

Their existence was reported two centuries ago by the Spanish conquistadores of Venezuela, yet they have remained unknown to this day. Their numbers is small and they have become resigned to their total extinction as a people in the near future. Nothing can save them and with them will disappear their entire culture. When the final day arrives the world will lose one of the few living examples of primitive human life left in the Americas.

Naked, nomadic, hunters of the crocodile and gatherers of wild roots, these people, the Yaruro~~s~~, roam in small bands over the southern "llanos", as the ^{ar} savannahs of central Venezuela are known. Two centuries of desultory contact with European civilization has scarcely made any impression on their mode of life and thinking. They live exactly as did their ancestors of long ago. They have succumbed to nothing except war, disease, and a diminishing birth rate. It will be all over soon.

All men carry the hope that their race, their nation, their family, will have a future. To realize that there will be no one to carry on the traditions, the racial hopes, that one's people will disappear for ever is to be confronted with a problem that seems hopeless of solution. If we are to become extinct why wait for the to-morrow? Relief must be found, and the Yaruros have discovered it in religion. Death holds no terror for them. Instead of despairing, nightly they ~~wake~~ lie on the bare hot sands watching the heavens for signs from their Mother-Goddess Kuma which will reassure them that she is waiting for their return to her world.

contact
is not
easy

Actual Table

This country of the Yaruros is a low plain lying south and east of the Venezuelan Andean mountain system, between the fifth and sixth degree of north parallel and is flanked by the Orinoco on the east, with the hills of Guiana looming beyond it. It is burned by a tropical sun the year around and there is no degree of elevation that relieves it from the intense heat, since it rises only a few hundred feet above sea level. During the period of the rains, to the discomforts of the heat, are added those of high humidity; but in the dry season an east wind alleviates the effects of the white sun traveling over a clear sky. Temperatures are always high, however, and in the plains of Apure, 130 degrees F. have been recorded a few feet from the ground. The heat is most intense at midday, driving all forms of life into a state of lethargy. The cowboy rests under the shelter of a grass roof, the traveler seeks the shade of bushes. During the dry season the east winds blow violently,

a double blessing, for it keeps insects away and cools the body. By mid-afternoon, when life becomes active again, the wind is more gentle, only to rise again as the sun sets. Then there is another lull before midnight, but by two A.M. it blows a gale driving all beneath blankets or, lacking these, to cluster around the fire. Shelter from it means mosquitos. *Bush* Both fauna and flora are typically tropical. By riverside and water-hole there is always a thick growth; otherwise there is nothing but scrubby grasses. Only the palms seem to be able to maintain their own against the alternating climate. The palm "llanera" is found in groves even though there is no water nearby, and the moriche ^{palms} guards the water-holes.

explain

It is said that a geologist who had been prospecting unsuccessfully for oil ^{in Venezuela} ended his report with the sarcastic statement, "The llanos are rich,--in water." He could have added more sincerely that the llanos are rich in winds, dust, vegetation, colorful animal life, hospitality, but above all rich in human interest.

Good *Good introd.*

In remote antiquity, the llanos formed the bottom of an inland sea. This was long ago, but traces can be found everywhere, and during the months when the waters are at their highest at the end of the rainy season, no imagination is needed to picture it as a sea; only it is a strange sea, supporting a thick flowering vegetation that makes of it a carpet rich in patterns of color. It is peopled with fish and reptile, aquatic mammals such as the manatee, and the tonino, crocodile, turtle, and a variety of snakes.

Good

And then comes the dry season. The waters withdraw and life retires to the water-hole and the banks of the rivers. What was a sea of water becomes a sea of sand and grass. Then the east wind blows, and does not cease until the waters return. Life is clear and the skies are open to everyone's gaze. The sun relentlessly passes overhead without ever hiding behind a cloud, causing sandstorms and confused mirages on the horizons. At night,

explain

nothing dims the brilliancy of the stars; there is the southern cross and its guards, other crosses more beautiful but less serviceable, and the north star low on the horizon, and the three kings, and in March, the glow in the west. Comes the season of blossoms and later of fruit.

The llanos are not silent. Living things, aided by the winds, produce a symphony of sound that has no beginning, and no end, and seem to ever be the background of the panorama that stretches before one. Dominating all is the impudent roar of the monkeys, coming from far away, at times threatening or eagerly encouraging the ^{primitive} dancing in the moonlight. The morning and evening hours are ^{especially} theirs. At night there is the mooring of the cowbird, while from the rivers comes the snorting of the toninos, and not rarely the rabble voices of the ducks are raised in senseless protest. The doves send their mournful cries off into the emptiness, and the pipers their nervous screams, the zorro its startling bark and the cats their throaty roars. And there are creatures that slink silently along in constant fear. Of these is the capibara whose moments are filled with dread, and the silent snakes seeking an unwary prey, the turtles and the armadillos and the lumbering ant bear, the scurrying lizards, but not the ~~crocodiles~~ ^{can} that bellow with the best of them.

Very good

But in the llanos is found also the most interesting of animals, man. Man, who listens to the ~~concerts of nature~~ and composes his own; ~~man~~, who views the symphonic panaroma, feels the driving wind, the burning sun, the cold rain, and seeks the meaning of nature's galleries. Over a portion of the llanos lives the llanero, a descendant of the conquistadores and the ^{primitive} original population of the region. He breeds cattle and horses and understands the world in which he lives in terms of war and love. To fight or to compose a ballad is the same to him. He ~~lives with a courage that is not~~ ^{and} ~~impaired by the thought of death.~~ ^{death is merely the end of a day} He is a child of the open vastness that surrounds him and he has not elected to throw up walls about himself, ~~re-~~ ^s ~~sponding to his world, with freedom, fearing no censure, expecting none.~~ ^{re-}

Excellent

Over the other portion of the llanos roams the primitive Yaruro. No breeder of animals is he. He is a hunter and a fisher wandering from water-hole to water-hole in search of his daily food. Peaceful and mystical, he is more concerned with spiritual matter than with the glories of this life. His material wants are few, and he would not understand the possession of wealth. As long as there is food his worldly desires are satisfied and he can withdraw to the world of his gods and seek the meaning of things.

Our search for the Yaruros began from San Fernando de Apure, an old settlement in the llanos. In preparation for it the Venezuelan government was most kind, and my grateful thanks are due to it and to the many Venezuelan friends who did not spare themselves to make my stay in Venezuela enjoyable and profitable. A young Trinidadian accompanied me. It was his first time away from civilization, and he could never relax to the extent of giving himself over to the country and its people. The trip was a hard one for him, especially since he was seeking nothing but adventure, which comes but rarely.

Leaving San Fernando, we traveled southward, passing through the settlements of *San Juan de Payara* and Cunaviche, enjoying llanero hospitality on the way. We rode in the cool hours of the early morning and in the afternoon, resting a few hours at midday, across a desiccated sandy region, meeting with herds of wild cattle and horses. In the distance there were always mirages. Trees were suspended in the sky, horses ran through the air, and great clear lakes stretched out before us. But water was indeed scarce, and had we not been guided by men who know every square inch of the ground we would have suffered for lack of it. We picked up our guided ^s relays on the way, a merry capable lot, whose companionship was of the best. At night, if we stopped at a ranch we listened to cowboy songs accompanied by the harp and rattle.

Search for the Yaruro

Our search for the Yaruros began from San Fernando de Apure an old settlement in the llanos

We made our first contact with the Yaruros at El Buron. Our journey there had been complicated by the unwillingness of our baggage carrier, a strongly individualistic bull who preferred to travel in any direction but the right one. Using a common cowboy expedient, one of our guides tied the bull's nose to his horse's tail, the result being that the bull was literally dragged all the way to El Buron. The horse did not mind, in fact, he seemed to enjoy it; and the bull seemed to get a good deal of satisfaction out of the knowledge that he was causing so much trouble. But we did not enjoy it, for the slowness of the pace meant so much more exposure to the burning tropical sun.

Pictures?

Once we reached El Buron, we promptly forgot the discomforts and annoyances of the trip. We were welcomed with fine llanero hospitality by the cowboy master of the household, Don Manuel Hurtado. He greeted us courteously, simply, and heartily, and he placed himself and his household at our disposal.

