

tions. If the census, no doubt imperfect, of 1775, yielded 15,562 female, and 29,366 male slaves, we must not forget that that enumeration comprehended the totality of the island, and that the sugar plantations occupy even now but a quarter of the slave population. After the year 1795, the *Consulado* of the Havannah began to be seriously occupied with the project of rendering the increase of the slave population more independent of the variations of the slave-trade. Don Francisco Arango, whose views were ever characterized by wisdom, proposed a tax on the plantations in which the number of slaves was not comprised of one-third females. He also proposed a tax of six piastres on every negro brought into the island, and from which the women (*negras bozales*) should be exempt. These measures were not adopted, because the colonial assembly refused to employ coercive means; but a desire to promote marriages, and to improve the condition of the children of slaves, has existed since that period, when a *cedula real* (of the 22nd April, 1804) recommended those objects "to the conscience and humanity of the planters."

The first introduction of negroes into the eastern part of the island of Cuba, took place in 1521, and their number did not exceed 300. The Spaniards were then much less eager for slaves than the Portuguese; for, in 1539, there was a sale of 12,000 negroes at Lisbon, as in our days (to the eternal shame of Christian Europe) the trade in Greek slaves is carried on at Constantinople and Smyrna. In the sixteenth century the slave-trade was not free in Spain; the privilege of trading, which was granted by the court, was purchased in 1586, for all Spanish America, by Gaspar de Peralta; in 1595, by Gomez Reynel; and in 1615, by Antonio Rodriguez de Elvas. The total importation then amounted to only 3500 negroes annually; and the inhabitants of Cuba, who were wholly engaged in rearing cattle, scarcely received any. During the war of succession, French ships were accustomed to stop at the Havannah and to exchange slaves for tobacco. The *Asiento* treaty with the English in some degree augmented the introduction of negroes; yet in 1763, although the taking of the Havannah and the sojourn of strangers gave rise to new wants, the number of slaves in the jurisdiction of the Havannah did not amount