. Vasquez at once ordered her head to be cut off. He knew it was Katenere's child because Katenere's wife, in their hands, told them so. There was no reason that Chase knew for their crime, save that the child was crying. Her head was cut off by a *muchacho* named Cherey, a Recigiro Indian boy. He was quite a young boy. They came on about half an hour's march past that, leaving the decapitated body in the path, and as one of the women prisoners they

had was not walking as fast as the rest Vasquez ordered a *muchacho* to cut her head off. This was done by the same boy Cherey in the same way, he flinging the woman on the ground and chopping her head off with several blows of his *machete*. They left this body and severed head right in the path and went on again towards Morelia. They were walking very fast because they were a bit frightened, thinking the Indians were pursuing them. One of the male Indian prisoners, a boy, about fifteen or sixteen [Chase indicated the boy's height with his hand], a lad who could work rubber, was lagging behind and could not keep up with them as they were going very fast. The Indian was hungry and probably weak. Vasquez ordered his head to be cut off. This execution took place there and then in the same way and was performed by the same boy Cherey. The Indian's hands were tied behind him. Cherey took hold of the lad's long hair, threw him on the ground, and cut his head off. They came on after this towards Morelia, walking as fast as they could, and when they were getting near it in the evening-time and perhaps three-quarters of an hour's distance Vasquez was in a great hurry to reach the station. Three of the Indian men who were weak through hunger and not able to walk fast could not keep up with them, so Vasquez himself shot one and he ordered Cherey, the *muchacho*, to shoot the other two. These were all grown-up men, Boras Indians, and belonging to Gavilanes, and were part of Katenere's people. The three bodies were left lying there on the path, and the place where they were killed was so near Morelia that when they reached it they learned that

the station hands had heard the shots of the rifles that had killed the men.

"They reached Morelia in the evening, and of their five prisoners three were put with their feet in the *cepo*, while the fourth was hung up by his neck with a chain round it. The chain was pulled taut over a beam in the roof of the house, so that the man's toes rested on the ground, but he could not budge or even move his head. He had to stand like this with his head and neck stretched up all night. Those in the *cepo*, two men and a woman, also had chains round their necks. They got no food."

Evidence confirmatory of James Chase's statement with regard to this expedition of Vasquez was subsequently obtained by the Consul-General from other quarters. The Report continues:—

"Allan Davis, a Barbados man who was in Abisinia when Vasquez arrived there, stated in his examination that Vasquez declared on arrival 'he had left the road pretty.' Davis saw him arrive with the emaciated prisoners, who were put in stocks, and all of whom subsequently met their deaths in Abisinia, as averred by Davis and Evelyn Baston, another Barbados man, whose testimony was subsequently taken. One of them was murdered by being shot, and the others were deliberately starved to death while confined in the stocks.

"Asked if he had seen women thus killed, he replied, 'Yes. They were shot and died from blows' (from floggings). They were cut to pieces sometimes and smelt dreadfully. Once he himself was put in *cepo* alongside some of these rotting human

beings who had been inhumanly flogged, and the smell was so bad he begged and implored to be taken out—he could not stand it—but Fonseca kept him in all night. He saw these people die from these floggings; their bodies would sometimes be dragged away and thrown in the bush around the station or burned. He has seen the *muchachos* shoot Indians under the order of Fonseca. Continual floggings went on at that time among women and children.

“Further statements were from time to time received from James Chase in the course of the journey made by Mr. Casement in the company of the commission, and finally on the 5th of November at La Chorrera he gave still further testimony in the presence of several of his countrymen. He states that amongst other things he saw Fonseca do was to kill an Indian man who was at the time confined in the stocks, or *cepo*, at Ultimo Retiro. The Indian in question had run away from working rubber, but had been caught and brought in a prisoner. Fonseca said to him, ‘I am going to kill you.’ The man protested, and said he had done no harm. He had not killed a white man, he had not injured any one or killed any one, and could not be killed for running away. Fonseca laughed at him, and had him hung up by the neck first with a chain drawn tight, and then when let down from this torture he had him put in the *cepo* with one foot only, the other leg being free. Fonseca came up to the *cepo* with a stick with a club head much bigger than the handle of the stick. He put one of his legs against the Indian’s free leg and stretched it apart from the confined leg.

