A

Preliminary Essay,

ON THE

OPPRESSION OF THE

EXILED SONS OF AFRICA.

CONSISTING OF

ANIMADVERSIONS ON THE IMPOLICY AND BARBARITY OF THE DELETERIOUS COMMERCE AND SUBSEQUENT SLAVERY OF THE

HUMAN SPECIES;

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DESULTORY LETTER WRITTEN TO

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE,

ANNO DOMINI, 1801.

By THOMAS BRANAGAN,

Late Slave-trader from Africa, and Planter from Antigua; who, from conscientious motives, relinquished a lucrative situation in that island; and now from a deep sense of duty, publishes to the world the tragical scenes, of which he was a daily spectator, and in which he was unhappily concerned.

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1804.

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TO ALL THE FRIENDS OF

HUMANITY,

PARTICULARLY THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS

OF THE

Abolition Society,

AND THE PEOPLE COMMONLY CALLED

QUAKERS,

WHO,

BY THEIR DISTINGUISHED EXERTIONS, FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF SLAVERY, AND THE RELIEF OF THE OPPRESSED AFRICANS, HAVE DONE IMMORTAL HONOUR TO THEMSELVES—TO HUMANITY, AND THE

CHRISTIAN NAME,

THE FOLLOWING WORK IS RESPECTFULLY

DEDICATED,

BY THEIR MOST OBEDIENT

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

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Advertisement.

WITH great deference does the author of the following pages, submit them to the inspection of a discerning public. To novelty of sentiment, or refinement of composition, he does not pretend. From a slave-trader or a West-India-planter, neither the one nor the other will be expected. If his *labour of love* obtain the approbation of the genuine friends of religion and humanity, he is willing to allow logicious cavillers and snarling critics to say what they please. If it contribute, in any degree, to the promotion of the good cause in which he has embarked, his end is gained; he is amply rewarded. The importance of the cause, and the rectitude of his intentions, he reckons sufficient to fortify him against every kind and every degree of bad treatment to which he can be exposed.

The author judges it necessary to apprize his readers, that this small performance is ultimately intended to pave the way for the publication of a poem on slavery; a work of considerable magnitude, in which he has been employed for some years. To enable him to publish this poem, in a manner corresponding to the merits of the

subject, and the labour with which he has prepared it for the press, he is obliged, in this manner, to bespeak the attention, and solicit the aid of a generous public. Subscription papers will speedily be issued; and, as soon as a number of subscribers sufficient to defray the expense shall be obtained, the work will be put to press. Of the ready co-operation and liberal support of the friends of bleeding humanity, he is certain.

Confidently relying for encouragement on the humane and philanthropic citizens of America, especially from a particular sect of people, whose liberality of sentiment displayed for a series of years in their laudable and indefatigable exertions in the vindication of the unalienable rights of men of every nation and colour, has done immortal honour to themselves and the cause which they espoused; whose relative conduct not only evinces that their hearts must be exceedingly humanized, but that they abound with a philanthropy which ennobles human nature. From these considerations, the author ventures to publish this premature performance, without soliciting patronage by subscription; and he flatters himself the merits of the cause will plead his excuse for any literary inaccuracy that may be discovered. It is his wish to represent in its proper colours the complicated

villainy of the African slave trade—to put to the blush hypocritical professors of the Christian religion, who, with impunity make daring innovations on the natural privileges and liberties of mankind: finally, he wishes to arise, and to arise with energy—and strive, though he should strive in vain, to oppose this popular corruption which has too long infected the principles of the inhabitants of Christendom, repugnant to the precepts of moral rectitude, natural reason, and evangelical religion.

To publish the poem, with all convenient speed, the author is prompted by recent conduct of the legislature of a certain southern state, in repealing the law that prohibited the importation of slaves. Criminal, shameful, disgraceful conduct. The situation of the exiled and enslaved sons of Africa, who can forbear to commiserate? He that does not pity them, is a monster rather than a man. A man of feeling and honor he cannot be. Are human beings to be bought and sold like the brutes which perish? No. If, therefore, his performances shall contribute, in the smallest degree, to retard the progress of this most scandalous traffic, the reflection will be pleasing to the author in his latest moments.

As to the letter subjoined to the preliminary essay, when the author wrote and addressed it to the first consul of France, his intention was to keep it a profound secret. By some means, however, a certain person heard of it, and reported it to his friends, who conceived an unfavourable impression of it. How rare, in our times, is the charity which thinketh no evil! How painful are the wounds of a friend! For the satisfaction of those who may have imbibed and entertained mistaken notions concerning this epistle, he now publishes it. And he flatters himself that it will not be uninteresting or unprofitable to the public at large.

REMARKS,

INTRODUCTORY TO THE

POEM ON SLAVERY.

LOCAL circumstances, which I need not enumerate, compel me to make these introductory remarks. When the poem appears, the propriety of them will be sufficiently manifest. Sincerely can I say, my great aim is to be useful. With this view I have endeavoured to accommodate my poem to the various tastes of the different classes of readers, into whose hands it is likely to be put. My endeavour is to imitate the eminent apostle of the Gentiles in *becoming all things to all men in order to gain some* of every sort. Of the vicious taste, caprice, and whim of many, I am sufficiently aware. To expect to please every one is absurd in the extreme. My object is to profit; but, in order to profit, I should wish to please. In the cause I have undertaken to promote, I glory. On the merits of it I confidently rely. I live in the animating prospect of the speedy approach of a period, in which

tyranny, of every species, will be seen in its native deformity. Then will all the votaries of oppression wish, but, perhaps, wish in vain, that they had listened to the soft, moving, pathetic strains, by which their best friends now endeavour to reclaim and reform them. Their recovery, before it be too late, is the object of these remarks, and also of the poem I am about to usher into the world. That they may accomplish this salutary purpose is my earnest wish and ardent prayer. Whether my endeavours shall be attended with desired success or not, it does not belong to me to predict. In the mean time it is to me no small consolation, that those who aim at the reformation of their fellow mortals, are, in the decisive day, to be approved and rewarded, not according to the degrees of success with which their endeavours are attended, but according to the integrity and fidelity with which they use them. If God approve, man may accuse; and I can remain unmoved. To be mal-treated and persecuted, for the best of causes and the most praise-worthy actions, is nothing new either in the christian or pagan world. I appeal to the history of all ages ancient and modern. Of the prophets or the apostles; or the martyrs, Jewish or christian, I shall not say any thing.

Were not the wisest and best of the philosophers of antiquity, who remonstrated against the prevailing vices of the times in which they lived, instead of being caressed and rewarded, persecuted by fines, banishment and death? Review the histories of Anaxogoras, Socrates, Seneca, and others. They were fined, banished, murdered! For what? For their crimes? No, for their virtues; for opposing the idolatrous worship of the inhabitants of Athens, and other cities of Greece; for denying the divinity of the heavenly bodies, particularly the sun; and pleading for one God, the eternal, original cause of all things terrestrial and celestial. Were such wise, exemplary, useful men persecuted? Yes; with unrelenting fury were they persecuted.

Are the times in which we live better than the ages which are past? No, this, indeed, is an age of discoveries and scientific improvement. But, at the same time, an age, which, in infidelity, dissipation, and vice, seems to exceed all former times.

Has persecution for virtuous actions and laudable efforts to promote the best interests of mankind, been confined to the pagan countries? No, nations and individuals, called, christian, have

been the most cruel and merciless butchers of their fellow creatures, and even of one another. What then may I expect to be the fate of my humble, but well-meant, endeavours for the good of my cotemporaries? While the phantoms and dreams of romancers and novelists are read with assiduity, my performances will, doubtless, be by many treated with great neglect. But philanthropy, though scarce, has not altogether left the world. For the sufferings of their fellow creatures some can feel. In the abhorrence of every species of tyranny and slavery I am not singular. Do the advocates and promoters of the slave-trade attend to the natural consequences and effects of it? Is it not a common, though unfair method, to estimate the merit or demerit of any religion from the conduct of its votaries and professors? How unworthy and disgraceful the behaviour of thousands and millions of the professors of revealed religion! Read the history of the barbarities and cruelties of the Spaniards in the West-India islands and on the continent of America; of the English and other nations in the East Indies. It is a certain, incontrovertible, melancholy truth, that nothing has a stronger tendency to confirm Pagans and Mahometans in their prejudices against the christian religion,

than the unworthy, immoral, inhuman, and cruel conduct of multitudes who affect to be called christians. What I have affirmed of Pagans and Mahometans, I might have extended to the practical Atheists and avowed Deists, who abound among us. Natural religion I do not decry. But is it not, in the present state of humanity, utterly insufficient to direct mankind, either how they may be extricated from the misery in which they have involved themselves, or recover the felicity which they have forfeited? Can it either discover the origin of evil, moral and penal, or prescribe a remedy adequate to the malady? For necessary information on all these most interesting topics, we are indebted to supernatural revelation. And is this revelation treated with contempt? Yes; and treated with contempt by those very persons, whose best interests it is intended and calculated to subserve. Is there a virtue which natural religion enjoins, that revealed does not inculcate? Is there a vice which natural religion prohibits, that revealed does not forbid? No, easy would it be to shew in what numerous instances revealed religion excels natural; in its precepts and prohibitions, the duties it requires and sins it forbids, the rewards and punishments it proposes, it incomparably excels.

Here I cannot forbear to take notice of an unhappy mistake, under which many who make high pretensions to distinguished refinement, seem to labour. The divine law exhibited in the sacred volumes of the Old Testament and the New, they treat with the utmost contempt; and, in their place substitute, as the standard of right and wrong in human conduct, something to which they have appropriated the name of honour. But, if honour is to regulate our moral conduct, I have a right to ask, Is honour a law? If a law, who is the author of it? If a law of sufficient force to direct and determine what is right and what is blame-worthy in the conduct of moral agents, it must be a law of heaven; and must belong to religion, natural or revealed. If it be a dictate of natural religion, it must be a doctrine of revealed. For, though revealed religion be not totally contained in natural, the latter is wholly comprehended in the former. If on the contrary, honour, the criterion of laudable and culpable actions, be not a law, it is of no force; we are under no restriction, but have an unbounded liberty to do what we please; subvert the government, betray our friends, assassinate our parents, and commit the greatest enormities with impunity. For, as an inspired writer speaks,

and common sense dictates, *where no law is, there can be no transgression.* Do not honesty and honour belong to that long catalogue of virtues, which the divine law sanctions?

That relative duties, no less than religious, are enjoined by the authority of heaven, cannot admit of a doubt. The neglect of the duties we owe to each other, no less than the non-performance of the duties we owe to God, must incur the divine displeasure. Are we, in the different stations and circumstances, which an all disposing providence has assigned to us severally in the world, indispensibly bound to contribute, to the utmost extent of our power, towards the welfare and comfort of one another? Then what shall we think of despots, tyrants, and every kind of oppressors, who, instead of alleviating the cares and enhancing the enjoyments of their fellow mortals, especially those who are in lower spheres and narrower circumstances, do all they can to imbitter their comforts, and render life itself an insupportable burden? Are such men, I ought to have said monsters, to be found in our world? Yes; even in Christendom they are to be found. Nor need we travel so far as either the East or the West-Indies in search of them; they are to be found among ourselves.

With what view, for what purpose, does the historic page transmit to us the fatal end of the tyrants and oppressors of former times, and distant countries? Are they not presented to us in history as beacons are erected at sea, to warn the potentates and nations in our times, of the rocks and shoals, on which the despots and oppressors of former ages have suffered shipwreck? Hear this, ye American task masters; hear and tremble. *Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.* The sighs and groans of the oppressed he hears; their stripes and wounds he feels. And though for reasons best known to himself, he delays the execution of his alarming threatenings and the infliction of his tremendous judgments, his determination to punish is fixed and irrevocable. *Vengeance is mine*, says he, *and I will* infallibly *repay.* On account of injustice and oppression the most extensive, opulent, and powerful empires have been subverted; kingdoms and commonwealths overthrown; cities great and populous are now no more. Scarce a ruin or vestige of them is to be seen. Nay, a traveller is at a loss to ascertain the spot on which they stood. Now as much as ever that great and good Being, who has the disposal of all persons and all events, and who is the common father, of the human

family of every country and every complexion, pities the oppressed and resents oppression. Have the persecutors of former ages suffered the vengeance of heaven? Are the crimes, for which they suffered, committed, with aggravating circumstances, by the potent tyrants, and petty task-masters of our times? and shall they escape with impunity? No, the divine veracity is not less pledged for the execution of the threatnings, than for the fulfilment of the promises, of revelation. Did the unjust judge, of whom our Saviour, in one of his parabolical discourses, speaks, *avenge the* injured and unfortunate *victim of her adversaries;* and shall not He, who ever is the patron of the widow, the fatherless, and every other species of the afflicted of mankind, avenge and deliver the unhappy sons and daughters of Africa, who, by their deep sighs and doleful groans, cry day and night unto him? Verily he will speedily avenge them. To suppose he will not redress their grievances, is supposing that he is more unjust than the unjust judge.

Methinks, I now see the wounds and tears of these unhappy victims to the sordid avarice, and infernal cruelty of their oppressors and murderers; and hear them uttering, in heavy groans their complaint and prayer to this effect—

O God, thou createdst us, not to make us miserable, but happy. Thou createdst our first father that thou mightest confer thy best blessings upon him. Behold, we earnestly beseech thee, and pity us the unhappy offspring of Adam. Thou hast made us rational creatures; capable of happiness and of misery. Our misery therefore is intolerable. Were we like to the brutes which perish, we could much more easily linger out a few days and years of bondage and wretchedness; as well as remain uncontaminated by the impious example and impure practices of our oppressors; without being compelled to be partners with them in their iniquity; and, after a few years of pain and sorrow, languish and die unconscious of our own innocence, and of the cruelty and brutality of our unrelenting enemies. Pity us, O our merciful Creator! From no other being can we expect relief. We see, day after day, the horse, the cow, the sheep, protected. If they be found in a trespass, eating a little cane, or otherwise; they are not injured; but only secured for their owners. But if we, impelled by hunger, and languishing under extreme distress, both of body and mind, eat a little of the cane, which, with the labour of our hands and sweat of our brows, we planted, we are instantaneously

beaten, cut, and almost murdered. But to thee, O most compassionate Father, we need not enumerate our grievances and sufferings. Thou knowest all that has befallen us from the time we were forced from our native country to this day. Often, with sorrowful hearts and weeping eyes, do we recollect our once happy, though homely, abodes; our near and dear relatives; our water brooks, our rosy bowers, our vernal groves, our shady woods, and scented meadows. Pardon, O most merciful God, our importunity; and look down with piteous eyes upon us the most wretched of thy creatures. Under our bleeding wounds and excrutiating tortures we languish, we groan, we die. Judge, we pray thee, between us and our capricious, cruel tormentors. Hast thou not declared thyself a God of great compassion and tender mercy; who *will by no means clear the guilty?* Art thou not the friend of the helpless, the fatherless, and the avenger of the oppressed? We, no less than our merciless tyrants, are the workmanship of thy Almighty hand. In us, as well as in them, thou hast placed that precious jewel, the immortal soul; and hast said, that thou wilt *not respect persons in judgment*; but *wilt render to every man according to his works.* Rescue us, O God, we beseech thee, from our op-

pressors, as a lamb from the jaws of the roaring, rapacious lion.

Thus they incessantly cry from the rising to the setting, from the setting to the rising sun. Shall their cries remain forever unheard, their prayers forever unanswered? No. *For the sighing of the poor and needy will I arise, saith God.* And, when he ariseth to judgment, who can stand before him? With a prophet, I ask, *who can abide the day of his coming?* When the cup of the indignation of the Almighty is full, must it not be poured forth? Are not the judgments of God already in the earth? Are not the times, in which we live, in a peculiar manner, portentous and eventful? What mighty revolutions, and wars, and massacres are taking place among the nations? Are not less judgments, in the usual course of providence, the fore-runners of greater? Is this country exempted from judgments? No. Judgments are of two kinds, temporal and spiritual. The former affect especially the body; the latter the soul. Is the soul of far greater value than the body? Then the plagues which are fatal to it are more to be deprecated than those which hurt the mortal body. In what age, and in what country, had infidelity ever a more ex-

tensive spread or a more powerful sway, than it now has among the inhabitants of the American states? How enslaved to the basest appetites; and how callous to every religious and moral obligation are multitudes among us! What paved the way for the introduction and spread of moral and penal evil in our world? The answer is obvious; the infidelity and scepticism of our original parents, and their subsequent indulgence of an unbridled appetite and criminal propensity. Review the history of the Jews; revolve the annals of the world; and they will furnish you with innumerable instances of the happy consequences of the cultivation of religion and morality, on the one hand; and, on the other, the baneful effects of the prevalence of impiety and vice. What a contrast do we see between the state of the Romans during the long and happy reign of Numa Pompilius, and the situation of that great people under the reigns of many of his predecessors and successors? Read the history of the decline and downfall of the four great empires, the Abyssinian, the Babylonian, the Grecian, and the Roman. Investigate the causes of those direful revolutions; and the coincidence between the vices which preceded them, and those which predomi-

nate among ourselves, will strike you more forcibly than I have language to express.

How successful in the invention of crimes and modes of sinning, has the depravity of human nature been? What diversified and complicated scenes of guilt have been discovered? In what various forms and shapes has every moral precept been violated? Can any new mode of offending Heaven and ruining souls be found out? Is it possible to make the smallest addition to the long black catalogue? How many practicably declare to all around them, that they neither fear God nor regard man? The religious duties they owe to their Maker, and the relative duties they owe to their neighbour, they treat with equal contempt. Is my account of the vices of the age exaggerated? Is it the effect of fanaticism? No. He must be *a great stranger in* our *Israel*, that does not know the truth, and perceive the justness, of the description; dismal, horrid as it is. In many, prejudice and interest blind the judgment; sordid avarice shuts up the avenues of sensibility; and seems to extinguish every sympathetic and tender feeling. To my serious strains the ear is shut; and the heart impenetrable; while the idle fopperies and the foolish

dreams of the romance or the novel, find the readiest access and the kindest entertainment. The reader is all attention. He is amused, he is delighted, he is in raptures. Delusory prospects, fanciful scenes open to him, with which he is, at once, astonished and delighted. Every thing he sees is marvellous. Every house is a palace or a cottage; every man an angel or a fiend; every woman a goddess or a fury. Here the scene momentarily varies; and assumes new appearances. Now it is a dreary castle full of spectres and ghosts, robbers and murderers. Next moment it is a beautiful villa or a splendid palace, resounding with the notes of festivity and joy. Now it exhibits the appearance of a loathsome dungeon, with rattling chains and chilly damps. Suddenly it is changed into a beautiful garden with fragrant flowers, blushing parterres, inviting fruits, and melodious songs; by which the juvenile mind is entangled and infatuated. Then succeed adventures, intrigues, rapes, duels, elopements, darts, sighs, groans, armies, murders. Debauchery, in this way, assumes the form and name of gallantry.—Revenge is termed honour. Thus the destruction of the human soul is accomplished; the arts of seduction are practised, and female innocence is ruined. Thus libertines endea-

vour, too successfully endeavour, to emancipate mankind from the shackles of religion and morality. This they call freedom. Fatal freedom! In this manner, unhappy for themselves, and numbers of their fellow creatures, they attempt to explode revealed religion, as the quintessence of absurdity; the immateriality and immortality of the soul; and a future state of rewards and punishments. Setting aside religion, they debase themselves to a level with the brutes; and, like them, abandon themselves to every species of sensuality.

Do such principles and such practices contribute to the advancement of their happiness? No. Of all men they are the most miserable. Their minds are necessarily filled and tortured with discordant, contradictory notions of the eternity of matter, the concourse of atoms, a self-created mind, the government of chance, and a future state of retribution. Thus are they in a state of almost uninterrupted solicitude, anxiety, and misery; from which they know not how to extricate themselves. Such sceptical ideas seem, in former times, to have been confined to a few. Now they are become common, popular, and fashionable. While infidelity prevails, no wonder that both re-

ligious and moral duties are neglected. I asked already, and I cannot forbear to ask again, In what did moral evil originate? The answer still is, infidelity, infidelity. The first human pair hesitated concerning the prohibitory precept, and, therefore, presumed to transgress it. While our modern infidels and sceptics discredit or even doubt the authority of that law, which enjoins the worship of God, and justice and benevolence to our neighbour, they may be expected to disregard both the former and the latter.

To contribute my mite towards the suppressing of the growing and alarming evils of these times; especially that injustice and oppression, which one part of the human race suffer from another, of which I have had the painful experience, I have ventured to take the pen in my hand. Whatever reception my performances may have from readers of another class, I am confident of countenance and encouragement from the benevolent and humane, the considerate and candid part of mankind. Did my readers know the interruptions and disadvantages under which I have laboured; especially in preparing, for the press, my greater work, the Poem on Slavery; and were they fully acquainted with my disinterested mo-

tives and views, I am morally certain I should escape censure, and experience sympathy from them.

Sensible am I, that the iniquity and impolicy of slavery have been sufficiently exhibited by a number of judicious and learned writers. But I must say, few, if any, who have written on this subject, have had the means of information concerning it, which providence has put in my power; having been, I say it with deep remorse, a considerable time unhappily engaged in the infamous business. I write not what I have read or heard, but what I saw; and, to my shame I must add, what I did; for in the tragical scene I was an actor. Besides, almost all the publications on this interesting subject are written in prose. And it is an undoubted fact, that many will read a performance in poetry; who could not be induced to peruse the same materials, however well arranged and digested, in prose. Various, indeed, is the taste of mankind; but that many, especially of the younger sort, are fond of poetical compositions, cannot be doubted. Many can more easily retain in their memories a metrical, than a prosaic composition. I have, therefore, with no small labour, arranged my work in the form of a tragi-

cal poem. May it accomplish the salutary purposes for which I composed and intend now to publish it. Did Lucretius write and publish a poem for the propagation of the Epicurean philosophy? And shall not I use my utmost efforts in the noble cause of religion, morality, and freedom? Actuated by motives of humanity, have individuals wrote against slavery, merely from verbal information; and shall I be silent? God forbid. Under the influence of that diffidence and pride, which are incident to my nature, I have procrastinated my work for years. But, solicitous not to stifle conviction any longer; not to continue guilty of the basest ingratitude to my best friend and benefactor, I am now resolved, for the conviction of oppressors and the relief of the oppressed, to publish my poem as soon as circumstances will permit. Sincerely can I say, so far as I know my own heart, my motives are disinterested, generous, and pure.

Were I not to use my most vigorous exertions to alleviate, if possible, the miseries of some of my fellow creatures, who are in a state of servitude and wretchedness, that is no less disgraceful than painful to human nature; I should only live to be lashed by a guilty conscience; and, in the

end, die under the consuming frowns of heaven, and the heavy curses of my fellow mortals, whose miseries I have enhanced; and to whom I am under every obligation, if I could, to relieve and comfort. What I write is the result of long research, and seventeen years observation and experience. Besides travelling among the Russians, the Prussians, the Danes, the Spaniards, and the English, I have been in Cayenne, Surinam, Demarara, and several other parts of South America. I have also visited almost all the West-India islands; the bay of Honduras, Bermuda, and the Bahama islands; not to mention the different parts of the United States which I have visited: eight years have I spent in Africa and the West-Indies. *I speak*, therefore, *what I* do assuredly *know*, and *testify what* with my eyes *I have seen*. If I can do nothing for the relief of my suffering brethren, I am determined, at any rate, to exonerate my own conscience.

A

PRELIMINARY ESSAY

ON THE

OPPRESSION

OF THE

EXILED SONS OF AFRICA.

CHAP. I.

General View of the Slavery of Modern Times.

I AM now entering on a painful task. Callous in the extreme must the person be, who is not hurt by the most cursory recital of the cruelties and barbarities, under which the unhappy exiled Africans languish. In the estimation of mankind, liberty ever is of incalculable value. To men of every country and of every complexion, the yoke of bondage must be galling. The wretched Africans are not merely enslaved; they are, in instances innumerable, oppressed, and starved, and tormented, and murdered. That the accounts of these cruelties, which have already been published, and I am to bring forward in the se-

quel of this essay, and in my poem, should to many appear incredible, does not in the least surprise me. They really seem almost to exceed belief. Had I not seen with my own eyes what I am to tell, I probably should have found some difficulty in giving full credit to the report of such shocking barbarities; barbarities which debase human nature far beneath the brutal. And what is any thing I have seen, in comparison of what the omnipresent and omniscient God beholds! But, while I recollect the tragical scenes at which I have been present, and in which, alas! I performed my part, my soul recoils; tremor seizes my whole frame; I can hardly restrain my knees from smiting one against another, while my blood hangs shivering in my veins.

Such was my abhorrence at the iniquitous scenes, which duty obliged me to witness, that I voluntarily relinquished, from conscientious motives, and in opposition to the advice and persuasion of my friends, both of the religious and irreligious character, a lucrative situation in Antigua, and threw myself on that all-beneficent providence, which hitherto has provided for me, and, I trust, will provide for me in all time coming. Though I treated the slaves un-

der my charge with some degree of lenity, the recollection of my situation, as a slave-dealer, and a West-India planter, still excites in my breast the most painful sensations, and pierces me with many sorrows.

Often, with a mixture of sensations and feelings, which it is not easy to express, do I recollect the beauty and fertility of Africa; the humanity and hospitality I have experienced from its inhabitants; and the base returns I have made to them; distributing among them toys, and trinkets, and ardent spirits, to purchase slaves, or, if they were not ready, to provoke the different nations to go to war, in order to procure them for us. Never, to my latest moments, can I forget the beauties and luxuriance of that picturesque country, and the happiness of its inhabitants. Whithersoever I turned my eyes, it had the appearance of a terrestrial Paradise. What lofty trees, crowned with never-fading green; vernal groves, fragrant flowers, dewy lawns, limpid streams, enchanting landscapes; and a thousand other beauties! After all my travels, in both the old and new worlds, I do not hesitate to say, this is the most beautiful and the most fertile country I ever beheld. When I have seen its happy inha-

bitants reclining under the lofty palm-trees, I could not forbear to think of the first human pair in their paradisical residence. What simplicity in their dress, and in their manners! How innocent, benevolent, and hospitable! When I traversed their woods, and, on a certain occasion, a particular adventure placed me fully in their power, they, in the kindest manner, invited me to their homely habitations, and treated me, not as an enemy, but as a friend; not as a stranger, but as a relative. Yet, horrid thought! tormenting reflection! this very people, in midst of remonstrances, and lamentations, and shrieks, sufficient to pierce the mountains and the rocks, I have torn and dragged from their happy country, and from their nearest and dearest relatives and connexions. The dishonourable, base methods we used to accomplish our infernal designs, are a disgrace to human nature. Every sentiment of honesty and honour we seemed totally to have forgot. Day and night my mind continues to be haunted by the image of those unhappy victims to our avarice and ambition. Methinks, I now see them dragged, with the most vigorous reluctance and resistance on their part, from their beloved habitations, on which they cannot forbear to look back; and, while they look back, tears

flow in copious streams down their furrowed cheeks; and their heaving breasts sufficiently indicate the inexpressible anguish which they feel within.

No sex, no station, no age is spared. Does the hungry lion pity his mangled prey? No. No more are those unhappy beings pitied. Children are torn from their distracted parents; parents from their screaming children; wives from their frantic husbands; husbands from their violated wives; brothers from their loving sisters; sisters from their affectionate brothers. See them collected in flocks, and, like a herd of swine, driven to the ships. They cry, they struggle, they resist; but all in vain. No eye pities; no hand helps. Into the hold of the vessel they are forced. Their limbs, already wounded and lacerated, and bloody, are loaded with heavy chains. Such numbers are compressed within so small a space, that the air almost immediately becomes pestilential; from the putrid effluvia of which they contract diseases, which, in a very short time, terminate in death. What effect has this on the traders, and crews of the vessels? Does it occasion remorse and grief? Not the smallest. The corps is, with the utmost indifference, thrown

overboard, to feed the monsters of the deep. Not one tear; not one sigh, on the occasion. Are the sorrowing wretches treated with any greater humanity than before? Quite the reverse. The recollection of what I have witnessed on such occasions cannot fail to shock my readers. The survivors have I seen severely flogged, for no reason, that I could perceive, but to gratify the infernal malevolence of those diabolical tyrants, who now had them perfectly in their power, and seemed to sport with their misery. To those, who are in a state of such debility and sickness, that they are utterly unable to walk, it is not unprecedented or even uncommon to apply scalding water. Apply scalding water! For what crime, for what purpose, is the miserable being tormented in this manner? For no crime, for no purpose, but to force him to move, while his strength will not permit him. Often, not once, or twice, but often, have I seen the sick and the dying, in the hold, crying most bitterly for a drop of water to quench their burning thirst; but crying in vain. These, and ten thousand other sufferings, which the brevity of my plan forbids me to introduce, befal the poor slaves, every year, in their passage from Africa to the West-Indies. According to a calculation made by well-informed persons, it

is supposed, that of those, who are annually transported from Africa to the West-India settlements, not less than thirty thousand die, I ought rather to have said, are murdered, on their passage. I might add the thousands, who annually die during the *seasoning* time, in the West-Indies.