Don Manuel is a good friend of the Indians and has always had pleasant relations with them. He gives them work, feeds them, protects them, and lets them camp on his property. He was anxious to find out why I was so interested in the Yaruros, and when I told him, he was in thorough sympathy with my work and eager to help me in any way possible.

Remembering Don's Manuel controls most Indians

We found at El Buron a young woman who was later to prove exceedingly valuable. She had a ^{heavy} figure that called to mind one of Renoir's bathers, but her face was alive with all the joys of a bonne vivante. Maria, in spite of her weight, likes to dance and whenever the opportunity presents itself she joins the Yaruros in their dance. In the plains, human beings are not plentiful, and consequently it doesn't occur to them to erect social barriers that would tend to keep them apart. So, Maria, whose pedigree would probably show a number of interesting crosses, volunteered to be our guide to the hearts of the Yaruros.

heavy?

~~There was not much to interest the casual glance about the camp of the~~

Don't emphasize lack of interest. Key up this, because it is of interest to a stranger.

In the first ^{Yaruro} camp we visited

Yaruros. There were present about a dozen women, eight men, and some children. The thing that immediately impressed itself upon me was the extreme poverty of the camp. There were no houses, no shelters of any sort; only a few old baskets, a few sticks, a few rags, calabashes and water-jars, and a few naked human beings lying half buried in the sand under the shade of thinly leafed branches thrust into the ground. Several fires were burning and there were pots over them containing turtle eggs. And yes, there was something unusual. Several large turtles and small crocodiles were broiling over a fire. The shells of the turtles and the hides of the crocodiles had not been removed and for a moment I thought that they were being cooked alive, but soon discovered that they had been killed before being placed over the fire. There was little else to be seen. The thought occurred to me that it was easy to understand the reaction of the casual traveler who stops, looks and goes away quickly with the impression that there is nothing there more than the glance takes in.

Correct
civility
with actuality
more of victory

We entered the camp, Pedro the guide, Maria and I, with a confident manner. Pedro shouted words of greeting in Yaruro, the only words he knew. He patted some of them on the back, asked after their health in Spanish, called everyone brother or sister-in-law, and tried to make himself generally agreeable. The Yaruros' only response to his demonstrations of friendship was to extend their arms half-heartedly and to answer his questions monosyllabically.

Pedro's reception was cordial in comparison to mine, even tho ---

Although I had been guided to this encampment at El Buron by a friend of theirs, they would not accept me as friend or guest. They steadily maintained their sphinx-like expressions; and knowing primitive ways a little, I realised that some of them were afraid and that all distrusted me. I tried to be pleasant, and asked for the headman. The young man pointed out to me resisted my attempt to draw him into conversation. All movement, all the normal activity of the camp had ceased. The Yaruros moved only their eyes,

Heighten this effect
of suspicion &
distrust

taking in our least movement, and only averting their gazes when we looked directly at them. No English drawing room could have been less receptive, so apparently oblivious of our existence. They seemed to ignore us completely--but then they themselves had stopped living, so the discomfort was not all ours. If one has never contacted South American primitives before such a reception is decidedly disheartening. *(and more than disheartening)*

I picked up a bow. Being too busy watching the people about me I failed to realize that the bow was newly made and that the wood was still green. Choosing the remnants of an old basket about fifty feet away for a target, I took careful aim, and shot the arrow. I missed by more than ten feet. The eyes watching me lighted with amusement and contempt, for it was inconceivable to them that any one could exist in this world without knowing how to shoot a bow better than that. I shot again--this time I came within six inches of my mark. The eyes about me changed their expressions to surprise. Having achieved so much I should have quit right then, but I was foolish enough to try again. I placed another arrow on the bow, raised it, pulled back the string--as far back as my ear-- and then, ~~then~~, with a loud snap, the bow broke. Amusement at my consternation was in all eyes, except in one pair, those of the owner of the bow; they reflected only wrath. A stranger had broken his bow, destroyed two days of patient work--he might have done much more than merely look crossly at me.

We left soon afterwards, promising to return in the evening, having accomplished nothing.

That evening we again visited the Yaruro camp, taking Maria along with us. The moon had not risen as yet and the camp fires were low, with the consequence that we could scarcely see our way through the camp. Pedro and Maria sang out cheery greetings, addressing the men as brothers-in-law and the women as sisters-in-law, while we picked our way through the camp between scarcely distinguishable piles of debris and groups of humanity, both apparently

*How did you
recompense the man?*

equally devoid of life. A few grunts, a few indifferent gestures of embrace, was the only acknowledgement of our presence. I then made a friendly gesture by distributing several yards of tobacco among them. In return they made me comfortable by putting up a hammock for me. They themselves however did not sit in hammocks, but preferred to lie half buried in the sand both for warmth and for protection from the numerous insects. Also because of the insects, the fires were kept low and therefore gave little heat. A condition of tentative friendship having been established, we again tried to draw them into conversation. Again we were unsuccessful.

Some of the bolder young men asked for rum. I had none with me, for I had anticipated the demand. All along the road I had been told that if I wanted to see the Indians dance to feed them rum, and that then they would put on a real exhibition. It was in vain that I had attempted to explain to these well-intentioned advisers that it was but a minor objective of mine to see the Indians dance, and that I preferred to converse with them. Ethnology is not understood that way.

Rum is not the key to ethnology; it is the key only to a little gross immorality--and certain failure in an ethnological objective. Give the Indians rum and lose all hope of getting reliable information. I counted on winning the intimate friendship of the Yaruros, to obtain the information I wanted. Therefore, I had brought no rum.

It was Maria that prevented the visit from being a total failure. She liked me and was anxious to do all she could to help. Furthermore she likes to dance with the Yaruros, to hop around and warm her blood, she said. She had come to start the dancing and dance we did as a result. It proved enjoyable. There was mild fun, and it served as an outlet of pent-up feelings, and the people began to lose some of their fear of the stranger. Where they had been sullenly hostile before, they now merely tolerated me. I was

Explain
The rum makes the Indians
etc.
Transition from
curiosity to tolerance
is too sudden. Play
it up more

able to arouse their interest in my flashlight, and to arouse their modesty and bewilderment when I flashed it upon them. My compass also drew an excited jabbering circle about me. But I was not able to get any information from them, and finally left them at about midnight, my purpose unfulfilled, but with the satisfaction that at least there had been no friction. Though I had gained but very little by my visit, I had lost nothing at all.

On the following day I sent them a pig and later in the day again visited. They were still shy of me, but permitted me to go about the camp examining their artefacts. Their suspicion of me was still strong. Two months before they had been attacked by irresponsible crocodile hunters, and a great many of them had been killed, and they watched me closely as a result.

There was not much to be done in this camp, for there were no old men and no real shamans or "medicine men", and the group had been too closely in touch with the Spanish-speaking llanero to be suitable for my studies. I then decided to go further into the country in search of another band.

I prevailed upon one of the Yaruros, Estaban, to accompany me for he knew some Spanish. Estaban was reluctant to go, for he did not want to be separated from his young and pretty wife. But it was because of his wife that he finally decided to go. He wanted to earn enough money to buy her some cloth and a mosquito bar. Estaban proved a loyal and faithful companion. *to me*

We found the next band on ^{sands by a} ~~the~~ ^{sandy} lagoon near the Capanare ^{para} River. Here they were temporarily in the employ of a llanero engaged in building a house. This group, too, was decidedly acculturized. I had no more success with them, for the first few days, than I previously had had with the other band. They claimed that they knew very little; that they had no old men and no shaman in the band. Of course, they did know more than they claimed, as subsequent events proved. But they insisted that the man I should see lived further down the river.

Why didn't you pay as before?
Elaborate.
Some for a little
kumbe, perhaps.
"His wife would appoint
Some cloth + a mosquito bar.
Estaban was almost compelled to
come, but did so grudgingly - gave a loyal - faithful companion.

(Put yourself in shoes. --- when we offered him enough

explain

(Superiorly complacent?)

So we amused ourselves for two days, studying whatever was on the surface. I was not however doing all the studying. They were watching me closely and weighing my statements carefully.

