

by the Llanos and the forests of Guiana, and, therefore, presenting great obstacles to agricultural labourers, we should still obtain a population of six millions for the remaining 9700 square leagues. Those who, like myself, have lived long within the tropics, will find no exaggeration in these calculations; for I suppose for the portion the most easily cultivated, a relative population equal to that in the intendencias of Puebla and Mexico,* full of barren mountains, and extending towards the coast of the Pacific, over regions almost desert. If the territories of Cumana, Barcelona, Caracas, Maracaybo, Varinas, and Guiana, should be destined hereafter to enjoy good provincial and municipal institutions, as confederate states, they will not require a century and a half to attain a population of six millions of inhabitants. Venezuela, the eastern part of the republic of Columbia, would not, even with nine millions, have a more considerable population than Old Spain; and can it be doubted that that part of Venezuela which is most fertile and easy of cultivation, that is, the 10,000 square leagues remaining after deducting the Llanos and the almost impenetrable forests between the Orinoco and the Cassiquiare, could support in the fine climate of the tropics, as many inhabitants as 10,000 square leagues of Estramadura, the Castiles, and other provinces of the table-land of Spain? These predictions are by no means problematical, inasmuch as they are founded on physical analogies and on the productive power of the soil; but before we can indulge the hope that they will be actually accomplished, we must be secure of another element less susceptible of calculation,—that national wisdom which subdues hostile passions, destroys the germs of civil discord, and gives stability to free and energetic institutions.

When we take a view of the soil of Venezuela and New Grenada, we perceive that no other country of Spanish America furnishes commerce with such various and rich productions of the vegetable kingdom. If we add the harvests of the province of Caracas to those of Guayaquil, we find that the republic of Columbia alone can furnish nearly all the cacao annually demanded by Europe. The

* These two Intendencias contain together 5520 square leagues, and a active population of 508 inhabitants to the square sea-league.