

the fourth year, abundant crops. Wherever the soil is not exhausted, the fruit has become by cultivation larger and bitter, but also later.

On seeing the produce of cacao gradually diminish in Terra Firma, it may be inquired, whether the consumption will diminish in the same proportion in Spain, Italy, and the rest of Europe; or whether it be not probable, that by the destruction of the cacao plantations, the price will augment sufficiently to rouse anew the industry of the cultivator. This latter opinion is generally admitted by those who deplore, at Caracas, the diminution of so ancient and profitable a branch of commerce. In proportion as civilization extends towards the humid forests of the interior, the banks of the Orinoco and the Amazon, or towards the valleys that furrow the eastern declivity of the Andes, the new planters will find lands and an atmosphere equally favourable to the culture of the cacao-tree.

The Spaniards, in general, dislike a mixture of vanilla with the cacao, as irritating the nervous system; the fruit, therefore, of that orchideous plant is entirely neglected in the province of Caracas, though abundant crops of it might be gathered on the moist and feverish coast between Porto Cabello and Ocumare; especially at Turiamo, where the fruits of the *Epidendrum vanilla* attain the length of eleven or twelve inches. The English and the Anglo-Americans often seek to make purchases of vanilla at the port of La Guayra, but the merchants procure with difficulty a very small quantity. In the valleys that descend from the chain of the coast towards the Caribbean Sea, in the province of Truxillo, as well as in the Missions of Guiana, near the cataracts of the Orinoco, a great quantity of vanilla might be collected; the produce of which would be still more abundant, if, according to the practice of the Mexicans, the plant were disengaged, from time to time, from the creeping plants by which it is entwined and stifled.

The hot and fertile valleys of the Cordillera of the coast of Venezuela occupy a tract of land which, on the west, towards the lake of Maracaybo, displays a remarkable variety of scenery. I shall exhibit in one view, to close this chapter, the facts I have been able to collect respecting