He then pulled off the man's *fono*, or loin-cloth made of beaten bark, so that he was quite naked, and then struck the man many times with the club-end of the stick on his exposed parts. These were 'smashed,' and the man died in a short time. Deponent described the occurrence fully, declaring that he was an eye-witness.

"This statement was confirmed by the Barbados man, Stanley S. Lewis, who stated he also saw Fonseca commit this deed.

"Chase states that Fonseca at Ultimo Retiro would shoot Indians with a long rifle which he had. He thinks it was a Mannlicher. Sometimes he shot at them whilst they were actually prisoners in the stocks, and others were taken out in the open ground round the house, and he shot at them from the veranda. The last case of this kind that Chase witnessed was that of a young girl. Fonseca bandaged her eyes and face so that even her mouth and nose were covered. She was then made to walk away, and whilst she was thus blindfolded Fonseca shot her 'as a sport for his friends.'

"Chase further states that he has seen Aquiléo Torres cut the ears off living Indians for sport. Torres took deponent's own knife from him. It was an open knife, and he used this knife for the purpose. He saw him do this several times. Once he cut off a man's ears and then burned his wife alive before his eyes. This was done by Torres.

"In the summer of 1909 Chase accompanied Torico on a journey. Asked what they were doing, he states that Torico, he thinks, was going round on a sort of inspection for Macedo, or else to give

warning to all the sections that things must be put straight, because an Englishman, Captain Whiffen, was then in the country and visiting the company's territories. He remembers Torico taking the names of the Indians at each station, and talking to the agents about Captain Whiffen's coming. Chase states that he was with Sealey in the expedition under Jiminéz, later described."

Stanley Sealey, another Barbados, described to the Consul a rubber raid and its results in the following terrible story:—

"A party of armed employees is sent out to collect the Indians of a certain division on the day when their *puesta* of rubber is due, and to march them into the station with their loads of rubber, after this has been weighed and found sufficient. The man in charge of the expedition will have a list of the Indians he is to collect, and the amount of rubber each is to bring in, and he proceeds to summon or find them. They call the chief, or *capitán*, of these Indians, and if all his people do not appear with him he may be put in the *cepo*, made out in the forest, and kept guarded there. Sometimes he, deponent, and others of the expedition would be sent to look for the missing Indians. If the Indians do not all come in, the *capitán* will be treated in a variety of ways. Sometimes they tie his hands behind his back, and then by a rope through his bound wrists he will be hauled up off the ground, the rope passing over a tree-branch. Sometimes his feet would be three or four feet off the ground. They kept him in this position for sometimes an hour or an hour and a half, he screaming out with pain. This is to make him

confess where the missing Indians are. When he admits this, and says he will go for the truants, they let him down, and, keeping him tied, they go with him to where the people are hiding. If they find his people, they may still keep him tied up. They do not then flog the Indians. They collect all they can, those with the rubber, and those who have failed to get it, and march them all down to the station. The arms of the *capitán* will be loosed on reaching the station, but his legs put in the *cepo*. Then they weigh the rubber, and if any man has not brought the right weight he is flogged. The severity of the flogging depends on the amount of rubber the man is short. The deponent has not seen more than two dozen stripes thus given. With regard to the Indians who had not appeared in the first instance, and had to be collected, they would be flogged and put in the *cepo*; they would get 'a good flogging.' Sometimes the *capitán* himself would be flogged in the station. Whole families would be marched down in these gatherings, men with their wives and children who would help the men with their rubber. On all these marches the Indians would have to carry their own food too; they get no food except what they bring themselves. They would only get food from the white men during the time they are actually kept in the station. The station would have a big pot of rice and beans boiled. This would be the food. He has seen sometimes one hundred and fifty people thus marched in. Those who have brought the fixed amount of rubber are allowed to go back after this meal. The others are punished by being kept in *cepo*. Some are

put in a hole in the cellars of the house. There is such a hole at Ultimo Retiro which the Consul can see when he gets there.