On their arrival in the islands, they are exposed to every insult and abuse, that can befal the most wretched of human beings. Surgeons, called to inspect them, examine men and women enrirely naked, more minutely than a butcher does the cattle he intends to purchase. The poor female slaves, innocent and unaccustomed to debauchery, are ready to sink with shame and grief. Like so many horses or hogs, they are driven to market, and sold to the highest bidder. Whether he be a humane or inhumane man; whether he will treat them with lenity or severity; is no question at all with the sellers. He has them, in consequence of the purchase, entirely at his mercy; and the tender mercies of the masters and managers of West-India slaves, God knows, are cruel.

The sale is now over; the slaves are assigned to their respective purchasers; and separated never to see one another again on earth. Is care taken, that husbands and their wives, parents and

their children, shall always be sold to one master? Far from it. This would be an instance of humanity and compassion, which we must not expect in a slave-trader. Compassion in a slave-trader! To suppose any such thing, is absurd in the extreme. Light and darkness are not more opposed to one another, than the slave-trader and compassion. A very small degree of the latter utterly disqualifies a person for the former. Were near relatives sold to one master, and permitted, during their captivity, to enjoy each other's company and friendship; this circumstance would be no inconsiderable alleviation of their misery. The separation of the loving husband and his beloved wife; the affectionate parent and the dutiful child, is one of the tenderest and most moving scenes at which I ever was present. As I do not know how to express this cruel and painful separation better than I have done in my manuscript poem, I will take the liberty to introduce the following lines from that work.

'Twas now the morning of the fatal day;
The universe in solemn sadness lay,
The murmurs of the woodland monsters die,
The morning star ascends the glowing sky;
Thro' all the verdant groves a silence reigns;
The flocks and herds lie stretch'd along the plains.

When, lo, Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Fring'd with her orient light the dewy lawn.
And then bright Sol, all beauteous to behold,
Tipt the green mountains with a gleam of gold.
While from their dens the slaves are driv'n along;
And scourg'd to market with the knotted thong.
Like flocks of sheep, alas! they're driven about,
The drudge and scorn of an insulting rout.
They move along with pensive steps, and slow;
And, as they move, the tears spontaneous flow.
With red-hot irons now they brand the crew;
While, lo, the briny tears descend anew.
In vain they strive ten thousand things to say;
In vain they strive, for groans stop up the way.
But speaking tears the want of words supply;
And the full soul bursts copious from each eye.
They strive their tyrants' pity to command:
The ruffians hear, but will not understand.
To what submissions, in what low degree
Are mortals plac'd, dire avarice, by thee!
Once more they strive, by melting tears, to move
Those tyrants' hearts to sympathetic love;
Try all their suppliant arts, and try again,
To move their pity; but they try in vain.
No hope the poor unhappy creatures find;
In body tortur'd, and distress'd in mind.
They curse their natal, and their nuptial hour:
Tears flow amain in one unceasing show'r,

And peals of groans in mighty columns rise,
Ascend the heav'ns, and thunder in the skies.
Pierc'd with the noise, the wretched babes, in vain,
With tender cries, repeat the sound again.
And, at the mournful call, the mothers prest
Their starting infants, screaching, to the breast.
They scream with dread, to hear the dire alarms,
And shrink for shelter in their mothers' arms.
When, lo, a matron wearied heaven with pray'r;
While on the precipice of black despair.
The wretched mother then embrac'd her son,
First shed a tender tear, and thus began—
Alas! my poor unhappy boy, she cries,
While silver sorrows trickle from her eyes;
And have I borne thee, with a mother's throes,
To suffer thus? Nurs'd thee for future woes?
How short the space allow'd my boy to view!
How short the space; and fill'd with anguish too!
And, as she speaks, the tears pour down again;
A cloud of grief o'erwhelm the weeping train.
They view their foes, and sicken at the sight;
In bitterness of soul, they long for night.
Again she cries, These floods of grief restrain;
Vengeance will soon o'ertake the Christian train.
Let us be patient, and let us prepare
To move great Jove, our heav'nly sire, by pray'r.
Our wrongs to him are known; to him belong
The stranger's cause, and the revenge of wrong.

When friendly death our woe-worn frames shall free;
And take our abject souls from misery,
Our ghosts, all stain'd with blood, shall daily cry
To heav'n, for vengeance, and the blushing sky.
If we, for latent guilt, be doom'd to woes;
The crimes we learned from our Christian foes.
Our ghosts shall follow them thro' earth and sky;
And, wrapt in flames, will blaze tremendously;
Flash in their faces, and for justice cry.
Our vengeful spirits shall enhance their woe,
Enjoy their anguish, and their torments know;
And smile with transport in the shades below!
These words were all, though much she had to say;
And scarce these few, for tears, could force their way.
Trembling with agonizing fear and woe,
The children view each bloody Christian foe;
Cling to their parents with a close embrace;
With kisses wander o'er each tearful face.
The scramble o'er, the horrid sale's now done;
The slaves but find their sorrows just begun.
To separate the hapless weeping throng,
The cow-skin hero wields the knotted thong.
And, as he wields, applies the dreadful blow;
Whilst streams of blood in purple torrents flow.
Smit with the signs, which all their fears explain,
The strict embrace exchang'd, their knees sustain
Their children's weight no more; their arms alone
Support them, round their bleeding parents thrown.

They faint, they sink, by dreadful woes opprest.
Each heart weeps blood, and anguish rends each
breast.
With fear and cruel pain they stood amaz'd;
First up to heav'n, then on their foes they gaz'd,
And, as they gaze, the pearly sorrows flow,
In grief profound, unutterable woe.
All stain'd with blood, a weeping mother prest
Her dear, dear trembling infant to her breast.
Then, shrieking, to her wretched husband springs,
With her poor babe, and on his bosom hangs,
Kissing his lips, his cheeks, his weeping eyes;
While tears descend to earth, and groans ascend
the skies.
Quick through his bleeding heart her sorrows ran;
Grief seiz'd his soul; and wrapt up all the man.
Deep, deep he sigh'd; and, when he sigh'd, he shed
A flood of big round tears; and thus he said—
Imperial Jove, thou sov'reign of the skies,
Avenge our wrongs, our mighty wrongs, he cries.
Our wrongs, the hero said, and strove to say;
But sighs and mighty groans stopt up the way.
Now furious rage the mournful chief inspires,
And all his soul just indignation fires.
Amid his hapless family he stands,
And lifts to heav'n his eyes and spreading hands.
Oppress'd with grief, and raving with despair,
With groans, prefers to Jove his mental prayer:

And, while he thus his wrathful prayer prefer'd,
His wrathful prayer th' almighty sov'reign heard.
And, lo, the chief stood still in grief profound,
And fix'd his eyes with anguish on the ground,
Majestically sad. The hosts on high,
With gazing saints, lean forward from the sky,
From clouds, all fring'd with gold, their bodies bent;
With eager eyes, they view the sad event;
They view the hero's wrongs, the foe's delight,
They view his wrongs, and loath the hateful sight:
Then veil their eyes, refulgent to behold,
With their white wings, all tipt with downy gold;
To whom, while blushing, from the chief they look,
The sire of men, the sire of angels spoke.
Around his brows a brilliant cloud was spread,
And floods of glory flam'd above his head.
Like mighty thunders, lo, his voice he rear'd,
Hosts dropt their harps, and worshipp'd as they heard.
With awe, they see the checquer'd lightnings play,
And turn their eye-balls from the golden ray.
Thus, in the starry courts, enthron'd on high,
Sat the majestic monarch of the sky;
A robe, beyond the thought of mortals white,
He wore, all fring'd with stars and golden light;
Bright azure gilds the arches of his brows,
And on his cheeks empyreal purple glows.

Around his em'rald throne arch-angels meet,
And smiling seraphs worship at his feet.
Where'er, serene, he turns his dazling eyes,
There's peace, there's joy, there's love, there's paradise:
But if just anger reddens their mild beams,
All heav'n trembles, and the world's in flames.
Rank'd by degrees, in the supreme abode,
Bright cherubs, wond'ring, view th' immortal God.
Beneath his eye, the heav'ns, in full survey,
The spacious earth, and vast creation, lay.
He darts his eye, his piercing eye profound,
And looks majestically stern around;
And, with a single glance, the God surveys
The slaves, the ships, the navigable seas.
Again the sire of men his silence broke,
All heav'n, attentive, trembled as he spoke;
The stormy winds a solemn silence keep,
The curling waves lie level on the deep;
All æther trembled, while high heav'n was aw'd,
All nature reverenc'd th' immortal God.
His voice harmonious, thus Jehovah cries,
While anger sparkled in his awful eyes—
"Behold and blush, ye first-born of the skies,
Behold yon Christian hypocrites unjust,
Full of rage, rapine, cruelty, and lust;
T' enslave my sons, they propagate their sway,
Join fraud to force, and bear the spoils away.

Who, smooth of tongue, in purpose insincere,
Hide fraud in smiles, while death is harbour'd
there:
From tender husbands, weeping brides they tare;
They proffer peace, yet wage unnat'ral war:
Whilst still they hope we'll wink at their deceit,
And call their villainies the crimes of fate.
Unjust mankind, whose will's created free,
Charge all their guilt on absolute decree;
To us they pray, to us their sins translate,
And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate.
The Christian rulers in their ruin join,
And truth is scorn'd! By all the perjur'd line,
Their crimes transcend, all crimes since Noah's
flood;
Their guilty glories soon shall set in blood.
They swear by heav'n, then spill their brother's
gore;
Lo, view my creatures bleeding on the shore:
Shall heav'n be false, because revenge is slow?
No—we prepare to strike the fiercer blow:
Sure is our justice. They shall feel their woe!
The day shall come, that great avenging day,
When all their honours in the dust shall lay;
Ourself shall pour dire judgments on their land.
Thus have we said, and what we say shall stand.
Their cruelty for justice daily cries,
And pulls reluctant vengeance from the skies;

Such hypocritic foes their toils shall know,
And ev'ry hand shall work its share of woe.
How av'rice fires their minds, ye heav'n-born
train;
Behold our sacred gospel preach'd in vain;
Behold us disobey'd; what dire alarms
Inflame their souls to slaughter, blood, and arms.
Their dreadful end will wing its fatal way,
Nor need their rage anticipate the day:
Let him who tempts me dread the dire abode,
And know th' Almighty is a jealous God.
Still they may charge on us their own offence,
And call their woes the crimes of providence;
But they themselves their miseries create,
They perish by their folly, not their fate."
Then, by himself, the gracious monarch swore
To save th' oppressed, and relieve the poor;
To bless the orphan, punish lawless lust,
And lay each haughty tyrant in the dust.
Destroy th' oppressor; aid the righteous cause;
Avenge the breach of heav'n's eternal laws.
Then, lo, he gave the great tremendous nod,
With his bright head, the sanction of the God.
Thro' heav'n, thro' earth, the strong concussion
rolls,
The golden planets trembled to the poles;
That moment thunders rattle, lightnings fly,
Black clouds and double darkness veil the sky;

The rough rocks roar, tumultuous boil the waves,
The tides come roaring through the rumbling caves:
The wild winds whistle, and the storms arise,
Lash the salt surge, and bluster in the skies:
The wave behind mounts on the wave before,
And drives the mountain billows to the shore.
While the unhappy exiles mournful stand,
Boys, babes, and dames, a miserable band;
The wretched train of shrieking mothers bound,
Behold their captive children trembling round:
They strive to ease their children's grief again,
But still repeat the moving theme in vain.
Scarce can the whip release each grasping hand;
Like sculptur'd monumental grief they stand.
Compassion then touch'd my tyrannic soul;
And down my cheek a tear that moment stole.
Then, nor till then, I pitied! though their foe,
Struck with the sight of such unequall'd woe,
Swift, and more swift, unbidden sorrows rise;
And, in large drops, ran trickling from my eyes.
Now parted by the whip, with doleful sound,
The children speak their agonies profound.
Dissolv'd in tears, they round their parents hung;
And their young arms in early sorrows wrung.
Pierc'd with such grief, the bleeding youths, in vain,
Fly back, for refuge, to their sires again;

Complain with moving tears, and moving cries,
And beg for aid with eloquence of eyes.
Lost, to the soft endearing ties of life,
The social names of daughter, parent, wife,
The frantic mother hears the well-known sound—
Can no redress, she cries to heaven, be found?
Can mortals give or feel a deeper wound?
Ye savage Christians! now your rage is spent;
Your malice can no greater pains invent.
Parental tenderness, and *kindred blood!*
Your force till now I little undersood.
Oh that the base tyrannic Christian band,
Had never touch'd my dear paternal land,
O that I were some monster of the wood;
Or bird by land, or fish that swims the flood!
Unthoughtful then my sorrows I could bear;
Nor sin, nor groan, nor weep, nor sigh, nor fear.
While thus she speaks, she views the golden light,
And purple skies; but sickens at the sight.
Her grief approximating to despair;
Thrice from her head she tore the sable hair;
Thrice beat her breast with unexampled fear;
Then looking up with streaming eyes, she cries,
Thus sobbing, to the Monarch of the skies.
Immortal Sire, good, gracious, and divine,
In might supreme, in majesty sublime;
Shall Christians, cruel Christians, still prevail?
And shall thy promise to thy creatures fail?

And shall they, shall they still increase our woe?
And dye our lands with purple as they go?
Rise in thy wrath, almighty Maker, rise;
Behold our grievous wrongs with gracious eyes.
Oh, save my valiant friends, the bold and brave,
Their wives abus'd, their bleeding infants save.
Oh! see them force the injur'd maid away;
With sons, sires, wives, an undistinguish'd prey.
While wives and daughters serve promiscuous lust,
Their sires and husbands bite the bloody dust.
To count our wrongs demands ten thousand tongues;
An angel's voice, and adamantine lungs.
While thus she prays, weeps, groans, complains in vain,
The ruffians whip her from the place again.
Thus the sweet nightingale scared from her nest,
By cruel boys, with grief and care opprest;
She hovers round and round the much lov'd place,
And strives, but strives in vain to save her race.
With melancholy notes she fills the plains,
And with melodious harmony complains;
And tells the cruel, listless boys her pains.
They heave round stones, that labour up the skies,
To kill the mother as the mother flies.
Lo, tyrants *thus* administer relief;
Add wrong to wrong, and wretchedness to grief.

And oft, alas! with hypocritic air,
Condemn the crimes in which they deeply share.
Hear this, ye tyrants, distant nations, hear,
And learn the judgments of high heav'n to fear.
Yes, ages yet unborn hereby shall see,
Their predecessors' guilt and tyranny.
These Christians thirst for gold; while fierce in arms,
Their cruel breasts no tender pity warms.
And if the heathens should one virtuous find,
Name the slave-traders; they will curse the kind.
Deceitful gold! how high will Christians rise
In latent guilt, to gain the glittering prize?
Hence sacred faith, and public trust are sold,
And villains barter Adam's sons for gold.
Hence tyrants rule; the scorn of honest fame;
And Virtue's chang'd to monumental shame.
Shall the oppressed race of human kind,
From heav'n above, nor earth, no justice find?
Can bloody carnage please Jehovah's sight?
Or flaming war reflect a grateful light?
No mortal woe impartial heav'n relieves,
Peace, joy, life, love, relenting mercy gives.
Impell'd by love, he promis'd to the poor,
To hear their pray'rs, nor drive from mercy's door.
Compel'd by truth he will his word fulfil,
Save the oppress'd, and do is sovereign will.

He will redress his creature's wrongs, tho' late;
Thus has he spoke; and what he spake, is fate:
And then the tyrants of mankind shall bend,
Their honours vanish, and their glories end.
For come it will, that dreadful day replete,
With penal sanctions, and tremendous fate.
Then tyrants, tho' on golden thrones, will bleed,
And ruffians too, to mighty woes decreed.
Whilst tyrants punish with an iron rod,
Oppress, destroy—their dreadful scourge is God.
He views their guilt with flaming eyes around,
That flash with rage, with mighty rage profound.
And ev'n the sons of freedom prove unjust,
Alike in cruelty, alike in lust?
Them shall the muse to infamy consign;
Despis'd, abhorr'd; the theme of tragic rhyme.
Those barb'rous villains spread consuming death,
The name of freedom withers at their breath.
Virtue disrob'd, infernal vice aspires;
And weeping liberty and truth retires.
Laurels that should fair Virtue deck alone,
To systematic hypocrites are thrown.
Their nature, and their nation they disgrace;
And stamp with sable signatures their race.
Republicans will suffer in their shame;
And e'en the best that bears the noble name.
A hypocrite, when once to sin inclin'd,
All hell cannot produce so fierce a fiend.

Wide o'er the world their character has spread;
Disgrac'd their country, and disgrac'd the dead,
Who fought for freedom, and for freedom bled.
Their hypocritic villainy proclaim:
Oh, sing their guilt, my muse,—inglorious fame!
For yet more woes their tragic acts inspire,
T' attune with energetic verse the mournful lyre.

So far are the inhuman tyrants from paying any proper regard to those endearing attachments, which cansanguinity forms, that instances occur, in which they seem to consider natural affection, the want of which sinks a man beneath a brute, as a crime. A striking instance, I recollect to have witnessed in Grenada. A sucking infant was, with more than brutal barbarity, forced from its mother's breasts, to return to her no more; and, because she struggled to keep it, which natural affection irresistibly prompted her to do, she was flogged with great severity.

Let us now follow the wretched slaves to the estates for which they are destined; and enquire into the treatment they receive from their new masters. Is the enquiry officious? No. This is no private business; it is the public cause of humanity, in which all mankind are deeply con-

cerned. Here a scene opens, at which human nature shudders. The first object that presents itself to those now slaves, probably is, one, or it may be, a number of their countrymen, in chains and fetters, and in that dreadful situation, confined to hard labour. I will leave you to conceive, I will not undertake to express their feelings on this occasion, to a degree, of which we can form no adequate conception, must they be shocked. It is no uncommon occurrence for these unhappiest of beings, in the above dismal condition, to be, by their relentless task-masters, scourged with rigour, because they do not perform more work, when they are labouring to the very utmost of their strength. Long after they have undergone this punishment have I seen the marks of the scourges on their lacerated bodies. Their punishments, unhappy creatures! are various, as well as severe. I have seen them, shocking to relate! forced and confined to hard labour, with an iron instrument of such a construction, that it went round their faces, and, projecting into their mouths, pressed down their tongues in such a manner, that they could neither speak, nor eat, nor drink. By this cruel machine, an invention worthy of the tormentors of the human race, have I seen them punished for the most fri-

volous offence; the pettiest faults that can be imagined. Their merciless oppressors seem to enjoy an execrable pleasure in acts of the most unprovoked and wanton cruelty.

Of long duration, as well as of a grievous nature, is the oppressive labour of these wretched creatures. Long eighteen, out of the twenty-four hours, are they naked, half-starved, nay, almost dead with oppression, grief, and despair, kept under the lash. At the earliest dawn, they are alarmed at the dreadful sound of the plantation-bell; and still more alarming report of the merciless driver's whip. A delay after this call, even of the most momentary duration, incurs inevitable punishment. Naked, and hungry, and dejected to the lowest degree, they go, rather are drawn, to labour, which abuse they cannot long support. Speedily wasted with oppression, grief, and despair, they, at last, come under the lash; which calls, but now calls in vain, to a renewal of their former toils.

To these wretchedest of mortals, how tedious the hours! how slow the sun's descent! But does their daily labour terminate with the setting of the sun? No, a part, and a most grievous part of it, still remains to be done. Instead of re-

tiring to eat and to sleep, of which their labour occasions so much need, they are compelled to go over the fallow ground, on the plantations, and even the mountains, in search of grass for their masters' cattle. When they have picked up, blade by blade, what they can find of the scarce article, they retire to their wretched huts. But, having their corn to grind and prepare for supper, they can seldom lay down to rest sooner than midnight; and when, at this late hour, they do lay down, it often is with an earnest prayer, that they may awake and rise no more. Unfeeling, indeed, must he be, that does not pity this hapless race of mortals.

But how are they fed, and how are they clothed? Is their food, in quantity and quality, proportioned to the extent and nature of their labour? Far is this from being the case. The usual allowance of food, for a full-grown slave, on the first estate I lived on, was no more than six pints of corn a week; without the addition of a grain of salt, or any other thing; except at Christmas, when each is allowed six pounds of animal food. On some estates they are allowed no clothing; no, not so much as is sufficient to cover their nakedness. In this case they have no alternative, but either to steal or go naked. If,

in any the smallest instance, they steal to supply their most pressing wants, they are unavoidably subjected to a cruel punishment. How often does a poor slave, pressed by the cravings of hunger, which he is unable to resist, receive, from a savage manager, a hundred lashes, for breaking a very few of the canes, which, with the labour of his hands and the sweat of his brow, he planted? With what resistless force does that equitable and humane Jewish law, *thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn*, come home to every feeling person's heart in this case? For offences still less, if possible, have I seen the unhappy slaves scourged in the cruellest manner. One slave, to escape the fury of his cruel master, plunged into a copper of boiling sugar, and immediately expired. For the most trifling faults, if they can, with any degree of propriety, be called faults, they sometimes have their ears cut off. One I saw, in the most cruel manner, cut and mangled with a cutlass. An old woman, bowed down with years, I saw flogged, in the severest manner, purely to gratify the caprice of a cruel tyrant. If we attempt to paint, in proper colours, the enormity of such conduct, we immediately labour under a penury of language; all language is defective and inadequate. Such monsters we leave to the righteous judgment of heaven. Is not the situation of slaves, in instances now ad-

duced, incomparably worse than the condition of the very brutes? Often do the latter commit depredations. Are they, on this account, tortured? No; far less put to death. There are not wanting instances, in which planters have given orders to their watchmen, not to bring home slaves they might find breaking canes, but to *hide* them, as the phrase is, that is, kill and bury them privately. In this manner many are murdered, and murdered with impunity. But shall the perpetrators of such attrocious crimes pass for ever unpunished? It is impossible. The blood of the murdered Africans cries from the earth; and the cry has already ascended to heaven. There is a period approaching, at which the *Lord shall come to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; and then shall the earth disclose her blood, and no more cover* or conceal *her slain.*

The brutal owners of the unhappy slaves seem to consider them as property which they may use, and of which they may dispose, in any manner they please; without responsibility either to God or man. A poor female slave, the savage master seems to caress, for his own unworthy purposes, in the evening, and in the morning he scourges her for the most trivial fault. She is a slave to him; and he is a greater slave to his

own unruly, beastly passions. Miserable man! Miserable is every one that is in his power.

Having had occasion to mention the female part of this servile race, a question naturally occurs—How are the female slaves treated during a state of pregnancy? Do they, in any degree, experience the indulgences, which such a situation indispensably requires? No, no. What! Does not their pregnancy exempt them, at least in part, from hard labour? No, from the commencement to the end of it, they are kept even in what is called the field gang, at the hard labour of hoeing, rather plowing, the land, on which the sugar cane is to be planted. The unhappy consequence is, numerous abortions happen among them. For the sake of humanity, I am extremely sorry to add, that I have seen some women in this condition, even during their ninth month, beaten, and afterwards confined in a dungeon, for faults of the most trivial kind. How is the unhappy woman accommodated during the time of her delivery? She is obliged to bring forth her tender offspring in a hut, at once dark and damp. Her fare, in this delicate situation, consists of a small quantity of horse-bean, corn, or corn-meal. The fatal effect of such inhumane usage, is the death of thousands of infants by convulsions and other

diseases. Unhappy women! Unhappy children! The latter I retract. Happily are such infants delivered from the misery, to which they must otherwise have been unavoidably subjected. A few weeks after she is delivered, the unhappy mother is, by a cruel and peremptory order, called to her former labour. Her unhappy infant she must fasten to her back, or lay in a furrow; exposed to a scorching sun, or heavy rains, without shelter or cover, except it be the skin of a kid, or, if it can be procured, a rag of cloth. For the support of this wretched infant, the still more wretched mother has but a small extra allowance until it be weaned. Nor, during the time of suckling her infant, has she any indulgence whatever, except it be an exemption from picking grass in the evening. This, indeed, is no inconsiderable mitigation of her misery. For, in consequence of the scarcity of grass, this foraging business is the unhappy occasion of the murder of numberless slaves. It often happens, that when these forlorn wretches are unable to procure their bundle, or quantity of grass, in time, they flee, to escape immediate punishment, and hide themselves in the woods, or the mountains. But woeful is the punishment that inevitably awaits them as soon as they can be found!

Numerous and fatal are the effects of this anti-christian and irrational, inhuman and impolitic, treatment of the wretched slaves in the West-Indies; not to say any thing, at present, of the usage of slaves in South and North America, and other parts of the world. How obvious and easy is the remedy of that evil, which, to every man of feeling, is an object of detestation, the commerce between Africa and America; the buying of human beings in the former, and the selling them in the latter, as if men and brutes were on a level? Were the slaves in the West-Indies treated as humanity requires and Christianity directs; would the planters treat them with one half the attention, tenderness, and care, they bestow on their horses; future importations from Africa, as unnecessary, would be happily prevented. Abortions and untimely deaths among the infants of the enslaved Africans, would become, in a great measure, unknown. Their progeny would be sufficiently numerous to cultivate their masters' estates; the expence of purchasing imported slaves saved; the masters would be better served; the slaves more happy; the friends of religion, liberty, and humanity would rejoice; and a long train of other glorious consequences would follow. The Euro-
fatal effects, and even our own southern states,
of t assume a new appearance. Auspicious

change! May the all-wise disposer of human affairs hasten it!

I have related only a few of the countless instances of barbarity and cruelty which have come within the sphere of my own observation. Are any disposed to discredit, or even doubt, my narrative? To such I shall only say, at present, I have, in my custody, and am ready, if called upon, to produce attestations of my character, from persons of the first respectability in the island of Antigua. These certificates I shall probably publish, either along with these introductory remarks, or my Poem on Slavery. Is there, in my detail, any thing more incredible than what appeared in the evidence, which a number of gentlemen of undoubted integrity, who witnessed the horrid scenes they relate, gave at the bar of the British House of Commons, some years ago? An abstract of that evidence, which has been several years in the hands of the public, coincides, in all the leading particulars, with the account I have given, and confirms it beyond a possibility of doubt. A part of this abstract I shall, therefore, introduce.

This abstract the editor ushers into the world as follows:

"The respectable and increasing numbers of those, who, from motives of humanity, have concurred in rejecting the produce of West-India slavery, cannot but afford a subject of the sincerest joy to every friend of mankind. Even those who, from motives of interest, still favour and engage in the trade, have been obliged to be silent upon the injustice of first procuring the negroes, and have not had the hardiness to excuse or palliate the horrors of the middle passage. But still they assert, that the treatment the slaves meet with in the West-Indies, amply counterbalances their previous sufferings. They have not failed to extol a state of servitude as a happy asylum from African despotism; and calmly maintain, that the condition of the labouring poor in England is much harder than that of the negroes in the West-India islands. Upon this ground, the opposers of slavery are willing to meet its advocates; and the design of the following extracts is to enable the public to form an impartial and decisive judgment upon the subject.

"When a ship arrives at the port in the West-Indies, the slaves are exposed to sale, except those who are very ill; they being left in the yard to perish by disease or hunger. The healthy are disposed of by public auction, the sickly by scram-

ble. The sale by scramble is described thus—The ship being darkened by sails, the purchasers are admitted, who, rushing forward with the ferocity of brutes, seize as many slaves as they have occasion for. In none of the sales is any care taken to prevent the separation of relatives or friends; but husbands and wives, parents and children, are parted with as much unconcern as sheep and lambs by the butcher. *Abstract, pages* 46 *and* 47.

With respect to the general treatment of the slaves, Mr. Woolrich says, that he never knew the best master in the West-Indies to use his slaves so well as the worst master does his servants in England. *Ab. p.* 53.

To come to a more particular description of their treatment, it will be proper to divide them into different classes. The first consists of those who are bought for the use of the *plantation;* the second of the *in* and *out-door* slaves.

The field slaves are called out by day-light to their work; and if they are not in time there, they are flogged. When put to their work, they perform it in rows, and, without exception, under the whip of drivers; a certain number of whom are allotted to each gang. Such is the mode of their

labour. As to the time of it, they begin at day-light, and continue, with two intermissions, one for half an hour in the morning, the other for two hours at noon, till sun-set. Besides this, they are expected to range about and pick up grass for the cattle, either during their two hours *rest* at noon, or after the fatigues of the day.

Sir George Younge adds, that women were, in general, considered to miscarry through the cruel treatment they met with. Captain Hall says, that he has seen a woman, seated to give suck to her child, roused from that situation by a severe blow from the cart-whip. *Ab. p.* 53, 54, 55.

The above account of their labour is confined to that season of the year which is termed *out of crop.* In the crop-season the labour is of much longer duration. Mr. Dalrymple says, they are obliged to work as long as they can, that is, as long as they can keep awake, or stand. Sometimes, through excess of fatigue, they fall asleep, when it has happened to those who feed the mills, that their arms have been caught therein and torn off. Mr. Cook, on the same subject states, that they work, in general, eighteen hours out of the twenty-four. He knew a girl lose her hand by the mill, while feeding it; being overcome with sleep, she dropped against the rollers. *Ab. p.* 55, 56.

To this account of their labour it should be added, that it appears, that on some estates the slaves have Sunday and Saturday afternoons to themselves, on others Sunday only, and on others only Sunday in part. It appears again, that *in crop* on no estates have they more than Sunday for the cultivation of their own lands. *Ab.* 55, 56.

