

scarcely penetrable woods. As it was, one seaman died on the march from fatigue. The Indians in these excursions steer by the sun; so that if there is a continuance of cloudy weather they cannot travel.

The day was beautiful, and the number of trees which were in full flower perfumed the air; yet even this could hardly dissipate the effect of the gloomy dampness of the forest. Moreover, the many dead trunks that stand like skeletons, never fail to give to these primeval woods a character of solemnity, absent in those of countries long civilized. Shortly after sunset we bivouacked for the night. Our female companion, who was rather good-looking, belonged to one of the most respectable families in Castro: she rode, however, astride, and without shoes or stockings. I was surprised at the total want of pride shown by her and her brother. They brought food with them, but at all our meals sat watching Mr. King and myself while eating, till we were fairly shamed into feeding the whole party. The night was cloudless; and while lying in our beds we enjoyed the sight (and it is a high enjoyment) of the multitude of stars which illumined the darkness of the forest.

January 23d.—We rose early in the morning, and reached the pretty quiet town of Castro by two o'clock. The old governor had died since our last visit, and a Chileno was acting in his place. We had a letter of introduction to Don Pedro, whom we found exceedingly hospitable and kind, and more disinterested than is usual on this side of the continent. The next day Don Pedro procured us fresh horses, and offered to accompany us himself. We proceeded to the south—generally following the coast, and passing through several hamlets, each with its large barn-like chapel built of wood. At Vilipilli, Don Pedro asked the commandant to give us a guide to Cucao. The old gentleman offered to come himself; but for a long time nothing would persuade him that two Englishmen really wished to go to such an out of the way place as Cucao. We were thus accompanied by the two greatest aristocrats in the country, as was plainly