

1562. spoils. These Indians have a deeper color, more inclining to red, than those of Canada, caused by the oil with which they rub their bodies, and the nature of which has never been ascertained. In other respects, there was no sensible difference between them and other nations of North America. They use less covering, because they inhabit a warmer country; they are more dependent on their chiefs, styled in the French accounts Paraoustis or Paracoustis,¹ and to whom the Spaniards apply the general title of Caciques. But whatever idea the Spanish historians have sought to give us of the power and wealth of these Caciques, it dwindles in reality to insignificance.

The character of these people.

The Floridians are well formed, brave, proud, yet tractable enough when managed with mildness and reason. They are not as cruel to their prisoners as those of Canada; and although, like the latter, cannibals, they do not carry inhumanity so far as to make the sufferings of a miserable wretch a spectacle of pleasure, or torture an art. Women and children taken in war, they are satisfied with keeping in slavery; men they immolate to the sun, and deem it a religious duty to eat the flesh of these victims.

On the march and in battle the Paraoustis are always at the head of their troops, holding a tomahawk or a kind of war-club in one hand and an arrow in the other. The baggage is carried by hermaphrodites, of whom there are great numbers in the country, if we believe René de Laudonniere, an author who was long on the spot.² These people are also accustomed to scalp their fallen enemies; and in the rejoicings after a victory, the old women lead the procession, adorned with these scalps. They might then be taken for real megaræ, or furies. The Paraoustis can decide nothing on important occasions without assembling the council, where, before proceeding to business, they begin by swallowing a great draught of apalachine,

¹ Histoire Notable, p. 97, etc.

These catamites are depicted in Le

² Basanier, Hist. Notable, pp. 7-9. Moyne de Morgues, plate xvii.