The next point to be considered is the food of the slaves, which appears to be subject to no rule. On some estates they are allowed lands, on others provisions, and others are allowed land and provisions jointly. The best allowance is at Barbadoes, of which the following is the account. The slaves in general, says General Tottenham, appeared to be ill fed: *each slave* had one pint of grain for twenty-four hours, and sometimes half a rotten herring. When the herrings were *unfit for the whites*, they were bought up *for the slaves.* Nine pints of corn, and one pound of salt fish, a week, is, in general, the utmost allowance. As a proof that some have not food enough, Mr. Cook says, that he has known both Africans and Creoles to eat the putrid carcases of animals *through want.* *Ab. p.* 57, 58.

As to the accusation of their being thieves, all the evidences maintain, that it was on account of their being *half-starved.* *Ab. p.* 58.

Concerning the *property* of the field-slaves, all the evidences agree in asserting, that they never heard of a field-slave amassing such a sum as enabled him to purchase his freedom. *Ab. p.* 60.

Having now described the state of the plantation, it will be proper to say a few words on that of the *in* and *out-door* slaves.

The *in-door* slaves are allowed to be better clothed, and fed, and less worked, than the plantation slaves. On account, however, of being constantly exposed to the cruelty and caprice of their masters and mistresses, their lives are rendered so wretched, that they not unfrequently wish to be sent to the field. The *out-door* slaves are por- [illegible] coopers, &c. who are obliged to bring their [illegible] certain sum every day.

The [illegible] ry punishments of the slaves are inflicted by t[illegible] hip and cow-skin. This, says Mr. Woolrich, i[illegible] generally made of plaited cow-skin, with a thick strong lash. It is so formidable an instrument, that some of the overseers can, by means of it, take the skin off a horse's back. He has seen them lay the marks of it into a deal-board. The incisions, according to Dr. Harrison, and the Dean of Middleham, are sometimes so deep, that you may lay your finger into the

wounds, and are such as no time can erase. As a farther proof of the *severity* of the punishments, the following facts are adduced. Mr. Fitzmaurice says, he has known pregnant women so severely whipped as to have miscarried in consequence of it. Mr. Davidson knew a negro girl die of a mortification of her wounds two days after whipping. Dr. Jackson says, he recollects a negro dying under the lash, or very soon after. *Ab. p.* 66, 67.

We now proceed to the *extraordinary* punishments, in the infliction of which, malice, fury, and all the worst passions of the human mind, rage with unbridled licence. Benevolence recoils at the dreadful perspective, and can scarce collect composure to disclose the bloody catalogue.

Captain Rap has known slaves severely punished, then put into the stocks, a cattle-chain of sixty or seventy pounds weight put on them, and a large collar round their necks, and a weight of fifty six pounds fastened to the chain when they were driven to the field. The collars are formed with two, three, or four projections, which hinder them from lying down to sleep. A negro man in Jamaica, says Dr. Harrison, was put on the picket

so long, as to cause a mortification of both his foot and hand, on suspicion of robbing his master, a public officer, of a sum of money, which, it afterwards appeared, *the master had taken himself.* Yet the master was privy to the punishment, and the slave had no compensation. *Ib. p.* 69.

Mr. Fitzmaurice says, it was a practice to drop hot lead upon the slaves, which he saw performed by a planter of the name of Rushie, in Jamaica. This same man, in three years, destroyed, by severity, forty negroes out of sixty. The rest of the conduct of this planter was suppressed by the House of Commons, as containing circumstances too terrible to be given to the world. An overseer on the estate where Mr. J. Turry was, in Grenada, threw a slave into the boiling cane-juice, who died in four days.

Captain Cook relates, that he saw a woman, named Rachel Lauder, beat a slave so unmercifully, that she would have murdered her, if she had not been prevented. The girl's crime was, for not bringing money enough from on board of ship, whither she had been sent by her mistress for the purpose of prostitution.

Lieutenant Davidson relates, that the wife of the clergyman at Port Royal, used to drop hot sealing wax on her negroes after flogging. He was sent for, as surgeon, to one of them, whose breast was terribly burnt.

If it should be asked, for what offences the punishments cited have taken place, the following answer may be given.

Under the head of *ordinary* punisments, the slaves appear to have suffered for not coming to the field in time, not picking a sufficient quantity of grass, for staying too long of an errand, and theft, to which they are often driven by extreme hunger. Under the head of *extraordinary* punishments, the following reasons have been alleged; for running away, for breaking a plate, or to extort confession, in the moments of passion; and one on a diabolical pretence which the master held out to the world, to conceal his own villainy, and which he knew to be false. Women punish their slaves for being pregnant, for not bringing home the full wages of prostitution, and sometimes even without the allegation of a fault. This is a specimen, and only a specimen, of the evidence that was exhibited in the British House of Commons.

Black catalogue! horrid facts! At the dreadful recital, angels, men, and even devils, seem to stand in silent astonishment. What kind, what degree of punishment must await such miscreants! In the hand of that omnipotent Being, who is the most valuable friend, and, at the same time, the most dangerous enemy, I leave them. And truly it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. An angry God! Dreadful idea! *He is*, as a sacred writer speaks, *wise in heart, and mighty in strength; and, therefore, it is impossible for any to harden themselves against him and prosper.*

CHAP. II.

Strictures on the State of Slavery among the Nations of Antiquity.

TO investigate the origin of slavery, and to follow it in its progress and gradations, during the early ages of the world, do not belong to my plan. That it is an invention of modern times is not pretended. The antiquity of it cannot be denied. But I ask, Is the antiquity of any practice an infallible proof of the equity of it? Evil practices, no less than good, are as old, or almost as old, as creation itself. What evil thing can be said to be new in the world? What crime is committed in our times, that was not perpetrated in former ages? In the words of the wisest of men, I may ask, Is there *any new thing*, good, or evil, *under the sun?* But if slavery itself be not new, the mode of treating slaves in modern times, appears to be, in various instances, new. Modes of oppression and punishment have been practised in latter times, which seem to have been unknown in former ages. Vain is it to plead, that slavery, among the ancient Jews, had the sanction of heaven. Ex-

ceedingly different, indeed, was the situation of the Jewish, from the condition of the modern slaves, of whom we have been speaking. To many, Jewish slavery was eventually a blessing, not a curse; a privilege, not a punishment. The Jews, it would seem, took pains in imparting to their slaves the knowledge of the true God, and of the method of salvation by the Messiah, with which those strangers, had they continued in their own countries, must have remained unacquainted. Not a few of them were admitted into the Jewish church, and to a participation of all their special privileges; even in participating in the solemn ordinance of the passover; these strangers, when they became proselytes of the covenant, were on an equality with the native Jews. There was, as the sacred historian informs us, one law for both. Was not the admission of those strangers into the Jewish church, an early prelude of the conversion of the Gentile nations to the Messiah and his church, in the times of the New Testament? Thus slavery was permitted among the Jews for salutary purposes. Besides, how safe and comfortable was the situation of slaves among the ancient Jews? Was it left to their masters to treat them with lenity or severity, as their inclination or caprice might direct them? No. That system of laws

which the Jews, through the instrumentality of Moses, received from heaven, contained express regulations for the treatment of their slaves; and secured to the latter the full possession of their unalienable natural rights. But even this is not all. Slavery among the Jews, was not like that among our modern Christians, so called, perpetual; but, at a certain period, expired. In the year of jubilee, so famous in Jewish history, the commencement of which was announced by sound of trumpet; there was an universal emancipation of slaves; as well as the cancelling of debts, and the reversion of forfeited inheritances to their original proprietors. If we were to review the history of slavery among other nations, and in other countries, we should find two things obviously manifest. The one is, the wisest nations and individuals, have ever used their slaves in the best manner. The other is, in proportion as slaves and vassals have been kindly treated by their masters, whether nations or particular persons, they have been useful and profitable to them. So happy and comfortable was the situation of slaves among the Jews, that, when the time arrived, at which, according to the Mosaic law, they were entitled to their freedom, some would not accept it; but voluntarily bound themselves to continue with their

masters till death, which, as the book of Job speaks, renders every *servant free from his master.*

The transition from the Jews to the Athenians, must occur to every person of reading. For progress in science, and every refinement, the Athenians are famous to latest times. Seldom, perhaps never, did any people, merely by the dint of natural powers, approach nearer to perfection. The equity, mildness, and humanity, with which they used their slaves, form a prominent feature in their character. On which account a celebrated philosopher could not forbear to say, that the life of a slave at Athens was much happier than that of a freeman in any other state of Greece. In the case of bad treatment from their masters, they had provided for them an asylum, to which they could at all times flee, and in which they remained in perfect safety, till the matter of complaint was fairly tried according to law. For justice was, at the expence of the public, administered to rich and poor without respect of persons. If the complaint of a slave against his master was found, upon investigation, to be just, his master was obliged to assign over his service to another person. Slaves could, in the case of certain injuries offered to

them, *demand* an exchange of masters. They had, by law, provided for them protection against all insults and injuries any of the citizens might be disposed to offer them. They were, by law, entitled to acquire property, and, if in a condition to do it, to purchase their freedom. Nay, they were, by law, authorized to *demand* their freedom from their masters at a reasonable price. Their masters frequently, and the state often, rewarded their fidelity with freedom. If they were employed in war, they were certain of obtaining their freedom. For such were the exalted and refined ideas which the Athenians entertained, that they seem to have thought no man fit to defend the state, if he was not a member of it. Was this indulgence of the Athenians to their slaves abused by the latter? Far from it. In proportion as their masters were just, humane, and beneficent to their slaves, they were diligent, faithful, and advantageous to them. Both masters and servants were contented and happy.

What a contrast to the Athenians, in this instance, were their neighbours the Spartans! In consequence of their capricious and impolitic behaviour to their slaves, they were harassed with continual broils, and insurrections, and other concommitant evils.

There does not appear to have been among the Romans, in early times, much distinction observed, either in working or living, between masters and servants. But in the more advanced ages of that great empire, when luxury and licentiousness encreased, the state of the unhappy slaves became most abject and wretched. And this debasement of their slaves, was the prelude and fore-runner of the downfal and final ruin of their empire. Are not such events recorded for examples and warnings to us? When we recollect the equity and humanity with which heathen nations, such as the Athenians, behaved towards their slaves, and on the other hand, the injustice with which slaves are now treated in countries, called Christian, must we not feel in a manner it is difficult to express? Vain is it to allege, that salutary laws have been enacted by the Christian powers, to regulate the conduct of masters to their slaves in the colonies. To talk of law here is nugatory and trifling; if not absurd. It is a melancholy truth, that the law which regulates the treatment of slaves, is the capricious, often cruel, will of their masters. How defective, and how partial, and how seldom executed, are the colonial laws? I shall allow these laws to speak for themselves. For this purpose I introduce the following quotations.——The

law of Jamaica orders "every slave that shall run away, and continue absent from his master twelve months, shall be deemed rebellious." And by another law, fifty pounds are allowed to those who kill, or bring in alive, a rebellious slave. But the law of Barbadoes exceeds even this; "if any negroe, under punishment, by his master, or his order, for running away, or any other crime, or misdemeanor, shall suffer in life or member, no person whatsoever shall be liable to any fine therefor. But if any man of wantonness, or only of bloody-mindedness, or of cruel intention, wilfully kill a negroe of his own, he shall pay into the public treasury, fifteen pounds sterling, and not be liable to any other punishment or forfeiture for the same."

Similar to these, are the laws which, formerly, were in force in Virginia. "No slave shall be set free upon any pretence whatever, except for some meritorious services; to be adjudged and allowed by the governor and council. And where any slave shall be set free by his owner, otherwise than is herein directed, the church-wardens of the parish, wherein such negroe shall reside for the space of one month, are hereby authorised and required to take up and sell the said negroe by public outcry."

Nearly allied to this was another law of Virginia; "after two proclamations are issued, against slaves that run away, it is lawful for any person to kill and destroy such slaves, by such ways and means, as he shall think fit." Bloody laws!

CHAP. III.

Of the State of the Slaves in the British West-India Colonies.

WHEN we recollect the improved taste, and generous disposition, which are so conspicuous in the general character of the English nation, we are utterally at a loss to account for that severity, with which they treat their slaves in the West-India islands. That their slaves are better used than any other, cannot be pretended. That they are as well treated as some other slaves, is not a fact. That a nation which enjoys so much freedom, and is so much opposed to slavery at home, should tolerate it, in its cruelest forms abroad, is truly astonishing. But why do I talk of the nation? The greater and better part of the nation are determined enemies to slavery, and every species of tyranny. But there is among them a set of interested, mercenary, cruel individuals, at whose infamous conduct, government seems, perhaps from mistaken, mercenary motives, to wink.

The owners of slaves appear to think, that as they are their property, for which they pretend to have paid an equivalent price, they have a right to dispose of them as they please. But all such reasoning is sophistical and delusory. An adequate price for human beings! Is there any proportion between millions of silver or gold, and a human soul? No. No man can possibly by any means acquire a right to treat another with injustice or cruelty. Even to treat an animal cruelly, is criminal.

That every man is born free, is a dictate of reason and common sense. But these monsters of men, the proprietors of our West-India slaves, will have thousands of men and women to be born slaves. From father to son, by an imaginary hereditary title, slaves, without any choice or consent on their part, descend from generation to generation. What! Are men and women sunk to a level with horses and hogs; houses and lands? The father considering them as his own, and his son's property, betimes sets the latter, yet a boy, over them, with a whip in his hand, to punish them as he pleases. Even this raw and inexperienced, inconsiderate and rash, perhaps cruel boy, may, with impunity, lash, lacerate, and torture them, when, and to what

degree his caprice may incline him; for the slightest offence, the most trivial fault; an offence or fault existing, perhaps, only in his own apprehension, or originating in his own neglect. Nay, for virtues rather than vices, are they frequently punished. A female slave is sometimes flogged for declining the impure embraces of her tyrant.

The very monster that wishes to humble her, perhaps, drives her, naked, hungry, and covered with blood, next hour, to accomplish a task, which he has disabled her to perform. Repeatedly have I witnessed the perpetration of crimes I cannot relate; nature blushes at them. But were not such scandalous crimes, such shameful enormities, punished? No; the perpetrators escaped with impunity. But can such monstrous transgressors always escape? The punishment of man they may escape; but there is a God, *who will by no means clear the guilty*. Considered merely as commercial machines, are not these poor slaves entitled to the notice and protection of government? Does the British parliament pass laws to regulate horses and dogs, and every article of manufacture and commerce, and neglect *them*? The natives of the West-India islands, who, from their infancy, are accustomed to barbarity, are generally blamed for the cruel

treatment of the slaves; but unjustly. I have, in repeated instances, seen greater barbarities and cruelties committed by adventurers from Europe, than ever I witnessed in the natives. At this we, in a great measure, cease to wonder, when we recollect, that many of these adventurers are the refuse of every family, and profession, and, I had almost added, prison in the mother country.

On the particular treatment of slaves in the British colonies, I need not enlarge. It does not materially differ from the general account I gave in the first chapter. The discipline of a sugar plantation is as regular and strict as that of a regiment of soldiers, or a ship of war. At the early hour of four, the plantation-bell rings, or the driver cracks his whip as loud as he can, to call the slaves to their labour; which is to manure, dig, and plow the ground; to plant, weed, and cut the cane; and carry it to the mills, that the juice may be pressed out, and boiled into sugar. I need not repeat, in this place, that most grievous and fatal part of all their work, the picking of grass for the cattle. How easily might this part of their labour, which, to many, is attended with such direful consequences, and all its fatal effects be prevented? Might not a few acres, even of the most

unproductive part of the plantation, be allotted and prepared for artificial grass, and a few young slaves appropriated to the picking of it for their horses and other cattle? Such was the severity of some of the managers with whom I was acquainted, that the least *appearance* of neglect of labour, or other fault, was with them sufficient to procure punishment. Such was the manager of the last estate on which I lived, I have seen him cause a slave to be flogged with great severity, because he imagined he saw the appearance of the mark of a whip on a horse's back. And yet the monster could, with composure, if not an accursed pleasure, see a poor slave whipped till his back was almost turned into a jelly. One stroke of the cart-whip, the instrument the overseers commonly use, is sufficient to cut out a flake of skin and flesh from the back of the unfortunate slave; and yet the usual punishment, even for a petty offence, amounts to no less than one hundred strokes. Immediately after receiving this severe punishment, the unhappy slave, covered with wounds and blood, is ordered to his work; be the weather wet or dry. In this situation death sometimes sets the slave free. And to him death is no small deliverance. During the season of boiling the sugar, slaves are almost totally deprived of rest; being obliged to attend the labour of the

mill and boiling-house from morning to evening, and sometimes from evening to morning. How inhumane and cruel!

How uncomfotrable are the huts of the poor slaves in the British colonies, as well as other islands! How costly and splendid the stables in which the owners keep their English horses! These animals, in point of attention and esteem, they seem to exalt far above the rank of brutes. On those human beings they have compelled to become slaves and dupes to their avarice and other passions, they do not bestow half the attention and care they shew to their animals.

How inhumane is the management of the unhappy slaves during sickness! They are lodged in a sort of hospital, rather a prison, and fed with water gruel. The owners, indeed, I have sometimes seen, allow them a little wine; but I as often saw the managers and their concubines, instead of giving it to the sick, drink it themselves. It may appear strange, but it is not less true, that there are proprietors of estates, who would prefer for manager or overseer, a man, who has, perhaps, twenty girls of colour for concubines, than place a virtuous married man on their plantations. The reason for this is, they pretend that a family is attended with more expence than an

unmarried manager or overseer. But egregiously are they mistaken.

Often have I contrasted, in my own mind, the situation of the proprietors of estates in the West-India islands, who live in the very height of extravagance and splendour in the metropolis of Great Britain; and the condition of the wretched slaves who cultivate their estates. A proprietor has remitted to him from his estate, annually, perhaps, fifty, or, it may be, a hundred thousand pounds, which he expends in every species of luxury, dissipation, and debauchery. He rides, during the day, in his gilded chariot; and at night he reposes on a bed of down. From day to day, and from year to year, he is supported, in all his extravagance; by the sweat and the blood of his slaves abroad; the most wretched of the human race. They are starved, and naked, and tormented, and often murdered! Is he supported at the expence of human blood? Accursed support! And a curse must, doubtless, attend the man that enjoys it. Do I envy him? No. I do, God knows, from my inmost soul, pity him. Though swimming in wealth, he is an abhorrence to God, and to all good men. He is rich and encreased in wealth; and yet *poor, and wretched, and miserable.* Go, thou wretch, view thy hungry, naked,

bleeding, groaning, expiring slaves; all raw with fresh wounds; wounds filled with pepper and salt to encrease their agony, already greater than humanity can bear! See some castrated; others having their ears cut off, and forced to eat them; and others burnt alive; having their feet exposed to a slow fire, which, by degrees, consumes the whole body!

But where, and by whom, are such enormous barbarities perpetrated? Among the furies and fiends of the infernal regions? No, no; but in a part of our world; and, which is more, a part of it that has assumed the name of Christendom; and by men called Christian. Christian! say not so. A cruel Christian is a contradiction; nay, the first-born of absurdities. Is not genuine Christianity, in its nature and effects, mildness in itself? It doubtless is; and, therefore, the pretensions of such persons to Christianity must be extremely preposterous and absurd. But, why are not the above, and thousands of similar enormities, remedied; speedily and effectually remedied? It certainly is within the power of the British parliament to do this. And they certainly are indispensibly bound to do it. Religion, humanity, policy, and every thing else, call loudly upon them to do it. Has the island of Great Britain, by its

constitution civil and ecclesiastical, its advantages natural and artificial, become famous from the northern to the southern pole, and from the eastern verge of Asia to the western boundary of America? And can it overlook such palpable violations of religion and humanity? It may seem impossible. But the melancholy truth will not admit of a denial. Blush, O king, blush both houses of parliament, blush O nation.* By tolerating such a gross violation of the essential rights of humanity, you expose yourselves not only to the sport of devils, and the indignation of all good men; but, which is the most tremendous of all

* It is with pleasure the author reflects, that in different ages, and at different periods, humane and philanthrophic individuals have come forward, in spight of persecution, and vindicated the natural rights of the exiled, wretched sons of Africa. To gratify the benevolent feelings of the reader, and in compliance with the dictates of his own, the author embraces this opportunity of transmitting some of their names to posterity, for admiration and imitation:—First, he would particularize the name of Bartholomew de la Casas, bishop of Chiapa, who distinguished himself in the 15th century in this noble cause; also, Morgan Goodwin, John Woolman, Anthony Benezet, and many others, respectable members of the society called Quakers;—likewise, Mr. Grenville Sharp, the Rev. James Ramsay, and the Rev. Thomas Clarkson. He would here offer a tribute of praise due to those worthy characters, but the approbation of heaven and their own consciences is capable of rendering them more real pleasure than is in the power of human eulogium to give.

considerations, to the severest judgments heaven can inflict. May your repentance and reformation be speedy! May the infliction of impending judgments be happily prevented! To me and to all the friends of humanity, a pleasing prospect opens; a period approaches, in which tyranny of every kind shall cease; nations and individuals shall cease to oppress; neither the crowned despot, nor the petty tyrant shall oppress any more. Auspicious period! May it speedily arrive!

CHAP. IV.

The Treatment of Slaves in the Dutch Settlements.

THE Dutch mode of treating the slaves in their colonies coincides, in many particulars, with the English. It is not more mild; but, alas, still more sanguinary and cruel. Their principal settlements in the West-Indies I have visited; and, therefore, can speak with certainty. In the Dutch settlements, as well as other European colonies, offences, on the one hand, and, on the other, punishments, are distributed into two classes; ordinary and extraordinary. Offences, called ordinary, are such as these—neglect of orders, absence from work, stealing food, eating the sugar-cane, breaking a plate, looking with displeasure or contempt at the tyrant, their master. For such offences the ordinary punishments are,—flogging with a cart-whip; beating with a stick; the breaking of bones; a heavy chain, tying two or three together; a large iron ring round the ankle; an iron collar, with prongs, round the neck; confinement in a dungeon; slitting the ears; breaking the limbs, so as to render amputation necessary; beating out the eyes; castration; &c. In Surinam they have a method of flogging the slaves, which seems to be of infernal origin; and

certainly is a master-piece of diabolical barbarity. They tie the wrists of the culprit tight, press his knees together; his bound arms he is obliged to put round his knees; then a long stick is put through behind his knees, and one end of it fastened in the ground. In this situation he can neither move hand nor feet. In this manner have I often seen the wretched slaves flogged till their wounds were an inch deep; and they were unable to move for a whole month. Another most barbarous practice in these colonies is this—one hand of the slave is tied to one tree, and the other to onother tree, so high that his toes can barely touch the ground. While he is suspended in this manner, two unfeeling wretches, as executioners, stand, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left; each having a whip in his hand, with which they alternately lash him, till he is, in a manner hardly to be conceived, cut from head to foot. Such are the barbarities and cruelties, which those devils in human form, the proprietors and managers of slaves in the Dutch settlements, commit. Execrable monsters! Hated are they of God, of angels, and of all good men. Heaven rejects, and has already began to repay them; the earth, no longer able to bear, spues them out. Whither can they flee for safety? Methinks I see the bottomless pit opening its mouth to receive them.

CHAP. V.

The Situation of the Slaves in the French Colonies.

HAPPILY are we, in a great measure, relieved from the dreary scenes which have been presented to us. We now enter on a more pleasing task. To the immortal honour of the French government, it must be acknowledged, that, of all the European powers, who have slaves in the West-Indies, they use their slaves with the greatest humanity. I speak of the French government previous to the late revolution. The state of their colonial possessions and slaves is now greatly changed. The former French government charged the governors of their several settlements, in an express manner, to protect the slaves. They also paid particular attention to the religious instruction of these negroes; appointing missionaries, at the expence of the public, to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion, as they are held in the Romish church. All the festivals of that church were observed among them. Then the slaves were forbidden to work, and enjoined to attend mass. Every slave was, by law, allowed a certain quantity of food and clothing, which

the master could not, under any pretext, withhold, or even diminish. The master, indeed, was allowed to apply the whip and the chain; but, even in the use of these, his power was limited. He was not permitted to mutilate his slaves. If he treated a slave with barbarity, the latter had a right to apply to the king's attorney, who was indispensibly bound to redress his grievances. The French proprietors of slaves were not permitted, like the masters in certain other West-India colonies, to send their superanuated or sick slaves to perish in the woods, or on the mountains. The estimation in which marriage was held among them was attended with great utility. The slaves, not less than the native French, were married, with proper solemnity, by a priest; and the nuptial relation continued for life. The happy consequence was, a due attachment to their families, together with a numerous regular offspring. For one child that is born on an English or Dutch settlement, twenty, perhaps, were born on a French, of the same extent. On an English or Dutch settlement, a slave multiplies his wives, and changes them at pleasure; looking no farther than the present momentary gratification. In this instance he imitates the example of his white master. I have known a master treat mulatto girls, his own daughters, with no less severity than the African

blacks. It is not uncommon for masters, in the English and Dutch colonies, to commit, not only adultery, but incest of the grossest kind, with impunity.

There was one circumstance of vast utility, both to the masters and the slaves, in the French colonies. The former did not, like their English neighbours, return to spend the product of their plantations in the mother country; but lived upon their estates in the West-Indies, and superintended their own business; not leaving their slaves to the caprice and cruelty of any scoundrel they could hire on the easiest terms, for a manager or overseer. The French planters seemed to know and attend to the wants of their slaves. Living among them, they contracted an affection for them. Hence their slaves were better fed, better dressed, and better lodged, than other slaves; and were allowed a competent time for relaxation and rest. The happy consequence was, they were orderly, sensible, honest, and faithful to their masters. I must not omit to mention here, that the French slaves began and ended their work with prayer; the black overseer officiating as priest. Before I dismiss this topic, I must observe, that when I speak of the cruel treatment of the English and Dutch slaves, and the mild usage

of the French, I must be understood to make allowance for the different, rather opposite, tempers of the masters. Among the English, and, I hope, the Dutch, there are a few, and, I believe, only a few masters, who treat their slaves with a degree of lenity and tenderness; and among the French governors, and owners of slaves, there were some, who were as oppressive and brutal as they could at all be with impunity. But even in this instance the situation of English and French slaves seems very different. The English appear as if they put the slaves entirely in the power of their masters, whether cruel or compassionate. The French, by their laws, strongly urged and enforced the dictates of humanity. The English slave, almost starved, is exposed to the resistless temptation of hunger; the French was raised above temptations of this kind. The English slave hates his master; the French loved his. The English slave is restrained by the whip; the French by his regard for his humane master; by the approbation or the censure of the priest; and by those hopes and fears which religion naturally inspires.

CHAP. VI.

The question, Whether the African Negroes be a part of the Human Species, capable of intellectual, moral, and religious Improvement, no less than the other Nations of Mankind; or, an inferior Order of beings, occupying a middle Place between Men and Brutes?—considered.

EASY is it to account for the occasion and origin of the question, the consideration of which I have now undertaken. Secretly convicted of their enormous cruelty, the proprietors and managers of slaves have tortured their invention to find out excuses to palliate, if possible, their guilt; and have discovered, for a subterfuge, that the poor Africans are not, strictly speaking, human beings; but creatures of a lower kind. Desperate expedient! Desperate must the cause be, that cannot be defended but by such desperate means. How fruitful in the invention of excuses for criminal behaviour is the human imagination! This unavailing method of defending an indefensible cause, is of great antiquity. It originated in Eden, the primeval residence of the first human pair. If we cannot deny a criminal act, we,

after the example of our original ancestors, endeavour, if possible, to excuse it.

But is the assertion, by which the cruel oppressors of a part of the human race attempt to justify their conduct, supported by any proper and satisfactory evidence? Have they, in fact, proved, that the African negroes are a species of beings inferior to the human? No; and I do not hesitate to add, they never can prove it. As a strong presumption that the hypothesis is false, the abettors of it are not agreed among themselves. While many talk of a lower order of beings, others speak of an inferior kind of men. An inferior kind of men! How many kinds of men are there? The advocates of this wild opinion do not advert, that it is attended with a long train of consequences, and big with a variety of absurdities, from which they themselves cannot but recoil. It subverts the whole fabric of revealed religion. To admit it, is at once to reject revelation. This revelation, as contained in the sacred books, Jewish and Christian, both as it respects the evils in which mankind are unhappily involved, and the means by which their recovery is accomplished, goes, from first to last, on the supposition, that the various nations and numerous individuals of the human form, are all the chil-

dren of one common father, and members of one undivided family. Are not the black inhabitants of Africa, as well as the white inhabitants of Europe, brothers, and entitled to that salvation which is common to men of every clime, and every complexion? In the history of the apostolic age, we have an authentic and circumstantial account of the conversion of a native of Ethiopia, a person of high rank in that country. Do not the Ethiopians belong to the tawny race? Is not this necessarily implied in the question, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin?* What! a race of beings, half men, half brutes, partakers of that salvation of which Jesus, the Son of God, is the author!

But, as we are opposed by a number, who do not admit the authority of revelation, we shall meet them on their own ground. The question recurs, Has it been, can it be, proved by any convincing evidence, that the African negroes are a species of creatures inferior to the human? Proof, indeed, has been attempted. Various evidences have been adduced; but, to every unprepossessed person, they are unsatisfactory. They may be reduced to two classes; evidences taken from the external form, features, and colour of the negroes; and evidences drawn from their mental faculties.