~~And then~~ ^{combine} one night their attitude suddenly changed. I had been sitting for hours on the sands in the midst of these people waiting for them to give me a sign of friendliness. I was almost annoyed at the howling monkeys. Their roar was brought to us on the waves of the wind, swelling and subsiding rhythmically and incessantly. They at least were performing their daily function without concern, I thought, but I was waiting for something to happen which would open to me a new world. When the outcome of an undertaking is in doubt, the most difficult thing to do is to wait patiently. It was not pleasant to wait, but there seemed to be nothing else to do. I looked from the people about me to the sky overhead, to the river close by, and back again to the people. I had traveled far and hard to reach this sand bank, to lie on it in the midst of the people that now surrounded me, in the hope that they would talk, but though I was in their midst, they chose to ignore me, and even to fear me in spite of my efforts to appear friendly.

The evening wore on and the howling monkeys became silent. The cowbird raised its voice once or twice in a melancholy call. The tinicos frolicked in the water. The southern cross began to peep over the horizon; and still we waited. I had offered tobacco to the Yaruros and they had received it in silence; my attempts at conversation had been gently brushed aside and they continued to sit on the alert, waiting for me to tire and go away. They were puzzled and suspicious too. I had not asked for their women. They could not understand what it was that I wanted. But I knew what I wanted, so I waited patiently.

I asked ~~one of the men sitting near me for a~~ gourd rattle. There ~~followed~~ a discussion among the men and finally they decided to give me one.

*Heighten suspense with a short paragraph
"One of those strange accidents found up, etc."*

Without much heart and almost hopelessly I began to sing a song of the Bororos of Brazil, accompanying myself with the rattle. It was a song of another tribe, and I sang it badly, but my unwilling hosts were listening, recognizing the musical pattern as being akin to theirs. I sang another when I had finished the first, and then still another, not failing to notice at the same time that they were listening carefully and passing comments to one another. When my repertoire was exhausted, I placed the rattle on the sands and smoked in silence. A moment of intense silence went by. Then a hand reached for the rattle and a voice said in Spanish.

"Ahora canto yo. Now I will sing."

The speaker sat again on the sands, facing east. He began to sing-- a song as wild as the medley of sounds brought to us on the never-ceasing wind. His people joined us and, sitting behind him in a semi-circle, took up the chorus at the end of every stanza. The song was now a murmur and now a shout, but ever maintaining its steady catching rhythm. The moon appeared brightening the tropical night with its colorless light and sharpening the many shadows, turning the waving leaves of palms into quivering ribbons of silver--and my host ^{sang} danced joyfully. ^{who?}

Together, as though on a prearranged signal, they rose and began to dance as they sang, around a pole. Women danced as well as men, and the children joined in too. With complete abandon, yet gracefully, in perfect rhythm they moved. Emotion, as expressed by their voices and bodies, was at its intensest pitch, and so was their control. With perfectly coordinated movement and sound, they expressed themselves most fully. All night they danced and it was not until the sun lifted itself clear of the hills of Guiana that they stopped--to seek an hour or two of sleep before setting off for the daily task of hunting their dinner.

At last I had been introduced to Yaruro religious singing. The first song destroyed the barrier that existed between us and that barrier was

destined never to be erected again. The understanding thus created was to be strengthened by the words of their gods, who were later to reveal to this strange people that I was a blood relative of theirs. I was to be regarded as an elder brother, a shaman who had come from a distant land to visit my fellow human beings. A song had opened to me the new world which I had sought so long.

A spirit of friendliness having been established, I began to be immersed in the problems of my researches, which from the point of view of my hosts were their own personal ones, belonging to their own conscious universe. I began to learn of a mother goddess called "Kuma," who lives in the west and who waits for the living Yaruros to return to her bosom; that in some fashion the water snake and the jaguar are considered to be their ancestral relatives; that, once upon a time, the Yaruros were very many and now very few; that the Yaruros had been visited with great calamities the preceding year and many of their people had died through sickness and other destructive forces.

use an empire, hordes, great tribes - some sort thing

sickness is anti-climatic to "calamities" Mention some real interesting calamities We love to hear about Calamities.

illustrate

There were also intimate personal problems which came to my attention. There were the mannerisms of their daily life, which revealed them as true primitive South American aborigines. Also I learned that, tho I could gather inklings of a rich spiritual culture and a good cross-section of the material phases, that I had to go further down river to meet the spiritual leaders of the remnants of this once powerful people if I wanted to reach the heart of the Yaruros' religion, cosmology, mythology, and ethics.

Accordingly, after singing and dancing with our hosts a few nights, sharing food and tobacco with them, and exchanging knowledge and confidences, I left early one morning in a dugout, to search for Landaeta, reputed to be the wisest of the Yaruros. So, we paddled down the Capanaparo by day under a white sun and by night under a white moon towards the Orinoco.

towards the Orinoco

next day?

About noon, one day, we sighted several empty canoes drawn up on the bank and knew that there must be more Yaruros nearby. We landed on the sandy beach and waited for them to return. They came early in the afternoon, the

men bearing turtles and crocodiles slung on poles, the women with baskets filled with changungo, ^{a kind of} leaning forward as they walked, looking not unlike grotesque apes under their heavy loads, and little children came too, carrying their share of food, straggling behind the adults. ^{turning somersaults, & shouting they did do.} They were frightened upon seeing me, but bravely greeted me in the most courteous fashion.

Feeling that my Yaruros paddlers could explain matters more easily if left alone with the newcomers, I pretended to be busy with several things which took me away from the group. My two boys acted the part of mediators perfectly, for soon afterwards we were all embarked and moving down stream to join the main body of Landaeta's band who were encamped several bends of the meandering river away. Their good humor almost amounted to gaiety. The three canoes moved steadily down river, the men paddling hard, the women sitting quietly and casting shy inquisitive glances in my direction.

On a vast ^{exposed} wind-swept beach we found Landaeta ^{and} his people. There could have been no wilder untamed picture of a group of human beings; there was the white sand, the strong wind blowing from the east raising it into dust-clouds, and the intense glare from river and sand, a blue-white sky, and a few human beings lying or sitting in the midst of all this and exposed to all of the elements, a few water jars, a few baskets, several refuse heaps with buzzards feeding at them, canoes drawn up on the beach, some turtles with their legs tied together to make escape impossible; all lost in the immense space of an immense universe.

← A little to one side a branch was planted in the sand and lying in its thin shade a girl was waiting for her ~~imminent hour of death~~. To the heat of the day was added the intense heat of her feverish body, and she lay helpless in the midst of her people who were watching her die without being able to alleviate her sufferings or help her to the end of life. Her malady was a new one to them, passed on by the newcomers to their world and thus they had no remedy for it.

Why frightened
how they
expected you?
how did they
come to know
you were
coming?

Holiday
festivities
etc.

My experience
drawn to a...

Contrast joy, fight, death, life vividly.

Among primitive people news travels rapidly, astonishingly so. Landaeta, in this case, received me with the air of one who was expecting a visitor and it turned out that my reputation had preceeded me and not only did he know that I was in the country, but also why I was there. He was expecting me in order to teach me his ways and the ways of his people and to learn my ways and the ways of my people. To him I was a shaman, no different than himself, who knew their mother goddess intimately and who was perhaps related to the gods themselves. Such a reputation had been built up for me by my Yaruro friends without direct instigation on my part, but it was a necessary inference of theirs after observing my behaviour and my interests. The sick girl was Landaeta's daughter and as one physician, as one man to another, he came to me requesting that I save his daughter from death. Being neither physician, nor magician, nor priest, I responded to his plea the best way I could. Her illness prevented any strictly professional investigation and lest I be drawn into a situation of attempting to cure a sick person without adequate knowledge of the sickness or its remedy, I moved off the same day to seek other Yaruros; but only with the promise of Landaeta that he would follow me in the cool of the evening and rejoin me several days later. So we paddled by day in the hot sun and we paddled at night under the bright moon. Late one night we reached our destination.

It has been often said that to accept the promise of a primitive Indian is to abandon all thought of its being remembered. Perhaps it would seem that I put too much faith and trust in my friends in sitting down to wait for them to join me. But a promise made and accepted without coercion is to the Indian one that has to be kept, and, as in many other cases of my experience with primitive people, this one was kept.

