

great misfortune of the natives came from those granitic formations; traces of that sand are still found in the rivers Holguin and Escambray, known in general in the vicinity of Villa-Clara, Santo Espiritu, Puerto del Principe de Bayamo, and the Bahia de Nipe. The abundance of copper mentioned by the Conquistadores of the sixteenth century, at a period when the Spaniards were more attentive than they have been in latter times to the natural productions of America, may possibly be attributed to the formations of amphibolic slate, transition clay-slate mixed with diorite,

quently purer than the gold of Sibao in San Domingo. In 1804, the mines of Mexico altogether produced 7000 marks of gold; and those of Peru 3400. It is difficult, in these calculations, to distinguish between the gold sent to Spain by the first Conquistadores, that obtained by washings, and that which had been accumulated for ages in the hands of the natives, who were pillaged at will. Supposing that in the two islands of Cuba and San Domingo (in Cubanacan and Cibao), the product of the washings was 3000 marks of gold, we find a quantity three times less than the gold furnished annually (1790 to 1805) by the small province of Choco. In this supposition of ancient wealth there is nothing improbable; and if we are surprised at the scanty produce of the gold-washings attempted in our days at Cuba and San Domingo, which were heretofore so prolific, it must be recollected that at Brazil also, the product of the gold-washings has fallen, from 1760 to 1820, from 6600 gold kilogrammes to less than 595. Lumps of gold weighing several pounds, found in our days in Florida and North and South Carolina, prove the primitive wealth of the whole basin of the Antilles, from the island of Cuba to the Appalachian chain. It is also natural that the product of the gold-washings should diminish with greater rapidity than that of the subterraneous working of the veins. The metals not being renewed in the clefts of the veins (by sublimation) now accumulate in alluvial soil, by the course of the rivers where the table-lands are higher than the level of the surrounding running waters. But in rocks with metalliferous veins, the miner does not at once know all he has to work. He may chance to *lengthen* the labours, to go deep, and to cross other *accompanying veins*. Alluvial soils are generally of small depth where they are auriferous; they most frequently rest upon sterile rocks. Their superficial position and uniformity of composition help to the knowledge of their limits, and wherever workmen can be collected, and where the waters for the washings abound, accelerate the total working of the auriferous clay. These considerations, suggested by the history of the Conquest, and by the science of mining, may throw some light on the problem of the metallic wealth of Hayti. In that island, as well as at Brazil, it would be more profitable to attempt subterraneous workings (on veins) in primitive and intermediary soils, than to renew the gold-washings which were abandoned in the ages of barbarism, rapine, and carnage.