As to the first class of evidences, I ask, Does a diversity of external form and features evince a diversity of species? Do those, who invent and use this argument, attend to the consequences which necessarily follow it? It is one of those arguments which, as logicians speak, if they prove any thing, prove too much; and, therefore, in fact, prove nothing at all. If a diversity of form, features, and stature, be an infallible proof of a diversity of species, then, instead of two species of human beings on earth, there must be ten, if not twenty. How different in form, features, and stature, are the Laplander and the Low Dutchman; the Icelander and the Englishman? Are the noses of the natives of Africa, in general, flat? This difference is not natural, but artificial. They entertain the foolish notion, that flat noses are no small beauty; and, for this reason, press down the noses of their infants. But can we wonder at this whimsical conduct of the poor Africans, while we recollect the no less whimsical practice of the Chinese, one of the most ingenious nations on earth, in contracting the feet of their children, from a nonsensical conceit, that small feet are a great beauty? How different in form, in features, and in stature, are the inhabitants of the same country; nay, members of the same family, children of the same parents? The astonishing

variety, perceptible among the many millions of the human species, is one of the amazing proofs of divine contrivance; the wondrous effects of the incomprehensible wisdom of the Deity. There probably are now, scattered over the face of the earth, between nine and ten hundred millions of human beings; and, among them all, there are not two, in form, features, complexion, and stature, perfectly alike. There is, even in these external circumstances, a visible natural characteristic, by which the inhabitants of different countries are distinguished. What a difference, in appearance, between the inhabitants of Sweden and Switzerland, near as these two countries are to each other; England and Italy; Poland and Portugal!

Is a diversity of colour a certain proof of a diversity of species? No. This argument, like the former, if it could prove any thing, would prove too much. It will be found, upon investigation, that there are, among the nations of mankind, no less than four or five principal colours; not to say any thing of the various intermediate shades, which approach more or less towards each of them. What! are there four or five species of human beings? Is each of the four great quarters of the world inhabited by a distinct species

of men? Are there to be found, even in the same quarter of the world, human beings of different kinds? Has not the grand sentiment, that all the nations and individvals, who inhabit the various continents and islands of the earth, are the descendants of one common original father, the joint suffrage of revelation and reason? This is the constant and uniform doctrine of revelation. Does reason, in this instance, contradict revelation? It confirms, rather than contradicts, revelation. It assists us in discovering and accounting for the diversity of colours, in the fullest consistency with the cardinal truth, that men, of all countries and of all complexions, are beings of the same species, and children of one common parent. The natural cause of this great diversity has been found out, and ascertained, by a variety of anatomical experiments, which have put it beyond a possibility of doubt. It is not my intention, were my abilities equal to the undertaking, to enter into nice physiological disquisitions on this curious subject. This task has been performed by different gentlemen of learning and ingenuity, to whose writings I refer the curious part of my readers. Nothing can be more apparent, than that colour varies according to the latitude and climate of a country. The nearer the equator, the complexion is the darker;

nearer the pole, the whiter. How dark the inhabitants of the southern parts even of Europe; and how fair the inhabitants of the northern! Can any man be at a loss, on inspection, to distinguish between a Norwegian and an Italian? Are the inhabitants of Norway and Italy two different species of beings; or a superior and an inferior kind of men? How absurd the supposition! The argument of our opponents, in short, is this—The descendants of Adam, by whom the earth was peopled at first; and the posterity of the three sons of Noah, by whom it was peopled a second time, must, even in the remotest parts of the earth, and to the most distant ages of time, continue to be of the same complexion, with one another, and with their original pregenitors; if of a different complexion, they cannot be their progeny. What is the inevitable consequence of this reasoning? It is this—Neither the black inhabitants of Africa, nor the white inhabitants of Europe, are the descendants either of Adam or of Noah, but a species of beings, or of men, whose original ancestor is totally unknown. That both Adam and Noah resided in the middle parts of Asia, is an opinion universally entertained, and supported by the highest degree of moral certainty. Is the colour of the inhabitants of the middle countries of Asia, the same with that of the Africans, or the

Europeans? No. The Asiatics, in colour, differ both from the Africans and the Europeans. The fact is, the seal of colour in the human body is wisely adapted to the climates in which the several nations of mankind respectively live. This is only one of the ten thousand instances, in which the unsearchable wisdom, and the unbounded goodness, of the almighty Creator, are conspicuous in every part of his vast universe. The effects of climate, on men and on irrational animals, even on vegetables, in higher and lower latitudes, are, in various instances, obvious to every observer, and merit the attention of every person that investigates the works of Deity. The same animal which, in high latitudes and cold climates, is clothed with wool, is, within the torrid zone, covered with hair. In the temperate and the frigid zones, men's heads are covered with hair; near to the equator, with wool. But are the men, who inhabit the torrid zone, of a different species from those who dwell in the temperate and the frigid?

As for the argument, which the sticklers for African slavery draw from the pretended inferiority of the mental faculties of the negroes, it is altogether unnecessary for me to prosecute it to any great length. It is supported by no shadow

of evidence; it has been ably refuted by writers who had the best opportunities of information, and were, in every view, the most competent judges. When our opponents bring it forward, they proclaim to all the world, that their cause is desperate; and that they are reduced to their last shift. I have often been among the natives of Africa, in the interior parts of their country, as well as on the coast; and seen how they lay out their towns, and cultivate their lands; construct their houses, and conduct their other affairs; and I do not hesitate to declare; that they are as sensible, ingenious, hospitable, and generous, as any people, placed in such circumstances, and labouring under such disadvantages, could be expected to be. Still, in a great measure, in a savage state, they follow the same mode of life, and practise the same arts, which the ancestors of the most enlightened nations in Europe practised, in their uncivilized and unpolished state. Have not many of them, as soon as they had an opportunity of learning, become proficients in the several mechanical arts? Can one instance be produced, in which any of them have been found destitute of capacity to learn? If they have not made equal progress in the liberal arts, the reason is obvious; it is owing to the want of opportunity. Do not many of them, in the West-India islands, possess

a very considerable degree of medical knowledge, which, in numerous instances, they practise with great success? Have not some of them become respectable in the clerical function? Have not some of them evinced a degree of capacity in literary acquisitions, that astonishes the world? The instance of Phillis Wheatley is a striking specimen. Are not her poetical compositions, the authenticity of which is attested by a number of gentlemen of the first respectability, excellent, not only for their piety, but their poetical beauties?

Of this surprising young African, her master, in a letter to the publisher of her poems, gives the following account.

Phillis was brought from Africa to America, in the year 1761, between seven and eight years of age. Without any assistance from school-education, and by only what she was taught in the family, she, in sixteen months time from her arrival, attained the English language, to which she was an utter stranger before, to such a degree, as to read any, the most difficult, parts of the sacred writings, to the great astonishment of all who heard her.

As to her writing, her own curiosity led her to it; and this she learnt in so short a time, that in the year 1765, she wrote a letter to the Rev. Mr. Occom, the Indian minister, then in England.

She had a great inclinatian to learn the Latin tongue, and made some progress in it. Such was the origin of this surprising young poetess; and such were the disadvantages under which she laboured. But to enable my readers to judge of her capacity and abilities, for themselves, I shall transcribe one of her poetical compositions, entitled, Thoughts on the Works of Providence.

Arise, my soul, on wings enraptur'd, rise,
To praise the monarch of the earth and skies;
Whose goodness and beneficence appear,
As round its centre moves the rolling year,
Or when the morning glows with rosy charms;
Or the sun slumbers in the ocean's arms:
Of light divine, be a rich portion lent
To guide my soul, and favour my intent.
Celestial muse, my arduous flight sustain,
And raise my mind to a seraphic strain!

Ador'd for ever, be the God unseen,
Who round the sun revolves this vast machine;
Though to his eye its mass a point appears:
Ador'd the God that whirls surrounding spheres.

Who first ordain'd that mighty Sol should reign
The peerless monarch of th' etherial train:
Of miles twice forty millions is his height,
And yet his radiance dazzles mortal sight
So far beneath; from him th' extended earth
Vigour derives, and ev'ry flow'ry birth.
Vast through her orb she moves with easy grace;
Around her Phœbus in unbounded space;
True to her course, th' impetuous storm derides;
Triumphant o'er the winds and surging tides,

Almighty, in these wond'rous works of thine,
What pow'r, what wisdom, and what goodness shine!
And are thy wonders, Lord, by men explor'd,
And yet creating glory unador'd!

Creation smiles, in various beauty, gay,
While day to night, and night succeeds to day.
That wisdom, which attends Jehovah's ways,
Shines most conspicuous in the solar rays.
Without them, destitute of heat and light,
This world would be the reign of endless night.
In their excess how would our race complain,
Abhorring life! how hate its lengthen'd chain!
From air adust what num'rous ills would rise!
What dire contagion taint the burning skies!
What pestilential vapours, fraught with death,
Would rise, and overspread the lands beneath!

Hail, smiling morn, that, from the orient main
Ascending, dost adorn the heav'nly plain!
So rich, so various, are thy beauteous dies,
That spread through all the circuit of the skies;
That, full of thee, my soul in rapture soars,
And thy great God, the cause of all adores.

O'er beings infinite his love extends,
His wisdom rules them, and his pow'r defends.
When tasks diurnal tire the human frame,
The spirits faint, and dim the vital flame,
Then too that ever active bounty shines,
Which not infinity of space confines.
The sable veil, that night in silence draws,
Conceals effects, but shews th' Almighty cause.
Night seals in sleep the wide creation fair,
And all is peaceful but the brow of care.
Again gay Phœbus, as the day before,
Wakes ev'ry eye, but what shall wake no more;
Again the face of nature is renew'd,
Which still appears harmonious, fair, and good.
May grateful strains salute the smiling morn,
Before its beams the eastern hills adorn!

Shall day to day, and night to night conspire
To show the goodness of th' Almighty Sire?
This mental voice shall man regardless hear,
And never, never raise the filial pray'r?

To-day, O hearken, nor your folly mourn
For time mis-spent that never will return.

But see the sons of vegetation rise,
And spread their leafy banners to the skies.
All-wise, all-mighty providence we trace
In trees, in plants, in all the flow'ry race;
As clear as in the nobler frame of man,
All lovely copies of the Maker's plan.
The pow'r the same that forms a ray of light,
That call'd creation from eternal night.
"Let there be light," he said: from his profound
Old Chaos heard, and trembled at the sound:
Swift as the word, inspir'd by pow'r divine,
Behold the light around its maker shine,
The first fair product of th' omnific God,
And now through all his works diffus'd abroad.

As reason's pow'rs by day our God disclose,
So we may trace him in the night's repose:
Say what is sleep? and dreams how passing strange!
When action ceases, and ideas range
Licentious and unbounded o'er the plains,
Where Fancy's queen in giddy triumph reigns.
Here in soft strains the dreaming lovers sigh
To a kind fair, or rave in jealousy;
On pleasure now, and now on vengeance bent,
The lab'ring passions struggle for a vent.

What pow'r, O man! thy reason then restores,
So long suspended in nocturnal hours?
What secret hand returns the mental train,
And gives improv'd thine active pow'rs again?
From thee, O man, what gratitude should rise!
And, when from balmy sleep thou op'st thine eyes,
Let thy first thoughts be praises to the skies.
How merciful our God, who thus imparts
O'erflowing tides of joy to human hearts,
When wants and woes might be our righteous lot,
Our God forgetting, by our God forgot!

Among the mental pow'rs a question rose,
"What most the image of th' Eternal shows?"
When thus to Reason (so let Fancy rove)
Her great companion spoke, immortal Love.

"Say, mighty pow'r, how long shall strife prevail,
"And with its murmurs load the whisp'ring gale?
"Refer the cause to Recollection's shrine,
"Who loud proclaims my origin divine,
"The cause whence heav'n and earth began to be,
"And is not man immortaliz'd by me?
"Reason let this most causeless strife subside."-
Thus Love pronounc'd, and Reason thus reply'd.

"Thy birth, celestial queen! 'tis mine to own,
"In thee resplendent is the godhead shown;

" Thy words persuade, my soul enraptur'd feels
" Resistless beauty which thy smile reveals."
Ardent she spoke, and, kindling at her charms,
She clasp'd the blooming goddess in her arms.

Infinite love where'er we turn our eyes
Appears: this ev'ry creature's wants supplies;
This most is heard in nature's constant voice,
This makes the morn, and this the eve rejoice;
This bids the fost'ring rains and dews descend
To nourish all, to serve one gen'ral end,
The good of man: yet man ungrateful pays
But little homage, and but little praise.
To him, whose works array'd with mercy shine,
What songs should rise, how constant, how divine!

This specimen of poetical merit I recommend to the candid review of the advocates for the inferiority of the mental powers of the Africans. Let them produce, if they can, any thing to excel, even equal it, from a young white female, of equal advantages, rather disadvantages. On a just comparative estimate, I am willing to rest the issue of the question betwixt us.

In music, both vocal and instrumental, have not many of the negroes become good performers? All the advocates for slavery I challenge to produce a proof of the inferiority of the intellec-

tual powers of the negroes. Can they adduce one example? No, they cannot. That all, who have had opportunities of learning, have, with equal facility, acquired either arts or letters, is not pretended. Is there a nation, is there a family, of mankind, in which a diversity and gradation of capacity are not discernible? But, that the faculties of the blacks are equal to those of the whites, and, were they equally cultivated, would afford as fine productions, is the solemn declaration of a person of exemplary piety, and strict integrity, who devoted a great part of his time to the education of the former; and, therefore, must be acknowledged a most competent judge. He uniformly affirmed, that he found no difference between their capacities, and those of other people.

But the question, whether the African negroes be a species of beings different from the human, may be, at once, determined, beyond a possibility of doubt, by an appeal to a fact of universal notoriety, and incontestible certainty. It is this—It appears to be a fixed law of nature, which operates in all parts of creation, that, if two animals of a different species propagate, the animal produced by them is unable to propagate its species. Do not a black African and a white American, in instances innumerable, propagate? Certainly?

Is the mulattoe unable to propagate? No, he is as capable of continuing his own colour, as his white father is of continuing his. An irrefragable proof this, that the black and the white inhabitants of our globe, constitute one species of beings.

But, though I do not admit, I will, for once, suppose, that the African negroes are inferior to the white inhabitants of the earth; and I ask, can the inferiority of the former justify the latter for treating them with cruelty? No, no. To torture any animal, even an insect, is criminal in the eyes of God, and of all good men. It is a violation of every sentiment of humanity, the want of which sinks a human being beneath a brute.

But is not the commerce, as well as the slavery, of any part of the human race, in the highest degree, criminal? Doubtless. To sell or buy a human being, is a gross violation of all the rights of man. It is an attempt to annihilate all distinction between man and beast. Have not the inhabitants of Africa as good a title to the undisturbed possession of that country, as the natives of Asia, Europe, or America, have to them? Is not *the earth the Lord's;* and has not he an indisputable title to assign the several parts of it to whomsoever he pleases? Has he granted a part

of it to the negroe race; and can any nation or individual, with impunity, rob them of it? No, such robbery man ought, and God will, resent. Are the negroes discontented or unhappy in their own country? Do they leave it of choice? The reverse, God knows, is the case. They are stolen and kidnapped, and by methods which are an eternal disgrace to human nature, forced from it; torn from every person and every thing, near and dear to them in the world. Is it for any benevolent purpose, with any generous view, that the Europeans or others force the poor negroes from their own country? Is it to instruct them in the Christian religion; or is it to meliorate their condition in the world? Quite the reverse. It is for the most mercenary, sordid purposes; with the most ungenerous, inhumane, cruel views. Of the patrons of this scandalous commerce, I will, for the present, take my leave; leaving them to their own reflections. In their serious moments, if any such moments they have, they must be self-convicted, and self-condemned. That their own consciences must, sooner or later, condemn them for their cruelty, with greater severity than I have done, I am confident. May they be brought to deep compunction and repentance before it be too late!

To illustrate my assertion, that the Africans possess the same specific nature with ourselves; and that they, no less than we, are capable of gratitude and resentment, friendship and honour, I give the following well-attested relation.

Quashi was, from his childhood, brought up in the same family with his master, and was his constant play-mate. As he was a lad of considerable abilities, he rose to be black overseer under his master, when he succeeded to the plantation. Still he retained for his master the tenderness, which, in childhood, he felt for his play-fellow. The respect which he felt for his new master was softened by that tender affection, which the remembrance of their juvenile intimacy still kept alive in his breast. He had no separate interest of his own; to promote his master's interest, not only while he was present, but when he was absent, was his constant study. Nay, in his master's absence, he redoubled his diligence, that his interest might sustain no injury from it. There was, in short, the most intimate, strong, and seemingly indissoluble union between them, that can subsist between a master and his slave.

His master had discernment to perceive when he was well served, and policy to reward good behaviour. But, unfortunately for his faithful ser-

vant, if he conceived a fault committed, he was inexorable. Even when there was only an apparent cause of suspicion, he was too apt to allow prejudice to usurp the place of proof. Something happened on the plantation, which Quashi could not explain so as to exculpate himself to the satisfaction of his master; and was threatened with the shameful, as well as painful, punishment of the cart-whip; and he knew his master too well to doubt of the execution of his threatening.

It is well known, that a negro, who has grown up to manhood without undergoing the punishment of the cart-whip, which possibly may be the case with some distinguished by certain accomplishments, which give them a superiority over their fellows, is apt to feel a pride in the smoothness of his skin; and is at greater pains to escape the lash from this, than, perhaps, from any other consideration. Nay, it is not uncommon for a slave, when he is flogged, or threatened with a flogging, for what he reckons no fault, or, if any, a very trifling one, to stab himself. Such is the sense of honour, which many of the better sort of them entertain, that, rather than be disgraced, they would chuse to die. Dreading this mortal wound to his honour, Quashi secretly withdrew from his master.

It is not unusual for slaves, when they are afraid of punishment, to apply to some friend of their master to intercede for them. Such mediation a humane master readily accepts in the case of some trifling offence. It answers a two-fold important purpose. It preserves the appearance of strict discipline, and prevents the severity of it.

Of this custom Quashi intended to avail himself. To save the glossy honours of his skin, he resolved to hide himself till he should find an opportunity of a friend to advocate his cause. He lurked among his master's negro-huts, and his fellow slaves had too much honour and too great a regard for him, to discover, to his master, the place of his retreat. Indeed, it is almost impossible to prevail with one slave, in any such case, to inform against another. So much superior are they in friendship and honour to the lowest classes of Europeans and Americans.

It happened, that, at this time, his master's nephew came of age; and, for the celebration of the event, a feast was to be made. This opportunity Quashi determined to improve; hoping that, amidst the good humour and festivities of the day, he might be able, through the intervention of an advocate, to obtain the reconciliation of his master. But, most unhappily, before he could

execute his design, perhaps at the very time he was setting out to solicit the aid of a mediator, his master happened to be walking in the fields, and fell in with him. Quashi, the moment he discovered him, ran off; and his master, a stout man, pursued him. Quashi, just as his master stretched out his hand to lay hold on him, struck his foot against a stone or clod, and fell. They fell together, and struggled hard for the mastery, Quashi also being a stout man. After a severe conflict, in which each had been several times uppermost, Quashi seated himself on his master's breast, now panting and almost out of breath; and with his weight, his thighs, and one of his hands, kept him so fast that he could not move. He then drew out a sharp knife, and, while the other lay in awful suspense and agitation, he accosted him thus—Master, I was bred up with you from my infancy; I was your play-mate while you and I were both boys; I have loved you as myself; your interest has been my daily care; I am innocent of the fault of which you suspect me. Had I been guilty, my attachment to you might have pleaded for me. Yet you have condemned me to a punishment, of which, were it inflicted, I ever must bear the disgraceful marks. In this way only can I avoid them—Uttering these

words, he drew the knife, with all his strength, across his own throat, and fell down dead, without a groan, on his master, bathing him in his blood.

CHAP. VII.

Melioration of the State of the Slaves proposed, and urged from Motives of Duty, and of Interest.

THAT the African slaves are partakers of the same specific nature, and have the same faculties and powers, corporeal and mental; the same sensations and feelings, with us, is, to every unprejudiced person, perfectly evident. Is not their situation, then, far beneath the dignity of their nature? Ought it not, without any farther delay, to be meliorated? Would the melioration of their condition be detrimental to their masters? No, the very reverse would infallibly be the case. The total abolition of slavery, and the final suppression of the slave-trade, I do not hesitate to affirm, are indispensibly incumbent on all the powers, who are, directly or indirectly, concerned in the infamous business. Is it judged impolitic to attempt this at once? Then, as a temporary remedy, let their slavery be mitigated, and their situation made easier; and let this change in their condition be effected without delay. Are there not multiplied obvious respects, in which their situation ought to be changed for the better?

Why should they be compelled to consider themselves below, and their masters above, the rank of men? Instead of recommending the Christian religion to them, do not their masters, by their cruel usage, instil into their minds the most invincible prejudices against it? Why are the necessaries of life, which the earth affords superabundantly for all its inhabitants, rational and irrational, either withheld from them, or dispensed in such a scanty degree, as is utterly insufficient for their comfortable support? Why is the property of their offspring violently wrested from them, and transferred to a stranger? Is not this a gross violation of the laws of nature, of religion, of morality, of common sense? Why are their wives and their daughters, in opposition to every remonstrance and effort they can use, compelled to become prostitutes to their brutal masters? Were these intolerable grievances speedily redressed; these insufferable grievances effectually remedied; what a happy change would immediately ensue! This glorious alteration we are, in our several stations and places, indispensibly bound to attempt. May our attempts be attended with desired success! Do our slave-holders know, do our Christian legislators recollect, that the distinction between master and slave, between the savage tribes of Africa and the civilized nations

of Europe, is adventitious? Is not every adventitious advantage fortuitous and accidental? Suddenly, and by means the most unexpected, have nations and individuals exchanged barbarism for civilization, and civilization for barbarism. Easily could I name immense countries, once the seat of science and liberty, now the abode of barbarism and slavery; once swarming with inhabitants, now a dreary inhospitable solitude. Such are the important mutations, vicissitudes, and revolutions, to which human affairs are liable. Happy would it be for every oppressor and tyrant, every slave-trader and slave-holder, to entertain a deep impression of this momentous truth!

Is it not, to every thinking person, apparent, that a redress of the grievances and oppressions, under which the unhappy slaves labour, would enhance, instead of injure, the interest of their masters? When a farmer starves his horses, and oppresses them with excessive labour, is he a gainer? No, he is a loser; and to oblige him, by law, to feed his horses, and work them in moderation, is to promote his interest, as well as afford to innocent animals that protection, to which they are entitled. Our merciful *God cares* even *for oxen* and asses; and shall he not resent the oppression of a part of his rational offspring? But,

shameful to tell! Africans are degraded beneath oxen and asses, horses and hogs. Certain governments, while they extend the benefit of civil police to the latter, seem to withhold it from the former. Colonial laws, indeed, enforce the authority of masters, and the unbounded submission of slaves. But what protection do they secure to slaves? Are they not, in effect, abandoned to the caprice of their masters? What! human beings entirely in the power of a cruel monster? Horrid situation! At the very idea of it, nature shudders. That it is the indispensible duty of every government, that has hitherto tolerated the slave-trade, immediately to abolish it, does not, with me, admit of a doubt. No advantages that may be supposed to result from the continuance, or inconveniences that may be supposed to attend the discontinuance of a practice in itself sinful, can justify it. For, as a writer of the highest authority teaches, *we must*, in no case, *do evil*, from a pretence *that good may attend it.* But, supposing prudential considerations to plead for a postponement of the final abolition of slavery, and the universal emancipation of the slaves, what consideration can possibly warrant a delay in alleviating their miseries, restoring them to the rank of rational beings, and rendering their servile condition tolerable? The means of accomplishing the

humane design are sufficiently obvious. Let a few simple rules, plain regulations, be, by law, enacted, for their protection. For, if subjected to the penalties, they are certainly entitled to the protection of law.

First, Let the misimum of their allowance in provisions and clothes, be, by law, fixed in such a manner, that their masters may not have it in their power to withhold, or even diminish it. And let their allowance of provisions be, both in quantity and quality, sufficient to satisfy the demands of nature, and qualify them for the hard service which they are doomed to perform.

Second, Let them be, by law, allowed Saturday afternoon, for attending to their own domestic concerns; and Sunday to be wholly appropriated to rest, and religious worship.

Third, As it is not at all uncommon for masters forcibly to violate their female slaves, both wives and daughters, promiscuously, let the masters be, by the severest penalties of law, deterred and restrained from this iniquitous and shameful practice.

Fourth, As the forcible separation of children from parents, without any just cause, is the grossest violation of the nearest and most endear-

ing ties of nature, parental affection, and duty, on the one hand, and filial on the other, let their children be, by law, inviolably secured to them, as their property; if any human being can, in any qualified sense, be said to be the property of another. Certain it is, such a natural relation subsists between parents and children, which must remain indissoluble till death; and, therefore, the former have an interest in the latter, which no authority under heaven can transfer to another person or persons.

Fifth, Let masters be, by the utmost rigour of law, restrained from every mode, and every degree, of punishment, incompatible with the dignity and prerogatives of human nature—such as slitting the ears, lacerating the bodies, breaking the limbs, of their slaves. These are what the advocates for slavery are pleased, in their great clemency, to call *ordinary* punishments, which are every day inflicted, for what they call ordinary crimes; that is, petty offences, if they can, with any degree of truth and propriety, be called crimes or offences at all. Such modes of punishment I call inhuman and brutal. I was going to retract the last epithet. How seldom are brutes cut or bruised for any depredations they commit? Is not torture, of every kind and degree, an insult

to humanity? If a man, be he black, or be he white, offend, let him be tried according to justice, and punished, not as a brute, but as a man.

Sixth, Let the murder of a slave, no less than of another person, be, by law, declared to be a capital crime; and let the law ascertaining death to be the punishment of it, be, in the most rigid manner, executed. For this purpose, let the antidiluvian law, *Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man let his blood be shed*, be put in full force. Let the inhuman, the irrational, the antiscriptural, the scandalous practice of the master atoning for the murder of a slave, by paying a certain sum of money, be known no more.

Seventh, Let it be, by law, enacted, that, when slaves become old and infirm, their masters, instead of being at liberty to send them to the woods or the mountains, shall be bound, under an adequate penalty, to provide for them, as their years and infirmities may require.

Eighth, Let it be, by law, provided, that, except in an uncommon case, or on an extraordinary emergency, the slaves shall be exempted from that most grievous and fatal part of their servitude, the extra work of the picking of grass in

the evening; that they may have it in their power to retire to rest in due season.

Ninth, Let provision be made, by law, for employing missionaries, authorised and qualified to instruct the slaves in the great doctrines and duties of the Christian religion. Then their captivity may eventually turn out to be a blessing to them. Whence was it, that the French slaves, before the revolution, not only were more happy, but more faithful to their masters, than the slaves of other European powers? It was the effect of the influence of religion on their temper and conduct. Initiated into the religion of Jesus Christ, they were, by their masters, considered not only as men, but as Christians. They were treated by their masters, and they behaved to them, in some degree of conformity to the genius of that religion, which teaches husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, to be dutiful, not only to God, but to each other.

Is there, in the above requisitions, any thing unjust, or unreasonable? Is there, I ask in behalf of the African slaves, any thing to which their nature, as human, does not entitle them? Are not all those things included in the essential and unalienable rights of man?

It has been suggested, that it would be no small encouragement to the slaves, and attended with various obvious advantages, if their masters were to assign them their work in tasks; allowing them, after their daily tasks are finished, to employ the remainder of the day for their own emolument. Might they not, in this way, acquire a little property; which would attach a degree of consequence and respectability to them? It would also contribute to the interest of both masters and servants, to prohibit the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes; and oblige male and female slaves to pay due respect to the solemnities and obligations of marriage. This would be a happy mean of ensuring a progeny, at once, regular and numerous; and preventing the necessity of future importations from Africa.

I ask, in the name of wonder, what possible reason can any man assign, for inhumanizing a considerable part of the human race; sinking them to a level with the brutal creatures, and treating them, in obvious respects, worse than they do the beasts which perish?

Is it on account of their colour? On account of their colour! Is there any certain standard of colour, of universal authority? Who establish-

ed this standard? Do we despise them because their colour is not the same with ours? Have they not as much reason to despise us because our colour is not the same with theirs? Does not a white face appear as unnatural in Negroland, as a black face in Norway? Were their colour inferior to ours, whom shall they, or shall we, blame for it? Is not the one as much the workmanship of God as the other? Have not they and we one common Maker? Can we vilify any part of his work, without reproaching himself?

Is it on account of their form and features? What vast difference is there between their form and our own? If any, on which side lies the advantage?

Is it on account of the inferiority of their intellectual powers and faculties? The inferiority of their capacities I deny. It is an hypothesis, invented by interested, mercenary, avaricious persons, to cover their own, or the villainy of others; an hypothesis supported by no proper evidence; and, therefore, an hypothesis, to answer which is to treat it with notice, to which it is not entitled.

Is it on account of their savage state? I ask, are they, in their own country, in a condition more savage than the ancestors of the most civil-

ized, learned, and polite nations of Europe were some centuries ago? Were not Greece and Rome, these seats of after refinement, literature, and politeness, once inhabited by people in a savage state? In what country is civilization to be found, that was not preceded by a state of barbarism?

