BOEKBESPREKING

about 1,200 whites and 35,000 slaves, making with those in the town
3,200 whites and 43,000 slaves in the whole Colony. The buildings on the
plantations are many of them very costly, and the dwelling houses good,
with piazzas before and behind, which render them very cool and conve-
nient. The sugar plantations have many of them water mills, which being
much more profitable than others, and the situation of the colony ad-
mitting of them, will probably become general. Of the rest some are worked
by mules, others by cattle, but from the lowness of the country none by the
wind. The estates are for the greatest part mortgaged for as much or more
than they are worth, which greatly discourages any improvements which
might otherwise be made. Was it not for the unfortunate situation of the
colony, in this and in other respects, it is certainly capable of being
brought to a great height."

The climate, especially during the months of September,
October, and November, receives unfavorable comment, but he
adds that “otherwise the climate is by no means very unhealthy”. Among
the diseases he mentions the dropsy as “common among
the soldiers and poor people, from their salt meat and great
quantity of bad water.”

We obtain a glimpse of living conditions at that time in the
following paragraph:

“As to living, I cannot say it is here very good; we have however all
European tame animals. Our butchers’ meat is small and not very good,
and costs from 9d. to 1s. per lb. Poultry is in great abundance. Of Euro-
pean vegetables some flourish here, others do not; there are some few
vegetables natural to this country, which are pretty good. The great
abundance and goodness of Surinam fruits (which I am told are hardly
equalled by those of any other part of the West Indies) fully make up the
entire want of all European ones, of which I believe not one succeeds here.
We have every production of the West Indies in its highest perfection, and
that greatest of blessings for these countries, the Plantain, grows no
where so well.”

The river water, he says, is brackish and unfit for drinking,
but “the rain water on the contrary is so pleasant as to exceed
almost any other I ever drank”, and that “water is seldom a
scarcity, except in long droughts, when a bottle of wine has been
given for a bottle of water.”

His remarks on wild life and game are confined to a few species
such as the turtle, deer, hares, rabbits, “buffaloe”, and two spe-
cies of wild hogs, “one of which (the peccary) is remarkable for
having its navel on the back.” He continues:

“The woods are infested with several species of Tigers, but I fancy with
no other ravenous or dangerous animals. The rivers are rendered danger-
ous by Alligators from 4 to 7 feet long; and a man was a short time since