

Descending the woody mountain of the Higuerote to the south-west, we reached the small village of San Pedro, situated in a basin where several valleys meet, and almost three hundred toises lower than the table-land of Buenavista. Plantain-trees, potatoes,* and coffee are cultivated together on this spot. The village is very small, and the church not yet finished. We met at an inn (pulperia) several European Spaniards employed at the government tobacco farm. Their dissatisfaction formed a strange contrast to our feelings. They were fatigued with their journey, and they vented their displeasure in complaints and maledictions on the wretched country, or to use their own phrase, *estas tierras infelices*, in which they were doomed to live. We, on the other hand, were enchanted with the wild scenery, the fertility of the soil, and the mildness of the climate. Near San Pedro, the talcose gneiss of Buenavista passes into a mica-slate filled with garnets, and containing subordinate beds of serpentine. Something analogous to this is met with at Zöblitz in Saxony. The serpentine, which is very pure and of a fine green, varied with spots of a lighter tint, often appears only superimposed on the mica-slate. I found in it a few garnets, but no metalloid diallage.

The valley of San Pedro, through which flows the river of the same name, separates two great masses of mountains, the Higuerote and Las Cocuyzas. We ascended westward in the direction of the small farms of Las Lagunetas and Garavatos. These are solitary houses, which serve as inns, and where the mule-drivers obtain their favourite beverage, the *guarapo*, or fermented juice of the sugar-cane: intoxication is very common among the Indians who frequent this road. Near Garavatos there is a mica-slate rock of singular form; it is a ridge, or steep wall, crowned by a tower. We opened the barometer at the highest point of the mountain Las Cocuyzas,† and found ourselves almost at the same elevation as on the table-land of Buenavista, which is scarcely ten toises higher.

The prospect at Las Lagunetas is extensive, but rather uniform. This mountainous and uncultivated tract of ground

* *Solanum tuberosum*.

† Absolute height 845 toises.