

THE
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[*From Mr. Bryan Edwards's History of the West Indies.*]

“SEVERAL vessels (says Dr. Robertson) were fitted out for the Lucayos, the commanders of which informed the natives, with whose language they were now well acquainted, that they came from a delicious country in which their departed ancestors resided, by whom they were sent to invite them to partake of the bliss which they enjoyed. That simple people listened with wonder and credulity, and, fond of visiting their relations and friends in that happy region, followed the Spaniards with eagerness. By this artifice above 40,000 were decoyed into Hispaniola, to share in the sufferings of that island, and its wretched race of men.”

THE ARGUMENT.

Affecting particulars of the poor Lucayans when there.

“Many of them in the anguish of despair refuse all sustenance, retire to desert caves and woods, and silently give up the ghost. Others, repairing to the sea-coast on the northern side of Hispaniola, cast many a longing look to that part of the ocean where they suppose their own islands situated, *and as the sea breeze rises eagerly inhale it*, believing it has lately visited their own happy valleys, and comes fraught with the breath of those they love, their wives and children. With this idea they continue for hours on the coast, till nature becomes utterly exhausted; when, stretching out their arms towards the ocean, as if to take a last embrace of their distant country and relations, they sink down, and expire without a groan.”

THE LUCAYAN'S SONG.

HAIL, lonely shore! hail, desert cave!

To you, o'erjoyed, from men I fly,

And here I'll make my early grave....

For what can misery do but *die*?

Sad was the hour when, fraught with guile,

Spain's cruel sons our valleys sought;

Unknown to us the Christian's wile,

Unknown the dark deceiver's thought.

They said, that here, for ever blest,
Our loved forefathers lived and reigned ;
And we, by pious fondness prest,
Believed the flattering tales they feigned.

But when we learnt the mournful truth....
No, I'll the horrid tale forbear :
For on our trusting, blighted youth,
My brethren, who will drop a tear !

Thou treasure of these burning eyes,
Where wave thy groves, dear native isle ?
Methinks where yon blue mountains rise,
'Tis there thy precious valleys smile !

Yes....yes....these tears of joy that start,
The softly-soothing truth declare :
Thou whisperest right, my beating heart....
My loved regretted home is there !

But then its trees that wave so high,
The glittering birds that deck each grove,
I cannot, cannot hence descry,
Nor, dearer far, the forms I love.

Yet still the winds that cool my brow,
And o'er these murmuring waters come,
A joy that mocks belief bestow ;
For sure they lately left my home.

Then deeply I'll the breeze inhale,
To life it yet imparts one joy,
Methinks your breath has filled the gale,
My faithful love, my prattling boy !

My prattling boy, my beauteous wife !
Say, do you still my name repeat,
And only bear the load of life
In hopes that we once more may meet !

My love ! in dreams thou still art nigh,
But changed and pale thou seemest to be ;
Yet still the more thou charmest my eye,
I think thee changed by love for me :....

While oft, to fond remembrance true,
I see thee seek the sparkling sand,
In hopes the little bark to view
That bears me to my native land.

But never more shall Zama's eye
Her loved returning husband see,
Nor more her locks of ebon dye
Shall Zama fondly braid for me.

Yet still, with hope chastised by fear,
Watch for my bark from yonder shore,
And still, my Zama, think me near,
When this torn bosom throbs no more.

Yet surely hope, each day deceived,
At length to daring deeds will fire ;
The Spaniard's tale no more believed,
My fate will fearful doubts inspire.

And then, blest thought ! across the main
Thou'lt haste, thy injured love to find,
All danger scorn, all fears disdain,
And gladly trust the waves and wind.

Ha ! even now the distant sky
Seems by one spot of darkness crost ;
Yes, yes, a vessel meets my eye !.....
Or else I gaze in phrensy lost !

It hither steers !.....No....beating breast,
Too well I see what bade thee glow ;
The sea-bird hastening to its nest,
To taste a joy I ne'er shall know.

Moment of hope, too bright to last,
Thou hast but deepened my despair ;
But woe's severest pangs are past,
For life's last closing hours are near.

'T was morn when first this beach I sought,
Now evening's shadows fill the plain ;
Yet herè I've stood entranced in thought,
Unheeding thirst, fatigue, or pain.

'T is past....I faint....my throbbing brow
Cold clammy drops I feel bedew;
Dear native shore! where art thou now?....
Some Spaniard shuts thee from my view.

Monster, away! and let me taste
That joy in death, in life denied!
Still let me o'er the watery waste
Behold the hills which Zama hide!

Alas! I rave! no foe is near;
'T is death's thick mist obscures my sight;
Those precious hills, to memory dear,
No more shall these fond eyes delight!

But sent from thee, my native shore,

Again that precious breeze is nigh....

Zama, I feel thy breath once more,

And now content, transported, die !

