

The necessity of labour, the preference given to the cultivation of the sugar-cane, indigo, and cotton, the cupidity which often accompanies and degrades industry, gave birth to that infamous slave-trade, the consequences of which have been alike fatal to the old and the new world. Happily, in the continental part of Spanish America, the number of African slaves is so inconsiderable, that, compared with the slave population of Brazil, or with that of the southern part of the United States, it is found to be in the proportion of one to fourteen. The whole of the Spanish colonies, without excluding the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico, have not, over a surface which exceeds at least by one-fifth that of Europe, as many negroes as the single state of Virginia. The Spanish Americans, in the union of New Spain and Guatimala, present an example, unique in the torrid zone, viz., a nation of eight millions of inhabitants governed conformably with European institutions and laws, cultivating sugar, cacao, wheat, and grapes, and having scarcely a slave brought from Africa.

The population of the New Continent as yet surpasses but little that of France or Germany. It doubles in the United States in twenty-three or twenty-five years; and at Mexico, even under the government of the mother country, it doubles in forty or forty-five years. Without indulging too flattering hopes of the future, it may be admitted, that in less than a century and a half the population of America will equal that of Europe. This noble rivalry in civilization, and the arts of industry and commerce, far from impoverishing the old continent, as has often been supposed it might at the expense of the new one, will augment the wants of the consumer, the mass of productive labour, and the activity of exchange. Doubtless, in consequence of the great revolutions which human society undergoes, the public fortune, the common patrimony of civilization, is found differently divided among the nations of the old and the new world: but by degrees the equilibrium is restored; and it is a fatal, I had almost said an impious prejudice, to consider the growing prosperity of any other part of our planet as a calamity to Europe. The independence of the colonies will not contribute to isolate them from the old civilized nations, but will rather bring all more closely together. Commerce tends