The question recurs; On what account, for what reason, is a part of our species degraded beneath the rank of men, and reduced to a level with brutes? Why are the weak enslaved and oppressed by the strong? By what law of heaven is one man made the property of another? Law of heaven! Such a law heaven never did, never will, never can, recognize. Such a law is totally incompatible with the native dignity, essential rights, and unalienable prerogatives of human nature. Man, the property of man! What an absurdity! One man never can become the property of another, till the latter become more, and the former less, than a man.

When a humane person, especially an European, sees, in the colonies, or the American states, a number of horses and hogs, oxen and asses, male and female negroes, collected in one herd at a public sale, how is he astonished, how is he shocked, and how is he grieved! What a mix-

ture of indignation and compassion does he feel! See such a melancholy spectacle in the American states! Yes, to their eternal shame be it said, in the states of America, such a dismal scene is often to be seen. I speak of the southern states; the northern, to their immortal honour, have totally discontinued slavery.

Were our African slaves happy in their own country? Were they forced from it? Are they, for the purposes of avarice and luxury, detained in grievous captivity, and the most oppressive servitude? And is nothing done for their benefit, either in this life, or that which is to come? What flagrant injustice! What enormous iniquity! To many of the Jewish slaves their captivity was the happy occasion of great good, both in this and the other world. Why are not the most effectual means employed for Christianizing our slaves? For this criminal neglect, what excuse can be offered? Could the converting of them to the Christian religion, and their introduction into the church of Christ, be productive of any bad consequences to themselves, to their masters, or to others? It is impossible. That an attempt to Christianize them would be attended with success, we have every reason which scripture and experience can furnish, to believe.

Means have been used in the West-Indies, especially by Moravians and Methodists, and attended with no inconsiderable degree of success. There are, in the island of Antigua, six or seven thousand, who make a credible profession of faith in Jesus, the son of God, and Saviour of men, and obedience to him according to the gospel. This truly good work, some masters of slaves favour, others oppose; persecuting the instruments and friends of it with unremitting enmity. Of the former class, some seem to favour the work from interested motives. They find, in experience, that the most religious slaves are the most conscientious; and, of course, the most industrious, diligent, and faithful servants. Humanity in masters, and fidelity in servants, Christianity, in the most explicit manner, inculcates. But, while the missionaries, as in duty bound, inculcate, on their disciples, obedience both to God and their earthly masters, and the commands of God and the orders of their masters are contradictory to each other, it often happens, that the poor slaves, whose knowledge must be very imperfect, are at no small loss, in certain cases, to distinguish between duty and sin; and to determine what they ought to do, and what they are to forbear. God commands the slave to rest; his tyrannical master orders him, under the severest

penalties, to labour, on the first day of the week. God strictly prohibits, the despotic master *forces* his female slaves to commit fornication, adultery, and incest.

For thirty years, and upwards, the Moravians have laboured in the colonies, with unwearied perseverance; and have organized a number of small societies, in Barbadoes, St. Christophers, and Jamaica. They have made the most extensive progress, in this good work, and their labours have had the greatest success, in the Danish colonies, where they are patronized and encouraged by the government. Their converts are taught to practise private prayer, when they go to their work, and when they leave it. Then they sing, in concert, a few plain hymns. Psalmody makes a very considerable part of their worship. The happy effects of their conversion to the religion of Jesus Christ, are many and glorious. They appear new creatures, both in their inward temper and external behaviour. Their religious knowledge is considerable, and their conversation is orderly. They pay proper attention both to their inward man and their outward, considering both soul and body, as the workmanship of God, and the purchase of the Redeemer's blood. Their persons are clean, their carriage sober;

they are industrious in the management of their own personal and domestic concerns; and, to an exemplary degree, diligent and faithful in the service of their masters. Such are the salutary effects of religion on all who imbibe its spirit, obey its precepts; and are allured by the glorious rewards which it promises. At the solemnity and order of their social meetings, I have been, at once, pleased and surprised. What encouragements are these to attempt a more extensive spread of the gospel among the poor African slaves; and a more general conversion of them to Christ and his church? Who, that has any love to God, or to the souls of men, can forbear to lament the woeful infatuation, and the invincible obstinacy of many holders of slaves; who, instead of promoting this good work, do, to the very utmost of their power, oppose it? Who, instead of aiding and co-operating with the missionaries, persecute them with relentless severity? Wretched men! how vain their opposition! They fight against God. But *whoever*, in any instance, *hardened himself against the Almighty, and prospered? He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength;* and, therefore, infinitely more than a match for all his enemies. An universal emancipation of oppressed slaves; and an universal spread of liberty, peace and piety, we are encouraged to expect.

Happy the persons who shall live to see this auspicious period! For its arrival I wait, I pray. I have done, and will do, what I can, for the relief of my enslaved and distressed brethren of mankind. Whether my endeavours shall, or shall not, be successful, I hope I shall deliver my own soul.

The cause for which I plead, I resign entirely into the hand of God. It is his own cause; and he will, in due time, make it reputable; and render all the revolutions of the times subservient to the promotion of it. *His counsel shall stand; and he will do all his pleasure.* The fulfilment of his designs, the united policy and power of hell and earth, are unable to prevent.

CHAP. VIII.

Miscellaneous Communications.

I HAVE already exceeded the limits I originally prescribed to myself. My only apology is, the importance of my subject. The farther I proceed in the discussion of it, the more interesting it appears. Of interested, sinister motives I can hardly be suspected. My expectations of success are far from sanguine. But I am solicitous to do my duty; and leave the event to the sovereign disposer of all things. Were my power equal to my will, all my fellow creatures in distress would experience immediate and effectual relief. But the relief of the children of misfortune and oppression is not my sole object. For the oppressors, as well as the oppressed, I both fear and feel. The signs of our times are truly portentous and alarming. They evidently are big with events of prodigious magnitude. The nations are terribly convulsed. Important revolutions have already taken place; and revolutions still greater seem to approach. The universal spread of Christianity in Europe, some centuries

ago, had almost totally banished slavery from it. In almost every corner of that quarter of the world, the Christian religion is still professed. Nor is slavery tolerated. But, strange to tell! the principal nations of Europe, while they disallow slavery at home, encourage it abroad. How inconsistent and absurd! Is it an evil, an enormous evil? Is it, instead of being suppressed, tolerated and patronized? Can such conduct escape finally unpunished? It is impossible. Every species of oppression God hates, he reprobates, he threatens, and, at an earlier period, or a later, he will infallibly punish. Shall not Europe, therefore, be afraid? Shall not America tremble? Innumerable are the instances on record, in which national sins have drawn down fearful national judgments. Often, and awfully, does God, by his prophets, threaten oppressors. Does he delay the execution of the threatenings, and the infliction of public judgments? For this delay he has reasons worthy of the design and purposes of his moral government; which, to us may be, for the present, incomprehensible. But the delay is limited and temporary. The execution of the divine threatenings is no less certain than the fulfilment of the divine promises. For a long series of years, I might have said ages, has the punishment of the sins of other nations been threat-

ened; and the execution of the threatnings delayed. But was the delay final? No; the fatal day, though long delayed, at last arrived, and the awful denunciations were realized. Examples extant in the annals of the world are many and obvious. Empires, kingdoms, and commonwealths, the most opulent and powerful, have been overthrown. Such is the instability of terrestrial things. Where now are the public monuments which the famous heroes of antiquity left behind them? Have they not long ago perished? Where are their magnificent palaces, their temples, their mausoleums, their rich and populous cities? Where are any remaining visible traces of the battles they fought, the empires they established, the laws they enacted; or the universal desolation they once spread around them? Have not the kingdoms they conquered undergone many revolutions, gained and lost their liberty, and experienced all those reverses and vicissitudes to which earthly glory is necessarily subjected? Does not the curious traveller explore large regions in search of standing records of the greatness of former princes? Does he not traverse immense countries, once the seat of science and liberty, now the abode of barbarism and slavery? Does he not search, and search in vain, for cities, in the very spot on which they once

stood? Babylon has long ago fallen! Persepolis and Ecbatana are now no more! Long have travellers disputed, without ascertaining, the site of ancient Nineveh, that *exceeding great city of three days journey*. Where are the remaining signatures, in Asia Minor, or in Judea, of Alexander's victories? How few are the standing memorials in Gaul or in Britain, to evince that there existed such a person as Julius Cæsar, who conquered the one and invaded the other. Such has been the fate of the most extensive empires, the most populous cities, and the most favoured nations! What reason then have the sinful nations of our times to be afraid?

That I may impress, more deeply, the melancholy truth upon the minds of my readers, and that I may, as far as my influence can extend, exhibit a faithful warning to the sinful nations of Christendom, both in the eastern and the western hemisphere; I will exemplify the execution of the divine threatnings in two of the most signal instances, which the histories of former ages have transmitted to our times; the destruction of the famous cities of Babylon and Jerusalem. I begin with Babylon. Before I give an account of the destruction of this celebrated city, and shew the exact fulfilment of scripture-prediction in that

calamitous event, it will not, I trust, be unprofitable or unentertaining to my readers, to prefix a concise description of its origin, regularity, and extent.

The name of *Babylon*, by which this famous city has long been known, is, probably, derived from the word *Babel*. This was the name of that extraordinary tower, which the human race agreed, by their united art and strength, to build, soon after the flood. But, in a manner most unexpected, the design was rendered abortive, and a final stop put to the work. God, in a manner, which many writers have attempted to explain, but which still remains inexplicable, confounded their language. This extraordinary occurrence seems to have been the occasion of the name of the mighty tower which they intended to build; for Babel literally signifies *confusion*. Concerning the design of this great tower, or rather the builders of it, the sacred history does not fully inform us. It is supposed to have been intended to secure mankind from the fatal effects of another deluge. Eastern tradition says, they were three years employed in preparing materials, particularly bricks, for this tower, each of which was thirteen cubits long, and five thick; and twenty-two years in building it. That it was built of

brick and bitumen, instead of stone and mortar, the Mosaic history informs us. This bitumen seems to have been a fat unctuous sort of earth, or slimy kind of substance, found in the neighbourhood of Babylon. The height of this extraordinary tower certain writers have estimated at a furlong, others at a mile, and others at four miles—a height equal, if not superior, to the altitude of the highest mountains in the known world. But this is all conjecture.

The tower of Belus, of which the Greek historian, Herodotus, who flourished about four hundred years before the birth of our Saviour, speaks, is supposed to have been the same with the tower, called in scripture Babel, or, at least, built on the old foundation, and was to be seen in his time. It consisted of eight towers, raised one upon another, but gradually decreasing in size from the first to the last. Above the eight stood the famous temple of Belus, the ascent to which was carried, in a circular manner, round the outside of the building. The riches of this temple, in statues, censers, tables, cups, and other vessels of massy gold, were immense. This great tower and temple are said to have been built by direction of Belus, king of Babylon. There were two Babylonian monarchs of this name; Belus the

father of Ninus, and Belus the son of Semiramis. The former is said to have been cotemporary with Shamgar, one of the Jewish judges, of whom the writer of the book of Judges speaks.

The situation and ruins of this ancient structure, modern travellers pretend to have found. But, in their accounts of its situation, and description of its ruins, they do not agree; and it is extremely problematical whether any of them have discovered the true situation or ruins of the original tower of Babel. Babylon having been the capital of Nimrod's empire, the antiquity of it cannot be doubted. For the honour of founding this truly magnificent city, three illustrious personages appear as candidates: Nimrod; Belus, the Assyrian, father of Ninus, and Semiramis. The matter has been compromised thus—Nimrod began, Belus enlarged it; and Semiramis not only enlarged, but adorned it to such a degree, that she has been called the foundress of it. But, above all, Nebuchadnezzar put the finishing hand to it, and made it one of the wonders of the world. *Is not this*, says he, in the pride and vanity of his heart, *great Babylon, which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?*

The following description of this magnificent city is collected chiefly from Herodotus; who had been on the spot, and is the most ancient as well as the most reputable historian, that has transmitted any account of it to us.

"Babylon stood in a spacious plain, and was, by the river Euphrates, divided into two great parts. The walls were, in every respect, prodigious; being eighty-seven feet thick, three hundred and fifty feet high, and four hundred and eighty furlongs in compass. They were drawn round the city in form of an exact square, surrounded on the outside with a vast ditch, full of water, and lined with bricks on both sides. In every side of this great square were twenty-five gates, an hundred in all, made of solid brass. Between every two gates were three towers; with four more at the four corners; three between each of these corners and the next gate on each side. Each tower was ten feet higher than the wall. From the twenty-five gates, in each side of this great square, went twenty-five streets in straight lines to the gates which were directly over against them, in the opposite side. The whole number of streets amounted to fifty; each fifteen miles long; all crossing each other at right angles. There were also four half-streets, which had houses only on

one side, and the wall on the other. These went round the four sides of the city, next the wall; and were each of them two hundred feet broad; the other streets being a hundred and fifty feet in breadth. Thus the whole city was divided into six hundred and seventy-six squares; each of which measured four furlongs and a half on every side. Around all these squares, on the side next to the streets, stood the houses; the space in the middle of each square being occupied in gardens, and for other uses. A branch of the river Euphrates ran across the city, from the north to the south side; dividing it into two great parts. On each side of the river was a key, and a high wall of the same thickness with the walls of the city. In this wall, opposite to the streets, which led to the river, were gates of brass; and from them a descent by steps to the river. The bridge, which opened the communication between the two great parts of the city, was, in magnificence, equal to the other buildings. Before they began to build it, they turned, by canals, the course of the river; and laid its channel quite dry. This gave them an opportunity to lay the foundation of it in the firmest manner, and to raise artificial banks, to prevent those inundations, to which, during the overflowings of the river, the country was otherwise exposed. The river, thus turned out of its

usual course; was received into a prodigious artificial lake, dug for the purpose, westward of the city. This lake, according to Herodotus, was fifty-two; and, according to Megasthenes, seventy-five miles square; and thirty-five feet deep. Into this vast lake the river was made to flow, till all the work was finished; and then it was turned back into its former channel. To prevent the Euphrates, during its encrease, from entering by the gates, and overflowing the city, this lake, as well as the canal, was preserved. In it, as a great reservoir, the water was kept all the year for the benefit of the inhabitants, to be let out by sluices, as exigences might require. At the two ends of the bridge stood two palaces, which had a communication with each other, by a vault built under the channel of the river. The old palace, which stood on the east side of the river, was thirty furlongs in circumference; and the new palace, which stood on the opposite side, was sixty furlongs in compass. It was surrounded with three walls, one within another, with considerable spaces between them. These walls, as also those of the other palace, were embellished with an infinite variety of sculptures, representing all kinds of animals to the life.

"Here were the hanging gardens, which have been so much and so justly celebrated in history.

These were of a square form, every side of which was four hundred feet long. They were carried up into the air, in the manner of several large terraces, one above another, till they equalled the height of the walls of the city. The ascent was from terrace to terrace, by stairs ten feet wide. The whole pile was sustained by vast arches, raised upon other arches, one above another, and strengthened by a wall surrounding it, twenty-two feet thick. On the top of these arches were laid large flat stones, sixteen feet long, and four feet broad. These were lined with bricks, closely cemented together with plaster, and that covered with sheets of lead, upon which lay the mould of the gardens." Such were the astonishing effects of art, which have long rendered Babylon so famous in history; a great part of which has been attributed to that truly enterprising woman, Semiramis.

But attend to what is to follow. How short-lived is all terrestrial glory! What a reverse of fortune has this once splendid city experienced! Long before it happened, the downfall of Babylon was predicted; and the event exactly corresponded to the prediction. Repeatedly, and in terms the most explicit, does the prophet Isaiah foretell it. Thus he speaks—*The burden of Ba-*

bylon—Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt. And they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be enraged one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and I will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, who shall not regard silver; and, as for gold, they shall not delight in it. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch his tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desart shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and the

owls shall dwell there; and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant places: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. The repetitions and amplifications of this awful prediction, which occur in the subsequent part of the prophecy, brevity forbids me to transcribe. For a series of years was the completion of the prediction delayed. To judgment God usually proceeds by slow steps, and with apparent reluctance. But the execution of the threatning, against impenitent nations as well as individuals, though slow, is certain. The downfall of Babylon, on account of its impiety, was determined, and, in a gradual manner, accomplished. From the Assyrians, that noble city passed into the hands of the Persians, and from the Persians to the Macedonians. Here Alexander the Great died. Almost immediately after his death, the city began to decline. Seleucus Nicanor built a new city forty miles above it; and to perpetuate his name, called it Selucia; and, to people it, he drew no less than five hundred thousand persons out of Babylon. In the time of Curtius, the historian, Babylon was reduced to three-fourths of its former magnitude. In the days of Pliny, it was reduced to desolation. And, when Jerom lived, it was turned

turned into a forest or park, in which the kings of Persia hunted.

According to some modern travellers, all that remains of it, is only one tower, called the tower of Daniel; from which may be viewed the ruins of this ancient city; which, for regularity and other astonishing works of art, certainly was the most magnificent in our world. But how unstable is all earthly glory! How transitory all terrestrial grandeur! Of this great city, in its meridian glory, we have had a circumstantial account. Let us now view it in its present fallen and ruinous state. What a contrast! A gentlemen who visited it in 1574, gives us the following melancholy account of it. "The village of Eltugo is situated where Babylon of Chaldea formerly stood. The harbour, where people go ashore, in order to travel, by land, to the city of Bagdad, is a quarter of a league from it. The soil is so dry and barren, that they cannot till it. and so naked, that I could never have believed, that this powerful city, once the most stately and renowned in all the world, and situated in the fruitful country of Shinar, could have stood there, had I not seen, by the situation of the place, by many antiquities of great beauty, which are to be seen round about, and especially by the

old bridge over the Euphrates, whereof some piles, and arches of incredible strength, are still remaining, that it certainly stood there. The front of the village Elugo occupies the eminence on which the castle stood, and the ruins of its fortifications are still visible. Behind, and some little way beyond, is the tower of Babylon, which is half a league in diameter; but so ruinous, so low, and full of venomous creatures, that lodge in the holes, which they have made in the rubbish, that no one durst approach nearer to it, than half a league, except during two months in the winter, when those animals never stir from their holes." Melancholly account! Between the prophetical description and the traveller's narrative, how striking is the agreement!

On what account, for what cause did this direful calamity befal Babylon? what was her crime? Her crimes were many and aggravated. One thing, in particular, the prophet, who foretold it, specifies; her cruelty to the Jews, whom she made, for long seventy years, her captives and slaves. *I*, saith God, *was wroth with my people; I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand; thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancients hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke.* Therefore, *Come down and sit in the dust,*

O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground. Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness; O daughter of the Chaldeans: for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms. Were the Babylonians punished, severely punished, because they detained the Jewish nation in captivity and bondage, and treated them with cruelty and oppression, for long seventy years? Then what shall be the fate of those nations, called Christian, who have enslaved and oppressed a greater number of the human race, for some centuries of years? How fearful the doom! how dreadful the punishment, that must await them!

From the overthrow of Babylon, I pass on to the destruction of Jerusalem. For a series of years, rather ages, the Jews had been favoured above all the other nations of the earth. In numberless instances, and with a high hand they had sinned. Their sins had not passed unreproved. Prophets had, time after time, remonstrated against them, and foretold the fatal consequences which followed. Their predictions and remonstrances were, by the great body of the Jewish nation, disregarded. Like the nations of our times, they were hardened in sin, and persevered in the practice of it. Judgment, however, at last overtook them; and, to this

day, they are memorials of divine resentment, and of the divine veracity. Often do we tantalize our Maker, but he never tantalizes us. If he promises good things, we have every reason to expect them. If, on the contrary, he threatens evil things, we have every reason to fear them. Has he punished the most favoured nations of antiquity? Do the nations, in our times, tread in their steps; and shall they not be sharers in their plagues? Is not God as holy; and is not sin as hateful as ever? That favoured nations may effectually be warned, and the reflection of threatened calamities happily prevented, let them review, seriously review, that awful instance and proof of the certain, though slow, completion of prophecy in works of judgment, as well as mercy, the fearful destruction of the city of Jerusalem, the total abolition of the Jewish polity, civil and ecclesiastical, and the final dispersion of that once happy, but now unhappy nation.

It has been observed, that prophecies are permanent miracles, whose authority is sufficently confirmed by their completion, and are therefore, solid proofs of the supernatural origin of the religion, whose truth they are intended to attest. Of all the various proofs, by which the truth of revelation has been evinced, that which arises from the ex-

act fulfilment of prophecy, is, perhaps, the most obvious, and the most convincing. Numerous are the instances in which this observation might be exemplified. Events the most improbable, which no human sagacity could foresee or foretel, have been, in the most circumstantial manner foretold; and the predictions have been literally fulfilled. Of all the instances of the vengeance of heaven against cruel and bloody, but refractory and impenitent, nations, which the history of past ages furnishes, the most striking is the final destruction of Jerusalem and dispersion of the Jews. At an early period was this dreadful catastrophe foreseen and predicted. Upwards of fifteen hundred years before it happened, Moses, in the most circumstantial manner, foretold it. Review and compare his prophetical description in the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, and the historical relation of Flavius Josephus, who was an eye-witness of the event. Between the former and the latter is there not, in all the material circumstances, such a surprizing agreement, as no man, friend of revelation, or foe, can candidly review without astonishment. With the early prophecies of Moses, the predictions of the subsequent pro-prophets agree. *The Lord*, says Moses, *shall bring a nation from far, as swift as the eagle*

flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand. A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee. So that the man who is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the remnant of his children, which he shall leave: so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children, whom he shall eat; because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate women among you, which would not adventure to set the soal of of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards her husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter, and towards her children which she shall bear: for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege. The people of the prince that shall come, says Daniel, *shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the*

end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. In how exact, full, and circumstantial a manner these predictions were accomplished, we shall immediately see. Could any degree of human sagacity, or political wisdom foresee, at so early a period, the tragical scene, which those prophets, in such an explicit manner, foretel? No. This foreknowledge must have proceeded from that omniscient spirit, to whom all events past, present, and future, are alike known.

In a manner, still more explicit and full, does our Lord, in the days of his personal ministry, foretel the speedy approach of this unparalelled catastrophe. The fearful prodigies and signs which were to precede it; the unexampled and unequalled sufferings, which the unhappy Jews were to undergo; the dreadful concomitants and consequences of it; and the short time in which all these things were to be accomplished, he foretels, in a manner, that has rather the appearance of a narrative of an event already past, than a prophecy of one to come. Thus he speaks—*There shall not be left one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down. The days shall come upon thee, O Jerusalem! when thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and keep thee in on every side,*

and shall lay thee even with the ground, and shall not leave thee one stone upon another. And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights; and great signs shall there be from heaven. There shall be great tribulation, such as never happened from the beginning of the world, to this time. They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles. This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled. Tremendous predictions! But the event was not less tremendous than the prediction.

Here was a complication of miseries, that never has been, and, probably, never will be equalled, in the history of mankind. Could human wisdom foresee these extraordinary calamitous occurrences? Was there now any external appearance, or human probability, of such an uncommon event? Not the smallest. Universal peace prevailed over the world.

Numerous were the preternatural and alarming signs, which preceded this tremendous catrosphe. In the days of Claudius Cæsar, a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem happened, there was in Judea, a prodigious tempest,

accompanied with most vehement winds and rain, terrible lightnings and thunder, and fearful shakings and roarings of the earth. Before the invasion of Judea, a star, in the form of a sword, hung over the city a whole year. In the dead of the night, at the time of the feast of the tabernacles, light, similar to that of the meridian sun, shone for a whole half hour, on the temple, and places adjacent to it. The great eastern gate of the temple, which was of solid brass, and of such bulk and weight, that twenty men were scarcely sufficient to shut it, though it was fastened with strong bolts, suddenly opened of its own accord.

The priests watching in the Temple, at the feast of Pentecost, heard a voice, as of a great multitude, crying, *Let us go hence.* Even before the sun went down, there appeared armies in battle array, and encountering in the air; with weapons glittering, and chariots which seemed to compass the whole country, and invest the great cities, especially Jerusalem. For no less than seven years and an half, a countryman, named Jesus, ran up and down the streets of Jerusalem, especially at the solemn festivals, crying, in the most doleful accents; *Woe to Jerusalem! Woe to the city! Woe to the temple! Woe to*

the people! And, though cruelly punished, nothing could restrain him from crying; till at last, as he was uttering these words, *Wo to myself also*, he was instantaneously struck dead by a stone from a sling. Were these extraordinary appearances, these awful prodigies insignificant or unmeaning? Far from it. They proved eventually to be, as our Lord had foretold, only *the beginning of sorrows*; omens and fore-runners of calamities and miseries unexampled in the annals of the world.

The Roman army, under Vespasian, having entered Judea from the north-east, desolated city and country. In the seventeenth year of the Christian æra, on the first day of the week, distinguished by the honourable name of the *Lord's Day*, this great army first encamped before Jerusalem. On the arrival of it, the Christians, crediting the predictions, and following the directions of their divine master, fled from Jerusalem, and hid themselves in the mountainous part of the country. But the Jews, judicially and wofully infatuated, instead of submitting to Vespasian, who is said to have been a very merciful general, madly resisted; nay, bent on their own destruction, they, in frequent instances, encountered and massacred one another. At

Jerusalem, especially, the scene was tragically and bloody beyond description. Its inhabitants, as an additional proof of their infatuation, were divided into factions and parties. Those, though they occasionally united to make furious, but unsuccessful attacks on the Romans, often murdered one another. Nay, shocking to relate! they even murdered one another in sport; pretending to try the sharpness of their swords. The multitude of unburied bodies, corrupting the air, produced a most fatal pestilence. Along with sword and pestilence, famine, prevailed to such an awful degree, that they fed on one another. Ladies, otherwise delicate, broiled their sucking infants, and ate them. The first breach was made by the besieging army, in the lower city, on the first day of the week. On the first day of the week the Temple was burned; and on the first day of the week, the upper city, otherwise called the citadel, was taken and burnt.

After an obstinate defence, for long six months, the city was taken, and immense numbers of its inhabitants put to the sword. A Roman commander, as a literal fulfilment of our Lord's prediction, ordered the foundations of the Temple to be ploughed up. To such a degree was Titus, notwithstanding his usual clemency, provoked by

the obstinacy of the Jews, that he is said to have crucified them before the walls of the city, as long as he had wood for erecting crosses. The destruction of this great city, happened at the time of one of the three annual festivals, at which all the Jewish males were required to attend; and, therefore, it is computed, there might then be almost three millions of souls in it. Not less than eleven hundred thousand are supposed to have perished in it, by sword, famine, and pestilence. Between two and three hundred thousand were cut off in other places. Almost one hundred thousand were taken prisoners, and sent into Egypt and Syria, to be sold for slaves, exposed for shows, or devoured by wild beasts.

Almost incredible are the cruelties and massacres which that devoted people suffered in succeeding times. In a dreadful war, about sixty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, occasioned by an impostor, pretending to be the Messiah, six hundred thousand Jews are said to have been slain, besides what perished by famine and pestilence. The very rivers, it is said, overflowed with human blood; and the sea, into which they ran, was, for some miles marked with it.

Such were the complicated and unexampled miseries and calamities, which our Lord foretold to befal the unhappy Jews; and which, in the most exact conformity to his predictions, actually befel them. Is not the coincidence, in every material circumstance, between the productions of this unexpected and improbable event, and the historical account of its accomplishment, truly striking? But by whom is this historical account given? By Christians? No, but avowed enemies to Christianity; Josephus, a Jew; Tacitus and Luctonius, Romans. But might not the three [illegible]lical histories, which contain the predic- [illegible] destruction of Jerusalem, be com- piled a[illegible] event happened? It is impossible. Fro[illegible] most authentic records which we have of tho[illegible]imes, it appears, that the evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke, far from compiling and publishing their histories after the destruction of Jerusalem, died before that event happened. And, which is truly worthy of remark, the evangelist John, who survived that catastrophe, predicted nothing concerning it.

To a circumstance, suggested already, I cannot but recal the reader's attention. Is it not truly remarkable, that the first encampment of the Roman army before Jerusalem; the first breach

made in the lower city; the burning of the temple; and the taking and burning of the citadel; all happened on the first day of the week, or the *Lord's day*. Was this recurrence of the *Lord's day*, on four such memorable occasions, the effect of accident or chance? No, it was, replies an ingenius writer, among the times and seasons determined by omniscience from the foundation of the world. Does it not carry in it a strong intimation, that, though this dreadful calamity befel the Jews, on account of a long series of complicated and aggravated crimes, that which, in an especial manner, procured and hastened it, was a recent enormous deed, the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory; to perpetuate the memory of whose triumphant resurrection, this day was instituted, and will continue to be observed in the Christian church, to the end of the world? Our Lord had said, *this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.* In this respect, as well as all others, the prophecy was literally fulfilled. The destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, the total overthrow of the nation and the church of the Jews, happened in less than forty years after the prophecy was delivered. Many therefore, of that generation, must have been eyewitnesses of its awful completion, and sharers in the horrors and miseries which accompanied it.