“The Indians are not paid at all on these occasions for such rubber as they bring in. They only get payment when the full *fabrico*—say, seventy-five days—is completed. These commissions take place sometimes every ten days, sometimes every fifteen days, according to the period fixed for each *puesta*, depending on the neighbourhood. Sealey gives this as a general indication of the manner in which he has been employed on ‘commissions’ and collecting the Indians from the forest. He next states he wishes to describe what took place on a certain occasion when he with other Barbados men went on a commission from Abisinia under Jiminéz. They were stationed at Morelia at the time, and went under Jiménez to the Caquetá. It was a journey to catch fugitive Indians who had fled from the rubber-working, and was soon after Sealey had gone to Abisinia; he thinks it was in June, 1908. On the first day’s march from Morelia, about five o’clock in the afternoon, when they were some one and a half day’s distance from the Caquetá, they caught an old Indian woman in the path. Jiminéz asked the old woman where the rest of the Indians were. Sealey states she was a bit frightened. She told him that the next day at eleven o’clock he would get to the house where some Indians were. She was an old woman, not able to run. They did not tie her up. They went on with her, keeping her all night in camp until about two o’clock of the next day, and then Jiménez asked her, ‘Where is the house; where are the

Indians?’ The old woman stood up, and said nothing. She could not speak; she kept her eyes on the ground. Jiménez said to her: ‘You were telling me lies yesterday, but now you have got to speak the truth.’ With that he called his wife—he had an Indian woman, the woman who is still with him—and he said to his wife: ‘Bring me that rope off my hammock.’ She took the rope off and gave it to him, and with that he tied the old woman’s hands behind her back. There were two trees standing just like that—one there and one there. He made an Indian cut a post to stretch across between the two trees. Then he hauled the old woman up, her feet were not touching the ground at all. He said to one of the boys, a *muchacho*: ‘Bring me some leaves—some dry leaves,’ he said, and he put these under the feet of the old woman as she hung there, her feet about a foot or so above the ground; and he then take a box of matches out of his pocket and he light the dry leaves, and the old lady start to burn. Big bladders [blisters] I see on her skin up here” (he pointed to his thighs). “All was burned; she was calling out. Well, sir, when I see that, sir, I said, ‘Lord, have mercy!’ and I run ahead that I could not see her no more.”

“You did not go back?”

“I stayed a little ways off to where she was. I could hear him speaking. He say to one of the boys, ‘Loose her down now,’ and they loose her, but she was not dead. She lay on the ground—she was still calling out. He tell one of the Indians: ‘Now, if this old woman is not able

to walk, cut her head off,' and the Indian did so—he cut her head off.”

“You saw that?”

“Yes, sir, he leave her there in the same place. We left her there, going a little ways into the forest; it was about four hours' walk; after we left the old woman we met two women. They had no house—they had run away. One had a child. Jiménez axed the one that had the child: ‘Where is these Indians that has run away?’ she tell him that she don't know where they were. He tell her after she tell him that she don't know that she was a liar.”

“Did he tell her this himself in her own language?”

“He tell his wife to tell her. His wife speaks Spanish, too. His wife is up there with him now at Ultimo Retiro. He tell his wife that she was a liar. He took the child from the woman and he gave it to an Indian, one of the Indians who had been collected to work rubber. ‘Cut this child's head off!’ he say, and he did so.”

“How did the Indian cut the child's head off?”

“He held it by the hair and chop its head off with a *machete*. It was a little child walking behind its mother.”

“Was it a boy or a girl?”