That the feeling of suspicion had not disappeared completely was proven by the attitude of another hunting group which I visited. I went alone among them, and unarmed. On my arrival alone in an empty canoe,

without paddlers, in spite of my apparent unarmed state, they regarded me with suspicion and sullenly warned me to keep away from them and their camp. However, good will is never unproductive and when they saw that instead of going away in either fear, disgust, or anger, I merely squatted on the sand, shared my tobacco with them, said nothing, and then cheerfully paddled away, their hearts must have melted, for several days later they too had joined my band of friends, later becoming among those most deeply attached to me.

We camped on a large wind swept beach on the Capanaparo, and waited there for Landaeta. While waiting I made visits about the country, seeking out Yaruros wherever I could find them. In one nearby group, I noticed an interesting thing. Unlike most of the Yaruros, these had built permanent shelters, constructed similarly to the houses of the ranchers. There was, however, one significant difference. With true Indian logic, they had left the walls open at the bottom, so that the wind could sweep through the house and keep it cool and free of insects.

One morning we embarked to visit a group led by Pablo Reyes, which, we had learned, was now on the Orinoco, at the mouth of the Capanaparo. Pablo Reyes had been described to us as a very old and very wise man, and I was anxious to see him. Borrowing a small dugout, we set out to visit him, traveling mostly by night. On our way we saw and heard a great deal of animal and bird life, for the lower part of the river was less hunted by the Yaruros than the upper part. ^{heard aggressive animal life} ~~On the banks~~ we saw numerous tracks of the cats, ^{on the banks} we saw many capibaras or "chiguire" and we were often serenaded by the roar of the howling monkeys. ^{gripping, sudden, fearful, rather than fascinating.}

Our first view of the Orinoco was truly fascinating. We catapulted out of the swift waters of the mouth of the Capanaparo and staggered about among the powerful cross-currents and eddies at the confluence of the two rivers. The east wind made travel no easier as it was (blowing a gale.) On the far side of the Orinoco were the hills of Guiana, rough jagged prominences.

with gnarled vegetation, dark patches of jungle growth. There were several islands of odd shape and one of them, about half way across the Orinoco, was the Lindabaro to which we made our way, for that was where Pablo was.

Encamped on this island we found also a number of "racionales", that is, squatters who consider themselves civilized, who during the dry season take to living like the very Indians, except that they clutter their shelters with civilized equipment, with the result that their houses are infested with parasites of all kinds. However they too live upon crocodiles, turtles, and the eggs of the latter.

This portion of the Orinoco is, in late March and early April, the gathering ground of both Indians and settlers. The region teems with turtles. By common agreement, certain stretches of the beaches where the turtles are known to gather in large numbers are not hunted until April at which time the people dig up thousands and thousands of newly laid eggs out of which they make oil and butter. The oil and butter they sell to traders, who in turn export it. The center for this commerce is the little settlement of Urbana.

Like Landaeta, Pablo Reyes had also learned of my coming and was ready for me. He too is a shaman, and delighted in speaking to a sympathetic listener about religious themes, of the understanding of the universe, the understanding of life and death, of the history of his people and their future, of morality and of justice. He likewise was anxious to hear what message I had to bring from my people in respect to these things. So, sitting under the shelter of some branches, we talked. As we talked we both worked. Pablo Reyes kept his hands occupied making string, fixing bows and arrows and I, when not busy writing, pretended to carve little figures out of wood. The children played about us and Pablo's three wives kept shyly in the background, though listening carefully to what we said and often throwing inquisitive glances in our direction.

Profiting by our proximity to Guiana, I decided to visit Urbana where I could buy some goods for my friends and at the same time gather information about archaeology. Also, I hoped to find there a friend, a Silesian father, Monsignor de Ferrari, who has actively begun the establishment of missions on the Orinoco, missions that are chiefly concerned with furnishing the people with material, medicinal and spiritual comfort rather than religion in the abstract. By this time the east wind was blowing so hard that the crossing of the Orinoco proved exceedingly dangerous. It proved necessary to drag the canoe along the shore of the island until we found the best place for a crossing. The sand was raised in clouds and our bodies were peppered with it so that we were forced to cover up closely. It finally proved impossible to continue and we were forced to stop and camp in the open with our backs to the wind and no shelter except what we could get out of our hammocks. But holding them up was as much a hardship as to be bombarded by sand. We made one attempt to cross the Orinoco in the afternoon but we were forced to give it up. Finally late in the afternoon, putting our trust in "God and the Virgin" as the Venezuelan canoe men say, we launched the canoe. We paddled until almost midnight. We reached Urbana, wild eyed and exhausted. Our stay there was short and we hastened back to Lindebara but not without recording on the way interesting phenomena.

At sunset as we were approaching the island, I was amazed to see a column of bats in flight that stretched for several miles across the Orinoco. The birds were coming out of a Guiana hill in the far distance in a cloud and flew directly over us, and across to the other shore of the river, disappearing into the forest. We watched this vast army for about fifteen minutes and then continued on our way, not because we had seen the last of the bats, but because time was short. I was told by my guide that this daily flight of the bats from the hills of Guiana across the Orinoco generally lasts two hours. How many thousands of them live in this cave and fly daily to forage for food in the forest is a matter of conjecture.

When we reached Pablo Reyes the next day we found there several other Yaruro families, relatives of Pablo, encamped with him. Of course, we talked some more, but departed soon in order to return to Landaeta. Without the aid of the Yaruros the crossing of the Orinoco would have been impossible. They are expert canoeists and safely ferried our baggage to the other side. Believing that I could handle a canoe, for by this time according to the Yaruros there wasn't anything that I could not do, since their gods had told them that I was one of them, I was asked to cross in any empty canoe, with the help of a twelve year old boy. The canoe had several gaping holes in stern and bow about ten inches in diameter. With serious misgivings, I embarked with the youngster, paddling in the bow. Cross-currents, winds, whirlpools made the half hour a very exciting one. Several times I gave up hope of crossing safely or of returning to our starting point, only to be encouraged by the laughter of my young companion who when we were in extreme danger would turn and grin happily at me. When it is remembered that in this portion of the Orinoco, there are crocodiles of enormous size besides the dreaded piranha and that drowning would be easy in spite of one's prowess in swimming, it can be seen that my anxiety sprang from a natural appreciation of the dangers. However, we crossed safely and soon afterwards we hoisted sail, which consisted of my mosquito net tied to an improvised mast and with the east wind behind us and with gunwales even with the water, we went flying up the Capanaparo. Our sailing was far from being monotonous, for every few minutes, it was necessary to use strength and skill to keep the canoes upright. Three days later we reached Landaeta's camp.

The trip to Urbana had been exciting and interesting, but I brought back with me ulcers on my feet which incapacitated me for the rest of my stay with the Yaruros. My feet, swollen to immense proportions and with open sores, refused to support my body, and I was forced to forego any further trips short or long. My life consisted from now on, for about six

weeks, of lying on the sand or in a hammock, surrounded by my affectionate friends, talking about the universe, the Yaruros and their ideas.

In order to make it possible for Landaeta and his people to stay with me on that particular beach rather than move about in search of food, I turned over all of my food stock to them, sharing equally the products of the hunt in return. From that day on, Landaeta never left me. The burden of hunting fell on the younger men who went out every morning in search of crocodiles and turtles, of honey, palm nuts, roots, and fish. This made for great intimacy between us. Our daily stimuli came from our surroundings, untamed, unchanged by the hand of man, from being continuously exposed to the elements, from always observing the world of nature over which we had not control at all; constantly subjected to the sounds of heavens and earth produced by the physical elements and the animal world, gazing upon the changing panorama of masses and color, we were sensitive to the need for explanations leading to an ultimate understanding of our universe. Reality is what we make of it perhaps, and Landaeta's was no less real because it was born in his primitive soul.

There is a sharp contrast between the simple primitive material culture of the Yaruros and the wealth and poetic intensity of the spiritual. The casual visitor would see merely a naked people plying up and down the rivers in their canoes, or lying on the sand, feasting on crocodile or turtle. He would see stolid fixed faces, uncommunicative, affrighted. But if this traveler were to become a brother to them he would see an energetic lovable group of humanity, full of all the emotions and intellectual curiosity of the civilized man. He would discover that lying on the sands under the open sky at night is conducive to revery, and that from sundown to sunrise the Yaruro lives in an intensive romantic world which he cannot and rarely would like to share with anyone else. If this visitor could become so sympathetic to Yaruro culture as to immerse his own soul in it he would discover a universe in

which gods walk about ministering comfort and man himself becomes a god by association.