It is natural to ask, for what crime or crimes did this dreadful calamity befal the nation and church of the Jews? Obvious is the answer. For a series of ages they had sinned with a high hand; their punishment was, by prophet after prophet, threatened; but, in the long suffering of God, delayed. But now the fatal time had arrived, at which *judgment was to begin at the house of God.* An enumeration of their complicated and aggravated offences I will not attempt. Suffice it to say, that injustice and oppression, cruelty and bloodshed, had, in an especial manner, hastened their ruin. Is not this the plain purport of our Saviour's words—*Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth; from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee—behold your house is left unto you desolate.* After shedding the innocent and precious blood of many great and good men, prophets and martyrs, and

many other men, they dared, at last, to embrue their impious hands in the sacred blood of the Son of God. On this account, for this cause, their destruction was hastened. *Wrath*, as an apostle expresses it, *came upon them to the uttermost*. Must not cruelty, in every form of which it is susceptible, be hateful to God? If the shedding of innocent blood was criminal in former times, can it be lawful now? It is impossible. The antediluvian law, *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*, is now, as much as ever, in full force. It is an express law of heaven, and to heaven the powers of the earth must, in the end, answer for the non-execution of it. Traffickers, owners, managers, overseers, murderers of slaves, tremble! Your nefarious, cruel, bloody, deeds, heaven every day beholds, and will infallibly punish. In every age, and in every country, innocent blood cries from the earth that receives it; and the cry of it never can fail to ascend to heaven. For reasons best known to himself, the almighty Ruler of the universe, the impartial Judge of the earth, now permits tyrants and despots. But will he permit them, for ever, to torture and murder their fellow creatures? No; in power and in duration they are circumscribed within limits, which are more fixed and permanent than the perpetual mountains or the

everlasting hills. Their cruelties, barbarities, and murders, are all registered in heaven. The day will shortly dawn, in which the dread tribunal is to be erected, and the books are to be opened, and both the quick and the dead, who are then to be raised, judged out of the books.

Is the oppression of mankind, in all the various modifications and forms which it assumes, incompatible with the essential rights of humanity; and an insult to that great Being, *who made man after his own image;* and who has, in the strictest manner, prohibited it? Has it, in numerous instances, drawn down the vengeance of heaven on nations as well as individuals? Then justice to the subject, to my fellow creatures, and to my own conscience, requires me, before I dismiss the cause for which I plead, to subjoin, to the nations of Christendom, which are unhappily engaged in the deliterious and fatal commerce and slavery of the human species, especially the Africans, a solemn warning and caution to desist, speedily desist, from a practice so offensive to the Deity, and so pernicious to mankind. This arduous and delicate task I undertake from the most generous motives, and with the most benevolent views, by which the human mind can be actuated. And, therefore, if I can afford no relief to my op-

pressed fellow creatures, I shall, I trust, deliver my own soul.

It is with no small concern that I reflect, that a very large share of the infamous commerce has fallen to that nation to which I originally belonged, and for which I still retain a strong predilection. That a nation, not less distinguished for refinement and delicacy of sentiment, than for arts and manufactures, should suffer any of its members, with impunity, to embrue their hands in the blood of the innocent, is truly astonishing. If I cannot remedy this alarming evil, I will not cease to remonstrate against it. Had I ten thousand tongues and pens, I should employ them all on the subject.

It is to me no small consolation to reflect, that, though many nations of Christendom are, to their disgrace, engaged in the infamous commerce and oppression of their fellow creatures, there are, in all these nations, thousands, and tens of thousands, who, in proportion to their measures of information, reprobate and bewail the evil, as much as I can do. As for any proportion of the nations of Christendom, who favour the inhuman traffic, they are all comprehended under two divisions; those who are concerned in it, and de-

rive pecuniary advantage from it, or those who either are uninformed concerning it, or receive their information from persons, who, from sinister considerations, are prepossessed in favour of it. The great mass of the people are uninformed, or misinformed, concerning the shocking barbarities under which the exiled Africans languish. The situation of the united kingdom of Britain and Ireland is attended with peculiar advantages. Its air is salubrious, its soil fertile and highly cultivated; the seas with which it is surrounded, abound in a great variety of the best fish; and its inhabitants rendered secure by a navy so formidable, that it has become the admiration and the terror of the world. Thus situated, it has, for a long series of years, been exempted from the calamities and ravages, to which the seat of war is necessarily exposed. Of slavery and war abroad they merely hear, but do not feel the one or the other. But, though they allow no slavery at home, their merchants and traders are active promoters of it abroad. Peace as well as plenty they enjoy in their own country; but their armies and navies shed torrents of human blood, and spread desolation around them, in distant parts of the world.

To the Inhabitants of Christendom.

Christian Nations! You hear of the achievements of your forces in the several distant quarters of the world. You admire their invincible bravery, and their unparalelled success. But are the accounts you are accustomed to read, full and fair? Are they not often mutilated, altered, and disguised, before they are put into your hands? Are your officers and armies as humane and generous as they are intrepid and brave? They conquer barbarous nations, you are told, with the most benevolent, with the most philanthropic design, and for purposes the most beneficial to the conquered; to civilize, or, perhaps, to Christianize them. Your traders and factors in Africa, it is pretended, are men distinguished by their humanity; they purchase the natives, in order to rescue them from the barbarities and massacres of which they are in danger in their own country; and to place them in a situation easy and comfortable in the West-Indies. Are these pretensions just? Do you believe them? Such pretensions are, perhaps, the greatest insult that ever was offered to the human understanding; and an imposition on the credulity of uninformed people, at which *effrontery itself can hardly forbear to blush!*

This, all this, is the downright reverse of truth. Do not allow partiality for your nation and connexions to pervert your judgment. For the sake of your country, for the honour of humanity and the Christian name, you wish the most favourable accounts to be true; and what you wish, you are apt to believe to be true. The time I can recollect, when I was in a similar predicament; but dire experience has rectified my mistake. Cruelties and barbarities, too shocking to be related, have I seen perpetrated by European emissaries and agents, both on the coast of Africa and in the West-India islands. Never can I recall them to my mind, but the blood almost forgets to flow in my veins. Has the behaviour of European governors and armies in the East-Indies; or has the conduct of the European agents in Africa, or of the owners of slaves in the West-Indies, had any tendency to recommend either civilized life or the Christian religion? Has not their conduct, on the contrary, been, in the highest degree, calculated to prejudice Pagans and Mahometans against both the politics and the religion of Christendom? Has it not proved an impenetrable barrier to preclude the promulgation of the gospel, the benign gospel of our Lord and blessed Redeemer? Has it not, in various instances, proved to be a war against religion,

against reason, against humanity, against the authority of heaven, and against the most valuable rights and the dearest interests of mankind? Human natur.ehas been abused, the Deity has been insulted. To Omnipotence itself, tyrants have bidden defiance. Natural is it to ask, with what great views, for what valuable purposes, has a traffic, so iniquitous, and attended with such shocking circumstances, been prosecuted? What can sufficiently counterbalance such enormous evils? The question admits of no satisfactory answer. Such ambition, such avarice, such luxury, such ill-gotten gain, *the curse of God necessarily attends.* Did such pursuits ever promote the true prosperity of either nations or individuals? It is impossible. Punishments ever follow crimes, and sometimes the former run paralell with the latter, with a mysterious uniformity. Nations and individuals, addicted to such acts of oppression, may seem, for a time, to flourish. But how unexpected, sudden, and alarming has their downfal often been! You imagine, perhaps, you have reached the highest summit of terrestrial prosperity and honour. Your armies and navies are powerful, your commerce flourishes, your national resources are inexhaustable. But remember, pride is the usual fore-runner of ruin; the ruin of nations and of individvals. Is

there not national as well as personal pride? Do you not recollect instances, in which the highest prosperity, and that consequent vanity which it is apt to occasion, have been the immediate harbingers of a fearful and fatal downfal? Do not such examples occur in the history of every period? Does national honour, or greatness, consist in foreign domination, or a vast extent of territory? Has not every nation, has not every tribe of mankind, as good a title to the undisturbed possession of the country, in which the common Father of the human family has placed it, as you have to yours? By what authority do you invade and dispossess them; and who gave you this authority? Are not the oppressor and the oppressed equally related to one common Creator? Yes, and, perhaps, the latter more valuable, in his estimation, than the former. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. Righteousness*, not riches, but *righteousness exalteth a nation.*

Shall my warning be, by any concerned, considered as a subject of sneer and banter, burlesque, and laughter? I shall be sorry, not on my own, but on their account. Now, they laugh, but the day will shortly dawn in which they will laugh no more. Then He, *who sits in heaven, will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear*

cometh. When judgment overtakes you, and you are involved in inextricable distress, you will learn, from expensive experience, to feel for others. What desolation by famine, fire, and sword, have your armies spread in different quarters of the world? The havoc they have made, I will not attempt to describe. *Justice* would weep, *benevolence* would mourn, and *human nature* would blush at the bloody recital! But what words can possibly describe, what imagination can paint, the horrors they have occasioned? Their cruelties in the East-Indies, as well as in Africa, *will never, never be forgotten.* Far removed from the scene of action, you must have formed a very faint and inadequate idea of them. Destruction, and complicated woe as far as the arms of Christians could extend them, have been spread, with wanton cruelty, from the East to the West, and from the North to the South. While you, remote from the scene of action, had nothing to lose, you had still less to fear; and of course, the intelligence reached you, like a tale of antiquity; the impression of which is, by distance of time, as well as place, in a great measure prevented: and woe unutterable is converted into momentary amusement. The horrors and miseries of war you have not experienced in your country. You have not been alarmed at

midnight, with the hollow noise of the drums, or the shrill clangor of the trumpet. To the afflicting scene of a family in flight, you have been strangers. You have not been reduced to the painful necessity of beholding your children dashed against the stones, or pierced through by the point of the bayonet. Nor can you form a just conception of a beloved relative blown to pieces by a ball from the mouth of a cannon, burnt alive, or suspended on a gibbet, for *asserting his natural rights and unalienable privileges.* These are only the fainter sufferings occasioned by war, particulary in the East-Indies; where streets have overflowed with streams of blood, mountains of human bodies have been raised, and towns have been seen in one general blaze. But even these complicated calamities, which the avarice of your governments, and the thirst of individuals for gold, have produced, fall far short of the horrid slaughter which has been made by the cruelty of your factors and slave-traders in Africa, and the West-Indies. This no imagination can conceive, no tongue or pen can describe. Innumerable groans arising from dying mortals, you have had no opportunity to hear; innumerable woe-worn cheeks continually wet with silent tears, you have had no opportunity of seeing. That such tyranny is encouraged, and the hands

of these murderers are strengthened by your laws, you know. Millions have been reduced to a state of perpetual slavery, or brought to a premature death, which you never did or can feel. Could you hear their bitter lamentations, were their blood sprinkled on your garments; *blood which cries to heaven for vengeance against you;* would you not tremble for your fate, and refuse to participate in such diabolical crimes? That you may have some idea of their auguish, make their case your own, and your case theirs; when we recollect the wretched sons of Africa, we can scarcely forbear to curse the governments, that, to the natural evils incident to mortal man, adds the dreadful adventitious misery and horrors of slavery. Are not the unavoidable misfortunes of mankind sufficiently numerous, without a wilful increase of them? Are not the histories of Nero, Cataline, and Alexander, histories of devils incarnate? Who can think of their actions without horror or of their death without satisfaction? And yet, I cannot forbear to say, those men were angels, in comparison with your servants, soldiers, and sailors, in distant countries. To see the bounties of heaven abused, the charming face of nature wasted, the noblest works of God destroyed; methinks, *is enough to force a curse from holiness itself.* Can

there be any sin greater than light in the head and malice in the heart? The whole compass of human language seems inadequate to express the cruelty, malice, and villainy of the British, Dutch, French and Spanish officers, factors, and planters, and their agents. They have refined so far in cruelty, that we have no proper name for it. To the unmethodized vices of ancient times, they have added the dregs, and methodized barbarity of modern times; and are wholly immersed in the abyss of serpentine deceit, as well as diabolical cruelty. The dying groans of millions, who have fallen victims to their more than brutal cruelty, have ascended to heaven, and their petitions are registered in eternity; while vengeance is on the wing.

These are serious considerations. Whatever oppressors or their abettors, persons judicially infatuated, may think, there is a minute account of all their barbarities in the records of eternity. And woe to all tyrants, despots, and oppressors, when the accounts are settled; or, to use the language of scripture, when they *are weighed in the balance*, for they, doubtless, will be *found wanting!* The most populous and famous nations of antiquity have been called to a reckoning; and the most haughty kingdoms have sunk to ruin,

when the balance was struck. Were unenlightened nations punished, and punished with severity; and can the enlightened escape with impunity? Such a supposition the justice of the Almighty forbids, as blasphemy against the rectitude of heaven. Be assured, it is not the benediction of a prelate, or the proclamation of a prime minister, that will repay the blood of India, requite the wretchedness of Africa, or appease the anger of heaven. Serious, solemn considerations!

I ask again, Why should you, directly or indirectly, multiply, either to yourselves, or others, adventitious calamities and woes? Do you reply, We multiply the miseries of our fellow-creatures! God forbid! We, from our inmost soul, abhor tyranny and slavery. But stop. Do you what is competent for you, and incumbent upon you, in your stations and places, for the suppression of slavery and oppression, while you tacitly consent, and tamely submit, to that toleration, and countenance, which your respective governments give to the commerce of the African race? You are virtually guilty of the crimes, and consequently, like the nations of antiquity, will literally partake of their punishment. You say, you detest cruelty. Why, then, do you tacitly

submit to your governments and fellow-citizens? Have not cruelties and barbarities been perpetrated in both the Indies, which are unexampled in the annals of the world. Do you find in the histories of Nero, and of Cataline, or of Alexander, barbarities equal to these, which are, every year, and every day, committed by your factors, and agents in Africa, and by your owners, and overseers of slaves in the West-Indies? No, no. If we make a comparative estimate, we must pronounce the former, merciful men; the latter, monsters of cruelty.

Is not man the noblest of the works of God, in our world? In him heaven and earth, mind and matter, unite. To him was given at an early period, dominion over the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea. But when, and by whom, was premœval power given to one part of mankind to enslave and oppress another? Such a power is utterly incompatible with the essential prerogatives, and natural equality, of men. Tyrants and despots usurp it; but heaven never granted it. Do you wish to escape the vengeance of offended heaven? Then cease not to remonstrate against it; and prevent the future execution of it. The love I bear to you, irresistibly constrains me to be

plain and importunate with you. Do not imagine *I am become your enemy, because I tell you the truth.* For the prosperity of your several governments and countries I pray. To the different ranks and degrees of men among you, I pay all due deference. My motives and views cannot possibly be interested or mercenary. Every such supposition, my situation absolutely forbids. For the favour of the great I will not fawn; their resentment I do not fear. I am placed in a state of mediocrity; having *neither poverty nor riches;* but, day after day, *fed with food convenient for me.* I possess an independent spirit. In this I glory. The man whose integrity is unshaken, who can smile at the frowns of an individual tyrant or an army of them, whose conscience approves his conduct; whether he be placed in a high station or a low, whether his condition be plentiful or scanty, I esteem. The despot, the tyrant, the oppressor, whether he be arrayed in robes of state, or covered with rags; whether he fill a throne, or sit on the dunghill; is a contemptible being; hateful to God, to angels, and to men.... In the dreadful day of retribution, whither shall the oppressor flee? where shall he hide? Will the mountains and the rocks hear his cries? will they fall on him and cover him from his judge? No, the cries of the orphans, the widows, the thou-

sands, who are now enslaved and oppressed, tortured and murdered, by these merciless despots, they refuse to hear; and, therefore, in the dreadful day of retribution, neither heaven nor earth will hear them. Now they put the evil day far away. But has not God foretold its approach? Can he falsify his word? Now, they show no mercy to their fellow creatures; then, God will show no mercy to them. Recollect, ruminate on the predictions and prophecies of the old and new testaments, prophecies against nations as well as churches. Review the histories of former ages; histories of both nations and churches. Compare their situation and your own. Do you not imitate them in sin? Must you not, therefore, expect to be partakers with them in punishment? Have not all the sinning nations of antiquity, at an earlier period or a later, suffered? and how can you expect to escape? This is the season of the infliction of national judgments. It only is in this life that mankind subsist in a rational capacity; and, therefore, it is in this life only, that they can suffer in this capacity. For the very sins of which you are notoriously guilty, the nations of former times have suffered the severest calamities. Be assured, that *vengeance* now, as much as ever, *belongs to God*, and *he will* infallibly *repay*. How often was

the nation, as well as the church, of the Jews, forewarned of the dreadful calamities that were about to befal them? Did heaven tantalize and trifle with them? No. He suffered their manners many years; but the execution of his threatnings, though slow, is certain. You, as they were, are now warned to flee from the wrath to come; and, therefore, if you persist in sin, till judgment overtake you, inexcusable must you be, and fearful will be your doom! My argument I might illustrate, and my call I might enforce, by a long deduction of examples, which the histories of former times amply furnish. I might lead you back to the antediluvian ages; I might delineate before your eyes, the examples of the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Medes, the Chaldeans, and the repeated catastrophes which befel the highly favoured Jews, particularly their final dispersion, and the abolition of both their civil and ecclesiastical policy. The repeated, pressing, solemn calls of heaven they disobeyed. Numerous threatnings and warnings they disregarded. Did heaven suffer their disobedience and neglect to pass with impunity? No. *God will not be mocked.* The authority of heaven is irresistible. All parts of the vast empire of Jehovah are subject to law; and every law of heaven must be obeyed. Every part of creation belongs either

to the rational or moral government of God. Even the mineral and vegetable departments are subject to permanent laws. Shall inanimate matter, shallbodies incapable of consciousness or sensibility, conform to the will of the Almighty; and rational creatures dare to counteract it? Horrid impiety! Can nation oppress nation; can one man oppress another; and be innocent? Is not the moral law of universal as well as perpetual obligation? Is not the whole reducible to two great commandments? And does not the second, in the most unequivocal, peremptory manner, enjoin a love of both benevolence and beneficence to all mankind? But a considerable part of the human race you enslave and oppress; or permit, while it is in your power to prevent their miseries, to be enslaved and oppressed. Is this love to them? Does he, who made both you and them, peremptorily command you to love them; and do you oppress and torture them? Will God, for this, hold you guiltless? No; from men you may escape punishment; but the hottest vengeance of heaven you have every reason to fear.

Britain! Britain! highly favoured of heaven; favoured above all nations on earth; favoured with a commerce that extends to all quarters and countries; favoured with universal information;

favoured with religious privileges, such as no other nation ever has enjoyed; favoured with unequalled advantages and opportunities of the most extensive usefulness to the human race, of civilizing and Christianizing the barbarous and unenlightened nations in the east and the west; the north and the south; how ungrateful art thou to thy great benefactor! How mercenary and inattentive to the dearest interests of thy vassals; particularly the unhappy African slaves in thy colonies! Has not the conduct of different nations of Christendom, to their unhappy slaves, a tendency to brutalize rather than civilize them; to confirm them in Paganism rather than convert them to Christianity?

This truly is an awful and alarming consideration. For innumerable bounties are you indebted to an all-indulgent Providence. But your religion is heaven's best gift to you; a gift he has bestowed with a discriminating hand. He has bestowed it on you; but, for reasons known to himself, he has withheld it from others. And he has laid you under the most solemn obligations to recommend it, both by precept and example, to all around you; and to endeavour, to the utmost of your power, to spread it among the nations of mankind, in every corner of the earth to

which you have access. Are you solemnly bound to recommend to the nations the religion of Jesus, and do you, by your unworthy conduct, your cruelties and barbarities, to the utmost of your power, confirm the unenlightened nations in their prejudices against it; and *prevent*, as far as you can, the spread of it? What must the consequence be? Shall I draw the conclusion; or shall I leave yourselves to do it? Certain it is, nothing tends more effectually to retard the progress of religion, by prejudicing strangers against it, than the unworthy and inconsistent practice of its professed friends. Many and great are the advantages, civil and religious, which have been bestowed on the different nations of Christendom. Proportioned to the extent and magnitude of their privileges, must their guilt and punishment be, in the event of a misimprovement of them. *To whomsoever much is given, from them much will be required.* Punishments, as well as rewards, admit of various degrees. What people, under heaven, during the old testament, enjoyed privileges equal to those of the Jews? And what nation of the world ever was punished with such severity as they were? *They knew their master's will, but did it not; and, therefore, were beaten with many stripes.* Yet with respect to tyranny, information, and privileges, Israel was only in miniature

what Christendom is in magnitude. Shall your armies and navies be permitted to destroy, for ever, countries they did not plant, and cities they did not build? Shall they continue, with impunity, to enslave a people they cannot destroy, or destroy the people they cannot enslave? Have you any better right to desolate their country, than they have to desolate yours? Shall the strong never cease to oppress the weak? When shall slavery and war be for ever banished from Christendom? when shall liberty, civil and religious and tranquillity, prevail in all parts of our world? Then happy world indeed! Do not the oppressor and the oppressed belong to one species of beings? Do not the Africans possess the same specific nature, the same faculties and powers, corporal and mental, the same attachments and aversions, sensations and feelings, with the inhabitants of Asia, Europe, and America? Is it not a prevailing sentiment among all the nations of mankind, that all men, as they come into the world, are equal? Does not this equality comprehend Adam's family from his first born, to his youngest son, with all his countless intermediate children? Are not all subsequent distinctions adventitious and accidental? Are not the innumerable millions of mankind, members of one family, and children of one father? Was it ever known,

was it ever heard, that one child of a family had a right to enslave another? No. Such a right never did, never can exist. Vain is it to plead innocent. That you never embrued your hands in the blood of an African, may be true. That you never, with your own hands, did beat or bruise, cut or lacerate, a poor slave, may also be true. But, though you never, in your own persons, committed murder or cruelty, if you silently connive at these things, if you do not what you can to prevent them in your governments, or agents of whatever description, you are accessary to them; in the estimation of an impartial God, you are guilty: and he has solemnly declared, *that he will by no means clear the guilty.*

As a strong presumption, that the barbarities committed by your governors, factors and agents abroad, will be placed to account of the nation, is it not a matter of sufficient notoriety, that the perpetrators, instead of being brought to speedy justice as the laws both of God and man require, have been in certain instances, concealed and screened from the penalties of the law, among yourselves; even in some of your own capitals? Christian nations, take warning. Christian powers, exert your influence and authority for the suppression of vice, that threatens the anihilation

of the greatest kingdoms in Europe, and the encouragement of virtue, that will consolidate their foundations. Look into the historic page, and see, as in a mirror, your perilous situation. You stand on a precipice; deep is the abyss beneath. That you should fall into it, God forbid! To see fruitful countries rendered a desert, populous cities reduced to a heap of ruins, how affecting the spectacle! Have not such disasters befallen the most favoured nations, and the most famous cities of antiquity? Is not their God, and ours, as gracious to reward virtue, and as just to punish vice now, as ever he was? Then; Christendom, fear! Enslavers, oppressors, murderers of mankind, tremble! Slavery, oppression, murder, God eternally hates. Such cruelties he can, and he *will* punish. If just, just to his word, just to himself, just to his creatures, he must do it, he cannot but do it. May a sincere repentance, a speedy and exemplary reformation be the happy means of preventing the ruin you have incurred! Thus was sinful Nineveh spared; and thus may you be saved from impending ruin. By the authority of heaven, by the terrors and by the mercies of the Almighty, I adjure you to consider your ways; to repent and reform; to suppress speedily, effectually, and finally suppress, in all your territories, oppression and cru-

elty, of every name, and of every form! Whom do you, by your emisaries, enslave, oppress, and murder? I tell you the sons and daughters of Adam; and Adam was the son of God. Is a child supposed, in temper and conduct, to resemble its father? Man was formed *in the likeness*, and *after the image*, of his divine Maker. Shall the rational offspring of God be degraded to a level with brutes; and, in various instances, treated worse than brutes? And shall not their common father be affronted, and to an awful degree, offended? The thought of his displeasure, and severe, but just resentment, who can bear?

A sudden reverse of fortune may befal you. Far is it from unprecedented or uncommon, for individuals, families, nations, in great dignity and power, to be suddenly sunk to a state of almost unequalled adversity and wretchedness. Unacquainted, indeed, is he with the history of mankind, to whom examples of such sudden reverses, are not familiar. Highly favoured have the nations of Christendom been. Flourishing is the present state of many of these nations. But how precarious is worldly prosperity! The greater the height of prosperity any nation has attained, the more dreadful its downfal, when prosperity is changed into adversity. What

is the history of the world, but a long catalogue of such vicissitudes, revolutions and changes? The *fashion*, external form and appearance, *of this world passeth away*. How often, and how suddenly, is the scene changed! In every age, and in every country, new forms and appearances are seen. Christians of every denomination; men of every description; your prosperity and happiness I ardently wish. Happy may you all be in time! Happy may you all be, when time is no more.

As my former connexion with Great Britain, and present attachment to it, naturally inspire me with the warmest wishes for its welfare, I cannot but take the liberty, before I dismiss this subject, to expostulate, for a few moments, with the British ministry, and the members of both houses of parliament, on the iniquity and dangerous consequences, of the toleration, I might have said encouragement, which they give to the commerce and slavery of the human race, particularly the African.

I write, or endeavour to write, pure nature: my pen and my soul are reciprocally combined in exhibiting the simple truth, and he must be wilfully blind, who will not see it. I allow that the

sophistry of philosophical unbelievers, as well as the virulence of invective, requires to be decorated with the brilliancy of diction, majesty of sentiment, sublimity of stile, flippancy of language, and the flowers of rhetoric; but plain truth is most resplendent when delivered in plain terms—and such is the nature of our understanding, that we cannot refrain from admiring it when most clearly discriminated; we are forced to acquiesce, and are no longer free to doubt; and this impossibility to doubt is called conviction, evidence, demonstration. We cannot appeal from it without ceasing to be reasonable; to doubt contrary to all reason, is extravagance; to pretend to doubt when the evidence leaves doubting impossible, is adding insincerity to folly, is the quintessence of absurdity, and is an insult to common sense!! *Can any person doubt the inconsistency of slavery? It is impossible.*

To the British Ministry and the Members of both Houses of Parliament.

GENTLEMEN,

SENSIBLE I am that I now address the most respectable, the most illustrious, and the most intelligent of men. With great diffidence on my own part, and with great deference to you, do I now appear before you. Great is the power, distinguished are the opportunities, of doing good to the brave nation, over which you preside, and to the world of mankind, in the east and the west, the north and the south; which an all-disposing Providence has put into your hands; and, when the day of final retribution shall arrive, you will be approved or disapproved, rewarded or punished, according as you shall then be found to have employed your authority, your talents, and your influence, in a worthy or unworthy manner. Of great magnitude and importance is the political vessel, which you have undertaken to steer. Tempestuous is the ocean on which you navigate. Dangerous are the rocks and quicksands to which you are exposed, while your political horizon seems impregnated with impending storms. The Omniscient, gentlemen is my witness, that

the freedom I use with you, far from originating in disrespect for your persons or station, disaffection to your sovereign or government, is the natural effect of the regard I entertain for you, and the zeal, which uniformly and irresistibly constrains me to exert myself, on all occasions, to promote, to the utmost extent of my power, the happiness of that great nation, of which I once was a member, and for which I still retain a partiality. To plead in behalf of one form of civil government, or to oppose another, is no part of my present design. Between men and measures, it is of importance ever to distinguish. Despotism, tyranny, cruelty, under what name soever it may appear, or in what form soever it may be assimilated and operate, I detest. To it I own myself a determined enemy. With it I am resolved to be eternally at war. I speak, I act from principle, not prejudice; from humanity and reason, not superstition or fanaticism. Actuated by a natural propensity to compassion for the distressed part of mankind, and zeal for the honour of human nature, as it subsists in every son and daughter of Adam. I feel, I cannot but feel an abhorrence of the commerce and slavery of mankind, in every quarter of the world. What! men and women sold and bought! Has the specific difference between the human kind,

and the brutal, ceased? Are men no longer men, but brutes? By whom are human beings bought, and by whom sold? By whom is the scandalous traffic carried on? Is there a people under heaven sufficiently barbarous and cruel to engage in it? Yes; and a nation called Christian too. Is not a part of your own mercantile interest concerned in it; and do you not allow, if not encourage them in it? A set of baptised infidels, Christian cannibals, among yourselves, are permitted, and with impunity too, to enslave, oppress, and murder, thousands of human beings, in Africa, and in the islands of America, and on the passage from the former to the latter every year.

British Legislators! permit me to remind you of what is greatly your duty and your interest: to you, and only you, an enslaved, an oppressed, a groaning, a dying race, in your West-India islands, look up for relief. Shall they, can they, look in vain? I pray, I hope not. You are men of feeling; men of honour; men of moral rectitude. Can you suffer your own flesh; can you suffer human nature, to be debased to a level with the brutal? Surely not. Of great antiquity; of universal authority, is the law, *whosoever shedeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.* Why is the shedding of the blood of a man, not

the shedding of the blood of a brute, punished with death? To the law itself, the reason of it is immediately subjoined by the sacred historian; *for in the image of God*, adds he, *made he man*. What distinguished honours and prerogatives belong to human nature, in all to whom it appertains, and in whom it subsists! Essential, unextinguishable, eternal, is the distinction between the human species and the brutal. Has God unalterably distinguished, and shall man dare to confound them? To yourselves, gentlemen, I submit the great question, whether the commerce, and consequent slavery, of the unhappy Africans, in which a number of your subjects are concerned, do not, almost totally, destroy the natural distinction between men and brutes; and sink the former to an equality with the latter. Is human nature woefully degraded? Do you not feel for the degradation of it? What! not feel for the affront and abuse of your own nature! Your pretensions to honour, integrity, impartiality, and candour, are high, and, I trust, in most instances, just.