“It was a boy. He left the child and the head in the same place, everything there, on the path. He went on then; he take the two women with him, but the woman was crying for her child. Well, sir, we got a little ways more inside the wood; walking, we met an Indian man—a strong young fellow he was, too. That is, after we gets over to near the

Caquetá. Jiménez say he wanted to go to the next side—the other side—of the Caquetá, but he do not know where he would get a boat, a canoe, to go over. So this time he tell his woman, his wife, to ax the Indian to tell where the boat is. Well, sir, the Indian say he do not know where it is. By that time Jiménez say the Indian lie—he was a liar, and he got a rope and he tie the Indian's hands like that behind his back. It was in the same way with the post across between two trees. He made the Indians tie a post across between two trees, and he haul the Indian, like that, up to the post. His feet could not touch the ground, and he call for some dry leaves, and tell the boys to bring some dry leaves, same as the old woman. He put the leaves under his feet, and he take a box of matches out of his pocket. The man was there shouting out, greeting. Jiménez draw a match and light the leaves, and this time, sir, the Indian start to burn, big bladders going out from his skin. The Indian was there burning, with his head hanging like that—moaning, he was. Jiménez say: 'Well, you will not tell me where the canoe, where the boat is,' he says, 'so you must bear with that.' Well, the Indian was not quite dead, but was there with his head hanging, and Jiménez he tell the *capitán*, by name José Maria, a Boras Indian [he is chief *capitán* of the Abisinia *muchachos*]; he says, 'Give him a ball!' he says, and the Indian took his carbine and give him a ball here, shooting him in the chest. Well, sir, after I saw how the blood started, I ran. It was awful to see, and he left the Indian hanging up there with the rope and everything on him."

“Was the Indian dead?”

“Yes, sir, he was dead with the ball, and we left him there in the same place. That’s all.”

“Sealey states that he had reported these things to his fellow-countryman, John Brown, who when he had reached Chorrera had become the servant of a Captain Whiffen, an English officer who had arrived there. He hoped that Captain Whiffen, hearing of it, might be able to do something and so told John Brown.* Sealey states that Chase was with him on the expedition.”

Another Barbados man’s (Westerman Leavine’s) examination includes the following:—

“He confirms the statement made by Genaro Caporo, in the *Truth* charges read out to him, who had declared what he saw in the middle of 1907. The statement made by Caporo, that three old Indians and two young women, their daughters, were murdered by Normand in cold blood and their bodies eaten by the dogs, was corroborated by Leavine. He saw this take place, and saw the dogs eating them. As to the starving to death of Indians in the *cepo*, it was a common occurrence, and the dead and stinking bodies left there alongside still living prisoners he declares he more than once witnessed. The statement made by Caporo as to an Indian chief who was burnt alive in the presence of his wife and two children, and the wife then beheaded and the children dismembered, and all thrown on the fire, Leavine says he remembers, and was a witness to it. He also remembers the occurrence narrated by Caporo of an Indian woman

* See p. 32.

who was cut to pieces by Normand himself, because she refused to live with one of his employees as he directed her to do. He was a witness to the woman being set fire to with the Peruvian flag soaked in kerosene wrapped round her, and of her then being shot. The statement made by Caporo as to the ground round Andokes being sown with skulls was then read out by the Consul-General to Leavine. He (Leavine) of himself stated that there were days in 1906 and 1907 'when you could not eat your food on account of the dead Indians lying around the house.' He frequently saw the dogs eating them, and dragging the limbs about. The bodies and arms were thrown all round and were not buried.

"With regard to the statement of Roso España, read over to him from the *Truth* charges, he saw one child rammed head first down one of the holes being dug for the house timbers.

