

The people have the character of being orderly, and govern themselves without the aid of the military. The principal article of culture is the cocoa-nut tree, which is seen in large groves. The trunks of these were notched, as was supposed, for the purpose of climbing them. From the spathe a kind of spirit is manufactured, which is fully as strong as our whiskey.

About noon they left Don Escudero's, and took a road leading to the southward and eastward, through a luxuriant and beautiful country, well cultivated, and ornamented with lofty cocoa-nut trees, betel palms, and banana groves. Several beautiful valleys were passed, with streamlets rushing through them.

Maijai is situated about one thousand feet above the Laguna de Bay, but the rise is so gradual that it was almost imperceptible. The country has every where the appearance of being densely peopled; but no more than one village was passed between Santa Cruz and the mission. They had letters to F. Antonio Romana y Aranda, padre of the mission, who received them kindly, and entertained them most hospitably. When he was told of their intention to visit the mountain, he said it was impossible with such weather, pointing to the black clouds that then enveloped its summit; and he endeavoured to persuade the gentlemen to desist from what appeared to him a mad attempt; but finding them resolved to make the trial, he aided in making all the necessary preparations, though he had no belief in their success.

On the morning of the 27th, after mass, Mr. Eld and Dr. Pickering set out, but Mr. Sturges preferred to keep the good padre company until their return. The padre had provided them with guides, horses, twenty natives, and provisions for three days. He had been himself on the same laborious journey, some six months before, and knew its fatigues; although it turned out afterwards that his expedition was performed in fine weather, and that he had been borne on a litter by natives the whole way.

The first part of the road was wet and miry, and discouraging enough. The soil was exceedingly rich, producing tropical plants in great profusion, in the midst of which were seen the neat bamboo cottages, with their industrious and cleanly-looking inhabitants. When they reached the foot of the mountain, they found it was impossible to ride farther, and were obliged to take to walking, which was, however, less of a hardship than riding the little rats of horses, covered with mud and dirt, which were at first deemed useless; but the manner in which they ascended and maintained themselves on the slippery banks, surpassed any thing they had before witnessed in horseflesh. The first part of the ascent of the mountain was gradual, but over a