

married provide food for themselves; and here, as everywhere else in the valleys of Aragua, a small spot of ground is allotted to them to cultivate. They labour on that ground on Saturdays and Sundays, the only days in the week on which they are free. They keep poultry, and sometimes even a pig. Their masters boast of their happiness, as in the north of Europe the great landholders love to descant upon the ease enjoyed by peasants who are attached to the glebe. On the day of our arrival we saw three fugitive negroes brought back; they were slaves newly purchased. I dreaded having to witness one of those punishments which, wherever slavery prevails, destroys all the charm of a country life. Happily these blacks were treated with humanity.

In this plantation, as in all those of the province of Venezuela, three species of sugar-cane can be distinguished even at a distance by the colour of their leaves; the old Creole sugar-cane, the Otaheite cane, and the Batavia cane. The first has a deep-green leaf, the stem not very thick, and the knots rather near together. This sugar-cane was the first introduced from India into Sicily, the Canary Islands, and West Indies. The second is of a lighter green; and its stem is higher, thicker, and more succulent. The whole plant exhibits a more luxuriant vegetation. We owe this plant to the voyages of Bougainville, Cook, and Bligh. Bougainville carried it to the Mauritius, whence it passed to Cayenne, Martinique, and, since 1792, to the rest of the West India Islands. The sugar-cane of Otaheite, called by the people of that island *To*, is one of the most important acquisitions for which colonial agriculture is indebted to the travels of naturalists. It yields not only one-third more juice than the creolian cane on the same space of ground; but from the thickness of its stem, and the tenacity of its ligneous fibres, it furnishes much more fuel. This last advantage is important in the West Indies, where the destruction of the forests has long obliged the planters to use canes deprived of juice, to keep up the fire under the boilers. But for the knowledge of this new plant, together with the progress of agriculture on the continent of Spanish America, and the introduction of the East India and Java sugar, the prices of colonial produce in Europe would have been much more sensibly affected by the revolutions of St.