crushed between the jaws of a fish, but it is not known what fish it was. Scorpions and Tarantulas are found here of a large size and great venom, and other insects without number, some of them very dangerous and troublesome. The Torporific Eel also, the touch of which, by means of the bare hand or any conductor, has the effect of a strong electrical shock. I had almost forgot to mention the Serpents, some of which are venomous, and others as I have heard from many creditable persons are upwards of fifty feet long. I myself have seen a skin of one of half that length."

The author expresses his thoughts on slavery and the cruel treatment accorded the slaves. I quote the paragraph in full:

"It appears to me from everything I can see here, that the English scheme concerning the slave trade, might easily be put in practice; they were for limiting the importation of slaves by degrees, in such a manner, as at last entirely to put an end to it. If that were done, every planter would do as some few only do at present—they would treat their slaves at least with some little appearance of humanity, and by that means raise as great a number of creoles on their estates as were required, and of a quality in every respect far superior to the savages imported from Africa. On the subject of the general treatment of slaves I shall say little, it being a disagreeable one, but I consider them as the most unfortunate of all human beings, not so much on account of any ill treatment from their masters (whose interest it is to treat them well, humanity being a word unknown in Surrinam) but from the cruelty of barbarous managers, who being for the greatest part old soldiers or others of low extraction, are people, who to great ignorance add a total carelessness with respect to the property of their employers, and as long as they can make annually their stated quantity of produce, care not by what means; thence comes and not from the owner, the cruel treatment and overwork of the unhappy negroes; and a slave has no law to guard him from injustice."

He comments on the military weakness against foreign attack, and also the discontent of the people and their desire for a change of government:

"The river Surrinam is guarded by a fort and two redoubts at the entrance, and a fort at this town, but none of them of any strength, so that one or two frigates would be sufficient to make themselves masters of the whole colony; and never was there a people who more ardently wished for a change of government than the inhabitants of this colony do at this time. The many grievances they labour under, and the immense burthen of taxes which almost threaten the ruin of the colony, make them in some measure excusable in their general desire to change the Dutch for a British or French government."

Continuing he says:

"The colony is guarded farther by about 1600 regular troops paid by the Directors. These troops together with a corps of about 250 free negroes paid by the court here, and another small corps of chasseurs, and so many slaves as the court thinks fit to order from the planters from time to time, are