

of our departure: we had seen him asleep at night, but it was deemed indispensable that we should see him awake in the morning. We promised to describe his features exactly to his father, but the sight of our books and instruments somewhat chilled the mother's confidence. She said "that in a long journey, amidst so many cares of another kind, we might well forget the colour of her child's eyes."

On the road from Maracay to the Hacienda de Cura we enjoyed from time to time the view of the lake of Valencia. An arm of the granitic chain of the coast stretches southward into the plain. It is the promontory of Portachuelo which would almost close the valley, were it not separated by a narrow defile from the rock of La Cabrera. This place has acquired a sad celebrity in the late revolutionary wars of Caracas; each party having obstinately disputed its possession, as opening the way to Valencia, and to the Llanos. La Cabrera now forms a peninsula: not sixty years ago it was a rocky island in the lake, the waters of which gradually diminish. We spent seven very agreeable days at the Hacienda da Cura, in a small habitation surrounded by thickets.

We lived after the manner of the rich in this country; we bathed twice, slept three times, and made three meals in the twenty-four hours. The temperature of the water of the lake is rather warm, being from twenty-four to twenty-five degrees; but there is another cool and delicious bathing-place at Toma, under the shade of ceibas and large zamangs, in a torrent gushing from the granitic mountains of the Rincon del Diablo. In entering this bath, we had not to fear the sting of insects, but to guard against the little brown hairs which cover the pods of the *Dolichos pruriens*. When these small hairs, well characterised by the name of *picapica*, stick to the body, they excite a violent irritation on the skin; the dart is felt, but the cause is unperceived.

Near Cura we found all the people occupied in clearing the ground covered with mimosa, sterculia, and *Coccoloba excoriata*, for the purpose of extending the cultivation of cotton. This product, which partly supplies the place of indigo, has succeeded so well during some years, that the cotton-tree now grows wild on the borders of the lake of