

C H A P. V.

The character of the American Portuguese. The state of the Negroes. The government.

THE portrait which the most judicious travellers give us of the manners and customs of the Portuguese in America, is very far from being favourable to that people. They are represented as a people at once sunk in the most effeminate luxury, and practising the most desperate crimes. Of a dissembling hypocritical temper; of little honesty in dealing, or sincerity in conversation; lazy, proud, and cruel. They are poor and penurious in their diet, not more through necessity than inclination. For, like the inhabitants of most Southern climates, they are much more fond of show, state, and attendance, than of the joys of free society and the satisfaction of a good table. Yet their feasts, seldom made, are sumptuous to extravagance.

The luxury, indolence, pride, and cruelty of the masters has, amongst other causes, been very justly attributed to their being bred up amongst slaves, having every business entirely done by such; and to their being permitted to keep a prodigious number of Negroes, not for their field work, nor for