

racts of the Orinoco, we shall soon find, among the Piraoas, the Macos, and the Maquiritaras, milder manners, a love of agriculture, and great cleanliness in the interior of their huts. On mountain ridges, in the midst of impenetrable forests, man is compelled to fix himself, and cultivate a small spot of land. This cultivation requires little care; while, in a country where there are no other roads than rivers, the life of the hunter is laborious and difficult. The Guamos of the mission of Santa Barbara could not furnish us with the provision we wanted. They cultivate only a little cassava. They appeared hospitable; and when we entered their huts, they offered us dried fish, and water cooled in porous vessels.

Beyond the Vuelta del Cochino Roto, in a spot where the river has scooped itself a new bed, we passed the night on a bare and very extensive strand. The forest being impenetrable, we had the greatest difficulty to find dry wood to light fires, near which the Indians believe themselves in safety from the nocturnal attacks of the tiger. Our own experience seems to bear testimony in favour of this opinion; but Azara asserts that, in his time, a tiger in Paraguay carried off a man who was seated near a fire lighted in the savannah.

The night was calm and serene, and there was a beautiful moonlight. The crocodiles, stretched along the shore, placed themselves in such a manner as to be able to see the fire. We thought we observed that its blaze attracted them, as it attracts fishes, crayfish, and other inhabitants of the water. The Indians showed us the tracks of three tigers in the sand, two of which were very young. A female had no doubt conducted her little ones to drink at the river. Finding no tree on the strand, we stuck our oars in the ground, and to these we fastened our hammocks. Everything passed tranquilly till eleven at night; and then a noise so terrific arose in the neighbouring forest, that it was almost impossible to close our eyes. Amid the cries of so many wild beasts howling at once, the Indians discriminated such only as were at intervals heard separately. These were the little soft cries of the sapajous, the moans of the alouate apes, the howlings of the jaguar and cougar, the peccary, and the sloth, and the cries of the curassao, the