

piastres; for 1825, only 70,302 pounds of cigars, and 167,100 pounds of tobacco in leaves; but it must be remembered that no branch of contraband is more active than that of cigars. Although the tobacco of the *Vuelta de abajo* is the most famous, a considerable exportation takes place in the eastern part of the island. I rather doubt the total exportation of 200,000 boxes of cigars (value 2,000,000 piastres), as stated by several travellers during latter years. If the harvests were thus abundant, why should the island of Cuba receive tobacco from the United States for the consumption of the lower class of people?

I shall say nothing of the cotton, the indigo, or the wheat of the island of Cuba. These branches of colonial industry are of comparatively little importance; and the proximity of the United States and Guatemala renders competition almost impossible. The state of Salvador, belonging to the Confederation of Central America, now throws 12,000 tercios annually, or 1,800,000 pounds of indigo into trade; an exportation which amounts to more than 2,000,000 piastres. The cultivation of wheat succeeds (to the great astonishment of travellers who have passed through Mexico), near the Quatro Villas, at small heights above the level of the ocean, though in general it is very limited. The flour is fine; but colonial productions are more tempting, and the plains of the United States—that Crimea of the New World—yield harvests too abundant for the commerce of native cereals to be efficaciously protected by the prohibitive system of the custom-house, in an island near the mouth of the Mississippi and the Delaware. Analogous difficulties oppose the cultivation of flax, hemp, and the vine. Possibly the inhabitants of Cuba are themselves ignorant of the fact that, in the first years of the conquest by the Spaniards, wine was made in their island of wild grapes.* This kind of vine, peculiar

* “*De muchas parras monteses con uvas se ha cogido vino, aunque algo agrio.*” [From several grape-bearing vines which grow in the mountains, they extract a kind of wine; but it is very acid.] (Herera, Dec. I, p. 233.) Gabriel de Cabrera found a tradition at Cuba similar to that which the people of Semitic race have of Noah, experiencing for the first time the effect of a fermented liquor. He adds, that the idea of two races of men, one naked, another clothed, is linked to the American tradition. Has Cabrera, preoccupied by the rites of the Hebrews, imperfectly interpreted the words of the natives, or, as seems more probable, has he