

is highly picturesque. It is called Risco del Cuchivano. The river rises at the distance of seven leagues southwest, at the foot of the mountain of the Brigantine, and it forms some beautiful cascades before it spreads through the plain of Cumanacoa.

We visited several times a small farm, the Conuco of Bermudez, opposite the Risco del Cuchivano, where tobacco, plantains, and several species of cotton-trees,* are cultivated in the moist soil; especially that tree, the cotton of which is of a nankeen colour, and which is so common in the island of Margareta.† The proprietor of the farm told us that the Risco or crevice was inhabited by jaguar tigers. These animals pass the day in caverns, and roam around human habitations at night. Being well fed, they grow to the length of six feet. One of them had devoured, in the preceding year, a horse belonging to the farm. He dragged his prey on a fine moonlight night, across the savannah, to the foot of a ceiba‡ of an enormous size. The groans of the dying horse awoke the slaves of the farm, who went out armed with lances and machetes.¶ The tiger, crouching over his prey, awaited their approach with tranquillity, and fell only after a long and obstinate resistance. This fact, and many others verified on the spot, prove that the great jaguar§ of Terra Firma, like the jaguarete of Paraguay, and the real tiger of Asia, does not flee from man when it is dared to close combat, and when not intimidated by the number of its assailants. Naturalists at present admit that Buffon was entirely mistaken with respect to the greatest of the feline race of America. What Buffon says of the cowardice of tigers of the new continent, relates to the small ocelots.¶¶ At the Orinoco, the real jaguar of America

* *Gossypium uniglandulosum*, improperly called herbaceum, and *G. barbadense*.

† *G. religiosum*. ‡ *Bombax Ceiba*: five-leaved silk-cotton tree.

¶ Great knives, with very long blades, like a *couteau de chasse*. No one enters the woods in the torrid zone without being armed with a machete, not only to cut his way through the woods, but as a defence against wild beasts.

§ *Felis onca*, Lin., which Buffon called *panthère oillée*, and which he believed came from Africa.

¶¶ *Felis pardalis*, Lin., or the *chibiguazu* of Azara, different from the *Tiateo-Ocelotl*, or tiger-cat of the Aztecs.