

France has colonies; she has invited her citizens to go and carry their riches to them; honor requires that she keep and protect them; but she is under no obligation to create new ones; to multiply points of defence; to squander away the capitals she wants at home and abroad. How could the possession of Louisiana be useful to her? In the first place, its cultivation is to be carried on, as in all warm countries, by slaves; the capitals spent in buying them, or the slaves themselves, would have been carried to the Islands, if this new channel had not opened. This rivalry will raise the price of slaves for the planters, and may thus much retard the settlement.

On their arrival at Louisiana, the slaves will be employed in the barren occupation of felling the large forests with which this immense country is covered, a labour but little suited to slaves, for it requires being long accustomed to the ax; and force and activity are seldom found in slaves. They must be clothed, fed and maintained during whole years before any profit can be derived from them. What I am about to relate may serve to determine that period. In the Northern and Middle States of America, the usual term of a quit-rent lease in the new lands is ten years free from rent, and after this the lessee pays 12 bushels of wheat for every 100 acres for ever. It is, therefore, obvious, that the first ten years are considered as a time of expence, during which term the owner requires no payment. But in the Southern States, new lands cannot even be given out on those terms, because the white planter sets a higher value on his labor, and the clearing of forests requires too great outsets for any one but the owner of the land.

Who then will cultivate Louisiana with slaves? Who is the citizen willing to bestow large capitals upon a precarious property with the prospect of a distant return?

It may be asked, why does it not happen in the Southern States? It is answered, first, because none are sufficiently early enough to be wholly free from the colds of winter, which renders savage life very difficult to men born in hot climates; and secondly, because the Southern States, are mostly surrounded by the sea, and by mountains the whole population of which is white, and which cut off the communication between the slaves and the vast forests of the interior parts.

But let us suppose all these difficulties overcome, what commercial advantages can France derive from the settlement of this colony? The productions of Louisiana being the same with those of the West Indies, no advantages is to be reaped, for the Islands, being well cultivated, will suffice for the wants of France, and even all Europe. The introduction of those from Louisiana, would only lessen the price without adding any thing to the value, and France would be obliged, to prevent the ruin of those who had employed their funds in the colonies, to imitate the Dutch, who destroy their spices and teas, when the quantity of these commodities in Europe is large enough to cause a depreciation of their value.

The productions of Louisiana, which do not grow in the West-Indies, are only lumber, and perhaps rice; but it is certain that those productions, considering the difficulties of procuring them in a hot and unsalubrious climate, will not cover the outsets, or at least, will not yield the same profits, as would be procured by raising them in the Islands, in procuring the same or other and more valuable articles.

The proof of this is found in the United States. It is not from Georgia nor South-Carolina, that the West-Indies are supplied with lumber, but chiefly from the Northern States, where forests are more scarce and more valuable than in the South. The cause