Do not misapprehend me. I am no anarchist or leveller. Gradations among men were known in earliest ages; and will obtain to the latest. Without subordination, I know, society cannot subsist. To distinctions and titles I am no ene-

my. But for the natural, unalienable, common privileges of men, as men, in contradistinction, and in superiority to brutes, I plead; to my last breath, I will plead. The impressions made on my mind, by the unparalleled barbarities committed on the enslaved, oppressed, exiled sons of Africa, which I have witnessed, time is not sufficiently long to efface. I consider myself under peculiar obligations to attempt their relief, though I should attempt it in vain. May the sovereign Disposer of all human events put it in the hearts of those who have authority and power, to send them an effectual and speedy redress of their heavy grievances, and alleviation of their accumulated miseries! With this benevolent view, for this salutary purpose, as well as to accelerate the total abolition of the slave trade, I now address you. Have you not power to alleviate the miseries of the unhappy slaves in your own colonies? I know, all the world knows, you have. The property of the planters in their slaves, and dominion over them, have you not, by law, sanctioned? But have you made equal provision for the protection and safety of the poor slaves? You know, we all know, you have not. Remember, gentlemen, HE, who made, and is to judge, you and them, *is no respecter of persons*. The poor are as near, and as dear to him, as the rich. Is

not the will, the capricious, barbarous, cruel, bloody will of the masters, in fact, the law of the slaves? Wretched beings! How forlorn, how distressed, how cruel, is their lot! From what principle, for what purpose, did the sovereign Ruler of the universe, raise you to the honour, and invest you with the power, of legislators? Was it to encrease the misery of any part of the human species? Was it not rather to administer justice, afford protection, and promote the happiness of all under your jurisdiction, of what station or condition, country or complexion, soever, they be? Do not these things belong to the very nature, design, and end of civil government, be it monarchical, aristocratical, republican, or democratic? You know, that the primary design of society and civil law, is for the equal protection of the inhabitants of a state. Slavery, therefore, must be incompatible both with social law and society. Vain is it for you to object, that you have actually enacted laws in behalf of the slaves as well as their masters. True; but what is the amount of these laws? Are they impartial, fair, and adequate to the end which they are proposed to accomplish? To yourselves I submit the decision. You cannot, I know you cannot, without a blush, answer in the affirmative. Review your laws, still in force, for regulating your slaves in

Jamaica; and your laws in force in Virginia, while it was a colony of the British empire. Of the laws relative to both, I have produced a specimen in the former part of this work. Review them, and say, whether they be not laws which it befitted a Nero or a Draco, rather than a British parliament, to enact?

I have, in the foregoing pages, given a specimen, and only a small specimen, of the barbarous cruelties of the West-India planters to their unhappy slaves. A full recital would occasion a shock too great for humanity to bear. But, on this part of the subject, you are not without sufficient information. You know what stands on your own records, and on the docket at Guildhall.* Has providence assigned to you the im-

* This refers to a case, that was, in the most unexpected providential manner, discovered by a trial at Guildhall, in the year 1783. The master, I ought to have said inhuman monster, of a slave-ship, had over-shot his port in Jamaica, and, under pretext of wanting water before he could beat up again, ordered his mate to throw overboard forty-six slaves handcuffed; and his diabolical order was immediately executed. Two days after he commanded thirty-six more to be thrown overboard; and, at the end of other two days, forty more. All which infernal orders were instantaneously obeyed. Afterwards ten others, who had been permitted, unfettered, to take an airing on deck, indignantly plunged into the ocean after their countrymen. After all, this

portant trust of protecting, and promoting the happiness of all within your extensive dominions? Has he put it in your power to do what is incumbent upon you? Do the oppressed cry to you for relief? Why do you not hear the cry of misery and woe? Can you return any answer? Can you assign any reason? Has not slavery continued, already, far too long? Long will posterity remember the period at which the Portuguese com-

murderous crew brought into port with them four hundred and eighty gallons of water. This monster of a captain had the effrontery to commence a suit against the underwriters, in order to recover the neat value of the slaves he had, with such unexampled barbarity, murdered; and his mate, who gave evidence against him in court, had the impudence, even at the bar of one of the most august tribunals on earth, to boast, and to boast with impunity, of his prompt obedience to the master's commands. Human nature, how art thou fallen! how degraded and brutalized! Africans, hard is your lot! We have heard of slave-traders, after purchasing their slaves from the African chiefs, treating them with more than brutal cruelty, in their own country, during a fatiguing journey of hundreds of miles, through woods and forests, to the Guinea-ships. We have heard of their flogging some to death; and others, because they refused food, they cut in pieces, and forced their companions to eat them. We have, in short, heard of individual slaves being thrown overboard alive; but the above instance seems to exceed every thing we have either seen, read, or heard. The monster, the master of the ship, might have two objects in view; to gratify his own more than infernal malevolence, and to defraud the underwriters.

menced the infamous trade, and your own Hawkins, like them, stimulated by a thirst for gold, followed their unhappy example. Now the far greater part of this criminal and disgraceful traffic is eugrossed by your merchants in Liverpool and other places. With how great truth and propriety does an inspired writer affirm, *the love of money is the root of all evil!* That the best informed, the most improved, the most generous nation in the world, should encourage, or tolerate, a trade which does disgrace, and is an indelible stain to human nature, must be matter of astonishment to friends and foes.

But, gentlemen, the question recurs—Why do you not interpose your authority, and employ your power, to remedy this enormous and alarming evil? Never, till retention and reflection totally fail me, can I be silent on this topic. The retrospect of the horrid scenes, which duty has obliged me to witness, haunts my mind, and oppresses my spirits, night and day.

Are there obstacles, pretended insuperable obstacles, which lay in the way of an immediate total abolition of the commerce and slavery of the human race? Can there be an obstacle or an objection to an immediate melioration of the con-

dition of the slaves? It is impossible. Supposing, then, though I do not admit, that you cannot, at present, totally abolish slavery, why do you, for a moment, delay to alleviate the insupportable sufferings of your wretched slaves?

Here is a great number of forlorn mortals; forced from their own beloved country, detained in servitude and misery, from which death alone is expected to relieve them. No human helper or comforter can they find. You, and you alone, under God, have power to relieve them. Why will you not do it? O that I could exhibit to your view the thousanth part of their miseries, sufferings, and woes, of which I have been a spectator, and which my imagination still paints to me, in colours which I am utterly unable to express! Most wretched of the wretched! To such forlorn wretches, will you, can you, refuse relief? Forbid it, Justice; forbid it, Compassion; forbid it, Heaven! Can you withhold compassion from them; and, either in life, or at death, ask mercy from God? I repeat the question, I insist for an answer: if you shew no mercy to them, how can you expect mercy from God? Will you deny them not only mercy, but justice? You must allow me to tell you, that you may deny them justice; but God will do justice both to you and to

them. The oppressed, his mercy, in unison with his justice, will reward; the oppressor, his justice, without disparagement to his mercy, will punish.

From the tyrants, despots, and oppressors of former ages, receive instruction and warning. Behind them they have left numerous monuments of their barbarity and cruelty; and are remembered by posterity, with detestation and horror. For their barbarity and cruelty, God and man hated them alive, and hate them now dead. But of you, gentlemen, *I hope better things, though I thus speak.*

Are you not, gentlemen, bound, by the law of remunerative justice and gratitude, to make greater and better provision for the accommodation and comfort of your poor, but profitable slaves? Need I remind you of the vast sums, which you periodically receive into your exchequer, raised by duties on sugar and rum? Of the immense sums, which proprietors of estates in the West-Indies, receive annually, and spend in great magnificence and splendor, in your metropolis, I do not now say any thing. Whence is all this great treasure? How is it raised? The answer is easy; by the sweat, the blood, the lives

of your poor, hungry, naked, oppressed slaves. Are they so infinitely advantageous to you? And can you refuse; can you delay, to hear the cry of their oppression, their sweat, and their blood? Surely not. Have you not, as a nation, been long distinguished and famous, for a free, independent, generous spirit? Is your constitution civil and religious, your glory among the nations of the world? Do you suffer no slavery at home? Why do you allow it abroad? Do you, year after year, concert the best measures, which your wisdom can devise, for the prosperity and happiness of your white subjects, at home and abroad? Why overlook, neglect, and oppress, your black subjects? Is there, can there be, such merit in one colour, and such demerit in another? Will you arraign the justice; will you impeach the wisdom; will you affront the goodness, of that great Being, who is equally the creator and preserver, the friend, nay, father, of all the nations and individuals of mankind, white and black, and every intermediate shade.

Does not your interest, gentlemen; and does not the interest of the nation, call loudly upon you to refrain from every kind, and every mode, of oppression; and, not only to do justly, but to love mercy? Has ill-gotten wealth, have riches,

acquired by fraud and oppression, ever afforded solid or permanent satisfaction to their owners? Search the records of antiquity, review the annals of former times; ask men of information and experience; and they will tell you. Have the legislators of other countries, encouraged or tolerated tyranny and oppression; shutting their ears, and hardening their hearts, against the cries of the poor and oppressed;—and prospered! No, their designs, heaven has ever justly frustrated. Between sin, of every kind, and an adequate punishment, the connexion has long been established. To injustice and cruelty, bloodshed and war, what a woeful propensity is there in depraved human nature! Cases, indeed, occur, in which war is necessary. But, in what case, can it be necessary, can it be lawful, for one part of the human family to enslave and oppress another? Specious things have been advanced by the advocates of slavery. But all reasonings in favour of it, ever have been, and ever must be, sophistical and delusory. They are calculated and intended to impose on the unwary and credulous part of mankind. But to every person of discernment and penetration, the fallacy of them must be sufficiently obvious. An action, in itself sinful, no emergency, no pretended necessity, can justify or warrant. Such is the commerce with the

consequent slavery, of human beings. The infamous traffic, thousands, nay millions, to whom providence has not given power, ardently wish totally to suppress, and finally abolish. But on you, gentlemen, it has devolved the important task. Who knows, but that, for this very purpose, it has raised you to that elevated and honourable place, which you now fill? Both the elevation of mankind, on the one hand, and on the other, their degradation, are acts of that operative providence, which extends to all worlds, and is employed about creatures of every rank and order. Your advancement to places of the highest legislative authority in the British empire, is not the effect of blind chance. No, promotion comes from no such quarter or cause; but that God, who made, and who governs our world, and all others, *setteth up one, and putteth down another. He doeth according to his will,* which none can control, *in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; none can stay his* powerful, providential *hand; or say unto him, what doest thou?* Remember, gentlemen, HE who advanced you, will require of you an account of your improvement of the advantages, and opportunities, which your elevated station affords you. May you give an account, which shall be attended with joy to yourselves, and to

that great nation, to which you now give laws; and whose happiness you are under every possible obligation to promote.

Permit me, gentlemen, before I have done, though it may seem to verge towards tautology, to repeat my entreaties. I feel, and I feel in the most painful manner, the vast magnitude and infinite importance of the subject matter of this address. I must tell you, when you wink at the barbarous crimes of individuals, you make them national crimes; and national sins are, and only can be, punished in this world; national characters and civil distinctions being unknown in the eternal world. An individual tyrant is in minority, what a government of them is in maturity. Individually and collectively they are guilty in the sight of the impartial God, and odious in the sight of all humane men. With unutterable regret do I now take a retrospective view of the inexpressible wretchedness of your slaves; and reflect that their wrongs have remained unredressed for hundreds of years. Methinks Liberty blushes, Humanity weeps, Philantrophy mourns, and Indignation frowns, at the horrid thought. May I flatter myself, gentlemen, may I indulge the pleasing hope, that you will speedily alleviate the distresses of your wretched slaves, and, as

you were the first to rivet, you will be no less forward to break asunder, their fetters? By this you will do to yourselves, and to the great nation, to whom you give laws, immortal honour. Could the British nation but once behold, what I have often beheld, this would inevitably be the case. Oh, that I could express across the Atlantic ocean, their mighty wrongs, miseries and woes! A greater variety of matter has forced itself into this production, and it has been drawn to a greater length, than I at first contemplated. But the discussion of political subjects I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to avoid. May my addresses accomplish the end for which I have prepared them! Especially may this be the case in your nation, to whese information I have had a special respect; and in whose metropolis I intend to have them republished.

Will you, gentlemen, disgrace your nature, disgrace your nation, and all Christendom; and, which is still a higher consideration, will you bring an eternal odium on that faith, of which you profess to be the defenders!! Have you not oftener than once risked your political existence to maintain the balance of power in Europe? And will you, can you refuse to enact one law to alleviate the miseries of the exiled sons of Africa, and to restore them to the rank of human beings,

and to society? How shall I move your compassion? I must repeat, too often it cannot be repeated, that you have in various instances, precipitated your nation into all the horrors of a bloody war. How lavish of your blood and of your treasure. But lavish for what? For the protection of strangers, and the eventual aggrandisement of ungrateful rivals; whose good will you enjoyed while, and only while you were useful to them. But the poor wretches, whose cause I plead, linger out a most miserable life only for your profit, and the encrease of your national wealth. They have no refuge, no hope, no comfort, no resource, no friend, to whom they can flee, but you, and you alone. Methinks, had I the honour of pleading in your presence, I could more pathetically depict their unutterable miseries and woes, and plead for them with tears, which would more than speak. I would ask you gentlemen, is there not a sufficiency, a superabundance of evil, natural and moral, already in the world, without your augmenting the fatal curse, and arming it with triple destruction? Is the journey through life so pleasant? Are its paths so smooth and delightful, strewed with flowers, and carpeted with roses; as to render it a duty incumbent on you to plant it with thorns and briars? Ask the heart, that is wounded by

untimely distress, and latent sorrow, proceeding from a variety of causes. Such a *heart knows its own bitterness*. There is a coming world, in which the potentate and the peasant will be upon an equality. The time is approaching, when sickness will seize, and medicine fail, the high, as well as the low; when the former must leave their riches and their honours, their sceptres and their crowns, for others to inherit them. Then will you be able to ascertain, whether there be not a superabundance of calamities and woes in the world. Gentlemen, reflect in time, attend to your own best interests, and those of the brave nation under your jurisdiction.

The simplified plan I have suggested for the alleviation of the unhappy condition of your slaves, may possibly be an introduction to a more generous one. Keeping the local prejudices and avaricious objects of the friends of slavery in view, I proposed mine on a narrow scale; and, therefore, I cannot but indulge a hope, that it will be adopted, or one, on a broader scale, substituted in its room. Not all I have thought, nor half what I have written, is here particularized. On consideration of the selfishness of this degenerate age, I have been necessitated to suppress many a generous sentiment.

Gentlemen, cases occur, and crimes are committed, to which all language, however sonorous, is unequal. Such must your crime be, if you do not immediately concert some effectual measures for affording relief to the oppressed sons and daughters of Africa in your colonies. Among other considerations, permit me to repeat the sentiment, though it has been previously anticipated, recollect the vast revenue you raise from their labours. What think you of two millions sterling annually deposited in the exchequer, from the duties on sugar and rum, made by the wretched slaves? Not to mention nine hundred thousand more, raised from the trade of the colonies; and the planters who spend their immense incomes in your metropolis; or the eleven hundred thousand for incidental expences. Have you, for many years, received such prodigious sums from the sweat, the blood, the lives, of millions of wretched slaves in your colonial territories; and will you, can you, refuse or delay to take their wretched case into your most serious consideration? What must such a refusal be in the estimation of Heaven? What will it be in the judgment of the friends of humanity on earth. What name shall I give to it? Shall I call it injustice, oppression, robbery, murder? What Britain now is, Rome once was, the mistress of the world.

Plunder enriched her; and the millions whom she oppressed rendered her popular. But what was the end of her riches and her popularity? When the hand of Heaven was stretched out, she nodded! she fell! she crumbled into ruins! Of her former magnificence, how few vestiges remain! But, perhaps, gentlemen, I address you in too serious a strain. Shall I, therefore, exchange religious for political topics? The latter are, perhaps, more congenial to your temper, and more agreeable to your taste. Those who take nature and experience for their guide, in these matters, are not easily deceived. Under such auspices, may I not boldly affirm, that those who rob the poor are not likely to prosper? This I have often had occasion to observe, in the course of my life and travels. Strikingly is this observation exemplified and evinced in the case of a privateer on a successful cruize. By plunder, her men are suddenly made rich; but how unsatisfactory and short-lived their riches. How often do crimes and their consequent punishments run parallel with each other? What a privateer is in miniature, a hostile nation is in magnitude. Are nations stimulated to war for the sake of plunder? Has such plunder ever proved a source of solid, satisfactory, and permanent wealth? Cases have occurred, in which war was

necessary, and has been undertaken with the approbation of Heaven. The protection of life and property may require it. But when no advantage or security can be obtained by war, but what may be accomplished in peace, war is unnecessary and unlawful. The infamous practice of duelling must not every well-disposed man detest? What is a duel, but a public war in miniature? Individual suicide, who does not reprobate? But what is an unprovoked, unnecessary, wantonly cruel war? Is it any thing else, any thing better, than what individual suicide is in miniature? What can be more criminal than an unprovoked, wanton, cruel war? It opens a vein at which the nation bleeds, perhaps, bleeds to death. When the tempest of national passion subsides, and is succeeded by calm reflection, what painful sensations must embitter the recollection of former follies and crimes? What advantages accrue to the nation? Let facts speak: an accumulation of national debt and public taxes.

But even this is not all. The destruction of useful lives, and impoverishment of national resources, are not the only bad effects of war. It indisposes the mind for the cultivation of refined sentiments, and more manly pursuits. Daily spectacles of woe, the cruel and vociferous intelligence

of bloody battles; the sight of enslaved Africans, under the lash, and loaded with chains, must blunt the edge of the softer feelings of humanity; and render in a degree tolerable, what otherwise would be horrible. What mind can conceive, or tongue express, the horrors of war or of slavery? When the man* according to God's own heart, had the awful choice of three, the most fearful calamities known in our world, he chose pestilence itself, with all its concomitant horrors, in preference to war. For centuries past, Europe has been awfully punished with almost continual destructive wars. There must have been, on her part, a sinful cause. *God does not afflict willingly, nor* without necessity, *grieve the children of men.* For her crimes, no doubt, has Europe been enveloped in all the horrors of bloody, revolutionary, cruel wars. Extensive wars, and extensive epidemics, have been observed, not unfrequently, to accompany each other. Remarkable has the eighteenth century been for wars, earthquakes, inundations, and epidemical distempers. In many places, the earth has been, by pestilence, swept as with the besom of destruction. Have these awful plagues been poured out on the earth for nought, or without design? Far from it. Sin is the procuring cause, and the reformation of mankind the salutary

* David, king of Israel.

end. But misfortunes and experiments are lost on mankind, when they produce neither reflection nor reformation. Evils, like poisons, have their uses; and there are diseases which other medicines are unable to cure. One word more, gentlemen, and then I have done. How false an idea do many governments affix to the complex term *national honour?* A false idea of this has caused millions of lives to be sacrificed, and immense treasure expended. What many call honour, is a foolish and fatal pride. This has occasioned many fatal duels between individuals, and many bloody wars between nations. In this instance, do not unenlightened and uncivilized nations, both in a religious and philosophical view, excel enlightened and christianized nations? To know what ought to be intended and understood by the honour of a nation, we need only recollect what constitutes the honour of an individual. Is a virtuous character the best character of an individual? It must no less be the best character of a nation. Reflect seriously, gentlemen, on this sentiment. Then say, whether it be competent for you to authorize or encourage, even to permit and tolerate, the barbarities and other crimes of your armies or agents, either in the East-Indies, Africa, or the West-Indies. This is the paramount point on which I have all along endeavour-

ed to fix your attention; the point in which all my expostulations with you centre; the great object to which they all ultimately tend. May the Almighty sovereign of the universe give you clearly to see the infinite importance of this interesting subject! May your official conduct be such as your consciences will approbate when you are about to drop the curtain of mortality, and appear at the awful tribunal of this King of kings! Finally, may you live the life, and die the death of the righteous!!

A recent act of the legislature of South-Carolina, which repeals the law that prohibited the importation of slaves into that state; has made such a deep and lasting impression on my mind, that I cannot dismiss my subject, till I subjoin a few strictures on that truly unexpected, extraordinary, and alarming measure.

Legislators of South Carolina!

YOUR conduct, in the instance adduced, I can assure you, has excited astonishment and consternation, from the one end of the federal Union to the other. Daring step! The period is not distant, at which, I am confident, your own consciences will reprobate your conduct with greater severity than I am either able or willing to do it. However, on this painful occasion, I cannot be altogether silent. Vice, in all the multifarious forms of which it is susceptible, ever has had, and ever will have, its reprovers. Were reprovers totally to cease, methinks that, on such an occasion, the stones of the wall, or the beams of the house, could not forbear to cry out. Were you in the full exercise of your judgments and recollection, when you passed the execrable act? Bodies of men, as well as individuals, have their moments of infatuation, and insanity; I do not say ebriety. Do your own consciences, in your moments of serious reflection, if any such moments you have, approbate your conduct? Or do they, in unison with the general voice of your nation, and of mankind, reprobate it? Do you

know the origin, and natural effects, of slavery? Have you ever investigated the nature and tendency of the commerce and slavery of the human species, to sanction and promote which you have exerted your highest legislative authority? Or, is your detested act a sin of ignorance?

Have you never been informed of the contented and happy situation of your wretched slaves, while they were in their own country? Did they leave it of choice? You know, or ought to know, that they are forced and dragged from it, as if they were horses or hogs. Do you know who brought them into existence, and put them in possession of the country, from which, by your instigation, they have been torn? Who authorised you, or any set of men on earth, forcibly to deprive them of the country, of which Heaven gave them ample possession? Shew your authority, if any authority you can pretend. Are not all your slave-traders, whom you encourage by what you call law, robbers? Robbers such men certainly are; and robbers of the most infamous kind. Men did I call them? Have they not forfeited the honourable appellation? Shall I call them *miscreants?* Do you know the means, the inhuman and base means, by which your traders procure these wretches for you? I advise you,

before you pass any more laws in support of slavery, to employ proper means for obtaining better information on the subject, than you seem now to possess.

Is there a *grain*, one small *grain*, of either justice or benevolence, in your conduct to the unhappy slaves? Do you employ, or encourage traders to procure them; or do you purchase them, with an intention to render their condition in the world better than it was? Do you intend to make them any compensation for the injustice and oppression, to which you have compelled them to submit? I do not want an answer. I will not either put you to the blush, or tempt you to become guilty of the most abominable hypocrisy.

But, where, by whom, has a law been recently passed to authorize and encourage the commerce and slavery of the African race? Is there a government on earth; can there be one in Christendom, in the now enlightened and improved state of the world, that could have passed such a law? Is it possible an individual villain, or a government of them, could sanction such a law? The fact does not admit of a doubt. That such a law has lately been passed, and is now in full force

and operation, we all know—the world knows. The fact cannot be concealed or denied. It has been passed in one of the free and independent states of America. Passed in America! Enacted in a free and independent state! Call it no more a state of freedom. Slavery in a free state! Are not freedom and slavery diametrically opposite! Americans! talk no more of Asiatic or European despotism and tyranny; talk no more of the freedom of America. A country free, while a considerable part of its inhabitants are in a state of the most humiliating and abject slavery! What a burlesque! What an insult to common sense! Your noble struggle for liberty, a few years ago, did you honour among your foes as well as your friends. For liberty, Americans fought, and bled, and died. Rather than become slaves to an European power, you were willing to shed the last drop of your blood. And why, in the name of wonder, should Africans be made slaves to you? Have not Africans as valid a natural title to liberty, as either Europeans or Americans? Are not the former children of the same Almighty Father, who, great in goodness, and good in greatness, is no respecter of persons. Are they not radically legitimate members of his august family equally with the latter? Is not Africa, in fertility and natural advantages, a country not

inferior either to Asia, Europe, or America? Have not the Africans been, in the former part of this work, both in a philosophical and theological point of view, evinced to be, in mental capacities and powers, equal to the inhabitants of the other quarters of our terraqueous globe?

That the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, were made to be at the disposal, and subservient to the use, of man, revelation expressly informs us. But that one part of mankind was made to be at the disposal and subservient to the use of another, revelation and reason, by their joint suffrage, deny; and I defy all creation to prove.

Gentlemen, for your own sakes, for the sake of suffering humanity, for the sake of your country, for the sake of all Europe, the benevolent inhabitants of which view your recent official act with painful sensations, and the tyrannical inhabitants of which exhibit your cruel measures as an excuse for their own barbarity, bethink yourselves; review your late legislative conduct; investigate the criminal nature, the fatal tendency, and ruinous effects of the commerce and subsequent slavery of your human brethren. May *the Father of light* open the eyes of your minds, to see the

atrocity and turpitude of such an infernal commerce! Do I seem to treat you with uncommon asperity of language? Scurrility of language I abhor; but, on such a topic, asperity of language is unavoidable. Nay, on such a subject we labour under a penury of language. Language fails; and is almost unmeaning. The enormity of your conduct, I confess, I know no words sufficient to express. Conception in this case, is too big for expression. The time is coming, when you will see the deformity, and detestable nature, of your conduct in more striking colours, than the flowers of rhetoric, than mortal eloquence, than the greatest master of description can now paint it.

You talk loud of the tyrants of Europe; and hold out your country as an asylum for the refugees, from European oppression. But ask emigrants from Europe, after they have seen the many hundreds and thousands among you, whom you have forced into the most grievous servitude, and confine to the hardest labour, their comparative opinion of European and American freedom. Their sentiments and emotions I know. With indignation against you, and commisseration to their poor fellow mortals, whom you oppress, their breasts swell, their hearts overflow. You

disgrace your country; and miserably disappoint them. Nay, your legislative conduct is both unjust and ungenerous; unjust, as it respects the poor Affricans who have to toil for their indolent, dissipated tyrants; and ungenerous as it respects the poor white people, who have to labour for their own support.

What do you think of the conduct of your fellow-citizens in the eastern states? What a contrast between their conduct and yours! By the emancipation of their slaves, they have done a lasting honour to themselves, to their country, and to human nature. They have made glad the hearts of all the friends of humanity and religion. You have brought a stigma on your character, which, to the mortification of your posterity, history will transmit to latest times. You have made sad the hearts of all your cotemporaries, who have any regard either for humanity or religion. Of the recent arrival of three vessels from Africa, with eight hundred and seventy-two wretched victims to your avarice and cruelty, who were landed in Charleston, we heard some time ago. Unhappy beings! May the *Father of mercies*, to whose controul all despots, tyrants, and oppressors, are necessarily subjected, commisserate your condition!

Do you ever, gentlemen, peep through the curtain of futurity? Possible future occurences, the human mind can anticipate. Do you ever advert to the probable dreadful effect of the continued oppression, and the encrease of slaves in your country?* To occasion, or encourage, insurrection or sedition, is infinitely remote from my intention. Every thing of the kind, all good men detest, and, to the utmost of their power, suppress. But the nature of the Africans, no less than that of other nations, is human. What human nature is, we all know; and what effect oppression necessarily has upon it, we know. That the Africans are as capable of gratitude and of revenge, as any other people in the world, does not admit of a dispute; and that they have more political information than any of their colour in the West-Indies, might easily be demonstrated. Facts are irrefragable proofs. The fate of St. Domingo is fresh in all their minds, as well as in all our memories, and if you are not judicially infatuated, will prove a solemn warning to you. That the tragical, the bloody scene, which has recently been acted in that unhappy island, should

* To demonstrate this topic, many incontestible arguments might be adduced, but prudence forbids the investigation: people should prudently think for themselves, what would be considered impolitic for me to write.

ever be re-acted among us, God forbid! I do not prophecy; I caution and warn, nay, I studiously avoid both the oriential stile of antiquity, and the prophetical language of divinity. May the inhabitants of your, and of the neighbouring states, take *timous* warning.

Gentlemen, for God's sake! review your late legislative conduct; be ashamed; and speedily recall what you have done. Know that the commerce of human beings is utterly subversive of the specific and essential prerogatives of human nature, and politically pregnant with the most fatal and inevitable consequences. When you make a human being a slave, you disgrace your own natures, and virtually militate against your own interest. Remember, that cruelty of every kind, is the object of the strongest aversion of that Being, whose darling attribute, whose brightest glory, is mercy. Of the oppressed he ever has been, and ever will be, the patron and the friend. While you oppress his creatures, you affront him, and may expect him to be your enemy; and a most dangerous enemy he is. Recollect the fearful doom and punishment of the oppressors of former times, and other countries. Read the history of the world and tremble! Your guilt is flagrant; your crime is attended with high ag-

gravations. Let your repentance, therefore, be speedy; and your reformation exemplary. For which you shall not cease to have my warmest wishes, and most ardent prayers. May universal liberty, civil and religious, prevail in South Ca-Carolina, in all her sister states, and throughout the whole world!

