been previouſly cut for ſugar are called *ratoons ;* the firſt yearly returns from their roots are called first *ratoons ;* the ſecond year’s growth *ſecond ratoons.*

Mr Edwards informs us, that the manure generally uſed is a compoſt formed, 1st, Of the vegetable aſhes, drawn from the fires of the boiling and ſtill houſes. 2dly, Feculencies diſcharged from the ſtill-houſe, mixed up with rubbiſh of buildings, white-lime, &c. 3dly, Refute, or field- traſh (i. e.), the decayed leaves and ſtems of the canes; ſo called in contradiſtinction to cane-traſh, reſerved for fuel. 4thly, Dung, obtained from the horſe and mule ſtables, and from moveable pens, or ſmall incloſures made by poſts and rails, occasionally ſhifted upon the lands intended to be plant­ed, and into which the cattle are turned at night. 5thly, Good mold, collected from gullies and other waſte places, and thrown into the cattle pens.

The ſugar-cane is liable to be deſtroyed by monkeys, rats, and insects. The upland plantations ſuffer greatly from monkeys ; theſe creatures, which now abound in the mountainous parts of St Chriſtopher's, were firſt brought thither by the French, when they poſſeſſed half that iſland; they come down from the rocks in silent parties by night, and having polled centinels to give the alarm if any thing approaches, they deſtroy incredible quantities of the cane, by their gambols as well as their greedineſs. It is in vain to ſet traps for theſe creatures, however baited ; and the only way to protect the plantation, and deſtroy them, is to ſet a numerous watch, well armed with fowling-pieces, and furniſhed with dogs. The negroes will perform this service cheerfully, for they are very fond of monkeys as food. @@The celebrated Father Labat ſays, they are very delicious, but the white inhabitants of St Kitt’s never eat them.

The low-land plantations ſuffer as much by rats as thoſe on the mountains do from monkeys ; but the rats, no more than the monkeys, are natives of the place ; they came with the ſhipping from Europe, and breed in the ground under looſe rocks and buſhes : the field negroes eat them greedily, and they are ſaid to be publicly sold in the markets at Jamai­ca. To free the plantations ſrom theſe vermin, the breed of wild cats ſhould be encouraged, and ſnakes ſuffered to multiply unmoleſted ; they may alſo be poiſoned with arſenic, and the raſped root of the caſſava made into pellets, and plentifully ſcattered over the grounds. This practice, however, is dangerous ; for as the rats when thus poiſoned become exceeding thirſty, they run in droves to the neigh­bouring ſtreams, which they poiſon as they drink, and the cattle grazing on the banks of theſe polluted waters have frequently periſhed by drinking after them : It is ſafer there­fore to make the pellets of flour, kneaded with the juice of the night-ſhade, the ſcent of which will drive them away though they will not eat it. There is an Eaſt Indian ani­mal called *mungoes,* which bears a natural antipathy to rats; if this animal was introduced into qur ſugar iſlands, it would probably extirpate the whole race of theſe noxious vermin. The *formica omnivora* of Linmeus, the carnivorous ant, which is called in Jamaica the *raffle's ant,* would ſoon clear a ſugar plantation of rats.

The ſugar-cane is alſo ſubject to a diſeaſe which no fore- sight can obviate, and for which human wiſdom has hither­to in vain attempted to find a remedy. This diſeaſe is call­ed the *blast,* and is occaſined by the *aphis* of Linnæus. When this happens, the fine, broad, green blades become ſickly, dry, and withered ; ſoon after they appear ſtained in ſpots ; and if theſe ſpots are carefully examined, they will be found to contain innumerable eggs of an infect like a bug, which are ſoon quickened, and cover the plants with the vermin : the juice of the canes thus affected be­comes sour, and no future ſhoot issues from the joints. Ants alſo concur with the bugs to spoil the plantation, and againſt theſe evils it is hard to find a remedy.

The crops of ſugar-canes do not ripen preciſely at the ſame period in all the colonies. In the Danish, Spaniſh, and Dutch ſettlements, they begin in January, and conti­nue till October. This method doth not imply any fixed ſeaſon for the maturity of the ſugar-cane. The plant, how­ever, like others, muſt have its progreſs ; and it hath been juſtly obſerved to be in flower in the months of November and December.@@ It muſt necessarily follow, from the cuſtom theſe nations have adopted of continuing to gather their crops for 10 months without intermiſſion, that they cut ſome canes which are not ripe enough, and others that are too ripe, and then the fruit hath not the requiſite qualities. The time of gathering them ſhould be at a fixed ſeaſon, and probably the months of March and April are the fitteſt for it ; becauſe all the ſweet fruits are ripe at that time, while the ſour ones do not arrive to a ſtate of matu­rity till the months of July and Auguſt.

The Engliſh cut their canes in March and April ; but they are not induced to do this on account of their ripeneſs. The drought that prevails in their iſlands renders the rains which fall in September neceſſary to their planting ; and as the canes are 18 months *in* growing, this period always brings them to the preciſe point of maturity @@(d).

“ The time of crop in the ſugar iſlands (ſays Mr Edwards) is the ſeaſon of gladneſs and feſtivity to man and beaſt. So palatable, ſalutary, and nouriſhing, is the juice of the cane, that every individual of the animal creation, drinking freely of it, derives health and vigour from its uſe. The meagre and ſickly among the negroes exhibit a ſurpriſing alteration in a few weeks after the mill is ſet in action. The labour­ing horſes, oxen, and mules, though almoſt conſtantly at work during this ſeaſon, yet, being indulged with plenty of the green tops of this noble plant, and some of the ſcum- ιnings from the boiling-houſe, improve more than at any other period of the year. Even the pigs and poultry fat­ten on the refuſe. In ſhort, on a well-regulated plantation, under a humane and benevolent director, there is such an appearance during crop-time of plenty and buſy cheerfulneſs, as to ſoften, in a great meaſure, the hardſhips of ſlavery, and induce a ſpectator to hope, when the miſeries of life are repreſented as inſupportable, that they are sometimes exaggerated through the medium of fancy.”

The plants being cut, the branches at the top are given to the cattle for food; the top-ſhoot, which is full of eyes,

@@@(D)The account given in the text concerning the time when the ſugar-canes are collected, we have taken from the Abbé Raynal’s Hiſtory of the Trade and Settlements of the Eaſt and West Indies ; but Mr Cazaud obſerves, that in February, March, and April, all the canes, whatever be their age, are as ripe as the nature of the ſoil ever allows them to be. He says farther, that the dryneſs of the weather, and not the age of the canes, which increaſes from January to April, is the cauſe that in January 400 gallons of juice commonly yield 48 gallons of ſugar and molasses, one with ano­ther ; in February from 56 to 64 ; in March from 64 to 72 ; in April ſometimes 80 ; after which period the ſugar fer­ments, and even burns, when the refiner is not very expert at his business

@@@[mu] Grainger's History of the Sugar-Cane.

@@@[mu] Raynal's History of the East and West Indies, vol. iv.