

Herrera, the great Spanish historian of America, expressly affirms, 'That neither on the continent, nor isles of the West-Indies, (the name the Spaniards usually give to all America), were there either silk, wine, sugar, olives, wheat, barley, or pulse; all which, and many other things, have been transplanted thither from Spain.' Their own original productions were only tobacco, indigo, cochineal, cotton, ginger, cocoa, pimento, sundry useful drugs and woods for dying, furniture, physick, and ship and house-building. Our British colonists have since found plenty of ironstone, as also copper and lead mines. And it is from those two countries of Spain and Portugal, that Europe has been supplied with that immense quantity of treasure, which has so much enriched and improved it. From Peru and Mexico, as also from some West-India isles, Europe has been supplied with great quantities of excellent materials for dying, (and above all, with that incomparable one of cochineal, hitherto peculiar only to Mexico), drugs, gums, colours and minerals for painters, preserved fruits of their own growth, ginger, Jamaica pepper (called pimento), tobacco, furs, skins, and many excellent timbers; all which were originally in those countries, but which have, by the cultivation of the Europeans, been since improved in quality, and much increased in quantity: So that, upon the whole, it may be said, that, even abstracting from the gold and silver of America, there has really been a greater accession of rich and useful materials for commerce introduced into it by the Europeans (their great improvements of American productions jointly considered) than all America afforded, before it was known to Europe; all which, through the benignity of the climate, and the fertility of the virgin soil of America, have long since repaid, and do still continue to supply Europe with immense usury. This, it is true, was also mostly the case with respect to many of the colonies settled in ancient times by the Arabians, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Greeks, and Romans, though perhaps not in so eminent a degree as in the modern case of the plantation of America.

Columbus, in his way homeward, called at the great and fine island of Espanola (or Hispaniola), where he bartered bits of glass, small hawks bells, and such other trifles, with the natives; for plates of virgin gold, which they wore as ornaments, beaten into shape with a stone, and made without melting or refining the ore, of which they were totally ignorant. Here he lost his best ship; and, leaving forty-nine of his men in a wooden fort, he returned to Spain, full of glory; having been no longer than six months and an half in making these discoveries, from his setting out to his return.

That America could not have been much longer hid from the Europeans seems at least probable, by reason that the use of the magnetic needle in navigation was general, if not universal; more especially after the Portuguese went so far southward in their discoveries on the west