

course would be in proximity with the best cultivated lands. The roads are nowhere worse in the rainy season than in this part of the island, where the soil is of friable limestone, little fitted for the construction of solid roads. The transport of sugar from Guines to the Havannah, a distance of twelve leagues, now costs one piastre per quintal. Besides the advantage of facilitating internal communications, the canal would also give great importance to the *surgidero* of Batabano, into which small vessels laden with salt provisions (*tasajo*) from Venezuela, would enter without being obliged to double Cape Saint Antonio. In the bad season, and in time of war, when corsairs are cruising between Cape Catoche, Tortugas, and Mariel, the passage from the Spanish main to the island of Cuba, would be shortened by entering, not at the Havannah, but at some port of the southern coast. The cost of constructing the canal de Guines, was estimated in 1796 at one million, or 1,200,000 piastres: it is now thought that the expense would amount to more than one million and a half. The productions which might annually pass the canal, have been estimated at 75,000 cases of sugar, 25,000 arrobas of coffee, and 8000 bocoyes of molasses and rum. According to the first project, that of 1796, it was intended to link the canal with the small river of Guines, to be brought from the Ingenio de la Holanda to Quibican, three leagues south of Bejucal and Santa Rosa. This idea is now relinquished, the Rio de los Guines losing its waters towards the east in the irrigation of the savannahs of Hato de Guanamon. Instead of carrying the canal east of the Barrio del Cerro, and south of the fort of Atarès, in the bay of the Havannah, it was proposed at first to make use of the bed of the Chorrera or Rio Armendaris, from Calabazal to the Husillo, and then of the Zanja Real, not only for conveying the boats to the centre of the *arrabales* and of the city of the Havannah, but also for furnishing water to the fountains, which require to be supplied during three months of the year. I visited several times, with MM. Lemaury, the plains through which this line of navigation is intended to pass. The utility of the project is incontestible, if in times of great drought a sufficient quantity of water can be brought to the *point of partition*

At the Havannah, as in every place where commerce and