

in their primitive simplicity. We quitted Trinidad on the night of the 15th March. The municipality caused us to be conducted to the mouth of the Rio Guaurabo in a fine carriage lined with old crimson damask; and, to add to our confusion, an ecclesiastic, the poet of the place, habited in a suit of velvet notwithstanding the heat of the climate, celebrated, in a sonnet, our voyage to the Orinoco.

On the road leading to the port, we were forcibly struck by a spectacle which our stay of two years in the hottest part of the tropics might have rendered familiar to us; but previously I had nowhere seen such an innumerable quantity of phosphorescent insects.* The grass that overspread the ground, the branches and foliage of the trees, all shone with that reddish and moveable light, which varies in its intensity at the will of the animal by which it is produced. It seemed as though the starry firmament reposed on the savannah. In the hut of the poorest inhabitants of the country, fifteen *cocuyos*, placed in a calabash pierced with holes, afford sufficient light to search for anything during the night. To shake the calabash forcibly is all that is necessary to excite the animal to increase the intensity of the luminous discs situated on each side of its body. The people of the country remark, with a simple truth of expression, that calabashes filled with *cocuyos* are lanterns always ready lighted. They are, in fact, only extinguished by the sickness or death of the insects, which are easily fed with a little sugar-cane. A young woman at Trinidad de Cuba told us, that during a long and difficult passage from the main land, she always made use of the phosphorescence of the *cocuyos*, when she gave suck to her child at night; the captain of the ship would allow no other light on board, from the fear of corsairs.

As the breeze freshened in the direction of north-east, we sought to avoid the group of the Caymans, but the current drove us towards those islands. Sailing to S. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.E., we gradually lost sight of the palm-covered shore, the hills rising above the town of Trinidad, and the lofty mountains of the island of Cuba. There is something solemn in the aspect of land from which the voyager is departing, and which he sees sinking by degrees below the horizon of the sea.

* *Cocuyo* (*Elater noctilucus*).