

English and French legislatures. The right of every slave to choose his own master, or set himself free, if he can pay the purchase-money, the religious feeling which disposes many masters in easy circumstances to liberate some of their slaves, the habit of keeping a multitude of blacks for domestic service, the attachments which arise from this intercourse with the whites, the facility with which slaves who are mechanics accumulate money, and pay their masters a certain sum daily, in order to work on their own account;—such are the principal causes which in the towns convert so many slaves into free men of colour. I might add the chances of the lottery, and games of hazard, but that too much confidence in those means often produces the most fatal effects.

The primitive population of the West India Islands having entirely disappeared (the Zambo Caribs, a mixture of natives and negroes, having been transported in 1796, from St. Vincent to the island of Ratan), the present population of the islands (2,850,000) must be considered as composed of European and African blood. The negroes of pure race form nearly two-thirds; the whites one-fifth; and the mixed race one-seventh. In the Spanish colonies of the continent, we find the descendants of the Indians who disappear among the mestizos and zambos, a mixture of Indians with whites and negroes. The archipelago of the West Indies suggests no such consolatory idea. The state of society was there such, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, that, with some rare exceptions, the new planters paid as little attention to the natives as the English now do in Canada. The Indians of Cuba have disappeared like the Guanches of the Canaries, although at Guanabacoa and Teneriffe false pretensions were renewed forty years ago, by several families, who obtained small pensions from the government on pretext of having in their veins some drops of Indian or Guanche blood. It is impossible now to form an accurate judgment of the population of Cuba or Hayti in the time of Columbus. How can we admit, with some, that the island of Cuba, at its conquest in 1511, had a million of inhabitants, and that there remained of that million, in 1517, only 14,000! The statistic statements in the writings of the bishop of Chiapa are full of contradic-