

the wealth it produces increase rapidly, complaints are heard of the prejudicial influence exercised by them* on ancient manners. We cannot here stop to compare the first state of the island of Cuba, when covered with pasturage, before the taking of the capital by the English, and its present condition, since it has become the metropolis of the West Indies; nor to throw into the balance the candour and simplicity of manners of an infant society, against the manners that belong to the development of an advanced civilization. The spirit of commerce, leading to the love of wealth, no doubt brings nations to depreciate what money cannot obtain. But the state of human things is happily such, that what is most desirable, most noble, most free in man, is owing only to the inspirations of the soul, to the extent and amelioration of its intellectual faculties. Were the thirst of riches to take absolute possession of every class of society, it would infallibly produce the evil complained of by those who see with regret what they call the preponderance of the industrious system; but the increase of commerce, by multiplying the connections between nations, by opening an immense sphere to the activity of the mind, by pouring capital into agriculture, and creating new wants by the refinement of luxury, furnishes a remedy against the supposed dangers.

FINANCE.—The increase of the agricultural prosperity of the island of Cuba, and the influence of the accumulation of wealth on the value of importations, have raised the public revenue in these latter years, to four millions and a half, perhaps five millions of piastres. The custom-house of the Havannah, which before 1794, yielded less than 600,000 piastres, and from 1797 to 1800, 1,900,000 piastres, pours into the treasury, since the declaration of free trade, a revenue (*importe liquido*) of more than 3,100,000 piastres.*

The island of Cuba as yet contains only one forty-second part of the population of France; and one half of its inhabitants, being in the most abject indigence, consume but little. Its revenue is nearly equal to that of the Republic

* The custom-house of Port-au-Prince, at Hayti, produced in 1825, the sum of 1,655,764 piastres; that of Buenos Ayres, from 1819 to 1821, average year, 1,655,000 piastres. See *Centinel de La Plata* (September, 1822), No. 8; *Argos de Buenos Ayres*, No. 85.