Humanity cannot be judged by its material successes alone. Culture, possessed by human beings and no other species of the animal world, is made up of more than material inventions which make life easier. Divisions of the human family behave in definite patterns of thinking and reasoning, and inventing and more than anything else always seeking a better world in which to live. We cannot and should not dismiss a people after making a casual observation with merely a contemptuous phrase, an invective, or an expression of pity. It is true that each people has a history, a way of living, a mode of thinking, and to try to understand these things would be our objective if for no better reason than it is possible that we, in seeking a better world for ourselves, may profit by the knowledge possessed by other peoples.

We arrived at Landaeta's camp at sundown. Bars of yellow blue and white light streaked the western sky where the sun had set, and the Yaruros were sitting on the sands watching the phenomenon with a certain rapture. Quietly they sat, and in silence until the lights had faded and merged into a subdued golden glow. Then Landaeta came and greeted me affectionately. He spoke of what we had just seen in the western sky, explaining that it represented a greeting from the mother goddess Kuma, to her children the Yaruros and to me, on this earth. The other men came also, and the women too put their arms about me, but the latter kept their faces averted as is proper in Yaruro culture. We settled on the sands. Small fires were burning with remnants of turtles and crocodiles broiling over them. The sands glistened in the moonlight that soon came upon us. Araguato monkeys roared in the distance. An occasional bird sang. Insects hummed. Toninos frolicking in the water came up to blow lustily. Dogs growled at nothing. Soft murmurs of women talking and laughing. An occasional misfortune such as burning one's finger in handling the cooking crocodiles met with merry laughter. Children playing in their own untrammelled

fashion. Crunching of sand as the women dug deep to reach moist sand in which to bury the thick leaves that were to be used in making cigarettes for us. Women crawling on all fours to reach a stick or pot, never standing up, looking like grotesque apes. Some of them wearing pins thrust through their lower lips, or beads around the neck. All painted bright red with blue on the cheeks. They put up posts for my hammock, but I preferred to lie on the sands with them. We smoked and Landaeta talked, telling me that his gods had told him about me; that now I was one of their family, and he affectionately called me "adjimai oteh" meaning brother.

At a point Landaeta rose and walked away into the darkness. His son and nephew followed him soon afterwards. He returned after an absence of half an hour, wearing his shaman's ceremonial cap and breechclout. He went to sit on the clean white sands to the east of the camp, remaining still and quiet for a long time. His wife went to him with a lighted cigarette. He smoked this in silence and alone. Finally he made a sign and his son and nephew rose immediately to plant a pole a few feet in front of him, and retired again to the darkness. After some time Landaeta rose, stood before the pole facing the east, and smoked in silence. It seemed a long time before he began to sing softly and hesitantly, a time measured by the rising stars. After he had finished two songs his wife approached him again, thrusting into the ground close to the pole a stick from which hung a small basket. Landaeta continued standing facing the east and singing, pausing briefly between songs. His nephew went to stand behind him; his son also went forward to stand at the left shoulder of his cousin. These two boys joined in the singing repeating stanza for stanza Landaeta's song. A few women led by Landaeta's wife and daughter went to stand at his right side, and joined the boys in answering the songs of the shaman. They stood there in front of the pole singing without until the southern cross hung high in the sky. Then Landaeta's wife took from

the basket a gourd rattle, gave it to her husband who immediately began to shake it, its liquid tone blending harmoniously with the voices. The singers became more animated when they heard the rattle, and soon they had begun to dance, with forward bending of the body, rhythmically and in unison. At times Landaeta would shake his rattle violently and his voice would betray his deep excitement. His wife from time to time would give a lighted cigarette to him, holding it to his mouth until it was consumed. At midnight the shaking of the rattle became more frequent and more violent and in the middle of one song all began to move around the pole. The women put their right hands on the shoulder of the one ahead, and soon were running, stamping the right foot as they did so. The men formed an inner circle, dancing one behind the other. At the end of each song they would pause for a moment in their original positions. As the night wore on, both singing and dancing became more and more animated until the shaman appeared to be in a frenzy. His voice rose in pitch, his rhythm was faster, and more strongly accented, and all sang with greater feeling. The shaman danced in jerky movements, bending and twisting his body, half spinning about, first one way then the other, until he seemed to be quivering all over. The dance around the pole became almost a mad run, made more difficult by the yielding sand under foot and the complex movements of the body. The men would leap high and as the right foot was stamped in unison a resonance beat was produced that soon seemed to represent the pulsating rhythm of the night, marking off the rich rattling of the gourd and the choral singing. In the morning hours the wind rose again, bringing to us the roar of the araguato monkeys. It was then, when the morning star was already high, and the sun began to peep over the eastern horizon that I fell asleep, leaving my friends still in their dance. The previous day's hard work with its many hours of hard paddling and my illness had quite exhausted me, and thus I failed to observe the end of the dance.

The sun awoke me, and though I had slept barely two hours, I felt quite refreshed. I sat up to look about me. There was the vast stretch of sand, the fringe of jungle and the sparkling river. My Yaruros were sleeping half buried in the sand, behind basketry to shelter themselves from the wind. The vultures were already at the piles of refuse, feasting on crocodiles and turtles. Soon the sun awoke my friends, and they too sat up to gaze quietly at the western sky where they believe their gods live. It was only when the sun began to burn our bodies that they approached me to chat. They expressed their concern over my illness and soon busied themselves to make me as comfortable as possible. While I distributed among them a few presents bought for them in Urbana, and turned all of the food over to Landaeta, the younger men were busy building a sun shelter, an arbor of the sweet smelling guava bush, though for themselves they had only branches thrust into the sands giving only a thin shade. From now on, I was completely in their care, and they were careful nurses and tender friends. Many were the little things they did for me. The best of the hunt was mine, and even the women delighted in taking care of my clothing, and to bring me delicacies.

They were indeed glad to see me, and the women shamans soon began their chants while the men surrounded me and told me in their own language and in broken Spanish what had occurred the previous night. Men are prohibited from singing during the day, but the women sit in swinging hammocks and chant their songs. I learned too that Landaeta's daughter had not died, for there she was, grateful and shyly looking at me, completely well. They attributed her cure to me, though I was not at all responsible for it. During the night, they told me, the gods had come among us, and told them that I too was one of Kuma's children, and again they insisted that I was related to their gods.

I learned a great many things. Kuma is their mother goddess, the creator of all things. Puanah and Itciai are co-creators, and they are

directly responsible for the actual creation of the world. Hatcawa, in the form of a little boy, is another god who has given mankind fire, the bow and arrow and many other blessings. Now, when the shaman sings at night his soul leaves his body and travels to the land of Kuma, leaving his body behind. The gods may come then, enter his body in the form of songs and transmit their messages to the Yaruros. They had come the night before to greet me and to reassure my friends of my goodness and my own powers of shamanism.

We sat, smoked and talked all day. In the afternoon we feasted on crocodile, turtle eggs, wild roots, palm nuts, and honey. Finishing our dinner we sat quietly facing the west, watching the skies. As the sun set low again, rays of gold, blue and white shot into the sky from the horizon, and my friends rejoiced, and I with them, at this greeting of Kuma to us.

Darkness came upon us, and in anticipation of a long night of singing and dancing,--I could sing but could not dance, since I could not stand up-- I lay on the sands to rest before the beginning of the ceremonies. Alas, the skies interested me. Their brightness and the changing star formations held too deep a fascination to be disregarded. There were the three kings and their children--and then came Landaeta to tell me about Yaruro star lore. I understood but little of it for his Spanish was too broken, and I understood little of his Yaruro. More and more stars came out and the big dipper, a formation not recognized by the Yaruros, began to twist itself around the low hanging polar star. Soft conversation and amity, with the soft voices of the women in the background, children, laughter, and always the throbbing roar of the distant bands of monkeys.