"The statement of Julio Muriedas, made in the same quarter, who stated that he had been at Matanzas, was then read over to Leavine. He remembers Muriedas. With regard to the statement that two hundred lashes were given to Indians, Leavine says this often took place, also the burning alive of children to make them reveal where their parents were hidden. This he declares he has seen Señor Normand do more than once. The eating of the limbs of the dead people by the house-dogs attested by Muriedas he again confirms, and says it was 'a common occurrence.' The statement of 'M. G.,' from the *Truth* accusations, was then read to Leavine. He recalls this man, named Marcial, being a short time at

Matanzas when Señor Normand wished to make him a station cook, and this man had refused and they had quarrelled. This man's statement that he had seen in one month and five days 'ten Indians killed and burnt' Leavine declares is in no wise remarkable. He has himself seen twenty Indians killed in five days in Matanzas. As to the 'stinking' of this section referred to by 'M. G.' he affirms that this was often the case to a revolting degree. He recalls 'M. G.,' or Marcial, shooting the little Indian boy by Señor Normand's orders as he, 'M. G.,' accuses himself of doing.

"Leavine finally declares that Señor Normand killed many hundreds of Indians during his six years at Matanzas, during all which time he (Leavine) served under him, and by many kinds of torture, cutting off their heads and limbs and burning them alive. He more than once saw Normand have Indians' hands and legs tied together, and the men or women thus bound thrown alive on a fire. The employees on the station would look on or assist at this. The station boys, or *muchachos*, would get the firewood ready, acting under Señor Normand's orders. He saw Normand on one occasion take three native men and tie them together in a line, and then with his Mauser rifle shoot all of them with one bullet, the ball going right through. He would fire more than one shot into them like this."

On arriving in London, in January, 1912, Consul Casement gave in a further Report to the Foreign Office, of which the following are extracts:—

"The managing director of the company, at Iquitos, Señor Pablo Zumaeta, against whom had

been issued a warrant of arrest, had, I found, not been arrested, but, with the connivance of the police, had merely remained in his private residence at Iquitos during the hearing of an appeal he was permitted to lodge. This appeal being considered by the Superior Court of Iquitos during my stay there, resulted in the court annulling the warrant issued by the Criminal Court below, and the return to public life of the accused man without trial or public investigation of the charges against him."*

"Following my return to Iquitos in the 16th of October, an effort was apparently made to arrest some twenty of those still employed by the company on the Putumayo towards the very end of October and in the early days of November. Although the localities where all of them were at work were well known, the *comisario* or commissioner of the Putumayo, one Amadéo Burga, a paid employee of the company, and a brother-in-law of its managing director, in each case took action just too late, so that all those incriminated were either absent in the forest or said to have gone away only a few hours before the officer's arrival. The vessel reporting this unsatisfactory ending to this, the latest attempt † to bring to justice the authors of so many crimes, returned to Iquitos on the 25th of November, bring-

* In outlying places in Peru and other Latin American countries it is extremely difficult to obtain the conviction of or even to sustain a process against wealthy or influential persons, as in small localities the "justices" are completely overawed or influenced by them. There is, moreover, a strong element of police-court methods in Latin America such as has been rendered familiar by occurrences in New York.—EDITOR.

† Some further arrests have been made since.—EDITOR.

ing only one man in custody, a subordinate named Portocarrero, who was among those implicated. All the rest of the accused were stated to have 'escaped,' in some cases, it was reported, taking with them large numbers of captive Indians, either for sale or for continued forced labour in other regions of the rubber-bearing forests.

"Some of those wanted, however, I learned subsequently, had returned to their stations when the officer, who had failed to find them, had left the neighbourhood, and were at work again in the service of the company at the date of my departure from the Amazon. Others of the individuals charged by the judge, I found, were, or had been, actually in Iquitos at the time the police there held warrants for their arrest, and no attempt had been made to put these warrants into execution.

"The evidence that I obtained during my stay in Iquitos, coming as it did from many quarters and much of it from the Putumayo itself, induced in me the conviction that the punishment of the wrongdoers was a thing not to be expected, and, from a variety of causes I need not dwell upon here, possibly a matter beyond the ability of the local executive to ensure. Suffice it to say I saw no reason to modify the opinion expressed in my Report of the 17th of March last, that 'custom sanctioned by long tradition, and an evil usage whose maxim is that "the Indian has no rights," are far stronger than a distant law that rarely emerges into practice.'

