

the most rigorous winter. The inhabitant of New England regards the increasing augmentation of the black population, the preponderance of the slave states, and the predilection for the cultivation of colonial products, as a public danger; and earnestly wishes that the strait of Florida, the present limit of the great American confederation, may never be passed but with the views of free trade, founded on equal rights. If he fears events which may place the Havannah under the dominion of a European power more formidable than Spain, he is not the less desirous that the political ties by which Louisiana, Pensacola, and Saint Augustin of Florida, were heretofore united to the island of Cuba, may for ever be broken.

The extreme sterility of the soil, joined to the want of inhabitants and of cultivation, have at all times rendered the proximity of Florida of small importance to the trade of the Havannah; but the case is different on the coast of Mexico. The shores of that country, stretching in a semicircle from the frequented ports of Tampico, Vera Cruz, and Alvarado, to Cape Catoche, almost touch, by the peninsula of Yucatan, the western part of the island of Cuba. Commerce is extremely active between the Havannah and the port of Campeachy; and it increases, notwithstanding the new order of things in Mexico, because the trade, equally illicit with a more distant coast, that of Caracas or Columbia, employs but a small number of vessels. In such difficult times, the supply of salt meat (*tasajo*), for the slaves, is more easily obtained from Buenos Ayres, and the plains of Merida, than from those of Cumana, Barcelona, and Caracas. The island of Cuba, and the archipelago of the Philippines, have for ages derived from New Spain the funds necessary for their internal administration, and for keeping up their fortifications, arsenals, and dockyards. The Havannah was the military port of the New World; and, till 1808, annually received 1,800,000 piastres from the Mexican treasury. At Madrid, it was long the custom to consider the island of Cuba and the archipelago of the Philippines, as dependencies on Mexico, situated at very unequal distances east and west of Vera Cruz and Acapulco, but linked to the Mexican metropolis (then a European colony), by all the ties of commerce, mutual aid, and ancient sympathies. Increased internal wealth has