Landaeta relayed to me questions uppermost in his wife's mind. Did I have a wife in my own country? Did I have any children? Why had they not come with me? Once in Brazil I had been asked similar question by another naked primitive folk, and I had answered truthfully that I had neither wife nor children. I remember their confusion and amazement. In their eyes I

was a great man, and therefore I should have had many wives and many children. It is certain that they really never believed or understood my answer. So, in this case, not wanting to make extensive explanations about our civilization, which not only does not insist that men and women marry, but even makes it very difficult for them to do so, I lied, answering that I was married and had one son. Of course I had to describe both wife and boy to the inquisitive women. They wanted to know if her skin was the same color as mine, and her hair as white as mine, and what did she wear on her body? Also, they made me promise that some day I would bring my wife and boy to them, so that the women whom because of social tabus could not converse directly with me, would be able to do so with my wife.

As we talked of these things, falling stars played in the heavens, the big dipper swung higher, and the southern crosses began their journeys. For a while the wind died down, and the monkeys became silent. The silence was deep yet there was no loneliness. And then, as the moon rose above the hills of Guina, Landaeta again disappeared into the darkness to return and begin his singing.

Unlike our own religious ceremonies there was no attempt at creating artificial seriousness. The children played about noisily under the very nose of the shaman without reproof, and the adults talked happily. The imminent communion with the gods was an event of festive proportions and no restraints were put on normal and natural behaviour before joyous events.

There was no dancing on this night in deference to me, for I could not participate in it, but we sat in a semi-circle and sang after the shaman.

Itciai arrived and I was helped to sit close to the shaman. Apparently Itciai was talking about me, referred to as the Man. I lighted a cigarette and held it to the shaman's mouth. Without interruption of the song it was smoked in the shamanistic manner or rather spirit style, and Itciai began to explain who I was. He said that he knew me well, that I had visited Kuma's

land many times, that I was a shaman; that my family was/well, that my wife was waiting for me and that my son was so anxious he began to fear that I was dead. He said that there was something big being saved for me in my country. I was a good man, and a man like the Yaruros, that he was glad I liked the Yaruros so much, and that he was glad I was living with them. I had nothing to fear since on my death I would go to Kuma land. Itciai was saying for me a beautiful large horse, for me to ride in the land of the gods.

During this long discourse about me from Itciai which lasted about one hour and which was translated to me only in fragmentary fashion, the shaman often at the beginning of a new thought would shake the rattle violently before my face, and continue the same frenzied tone and shaking throughout. The people sang lustily, with feeling likewise, a great compliment to me.

Itciai had something to say about the Yaruros in general, namely that they were doomed to die, but that a better world and life awaits them with Kuma. They will have houses and cattle, clothing, tobacco, and all food; they will be born again there, young and strong. This world will come to an end because the Yaruros are being killed off.

Later Hatchawa came. I had a cigarette ready for him. He appreciated it and asked the shaman why I didn't drink of the shaman's drink. He urged me to drink it. I was a Yaruro. He also acknowledged my acquaintance in my own country and in Kuma's, and expressed deep affection for me. He brought good news of my family, saying to hurry back to my wife since she was waiting for me with much love for a long time. He got another cigarette and I was embraced several times.

The next to come was the father of a Yaruro present there, and as soon as I heard of it I offered a cigarette. It was properly acknowledged and the people were told by the spirit that indeed I knew a great deal since I had cigarettes ready to greet the spirits. At about three in the morning came

the god Puaná--expressly to greet me. he said that I lived in another land which he himself had made and that he was glad I had come to visit this land. He received three or four cigarettes. He described my land as being like that of Kuma, high and beautiful. He gave me further news of my family and said that he was keeping for me much cattle and many horses in the land of Kuma.

Puaná was greeted with happy laughter and general approval, the reception as demonstrated by the quality of the singing being frenzied. Puaná stayed with us for about an hour and a half talking most of the time about me.

And finally at about five Kuma herself came to visit me and like Hatchawa urged me to drink of the shaman's drink. I had to drink a gourd full of it, since it was held to my lips until I finished it. She gave me messages similar to the others. Finally other Yaruros came, and the shaman eventually returned being greeted by affection by all. We stopped when the sun rose and began another day of primitive life.

This was my reception among the Yaruros after my return from the Orinoco. Afterwards we learned much about each other, and they revealed more and more of their culture to me. We talked day and night about religion, about morality, about the world in which we lived. I learned that a mother-in-law and son-in-law must never look upon each other and never talk to each other, though they must be careful to do each other service; that a man must marry his first cousin, and that socially he is under obligation to his maternal uncle who later becomes his father-in-law. I learned something of their ideas of the history of the world, and their own history of shamanism, and primitive family life.

One day I announced to Landaeta that I would have to leave in the near future, giving as a reason that my wife and child needed me at home. Actually, there were other considerations; my physical condition was becoming worse, though the sores on my feet were a little better; and for the time being I had nearly exhausted the possibilities of obtaining fresh material from my friends. After

all we had been in contact with each other for six weeks, the major portion of it living communely and conversing with the shaman continuously day after day, somet mes even from sunrise to sunrise. My daily schedule consisted of rising at sunrise, drinking a little coffee sometimes brought to me by Landeata and immediately plunging into discussions of religious themes. This would last up to about teno'clock when Landeata would withdraw and busy himself making string or carving gourds for several hours. During this period I would week clarification of some points from whomsoever was present, or work on social organization, or on geneology. In the early afternoon Landaeta would be back with new material, new ideas, having thought over what he had said, what I hadsaid and what still needed to be said. This would continue until sundown.

Then there was a short intermission for dinner, bu soon afterward I was hurried over to the eastern sand where Landaeta and his people sat after dinner, and there we would sit with the women making cigars for us, talking about mythology, religion andgeneral philosophical concepts. These discussions would last until ten or eleven o'clock but often until much later and not rarely shamanistic performances would be given which would last until sunrise. Therefore there was an intense exchange of ideas for relatively long times with no rest.

The time came when Landaeta became a little restless. He was not accustomed to camping on one spot for more thantwo or three d ys at a time andhe himself haddone no hunting about since I had joined them. Besides, the men and women had to forage fartherand farther away for food. If my physical condition hadpermitted it would have been well to continue living with them, moving from place to place as is normal.

However, I knew I had to return to civilization quickly. The effect of my announcement on my hosts was interesting, and touching. It will be recalled that I had appeared in their midst as a stranger and a potential enemy and it was through a fortuitous event that I was accepted by them, not

only as a friend but as a relative who worshipped the same gods. Since then I had actually been given an affectionate place in their emotional lives and they were sorry to see me go. They understood the reasons that were making it urgent for me to leave, especially understandable was the fact that my wife and child who had not seen me for many months were waiting for me to return. Never the less, they expressed sorrow, a certain amount of listlessness began to appear and they would come to me and sit by my side, telling me that they would be a rather lonesome people after I had gone, that they like to talk about religious matters, that when I would no longer be there with them they would have no one to talk things over with. This attitude affected the men and women in a very curious way. We had very little food in the camp, but still they would not go out and gather fresh quantities. And when I urged them to do so they answered that the knowledge of my coming departure made them very sad and consequently they did not have the proper spirit to gather food, or even to eat.

These people have very little in the way of excess goods. Each family has a few baskets, perhaps a water jar, a mat or two, scraps of clothing and their tools, nothing more. And these generally were in very poor condition from long use. Wanting to bring back a representative collection of their material culture, I asked them to exchange with me a few of their things. Immediately, they became busy weaving hammocks, making basketry and even pottery so that I would take back to my wife and child objects new and well-made. This reaction on their part was spontaneous and they all expressed the idea that I should take back with me only new, well-made articles to remember them by, so for about a week before my departure, there was intense activity around camp.

The day of my departure finally arrived and I said good bye. There was no ceremonial wailing as had attended my departure from a primitive village in Brazil; but the very silence was expressive of the mutual sorrow

at our parting. Landaeta loaded me and my baggage in a canoe and we drifted slowly away, leaving on the vast beach a few human beings alone in a strange world but not lonesome since they live with their gods.

Kuma's Children

I

"Let the 'Racional' rob, rape and kill. Let him destroy the very things which cost him so much labor to make. Let him waste his life in hate and blood. He will make himself uglier than ~~xxxxxxfirstxxxxxx~~ when he first appeared, a diseased and kishapen thing. He will inherit a barren earth. We, the Yaruros, children of Kuma, will be destroyed by him, but we shall go to Kuma's land to live with our mother.

