

five miles distant from the coast, it is of little service as a signal to mariners who seek the port of Saint Marta. Fidalgo during the whole time of his operations, near the shore, could take only one observation of the Nevados.

A gloomy vegetation of cactus, *Jatropha gossypifolia*, croton and mimosa, covers the barren declivity of Cerro de la Popa. In herbalizing in those wild spots, our guides shewed us a thick bush of *Acacia cornigera*, which had become celebrated by a deplorable event. Of all the species of mimosa the acacia is that which is armed with the sharpest thorns; they are sometimes two inches long; and being hollow, serve for the habitation of ants of an extraordinary size. A woman, annoyed by the jealousy and well founded reproaches of her husband, conceived a project of the most barbarous vengeance. With the assistance of her lover she bound her husband with cords, and threw him, at night, into a bush of *Mimosa cornigera*. The more violently he struggled, the more the sharp woody thorns of the tree tore his skin. His cries were heard by persons who were passing, and he was found after several hours of suffering, covered with blood, and dreadfully stung by the ants. This crime is perhaps without example in the history of human turpitude: it indicates a violence of passion less assignable to the climate than to the barbarism of manners prevailing among the lower class of the people.

My most important occupation at Carthagena was the comparison of my observations with the astronomical positions, fixed by the officers of the expedition of Fidalgo. In the year 1783 (under the ministry of M. Valdès), Don Josef Espinosa, Don Dionisio Galiano, and Don Josef de Lanz, proposed to the Spanish government a plan for taking a survey of the coast of America, in order to extend the atlas of Tofino to the western colonies. The plan was approved; but it was not till 1792, that an expedition was fitted out at Cadiz, and they were enabled to commence their scientific operations at the island of Trinidad.