

the mouth of the Orinoco, as well as on the banks of the Gulf of Paria, commonly called the Golfo triste. It was not intended to establish docks on that spot, but to hew the weighty timber into the forms necessary for ship-building, and to transport it to Caraque, near Cadiz. Though trees fit for masts are not found in this country, it was nevertheless hoped that the execution of this project would considerably diminish the importation of timber from Sweden and Norway. The experiment of forming this establishment was tried in a very unhealthy spot, the valley of Quebranta, near Guirie; I have already adverted to the causes of its destruction. The insalubrity of the place would, doubtless, have diminished in proportion as the forest (*el monte virgen*), should have been removed from the dwellings of the inhabitants. Mulattos, and not whites, ought to have been employed in hewing the wood, and it should have been remembered that the expense of the roads (*arastraderos*), for the transport of the timber, when once laid out, would not have been the same, and that, by the increase of the population, the price of day labour would progressively have diminished. It is for ship-builders alone, who determine the localities, to judge whether, in the present state of things, the freight of merchant-vessels be not far too high to admit of sending to Europe large quantities of roughly-hewn wood; but it cannot be doubted that Venezuela possesses on its maritime coast, as well as on the banks of the Orinoco, immense resources for ship-building. The fine ships which have been launched from the dockyards of the Havana, Guayaquil, and San Blas, have, no doubt, cost more than those constructed in Europe; but from the nature of tropical wood, they possess the advantages of hardness and amazing durability.

The great struggle during which Venezuela has fought for independence, has lasted more than twelve years. That period has been no less fruitful than civil commotions usually are in heroic and generous actions, guilty errors, and violent passions. The sentiment of common danger has strengthened the ties between men of various races, who, spread over the plains of Cumana, or insulated on the table-land of Cundinamarca, have a physical and moral organization as different as the climates in which they live.