" The birds sing beautifully but the 'Racional' does not hear them. He does not listen to the roar of the monkeys on moonlit nights and does not dance to their music. The skies are covered with color where Kuma sends her shafts of light in greeting to us, her children, but the 'Racional' does not see them. At night all the dead walk across the sky ~~xxxx~~ but the 'Racional' will not talk with them. He thinks that they are truly dead. There is no morrow for the 'Racional', He lives hidden from the light of the day and is afraid of the night. That is not the way we who are Kuma's children live, and when the 'Racional' kills us all we shall go to live with Kuma.

"Once the earth was a fair place. There was peace. Man killed only for food. There was no hate. Then the 'Racional' appeared. He came mounted on a horse. He was pock-marked and rotting with disease. He put fear into all living things. He killed many Yaruros, Kuma's children. Now there are only a few of us left. Soon all of us will die, but this death will take us to Kuma. Our dead are there with her, in her land, and they are waiting for us also. The 'Racional' will inherit all of the earth but it will be stripped of all living things which make it beautiful. He will live with his diseases and fight with his own kind. The world will become dark except in Kuma's land where we her children will dwell in peace."

Landaata paused, ~~his~~ as if to listen to the roaring of the monkeys which the east wind brought to us in waves. And then he added kindly,

"And you, adjimai otah, elder brother, you too will live with us in

Kuma's land. You are white but Kuma has told us that you are a pumeh too. like us. Kuma is waiting for you. Life will be beautiful with her."

2.

Landaeta was the chief and the spiritual leader of his people the Yaruros. By 'Racional' he meant the "civilized" peoples who had persecuted his tribes for several hundred years. At first these were Spanish soldiers and priests, but later these gave way to the half breeds who however have given up the Indian mode of life for the white man's. Landaeta may be dead now and his people also, but he was a wise man and a kind host.

The Yaruros were first reported in the middle of the 18th century by the Catholic missionaries who introduced this primitive folk in one paragraph and dismissed them in another.

"They are so sensitive," wrote Father Gumilla, "that the least harsh word or look is enough to send them away. They will vanish, men, women, and children, and they will never return."

Another missionary accused them of being incorrigible. They were reputed to be "parricides and eaters of clay". No mission was ever established for the Yaruros. Some of them presented themselves occasionally at the mission of another tribe, the Tamanachi, to be duly baptised, but they could not be held there and apparently the tribe was never Christianized. It is worth mentioning that those tribes which ~~were~~ were converted, the Tamanachi, the Achaguas, Otomacos, and many others which shared the plains of Apure with the Yaruros have all disappeared. Only the primitive, nomadic, untamable Yaruros have managed to survive.

KUMA'S CHILDREN

I.

"Let the 'racional' rob, rape and kill. Let him burn, hate and destroy the very things which cost him so much labor to make. Let him waste his life in hate and blood. Let him make himself uglier than when he first appeared, a foul, diseased, mishapen thing. He will survive our death and live to inherit the barren earth. We, the Yaruros, the children of Kuma, will be his victims but we shall go to Kuma's land to live with her our mother after the racional has destroyed us.

"The birds sing beautifully but the racional does not hear them. The skies are covered with color where Kuma sends her shafts of light in greeting to us her children, but the racional does not see them. At night all the dead walk across the sky but the racional will not talk with them. He thinks that the dead are truly dead. There is no morrow for the racional. He lives hidden from the light of the day and is afraid of the night. That is not the way we, Kuma's Pumehe live, and when the racional has destroyed us we shall go to a better world.

"Once the earth was a fair place. There was peace. Man killed only for food. There was no hate. Then the racional appeared. He was mounted on a horse. He was pock-marked and was rotting with disease. He put fear into all living things. He killed ruthlessly. He killed many Yaruros, Kuma's children. Now there are only a few of us left and soon all of us will die. But this death will bring us all to Kuma. She is waiting for us in her land. Our dead are there with her and they are waiting for us too. The racional will inherit all the land but stripped of all living things which make it beautiful. He will live with his diseases and fight with

Kuma's Children

I

"Let the 'Racional' rob, rape and kill. Let him destroy the very things which cost him so much labor to make. Let him waste his life in hate and blood. He will make himself uglier than ~~xxxxxxfirstxaxaxatad~~ when he first appeared, a diseased and kishapen thing. He will inherit a barren earth. We, the Yaruros, children of Kuma, will be destroyed by him, but we shall go to Kuma's land to live with our mother.

"The birds sing beautifully but the 'Racional' does not hear them. He does not listen to the roar of the monkeys on moonlit nights and does not dance to their music. The skies are covered with color where Kuma sends her shafts of light in greeting to us, her children, but the 'Racional' does not see them. At night all the dead walk across the sky ~~xxxx~~ but the 'Racional' will not talk with them. He thinks that they are truly dead. There is no morrow for the 'Racional', He lives hidden from the light of the day and is afraid of the night. That is not the way we who are Kuma's children live, and when the 'Racional' kills us all we shall go to live with Kuma.

"Once the earth was a fair place. There was peace. Man killed only for food. There was no hate. Then the 'Racional' appeared. He came mounted on a horse. He was pock-marked and rotting with disease. He put fear into all living things. He killed many Yaruros, Kuma's children. Now there are only a few of us left. Soon all of us will die, but this death will take us to Kuma. Our dead are there with her, in her land, and they are waiting for us also. The 'Racional' will inherit all of the earth but it will be stripped of all living things which make it beautiful. He will live with his diseases and fight with his own kind. The world will become dark except in Kuma's land where we her children will dwell in peace."

Landaata paused, ~~his~~ as if to listen to the roaring of the monkeys which the east wind brought to us in waves. And then he added kindly,

"And you, adjimai otah, elder brother, you too will live with us in

Kuma's land. You are white but Kuma has told us that you are a pumeh too. like us. Kuma is waiting for you. Life will be beautiful with her."

2.

Landaeta was the chief and the spiritual leader of his people the Yaruros. By 'Racional' he meant the "civilized" peoples who had persecuted his tribes for several hundred years. At first these were Spanish soldiers and priests, but later these gave way to the half breeds who however have given up the Indian mode of life for the white man's. Landaeta may be dead now and his people also, but he was a wise man and a kind host.

The Yaruros were first reported in the middle of the 18th century by the Catholic missionaries who introduced this primitive folk in one paragraph and dismissed them in another.

"They are so sensitive," wrote Father Gumilla, "that the least harsh word or look is enough to send them away. They will vanish, men, women, and children, and they will never return."

Another missionary accused them of being incorrigible. They were reputed to be "parricides and eaters of clay". No mission was ever established for the Yaruros. Some of them presented themselves occasionally at the mission of another tribe, the Tamanachi, to be duly baptised, but they could not be held there and apparently the tribe was never Christianized. It is worth mentioning that those tribes which ~~were~~ were converted, the Tamanachi, the Achaguas, Otomacos, and many others ~~which~~ shared the plains of Apure with the Yaruros have all disappeared. Only the primitive, nomadic, untamable Yaruros have managed to survive.

his own kind. The world will become dark except Kuma's land where we her children will dwell.

" And you, adjimai oteh, elder brother, you too will live with us in Kuma's land. You are white but Kuma has told us that you are a pumeh too, like us. Kuma is waiting for you also. Life will be beautiful with her."

Landaeta, headman and shaman of the Yaruros , had been in communion with his gods all night. His soul had left his body and traveled to Kuma's land. Many spirits had entered his body during the absence of his soul and they had sung to us much advice and encouragement. Landaeta's soul had learned many things, and now in the early morning he reassured me that though I was a "rational" a "civilized" man his mother goddess found me worthy. I too was a Pumeh like the Yaruros.

Vincenzo Petrucci
University Museum
Phila

With a Primitive People

of Venezuela

Kuma's Children

Primitive peoples are disappearing. Under the contemporary conditions of unrest in the civilized world, no primeval forest, no matted jungle path, no desert is safe from the invasion of the civilized adventurer, seeking notoriety, fame, riches, simple adventure, or a mere refuge from a too-oppressive civilization. Even the lowlands of tropical South America are being penetrated, and the primitive aborigines made to know a foreign culture. ^{There are still} South America still has large unexplored regions, ^{in South America} and in their most remote parts there are numerous small groups of primitive hunters holding to their traditional mode of life, but that they ^{are doomed to an early extinction,} will continue to ~~do so for any length of time is not to be expected.~~

The forces that are brought into play whenever the civilized peoples and the primitive ^{peoples} come in contact with each other are generally detrimental to the latter. The newcomers are the real aggressors, since they come to the country to exploit it, and often to exploit the natives themselves. The natives generally have recourse to one means, that of warfare, to protect themselves and to keep possession of their country. It is seldom that this contact ^{has been} is peaceful, though it may be well-intentioned on both sides. Civilized interests invariably put restraints on the native population, such as restricting their hunting grounds and activities. Resentment at being stripped of ^{such} their natural privileges leads to fighting for them. Then, too, civilized men take with them the evils of our civilization, such as economic systems, religious, political and social ideas foreign to those that are traditional to their primitive society, and often new diseases that decimate their population rapidly.

