

would degrade their rank by becoming servants to their soldiers, in whom they can only inspire contempt. In all the Spanish colonies taverns are prohibited; the commanders alone have the privilege of selling strong liquors. It is not uncommon to hear a captain, or even a lieutenant-colonel, enjoying this privilege, order a bottle of rum to be given to a soldier, when he at the same time knows, that before the end of the day he will be obliged to punish him for excess. Besides this, they claim the exclusive right of furnishing the inhabitants with articles necessary for their consumption. This disgraceful monopoly exists more or less in all the military stations, excepting those of Upper Louisiana, where the governor has preserved the delicacy of a true French soldier, and the commanders under him are too far distant from Spanish manners to imitate such a bad example.

CHAP. XVII.

NATCHITOCHES. — BATON-ROUGE. — POINTE COUPEE. — ACADIANS. — GERMAN COAST. — ATAKOPAS AND APELUSAS. — CULTURE OF INDIGO REPLACED BY THAT OF SUGAR.

AT about four hundred miles from the mouth of the Red River, is the settlement of Natchitoches. It contains from twelve to thirteen hundred inhabitants, who cultivate cotton, maize, rice, and tobacco. The latter is reckoned the best in North America, so that the king of Spain bought it from the proprietors at a great price; but he has been so deceived, that he has declined it for many years, which has occasioned the cultivation almost entirely to cease. Besides these productions, many of the inhabitants traffic with the neighbouring Indian nations. Some miles below the mouth of the Red River, on the opposite coast, is the small fort of Baton-rouge, occupied by some Spanish soldiers, under the command of a sub-lieutenant. This fort is of so little importance, and the number of inhabitants so small, that I shall not delay the time in mentioning it.

Near to this is Pointe Coupée, the first post which has the title of parish in Lower Louisiana. Its inhabitants cultivate cotton, for which the lands are well adapted. The houses which border the two shores, present an agreeable prospect to the traveller, fatigued with beholding dry sands and immense forests. In all Lower Louisiana, the shores of the river are alone susceptible of culture, but must be defended from inundation by means of banks. The lands in other parts being low, are a great part of the year covered by