

of gold or silver, but many mines of metal, of which pieces of artillery are made for the town of Havanna.

Neither corn nor wine grows on the said island; that which is consumed comes from New Spain, so that sometimes they are very dear.

In this island there are quantities of very good fruits; among others one which is called pines,¹ which perfectly resembles in shape the pine (cones) with us. The skin is removed, then it is cut in half like apples; it has a very good taste, and is very sweet, like sugar.

There is abundance of cattle, such as oxen, cows, and pigs, which are better meat than any other in this country, or in all the Indies. They keep a great number of oxen, more to have the hides than the flesh. To take them, negroes go on horseback after these oxen, and with astes,² at the end of which is a very sharp crescent, cut the hamstrings of the oxen, which are immediately skinned, and the flesh so soon consumed, that, twenty-four hours after, none can be perceived, being devoured by great numbers of wild dogs and other animals which inhabit this country.

We were four months at the Havanna, and leaving it with the whole fleet of the Indies, which had assembled there from all parts, we proceeded to pass the channel of Bahan (Bahama), which is a passage of consequence, and which must necessarily be passed in returning from the Indies. On one side of the said passage, to the north, lies the land of Florida, and on the other the Havanna. The sea flows

¹ Pine-apple. Piña de Indias (Span.) anana.

² Hasta (Lat.), lance or pole.