"In the Amazon territories of Peru—the great region termed the Montaña—the entire population, it may be said, consists of native Indians, some brought into close touch, as at Iquitos and in the

settled mission centres of the Ucayali, with white civilisation, but a great proportion of them, like those on the Putumayo, still dwelling in the forest, a rude and extremely primitive existence. To these remote people civilisation has come, not in the guise of settled occupation by men of European descent, accompanied by executive control to assert the supremacy of law, but by individuals in search of Indian labour—a thing to be mercilessly used, and driven to the most profitable of tasks, rubber-getting, by terror and oppression. That the Indian has disappeared and is disappearing rapidly under this process is nothing to these individuals. Enough Indians may remain to constitute, in the end, the nucleus of what is euphemistically termed ‘a civilised centre.’

“The entire absence of government, which has not kept pace with the extension of revenue-yielding communities, has left the weaker members of those communities exposed to the ruthless greed of the stronger. The crimes of the Putumayo, horrible as they are, have their counterpart, I am assured, in other remote regions of the same lawless forest—although possibly not to the same terrifying extent.

“In this instance the force of circumstance has brought to light what was being done under British auspices—that is to say, through an enterprise with headquarters in London, and employing both British capital and British labour—to ravage and depopulate the wilderness. The fact that this British company should possibly cease to direct the original families of Peruvian origin who first brought their forest wares (50,000 slaves) to the English market will not, I apprehend, materially affect the situation on

the Putumayo. The Arana Syndicate still termed itself the Peruvian Amazon Company (Limited) up to the date of my leaving Iquitos on the 7th of December last. The whole of the rubber output of the region, it should be borne in mind, is placed upon the English market, and is conveyed from Iquitos in British bottoms. Some few of the employees in its service are, or were when I left the Amazon, still British subjects, and the commercial future of the Putumayo (if any, commercial future be possible to a region so wasted and mis-handled) must largely depend on the amount of foreign, chiefly British, support those exploiting the remnant of the Indians may be able to secure.

“A population officially put at 50,000 should in ten years have grown by natural increase to certainly 52,000 or 53,000 souls, seeing that every Indian marries—a bachelor or spinster Indian is unknown—and that respect for marriage is ingrained in uncivilised Indian nature and love of children, probably the strongest affection these people display. By computations made last year and the year before, by officials and by those interested in the prosperity of the Peruvian Amazon Company, the existing population of the entire region is now put at from 7,000 Indians, the lowest calculation, to 10,000, the highest. Around some of the sections or rubber centres whence this drain of rubber has been forced, the human sacrifices attained such proportions that human bones, the remains of lost tribes of Indians, are so scattered through the forests that, as one informant stated, these spots ‘resemble battlefields.’ A Peruvian officer, who had been through the Putumayo since the date of my visit

in 1910, said that the neighbourhood of one particular section he had visited recalled to him the battlefield of Miraflores—the bloodiest battle of the Chilean War. Moreover, these unarmed and defenceless people, termed, indeed, in the language of prospectuses, the ‘labourers’ of this particular company, were killed for no crime or offence, and were murdered by the men who drew the highest profits from that company. They comprised women and children—very often babies in arms—as well as men and boys. Neither age nor sex was spared; all had to work rubber, to perform impossible tasks, to abandon home and cultivation of their forest clearings, and to search week by week and month by month for the juice of rubber-yielding trees, until death came as sudden penalty, for failing strength and non-compliance, or more gently overtook them by the way in the form of starvation or disease. With all that it has given to the Amazon Valley of prosperity, of flourishing steamship communications, of port works, of growing towns and centres of civilisation, with electric light and tramways, of well-kept hospitals and drainage schemes, it may well be asked whether the rubber-tree has not, perhaps, taken more away.

