

the cocking of several formidable looking blunderbusses, which changed Don Pedro's mind, and he agreed to furnish the needful. He ordered his servants to provide refreshments for his brother-citizens, and then paid over to Don Raphael the money in hard cash, receiving in return a most formal receipt. His guests lingered about, evincing no desire to depart, and their reasons for delay were soon made apparent. A large drove of pack donkeys was seen approaching, followed by *burros* (donkey drivers) and a body of *pones* (native laborers). In a few minutes, urged on by the cracking of whips and shouts of *burro curamba*, and other oaths, much more vigorous and disgusting, the donkeys filed into the courtyard, followed by the drivers and *pones*. Don Raphael now explained that supplies were needed as well as cash, and, needless to say, Don Pedro had to place his goods, as he had his money, *a su orden, Señor*, (at your order, Señor). The shelves were soon cleared of goods, which were quickly strapped on the pack saddles, and the donkeys were driven away almost staggering under the weight of their loads. After tenderly embracing Don Pedro, the cavaliers followed by Don Raphael, mounted their horses and galloped away, the air resounding with their lusty *vivas*. Poor Don Pedro! how bitterly did he curse the day when he had renounced allegiance to good Queen Victoria and had become a free and independent Venezuelan. He saw, when too late, that he had made a fatal mistake. As a British subject he could have gone to Puerto Cabello and the English consul would have forced the authorities to restore him his goods and money, increased by a large sum for damages. Nay more, he knew that if he had remained a British subject he would never have been molested. All honor to Her Gracious Majesty for the full protection afforded her subjects in foreign lands. It is here that Britain admittedly excels all other nations. But Don Pedro had severed the link that bound him to his native land, and where could he look for justice? Echo answers—"Where?" He roamed through the pillaged shop, he peered hopelessly into his empty safe, and then thanked Heaven that the bulk of his money was securely deposited in London banks.

But Don Pedro's troubles did not end here. A party of revolutionists under a fierce negro leader, (a general whose naturally repulsive features had been rendered frightful by the loss of his nose), descended upon Cocorote. All of Don Pedro's servants took to the bush, but they were captured and impressed. His horses and cattle were seized and driven off; a sugar cane plantation fired and burned; and he himself narrowly escaped being shot for supplying money and stores to the government party. In time the revolutionists triumphed and assumed the reins of government, leaving Don Pedro a constant claimant for damages that were never satisfied.

About the year 1866 I found myself in the vicinity of Cocorote as one of the members of a surveying party employed in laying out a line of railway in the Aroa Valley. Our headquarters at La Luz (the light) were distant only thirty miles from Cocorote, but, as it was necessary to cross a steep mountain range in going from one place to the other, communication was seldom attempted. Mr. C. Campbell Downes, chief engineer, Mr. Palmer, his assistant, two Hindoo or Coolie servants, and the writer, then a youth of seventeen, made up the party. We were all well mounted, and several pack mules and two pack oxen carried our tent, baggage and stores. The railway is now constructed, and connects Tucacas, a seaport, with the celebrated Aroa copper mines, sixty miles in the interior. The Comba Company had in 1830 built a large brick house three miles from La Luz, known as the *casa de tejas* (tiled house), and as it was still in a habitable condition, we had it cleaned up, and took possession. It stood a lasting monument to the old company's folly, as every brick used in its construction had been imported from England at an estimated cost of one pound each. In 1834 or 1835 it had been the scene of a sad massacre. Several thousand pounds in silver had been received by the company's officials, about a dozen of whom lived in the "tiled house," and had been carelessly piled in the dining room in full view of the natives. The same evening, while the Englishmen were at dinner, the natives armed with *machetes*, (long wood knives which they always carry), broke in upon them, and cut them all down before the officers could secure their weapons in an adjoining room. One of the officers was a famous swordsman, and seizing a carving knife he tried to cut his way to the door of his room where his trusty sword was hanging. He fought like a lion at bay, wounding several of the natives, but the odds against him were too heavy, and he fell almost hacked to pieces. Not an Englishman survived to tell the tale, but the indignation aroused by the cowardly slaughter stirred the Venezuelan government to action, and all the natives implicated were arrested and promptly executed.

When we took possession of the house over thirty years after, the marks of the machetes were plainly visible deeply dented in the walls and doors, and the floors were still stained with blood. I am not superstitious, but I must confess that a creeping sensation came over me as I turned into my hammock, which was slung in the very room where the murders had been committed, and I found sleep out of the question. The room was infested with bats, which occasionally flew in my face, and a company of howling monkeys in the woods in the rear of the house, made night hideous with their ceaseless cries. I was up at daylight and out of the house, and was rewarded by witnessing a glorious tropical sunrise. The "tiled house" was sufficiently elevated to give a fine view down the valley. The dense tropical forest extended to La Luz, which was just discernable in the distance. Its thatched houses and fields of waving sugar cane and maize, its coffee and cacao plantations, protected by tall shade trees, were glorified by the morning sun. The air was cool and bracing, flocks of gaily plumaged birds swept by on their way to their feeding grounds, while some macaws, perched on tall trees, kept up an incessant chattering. As I

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