

escaping from slaughter or slavery, they fled in open boats with their families, and possessed themselves of the small unoccupied island of *Tortuga*, situated within a few miles of the northern coast of St. Domingo. Here they were joined by a considerable number of Dutch emigrants from *Santa Cruz*, whom the avarice and cruelty of the Spaniards had compelled, in like manner, to roam over the ocean for shelter, after having witnessed the massacre of many of their number, even to the women and children. Companions in adversity, their misfortunes probably taught these poor exiles mutual forbearance; for, although they were composed of three different nations, they appear to have lived for some years in perfect harmony with each other. Their mode of life contributed to produce the same beneficial effect: finding a country of immeasurable extent in their neighbourhood abounding in cattle, their time was chiefly occupied in hunting; an employment which left no leisure for dissension, and afforded them both exercise and food. The plains of St. Domingo were considered, however, merely as their hunting grounds: *Tortuga* continued their home, and place of retreat. Here their women and young people cultivated small plantations of tobacco (an herb, of which, in hot and moist climates, the practice of inhaling the smoke, seems to be pointed out by nature); and as the coast was rugged, and of difficult approach, they fondly hoped that their obscurity would protect them from further persecution.

If the government of Spain had been actuated at this time by motives of wisdom, it would indeed have left these poor people to range over the wilderness unmolested. It ought to have known, that the occupation of hunting diverted them from pro-

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