As in the other countries of South America, in Venezuela the aborigines

have disappeared or have blended with the European or African races. Outside of Venezuela^{and} Guiana there are but few groups pure in race and living within their ancient culture pattern. It is truly regretful that the extermination of so many tribes took place before any attempt could be made to preserve accounts of their cultures for future generations. They themselves were not acquainted with the art of writing and thus were not able to leave behind literary accounts of their history and culture.

In the interior, however, in the great ~~steppe~~^{plains} region of the country, called the llanos, two tribes have managed to survive to this day. They do not occupy the extensive territory as formerly they did, nor are their numbers very great, but they have remained faithful to their ancient mode of life, and have chosen inevitable extinction to absorption into the laboring class of Venezuelan society. These are the Yaruros and the Guahibos of the llanos of Apure, and it was the former that, in the spring of 1934, the University Museum expedition visited and studied. They were hostile to the expedition at first, and as long as this feeling lasted nothing could be done. Thus the first step of the expedition was to break down this suspicion and to win them over to a friendly attitude. Success came when least expected. But then, that is field ethnology. It is the unexpected and the unforeseen that brings about the fulfillment of plans, or sometimes their frustration.

The Yaruros, naked and nomadic, roam in small bands over the ~~steppes~~^{plains} of inner Venezuela, not far from the Colombian border. Contact with European civilization has scarcely made any impression on their mode of living. They still live as did their ancestors, hunting the turtle and the crocodile, gathering wild roots and fruit. They know that they are dwindling so rapidly that in a few years they will have disappeared as a people. In this affliction, they have turned to religion for relief, and so, at night lying on the bare hot sands they watch the heavens for comforting signs from their

gods and stoically await the day when the last one of them will have gone to Kuma's land where there is no death, no hunger, and no unfriendly people to oppress them.

Before the coming of the Spaniards this region was populated by numerous aboriginal peoples. There was no fear of extermination, for ^{even} the Caribs, the "Huns" of South America, preferred to subjugate rather than to exterminate the peoples they conquered. Then came the European, soldiers and priests, *and later came cattlemen, and oil men not to mention the marauding revolutionary bands.* Most of the natives were exterminated with inhuman cruelty, and there was borne on the consciousness of the survivors, on those very same ones who *are the the Columbian border.* considered themselves the children of gods, the knowledge that they were inferior to another race. In fact, at times they were not considered to be human beings at all. In the transformation that has occurred since, war and disease have been active factors. Had the aborigines really been animals, they would have at least been domesticated and treated with care. Preserves might have been set aside for them as we do for game; but primitive peoples the world over have had the misfortune to be humans after all, and because of that entitled to no kind of even fair treatment.

*intro desc
Historical notes.*

→ *The Ymurs*

The Ymurs They are a short people, but they do not give that impression. They are stocky, with deep chests, heavy shoulders, strong legs and rather small arms. Their hands and feet are small and beautifully ^{formed?} made. Their wrists and ankles are small. The legs are straight, round and strong. This is seen even among the old women, who, though desiccated and with wrinkled skins, will still show beautifully round strong legs. Their faces are broad and heavy with a mongoloid cast.

They are not very strong and do not seem to have any great powers of endurance. It is not, incidentally, a question of lack of interest in the task, but actual physical inability. Perhaps it is true that the Indian race is not as yet acclimatized to the tropics, for certainly it does not

4.
seem as well fit to stand up under the tropical heat as the negro races.

There is a legend given life from time to time that in the fastness of the wilds of South America are to be found white Indians. However, no such legend is built around the Yaruros who are known by the ranchers that occasionally come in contact with them as being rather dark. This question of the color of the native peoples of tropical America has received much attention in popular literature. Often little account is taken of the darkening effects of sunlight. For instance, the Yaruros who live exposed to the tropical sun the entire day are darker than tribes I have seen who live in the forests and are subject to the sun's rays to a lesser extent. I have noticed also that some Yaruros who wore scraps of clothing showed a considerably lighter skin color in those parts which are generally kept covered than on the parts that are always exposed to the sun. This is not surprising, yet it is easily forgotten by some who write about the Indians and make statements about their color. The difference is truly striking, since the Yaruros will show a skin almost as black as the chocolate colored negro where it is exposed and as light as the tanned hide of the young American who spends his time on the beaches for a summer where it is covered.

Linguistically, the Yaruros are not related to any other people on the continent. This does not mean, though, that they have no language as is attributed very often to primitive peoples by untrained explorers. Their language is very complex and difficult to learn. An interesting fact is that they have a man's language and a woman's language. The endings of many words vary in accordance with the sex of the speaker. They understand and know each others' language, but are very careful to speak only the language allowed to their sex.

Physically, the tribes of South America are not primitive in the same sense that the archaic races of Europe were primitive. There is neither the

bulging brows, nor the stooped posture, nor the protruding jaws. But, on the other hand, their economic culture must be given a place close to that of our precursors. It is difficult to imagine a more simple economy than the one possessed by these people. Bow and arrow, digging stick are the key artefacts. They have canoes, but they do most of their hunting on land; they know how to make pottery, but more often calabashes, gourds, turtle shells do as well; they know how to make basketry but have very little use for it; they construct a simple shelter, but only for shade. Various primitive peoples have sought the shelter of caves; the Yaruros do not even seek the shelter of the forest. Primitives have utilized stone tools; the Yaruros are satisfied with bone and wood.

Unfortunately it is impossible to compare that phase of culture which we may call the non-material or spiritual. The preliterate races that have vanished have not left much in the way of information on such topics as religion, for instance. The spiritual culture of the Yaruros and the other primitive groups of mankind of South America astonish one by its depth, but there is no way of comparing it with that of our own remote ancestors.

To a greater degree than his civilized brother the primitive is nature conscious. With him there is no need for drives to get him to observe it as among civilized peoples. The primitive lives in a world of raw nature and perforce he must associate himself with it, whereas in the case of the civilized man, his life concerns are generated and solved by man-made worlds to a greater degree. The daily stimuli come to the primitive from the physical world and from the life contained in it. Always exposed to the elements, always watching a world of nature over which he has no control at all, subject to the sounds produced by wind and rain, thunder, and the animal world, he is more sensitive to the changes that take place and seeks explanations for phenomena which among civilized peoples are the prerogatives of a few to experience.

29 February
1 9 3 6

Dr. Vincenzo Petruzzo,
60 Windemere avenue,
Lansdowne, Penna.

Dear Dr. Petruzzo:

Enclosed please find the manuscript.
I am sorry that I kept it so long, but I wanted to read
it over carefully, and I enjoyed it hugely.

Unfortunately -- magazines want art.
Had there been good pictures with this it would have
been a wonderful story for the National Geographic.

Before you go away again why don't you
get a good 4 x 5 news camera, they can be bought for
less than \$75, and I am sure you will find it profitable.
It would even not be necessary to develop in the field.

As a matter of fact any of the news agencies
would be happy to lend you equipment and material.
Of course, the "lender" expects the exclusive rights to buy
the resulting pictures.

I know that the NEW YORK TIMES has made
this arrangement in the past with explorers. For that
matter I understand that the National Geographic also
lends photographic equipment. It does not take long to
"get on" to the use of this equipment and the modern
news plates and films are so fast that they are practically
fool proof. You go to such unusual places that the art
would be extremely valuable. The prices which the
National Geographic pays for stories are such, I believe,
that it is worth while. With kindest personal regards,

Very cordially yours,

G. H. Eckhardt.

George H. Eckhardt.

2047 North Park avenue,
Philadelphia, Pa.