

when the first plantations were made near Chacao. The finest coffee-plantations are now found in the savannah of Ocumare, near Salamanca, and at Rincon, in the mountainous countries of Los Mariches, San Antonio Hatillo, and Los Budares. The coffee of the three last mentioned places, situated eastward of Caracas, is of a superior quality; but the trees bear a smaller quantity, which is attributed to the height of the spot and the coolness of the climate. The greater plantations of the province of Venezuela (as Aguacates, near Valencia and Rincon) yield in good years a produce of three thousand quintals.

The extreme predilection entertained in this province for the culture of the coffee-tree is partly founded on the circumstance that the berry can be preserved during a great number of years; whereas, notwithstanding every possible care, cacao spoils in the warehouses after ten or twelve months. During the long dissensions of the European powers, at a time when Spain was too weak to protect the commerce of her colonies, industry was directed in preference to productions of which the sale was less urgent, and could await the chances of political and commercial events. I remarked that in the coffee-plantations the nurseries are formed not so much by collecting together young plants, accidentally rising under trees which have yielded a crop, as by exposing the seeds of coffee to germination during five days, in heaps, between plantain leaves. These seeds are taken out of the pulp, but yet retaining a part of it adherent to them. When the seed has germinated it is sown, and it produces plants capable of bearing the heat of the sun better than those which spring up in the shade in coffee-plantations. In this country five thousand three hundred coffee-trees are generally planted in a *fanega* of ground, amounting to five thousand four hundred and seventy-six square toises. This land, if it be capable of artificial irrigation, costs five hundred piastres in the northern part of the province. The coffee-tree flowers only in the second year, and its flowering lasts only twenty-four hours. At this time the shrub has a charming appearance; and, when seen from afar, it appears covered with snow. The produce of the third year becomes very abundant. In plantations well weeded and watered, and recently culti-