

nearly double. The extreme inequality in the distribution of the population, the want of inhabitants on a great part of the coast, and its immense development, render the military defence of the whole island impossible: neither the landing of an enemy, nor illicit trade, can be prevented. The Havannah is well defended, and its works rival those of the most important fortified towns of Europe; the Torreones, and the fortifications of Cogimar, Jaruco, Matanzas, Mariel, Bahia Honda, Batabano, Xagua, and Trinidad, might resist for a considerable time, the assaults of an enemy; but on the other hand two-thirds of the island are almost without defence, and could scarcely be protected by the best gun-boats.

Intellectual cultivation is almost entirely limited to the whites, and is as unequally distributed as the population. The best society of the Havannah may be compared for easy and polished manners, with the society of Cadiz, and with that of the richest commercial towns of Europe; but on quitting the capital, or the neighbouring plantations, which are inhabited by rich proprietors, a striking contrast to this state of partial and local civilization is manifest, in the simplicity of manners prevailing in the insulated farms and small towns. The Havaneros or natives of Havannah were the first among the rich inhabitants of the Spanish colonies, who visited Spain, France, and Italy; and at the Havannah the people were always well informed of the politics of Europe. This knowledge of events, this prescience of future chances, have powerfully aided the inhabitants of Cuba to free themselves from some of the burthens which check the development of colonial prosperity. In the interval between the peace of Versailles and the beginning of the revolution of San Domingo, the Havannah appeared to be ten times nearer to Spain than to Mexico, Caracas, and New Grenada. Fifteen years later, at the period of my visit to the colonies, this apparent inequality of distance had considerably diminished; now, when the independence of the continental colonies, the importation of foreign manufactures, and the financial wants of the new states, have multiplied the intercourse between Europe and America; when the passage is shortened by improvements in navigation; when the Columbians, the Mexicans, and the inhabitants of Guatimala, rival each other in visiting Europe; the ancient Spanish colonies—those