

ampelite. The minerals extracted from this shaft, which were sent to me at Caracas, were quartz, non-auriferous pyrites, and carbonated lead, crystallized in needles of a silky lustre.

In the early times of the conquest the working of the mines of Nirgua and of Buria* was begun, notwithstanding the incursions of the warlike nation of the Giraharas. In this very district the accumulation of negro slaves in 1553 gave rise to an event bearing some analogy to the insurrection in St. Domingo. A negro slave excited an insurrection among the miners of the Real de San Felipe de Buria. He retired into the woods, and founded, with two hundred of his companions, a town, where he was proclaimed king. Miguel, this new king, was a friend to pomp and parade. He caused his wife Guiomar, to assume the title of queen; and, according to Oviedo, he appointed ministers and counsellors of state, officers of the royal household, and even a negro bishop. He soon after ventured to attack the neighbouring town of Nueva Segovia de Barquesimeto; but, being repulsed by Diego de Losada, he perished in the conflict. This African monarchy was succeeded at Nirgua by a republic of Zamboes, the descendants of negroes and Indians. The whole municipality (cabildo) is composed of men of colour to whom the king of Spain has given the title of "his faithful and loyal subjects, the Zamboes of Nirgua." Few families of Whites will inhabit a country where the system of government is so adverse to their pretensions; and the little town is called in derision *La república de Zambos y Mulatos*.

If the hot vallies of Aroa, of Yaracuy, and of the Rio Tocuyo, celebrated for their excellent timber, be rendered feverish by luxuriance of vegetation, and extreme atmospheric humidity, it is different in the savannahs of Monai and Carora. These Llanos are separated by the mountainous tract of Tocuyo and Nirgua from the great plains of La Portuguesa and Calabozo. It is very extraordinary to see barren savannahs loaded with miasmata. No marshy ground is found there, but several phenomena indicate a

* The valley of Buria, and the little river of the same name, communicate with the valley of the Rio Coxede, or the Rio de Barquesimeto.