“However this be, it is certainly in the best interests of commercial civilisation itself, and of the vital needs of the trading communities upon the Amazon River, that the system of ruthless and destructive human exploitation which has been permitted to grow up on the Putumayo should be sternly repressed. Peru herself can only greatly benefit from the establishment of a civilised and humane administration—a task of no great magni-

tude—in those regions hitherto abandoned to the *cauchero* and the vegetable filibuster. The healthy development of the Amazon rubber industry, one of the foremost of Brazilian needs, calls for that humanity of intercourse civilisation seeks to spread by commerce, not for its degradation by the most cruel forms of slavery and greed.

“All that is sensible of this among those interested in the rubber industry, whether of Europe, the United States, or Brazil, should heartily unite in assisting the best elements of Peruvian life to strengthen the arm of justice, and to establish upon the Putumayo and throughout the Montaña, wherever the rubber-seeker seeks his profits, a rule of right dealing and legality. It may be long before a demoralisation drawing its sanction from so many centuries of indifference and oppression can be uprooted, but Christianity owns schools and missions as well as *Dreadnoughts* and dividends. In bringing to that neglected region and to those terrorised people something of the suavity of life, the gentleness of mind, the equity of intercourse between man and man that Christianity seeks to extend, the former implements of her authority should be more potent than the latter.

“I have, &c.,

“ROGER CASEMENT.”

CONCLUSION

THE foregoing are but a few portions of the accounts published in Consul Casement's Report given by the Barbados men whose statements were taken. They have been here selected to show that the worst stories of almost incredible barbarity were more than confirmed. No apology is needed for setting them forth in this book. It is in the interests of truth and justice that one half of the world should know how another, remoter half lives. The history of the affair throws a light on the curious character of people of various nationalities connected with it. The Latin Americans, even those who committed the most appalling deeds, are such people as would under ordinary circumstances receive the traveller with high-sounding phrases of hospitality. Away from the restraining power of civilisation and public opinion, it is seen that men of certain character easily revert to primitive instincts of cruelty and oppression, and hold human life the cheapest thing on earth. The terrible indictment that has been made of Peruvian methods away from the influence of their cities shows how far from the principle of self-government the people of Latin America still are. It is to be recollected, moreover, that these poor forest Indians differ very little from the people who have formed the basis of Peruvian and Latin

American nationality generally : whilst the Indians and Cholos of the uplands, who are still subjected to oppression and civic negligence, are those from whom Peru and others of the Andine republics draw, and always will draw, unless a strong tide of immigration sets in, the bulk of their citizens. The governing Peruvians and Bolivians of to-day are formed from that race. They bear its stamp upon their faces and cuticle. This brown race, which has, in Mexico and Peru, produced statesmen and law-givers, is nothing to be ashamed of, yet the *mestizos*, or people of mixed race, forming the bulk of the Latin American nations, are harsher in their conduct towards the Indian than are white men. Comparatively few women from Spain have entered the New World. The Indians have formed the mothers of the Peruvians and their neighbours, from Presidents and Cabinet Ministers downwards. These poor women, who have been outraged, starved, murdered, or burnt alive, are of their own flesh. What reparation will Peru make to expiate these terrible outrages against man and Nature? How will it compensate the relatives of the murdered, or the scarred and ruined survivors? Furthermore, what reparation will the European shareholders of the now liquidated company make?

The pressing necessity for Peru—as for every other land and nation—is to awaken to the necessity for a new doctrine and science regarding the disposal of the resources of the earth and the enjoyments of its fruits by those who have their being upon it. Until this is done, commercialism and oppression will continue to go hand in hand.

EDITOR.

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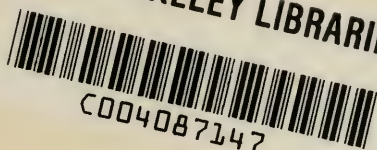


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