I must, once more, beg the indulgence of my readers, while I suggest a hint, and only a hint, to the Congress of the United States. That Congress may, without delay, take this subject into their most serious consideration, and adopt such judicious measures, as, to them, shall appear the most proper and eligible, for meliorating the condition of the poor slaves, and putting a period, with all convenient speed to slavery, in their territories, is my earnest wish, devout prayer, and pleasing expectation. With great satisfaction do I reflect, that the year 1808, is not now very distant. The approach of it opens a pleasing prospect to me, and to the other friends of humanity; and diffuses a degree of joy through the whole soul. That our prospects should be disappointed, or our anticipated happiness frustrated, God forbid! Yet alas, before that auspicious period arrives, what thousands of Africans will be imported into South Carolina, what thousands of

mortal enemies scattered through other states. Is not Congress under every obligation, which duty or interest can confer, to embark in the cause? The safety, the very existence of the nation, seems to require it. Have we not among us, and intermixed with us, five hundred thousand persons, who were, at least in their progenitors, dragged from their own beloved country; forced into a grievous servitude in this land; and, contrary to their most earnest desires, detained in it? Is not liberty a most desirable thing, and the yoke of bondage galling, to every human being? Do not our slaves consider themselves as opprest most cruelly, as well as unjustly opprest? Do they not meditate revenge? For wishing, for attempting, by just measures, to regain their liberty, who can blame them? To their liberty they have as indisputable a title, as to the vital air they breathe. Who can blame an individual man, or an army of men, for attempting, by every lawful mean, to recover what is their own? If a man be robbed, is it not lawful for him to recover the property of which he was, unjustly and forcibly, deprived? The English are deeply and shamefully concerned in the slave trade; but their situation, humanly speaking, is far less dangerous than ours. They allow slaves abroad; but they tolerate none at home. To provide for the general safety of

the nation is, doubtless, the duty of Congress. Let them take warning from the fate of others. Examples of national judgments occur in every page of the history of the world. Hispaniola in general, and St. Domingo in particular, will long continue to be remembered. Impolitic in the highest degree, as well as intrinsically criminal, is the oppression of the African slaves. Here an ample range of arguments opens. In a variety of views, and from a variety of topics, might the impolicy of it be evinced. But I must, at present, forbear, and postpone the discussion.

That a period is approaching, in which liberty, peace and religion, will universally flourish, is truly a consolatory consideration. But the Most High fulfils his designs, and accomplishes his promises, by the intervention and agency of instruments and means. Happy would it be for themselves, and for the world, if Christian powers would advert to what is competent for them, and incumbent upon them, for the happiness of mankind, and the honour of that great Being, who is the common friend and father of all men, black as well as white. Does the one colour naturally entitle to a life of idleness and dissipation; and the other subject to a life of cruel servitude and oppression? God is not; and why should man be a

respecter of persons? Shall I not entertain the fond, the pleasing, hope, that Congress will, at their ensuing session, enter on the consideration of this truly important subject; and begin to make arrangements for the effectual relief of the oppressed, exiled sons and daughters of Africa?

To the reader, the question will naturally occur, Why has the author given us no account of the mode of treating slaves in the Spanish colonies, the southern states of North America, and other countries? Suffice it to say in answer, the treatment of slaves in all those countries is, in great part, similar to that in the English, French, Dutch, and other colonies, which I have visited; and of whose slaves I have spoken. The fact is, slavery, however modified or meliorated, is a bitter draught; and, in its worst form, poisonous to mankind. In the representation I have given, my readers may see, as in a mirror, the state of slavery, both in the West-Indies, and in the American states. There is, however, this difference, the African in North America suffers not a little from cold, from which his countrymen in the West-India islands are exempted; the climate in the latter being much more congenial to that of their native country than the former. Far is the writer from wishing to give any

offence; but in justice he must say, that, in many instances, the proprietors of plantations of tobacco and rice in the southern states,* have treated not only Africans, and convicts from Great Britain, but reputable, though poor, people, who, to pay for their passage from Europe, have been obliged to sell their services for five, though two years were more than an adequate compensation; with as great severity as Africans suffer in the sugar islands. But this is not all; though America be a country in which provisions are superabundant, many of those unhappy beings in the southern states have been pinched in their daily food. This is not all; slave-holders in those states have confined to hard labour, their own countrymen in iron chains. Indented servants have been, on the most trifling occasions, tied up and cruelly lashed. They have been forced to drag iron wrings, of ten or twelve pounds weight, hammered round their ankles; and to sleep, as they could, with heavy iron chains, and crooks round their necks. Here, however, I must observe, that the condition of the unhappy slaves is tolerable or intolerable, as the master

* The citizens of the southern states in general, are by no means included in our animadversion, we firmly believe, many virtuous and honourable persons in those states, abhor slavery, and deprecate its concomitant evils, as much as any people.

is a man of clemency or cruelty. But, how seldom does it happen, that either the proprietors or the superintendants of slaves are men of humanity and feeling? Seldom, indeed, does this happen either in the West-India islands or the southern states. A master, an overseer of slaves, and yet a man of humanity! Is not this a contradiction? From what I have seen in Georgia, the leeward islands, particularly Jamaica and Hispaniola, the windward islands, particularly, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Christophers, Mountserrat, St. Eustatia, St. Bartholomew, and others, which I have visited; and from information, verbal and written, concerning the usage of slaves in the southern states, and other places, which I have not seen, I solemnly declare, as in the presence of the Almighty Searcher of all hearts, and final Judge of all men, and all their actions, that I never yet knew one master or manager of slaves, including myself, till conscience effectually checked and stopt me in the criminal carreer, that treated them with any tolerable degree of humanity or tenderness. To expatiate on the forlorn condition of slaves in the southern part of the United States, is unnecessary. Their hopeless situation cannot be altogether unknown to the friends of humanity in any part of the Union. But, were the enslaved Africans treated with more huma-

nity in the southern states, I could not but ask, can this be a sufficient compensation for the unequalled hardships and miseries they suffered in their own country, in their way to the slave-ships; and on the middle passage? What violent commotions, and sanguinary wars have been excited and fomented by the emissaries and agents of slave-traders, on the African shore! and excited, fomented solely for the inhuman purpose of procuring slaves! Though I have been a hundred miles up the country, from the shore, I cannot say, that I ever saw any of those bloody engagements.

The following is an account of one of their battles, as described by a trader, who was witness to the scene. "I was sent, with several others in a small sloop up the river Niger, to purchase slaves: we had some free negroes with us in the practice; and as the vessels are liable to frequent attacks from the negroes on one side of the river, or the Moors on the other, they are all armed. As we rode at anchor a long way up the river, we observed a large number of negroes in huts by the river's side, and for our own safety kept a wary eye on them. Early next morning we saw from our mast-head a numerous body approaching, with apparently but little or-

der, but in close array. They approached very fast, and fell furiously on the inhabitants of the town, who seemed to be quite *surprized*; but nevertheless, as soon as they could get together, fought stoutly. They had some fire-arms, but made very little use of them, as they came directly to close fighting with their spears, lances, and sabres. Many of the invaders were mounted on small horses; and both parties fought for about half an hour with the fiercest animosity, exerting much more courage and perseverence than I had ever before been witness to amongst them. The women and children of the town clustered together to the water's edge, running, shrieking up and down with terror, waiting the event of the combat, till their party gave way and took to the water, to endeavour to swim over to the Barbary side. They were closely pursued even into the river by the victors, who, though they came for the purpose of *getting slaves*, gave no quarter, *their cruelty even prevailing over their avarice.* They made no prisoners, but put all to the sword without mercy. Horrible indeed was the carnage of the vanquished on this occasion, and as we were within two or three hundred yards of them, their cries and shrieks affected us extremely. We had got up our anchor at the beginning of the fray, and now stood

close in to the spot, where the victors, having followed the vanquished into the water, were continually dragging out and murdering those, whom by reason of their wounds they easily overtook. The very children, whom they took in great numbers, did not escape the massacre. Enraged at their barbarity, we fired our guns loaden with grape shot, and a volley of small arms among them, which effectually checked their ardour, and obliged them to retire to a distance from the shore; from whence a few round cannon shot soon removed them into the woods. The whole river was black over with the heads of the fugitives, who were swimming for their lives. These poor wretches, fearing *us* as much as their conquerors, dived when we fired, and cried most lamentably for mercy. Having now effectually favoured their retreat, we stood backwards and forwards, and took up several that were wounded and tired. All whose wounds had disabled them from swimming, were either butchered or drowned, before we got up to them. With a justice and generosity, *never I believe before heard of among slavers*, we gave those their liberty whom we had taken up, setting them on shore on the Barbary side, among the poor residue of their companions, who had survived the slaughter of the morning."

Slave-traders have the precaution to stand at a sufficient distance from the scene of danger and blood. On one occasion, however, while I, another white, and four black traders, were negociating with the chief warriors of one of the African towns, and they were regaling us with palm-wine in a large verdant pavillion, an alarm was given; the warriors, in a moment, left us; each took his weapons of war; and, in two minutes, I saw them running as swiftly as deers, to the place from which the alarm came; while we fled to the next town, which we had left that morning. The towns in that quarter few white people had ever visited. The children, and even the female part of the inhabitants, were afraid of me. The men, with an air of wonder, felt my hair, my cloathes, &c. Here I saw a war-dance, a wedding-dance, and other curious manœuvres of the natives, which I circumstantially describe in my Poem on Slavery.

The contrast between the conduct of the British House of Commons, and that of the legislators of South Carolina,* must forcibly strike every

* In taking a retrospective view of the half a million of slaves in the southern states, languishing beneath the whip and frowns of their cruel tyrants; and, at the same time, viewing the pompous characters, LIBERTY, VIRTUE, INDEPENDENCE, designat-

observer. While the latter are riveting the chains of slavery, the former are concerting measures for the total abolition of the slave-trade. Important, useful lesson to the republicans of the southern states! an example that speaks louder than words. After such a precedent, can the Carolinian legislators refuse, hesitate, or delay to repeal their late law, which is so dishonourable to themselves, and has excited so much disgust in all the states? Certainly not. May the influence of the American constitution, so friendly to liberty, break asunder the chain, and annihilate the power of despotism and tyranny! Speedily may it be proclaimed to the imported Africans, and all others, when they set their feet on the American shore, that the land on which they begin to tread, is an asylum for the oppressed of every country and complexion, and consecrated to liberty! May America be inhabited by freemen alone! May slavery be known in it no more for ever! If neither mercy, nor honour, nor equity will stimulate the Americans to abolish slavery, let good policy, the example of the British Parliament, and the fate of St. Domingo do it—the fate of St. Doned in guilded capitals on their sign-posts and military standards; struck dumb with astonishment, I am constrained to lay down my pen, and wonder at their complicated villainy and hypocritical pretensions.

mingo, written in capitals with the blood of thousands, once advocates and supporters of slavery. America countenance slavery! what a striking proof of the inconsistency and corruption which attend the best governments on earth! Do you see the conduct of an individual glaringly inconsistent, and are you not, of course, afraid to place confidence in him? If the northern states withdraw the confidence they used to place in the southern, who can wonder? Has not an individual often entailed disgrace on a family?* Has not a part of a nation disgraced the whole? Could we reckon either our persons or property safe in the power or at the disposal of men, who, one day, declare all men free, and the next day pronounce many of them slaves? Have not the legislators of South Carolina discovered a degree of duplicity and instability, that is disgraceful to men, not to say legislators? Is there not too much reason to think, that such legislators, if they could with impunity, would enslave white men, as soon as black? Do not such men give occasion to think that they have a secret inclination, if circumstan-

* The deleterious conduct of Paris, in forcing Helen from her Grecian husband, was the primary cause of the Trojan war, and the fall of Troy. The cruelty of certain individuals of the tribe of Benjamin, to the Levite's concubine, facilitated the almost total destruction of that tribe.

ces favoured, to subvert the foundations of civil society and human happiness, and commit every outrage? And that it is the fear, not the love, of either God or man, by which they are restrained?* Is industry a source of wealth to a nation? Slavery must be the grand empoverisher of it. The reason is manifest. It is an encouragement to idleness. Does virtue consolidate and strengthen a nation? Slavery, and its concomitant vices, must enervate, if not subvert it. How shamefully slavery exposes and endangers the virtue of females, I forbear to say; delicacy† would shudder at the recital. But such glaring evils call aloud for a speedy and effectual remedy. I hope Congress, in their wisdom and zeal for the safety and happiness of the nation, will soon devise means for the speedy abolition of the slave-trade, and gradual emancipation of slaves, with all convenient speed. An important step, that admits of no delay, is the instruction of the slaves. For this salutary purpose, schools ought immediately

* The advocates of slavery should be noticed by the friends of liberty with a wary eye. If ever intestine commotions originate in America, which Heaven forbid, I think, and I tremble at the thought, that it will originate exclusively among them.

† It is evident to me, that the lady who, from principle or practice, is an advocate for sla very, cannot be a votary or a friend to chastity.

to be erected, and supported at the expence of the public. Slaves, if well treated, would continue in the employ of their masters; and, holding a rank as men in society, and receiving an equivalent reward for their services, would labour with alacrity and fidelity; and, instead of losers, their masters would be great gainers. The experiment has been made, and has turned out exactly as I have said. Ask any man in the northern states, who has emancipated, and now pays wages to his slaves. He will tell you, at once, he has gained greatly by their emancipation and education. One of these now, is better than two formerly were. The slaves emancipated, their children will be born free, and educated as men and Christians. Happy change!

By such judicious measures, the most beneficial good may be effected, and the most calamitous evils avoided. But, without cogent measures, the body politic must one day feel what I shudder even to think; for, as slavery began with a vengeance, as it has been continued with a vengeance to thousands of mariners annually destroyed in the slave-trade, by the cruelty of their captains, the inclemency of the climate, and by the Africans raising upon them to regain their liberty, it will assuredly end (as in St. Domingo)

with a vengeance. To expect any thing better, is to expect that God will alter the course of nature, and perform a prodigy, to save the traitors and tyrants of mankind. But, in order to illustrate this topic, we will transcribe an observation made by the greatest statesman and philosopher in America, who cannot be supposed to be prejudiced in favour of the African race:— "I tremble," says he, "I tremble for my country, when I remember that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep for ever; and that an exchange of circumstances is among probable events. The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a conflict." Judicious, candid observation. The reasonableness and truth of which is as clear to me as a ray of light—as plain as A, B, C; and they must be rogues or fools that will not see it.

A

DESULTORY LETTER,

WRITTEN TO

Napoleon Bonaparte,

FIRST CONSUL OF FRANCE,

ANNO DOMINI, 1801,

AND NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME PUBLISHED

FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

PREFACE.

IN transcribing the following letter for the press, though the original sentiments are retained, the stile and arrangement have been considerably altered. Still however, it appears in a very different form from that, which existing circumstances seem now to require. To the foreknowledge of future contingences I make no pretensions. But I cannot forbear to say, that, at the time of writing the letter, I had anticipations and forebodings of mind, which recent occurrences have woefully realized. What a melancholy proof of the instability, the ambition, the treachery of the human heart, is, the official conduct of the French consul! That the brave people of France, that the nations of Europe, should so long have submitted to his despotism and tyranny, I confess, is to me matter of no small astonishment. Is it possible to think of the present state of France, and not to recollect the situation of the ancient Roman commonwealth? Was not that great commonwealth, after subsisting for ages, defrauded and robbed of all its rights, privileges, and liberties, by a set of ambitious adventurers, crafty traitors, and political despots. After they had precipitated into all manner of luxury and dissipation, which inevitably proved

a prelude to their fall, their barbarous, but valiant, invaders and invincible usurpers, found them an easy prey. Was not Rome at one period, literally sold to the highest bidder? Was not the will of the despot, literally the law of the people? By a succession of despots and tyrants, that great people were forcibly subjected to the military yoke; and degraded to the very lowest pitch. At last, scarcely did the name of liberty exist among them. Shall I draw the parallel between the two republics? I need not do it. My readers will do it for themselves.

Is not the conduct of the French republic truly astonishing? No sooner had she asserted her just claims, established her natural rights, her liberty, and a representative government, and done all this at an immense expence; an immense expence of both blood and treasure, than she permitted an obscure stranger, a Corsican adventurer, to rivet her former fetters and chains; nay, fetters and chains, if possible, still heavier. Is not this a phenomenon in the history of nations, that has not, perhaps, had a precedent, nor may never have a parallel? Is there not here a combination of the energy and the lassitude, the dignity and the degradation of the human character, that has seldom, if ever been equalled on the theatre of our world? It has been, and is, my opinion, that the French consul, and his hipocritical parasites, are, by long strides, hastening their own ruin. Till I be convinced, that the French nation are totally deprived of patriotism, and of a memory to recollect former times, and former occurrences, I cannot think otherwise.

Philadelphia, 1804.

A LETTER

WRITTEN TO

Napoleon Bonaparte.

SIR,

PERMIT me, in the epistolary form, to address you on a few topics, highly interesting to yourself, to the great nation over which you preside, and to the whole world of mankind. Sensible of my unequal abilities, and of your distinguished penetration, I write with no small diffidence in the former, and great deference to the latter. Conscious, however, of the goodness of the cause for which I plead, and of the purity of my intentions, I am emboldened to proceed.

The idea of writing to you was first suggested to me in the course of last war; but finding my mind in a state of suspense and uncertainly concerning the propriety of the step, I have till now postponed it. I now do it from a conviction of duty; and, therefore, in whatever light it may appear to you, your candour, doubtless, will excuse it. To your discerning mind, it must at once be

apparent, that my motives cannot be of the sordid or mercenary kind. Of this sort they *cannot* be. Your own prosperity, the happiness of my fellow creatures, and, above all, the honour of the common Benefactor of mankind, are, I trust, the grand objects for the accomplishment of which I have now taken the pen in my hand.

To brilliant actions, and great terrestrial glory, you have been destined. Is your elevation to a high summit of worldly grandeur the effect of mere accident; of blind chance? No. The pen of inspiration informs us, that promotion cometh neither from the east nor from the west; but the great Ruler of all worlds putteth down one, and setteth up another. How rich the profusion of providential beneficence with which you have been favoured! How strong, inviolable, endless your obligations to the best of benefactors! Did he not, with a watchful eye, guard you in your mother's womb, and, while a helpless infant, you hung upon her breasts? Did he not conduct you, in safety, through all the slippery paths of youth? Has he not protected you in the midst of enemies, and dangers, and deaths? How important in its time, and its great consequences, was your arrival from the confines of Egypt in the capital of France? The convulsed, distracted, and almost

ruined state of this fine country, at that critical period, will long be remembered and lamented by all the friends of humanity. To save one of the best countries, and one of the bravest nations on earth, the reins of government were deposited in your hands. How important the deposit; and how great the trust! By you, glorious actions have been performed; and from you, great things are still expected. Your exalted situation has put much in your power; and I must remind you, that for the performance of your duty, you are responsible to that great Being, to whom you are indebted for your advancement.

I need not tell you, Sir, that terrestrial glory is extremely precarious. How unstable all earthly thrones! How fading all earthly crowns! How numerous the instances of worldly revolutions, which the history of past ages records; and how big with admonitions and instruction to us! To worldly advantages and distinctions the grim messenger Death pays no respect. From one common earth were the high and the low, the rich and the poor, taken; to one common earth they all return. In the subterraneous state, the dust of the potentate and the peasant is blended. The most philosophical eye is unable to discern between the remains of the one and of the other.

I must say, not one moment of doing good is to be neglected. The greater the opportunities of usefulness, the more criminal and hurtful the neglect.

Allow me, Sir, warmly to recommend to you, as a man and a migistrate, the practice and encouragement of the Christian religion. Is not religion the chief glory of human nature? Is it not religion that renders the man so much superior to the brute? Does not instinct in many animals seem to approach near to reason in man? Nay, are there not instances in which the former, in certain animals, appears to excel the latter in some men? But to religion no irrational animal can make any pretensions. Of a Deity, none of them seem to have the smallest idea. Shall any man, then, neglect that in which the chief glory of his nature consists? Can any man be wanting in duty to himself, and the honour of his nature, so far as to debase himself to a brute? Is not religion attended with every advantage and excellence that can recommend any object to our attention and esteem? It was said of a celebrated philosopher, all who knew him, loved him. And, with distinguished propriety, may it be affirmed of the religion of Jesus. All who know it, love it; and, if any do not love it, the reason is, they do

not know it. To be the successful instrument of the promotion and extension of this heavenly religion, is the greatest happiness and honour that can be conferred on man; a happiness, an honour that will continue unfaded and flourishing, when sublunary sceptres, and thrones, and crowns, are known no more.

Of penal laws, sanguinary statues, methods of compulsion and force, our holy religion has no need; nay, all such means it disavows and rejects. But means wisely adapted to the genius of the Christian religion, fully compatible with the rights of man, and the freedom of moral agency, and happily calculated to accomplish every salutary purpose. Heaven has sanctioned and now put in your power. Great, extensive, resistless, must your influence and example be. In a manner most honourable to yourself, and highly conducive to the present and future happiness of your fellow creatures, both in the mother country and her distant colonies, may it be employed!

Important is the discrimination between the religious and the irreligious. Under these two grand divisions, the numerous individuals of the human species are comprehended. Among the one or the other each of us will, in the day of

final retribution, be found. For, as an apostolical writer speaks, *we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.* Dread tribunal!

Long has the final catastrophe been predicted. Often has the prediction been repeated. For reasons best known to the most high God of Heaven and Earth, the event has hitherto been delayed. But delays with us are not delays with him. A day and a thousand years are with him as one thing.

Is the second advent of that all-glorious person, who is at once the Saviour and the Judge of the world, delayed? Do we remain unprepared for it; nay, forgetful of it? Inexcusable must we be. How certain the approach of the day of accounts! and how sudden! In different lights does the scripture introduce it. Opposite aspects does it assume. It smiles and frowns; it allures and alarms. How animating and how alarming the declaration from the mouth of that Almighty Redeemer, who has universal and unlimited authority and power in Heaven and on Earth—*Them that honour me, I will honour, but they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed?*

The terrors of the day of final decision, what tongue can utter; what mind can conceive? I

could tell you of inundations, earthquakes, and subterraneous explosions; mountains, cities, and all their inhabitants, buried in one common watery grave; foaming seas, ships dashed in pieces, roaring thunders, and streams of elementary fire. But what are all the phenomena, which have appeared in our world, to the terrors and glories, with which the Judge of the quick and the dead will be attended in the day of decision? What is a nocturnal taper to the mid-day sun? Methinks I see the stern Judge descending from Heaven to Earth. How awfully majestic the appearance! How numerous, and how brilliant his attendants! From his terrible face the Heavens and the Earth seem to fly away. Universal nature appears in one common blaze. The bowels of the sun seem to burst, and to throw out immense magazines of fire. The moon, affrighted, assumes a bloody hue, catches the flame, and hastens to die. Planets and comets seem to burst from their orbits; spreading flame and desolation through the boundless dimensions of space. Burning worlds dash one upon another. What a crash of systems! What a wreck of worlds! With what justness and propriety does a prophet exclaim, *Who can abide the day of his coming?* Behold the empyreal throne erected; the dread Judge descending, attended by myriads of

myriads, and millions of millions, of angels and arch-angels; the graves opening, and the multitudes, who sleep in the dust of the earth, coming forth; worlds summoned, and innumerable millions collecting from all quarters. Both the sea and the dry land yield up their dead. Even Hell itself refuses to conceal or detain its prisoners. Horrid forms! What dreadful confusion! Thunders roaring, lightnings flashing; the Heavens in one general blaze; all Hell reverberating the alarming signal; the Earth shaking to her centre; mountains reeling; angels flying; wicked men howling; devils yelling; and old Nature expiring.

Now every individual of the human family will know, either to his everlasting joy, or his endless sorrow, the advantages of religion, and the danger of impiety. Among the many thousands of worlds, which are then to be assembled, not one infidel, not one sceptic, will be found. Who then would not wish to be religious? Many wish to live; but who ever wished to die, without religion? The most mercenary of mortals could not forbear to say, *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.* Is religion a low employ, unworthy of a great mind, patronized only by the illiterate rabble, or interested churchmen? Far from it. It is an employ

rational and noble; worthy, not only of men, and the greatest of men, but of angels and archangels. Among its most cordial and zealous votaries, I can recite a long catalogue of men, who, by their accomplishments, natural and acquired, were ornaments to human nature; and will shine, with distinguished lustre, in the historic page to latest times. Here we find the best scholars, the bravest soldiers, and the ablest statesmen. Can it disgrace you to practise religion in your own person, and promote it among your citizens? No, no. It will reflect the highest honour upon you in this world, and introduce you to immortality in the world to come.

But, sir, I do not recommend religion and morality solely with a view to the spiritual and eternal interests of mankind. To others I could, to a person of your discernment I need not, prove, that they are indispensibly necessary, not only to the happiness and prosperity; but the very existence of civil society. Does not a sense of the necessity and utility of religion, even in a political view, prevail among all nations, Pagan as well as Christian? What country is it, into which Christianity has not yet been introduced, in which civil rulers have not found it necessary, for the support of government and preservation of order, to

substitute one species of superstition or another, in room of it? Despoil mankind of every impression of their duty, of all distinction between good and evil, evil, moral and penal, of the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments; and what will ensue? Universal anarchy, robberies, massacres upon massacres, desolation and ruin. Deny a Deity, and you cut all the sinews of civil government; you render it a weak, feeble, useless thing. Without religion, mankind never were, never will be, never can be, either as individuals, or as societies, happy. Do infidelity, irreligion, and immorality, contribute towards the happiness of individuals, families, or nations? To the universal experience of mankind I appeal; to the history of society, in earlier and later times, I submit the decision. In what situation was France a few years ago, while the exercise of religion was suspended; while no solid permanent government was established? You know, the nation remembers, all the world knows—a scene of blood, murder, and death!

Happy, doubtless, is the country in which irreligion and immorality are suppressed; religion and morality patronized. If the laws of God are neglected, the laws of man cannot be duly regarded. Is he, who lives in the habitual violation of

the laws of Heaven, and of his country, an useful member of society, a good citizen, a true patriot? No. I may venture to affirm, that he has not a drop of patriotic blood in his veins. Obedience to the mandates of Heaven, and to the lawful commands of his civil superiors, is at once his duty and his interest. Were I asked, what is the first part of the duty of a good citizen? I would answer, obedience. What is the second part of the duty of a good citizen? I would answer, obedience. What is the third part of the duty of a good citizen? I would still answer, obedience. Was the authority of Pythagoras such, that his bare opinion was sufficient to adjust every controversy that arose among his captious pupils? and shall the authority of the Most High be controverted, and his laws wantonly violated? Is there a creature, rational or irrational, terrestrial or celestial, that is not under law? Is there a creature that is not a subject either of the natural or moral government of the great Creator of all? Does not the principle of subordination and subjection to the laws of nature, extend to every part of inanimate creation? How nice the adjustments, how wise the laws, by which the several parts of our planetary system are regulated! How regular and exact their periodical revolutions! Blush, O men! blush, O angels! in all inanimate

creation disobedience is unknown. Must the citizen be subject and obedient to the magistrate? Remember, sir, the magistrate, no less than the citizen, must be subject and obedient to the authority of that great Being, who does *according to his* uncontrollable *will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of our earth.* In the intermediate state; in the world to come, civil distinctions are unknown; *the servant is free from his master.*

Fatal, indeed, have been the effects of disorder and disobedience in the moral world. What converted angels into devils? What turned our world, once the seat of health and happiness, into a hospital; the land of sickness and sorrow, disease and death? What has occasioned the subversion of so many populous, opulent, powerful states, kingdoms and empires? What is the cause of all our miseries and all our woes, personal, domestic, and public? Disobedience, disobedience! How salutary are the effects of good order and obedience! How conducive to the happiness of individuals, and of society? Perfect, uninterrupted, undisturbed is the government of the countless millions, who inhabit the celestial regions. The salutary consequence is, they are completely, universally, and for ever happy.

Permit me, sir, for your own improvement, and for the prosperity of your young republic, to recommend, in a particular manner, to you, a serious perusal and review of history, sacred and civil. There you will find numerous examples, big with instruction, both to yourself and your fellow-citizens; examples useful both for imitation and for caution. Here are presented, for beacons, those dangerous rocks and shelves, on which the rulers of nations in former times have struck; and which you, as the political pilot of France, must endeavour to avoid. Precious are the contents, valuable the charge, of that political vessel you have undertaken to steer. Read the history of the Greek and Roman republics; their rise and progress, their decline, and subversion. Here you will find, on the one hand, the virtues of their rulers, and, on the other, their vices, painted in striking colours. Here you will find objects of admiration and applause; and objects of abhorrence and aversion. You will meet with an Alexander and a Cincinnatus; a Catiline and a Cicero; a Nero and a Socrates. Why did the citizens of Rome place the images of their brave ancestors in the vestibules of their houses? The reason is obvious, when they came out, and when they went in, those venerable busts met their eyes; and, recalling to their mind the

glorious actions of the dead, stimulated them to imitate such noble examples. The design accomplished its end. The virtue and bravery of the fathers were transferred to their sons. For a series of ages a spirit of heroism was transmitted from one generation to another. Easy would it be to introduce a numerous list of heroes and of politicians, who, by their humanity as well as valour, have merited the approbation, and are entitled to the esteem, of mankind to the end of the world. No less easy would it be to recite a catalogue of persons, who, in different ages and countries, have filled places of great honour and profit; but, misled by the flatteries of mercenary sychophants, and the advice of other evil counsellors, have entailed lasting infamy on themselves; and irretrievable ruin on the people, whom they ought, by every mean in their power, to have rendered happy. That combination of causes, by which the erection of states, and the advancement of rulers, have been effected; and that concurrence of circumstances, by which the downfall of the latter, and the overthrow of the former, have been accomplished, are among the most curious and instructive parts of history. How necessary for the statesman as well as the Christian, is the apostolical caution, *let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

Of you, no less than of the Persian king, may it ever be said; his humanity, even in the midst of his triumphs, attracted the attention, and excited the admiration of all the surrounding nations; he conquered more by his humanity than by his sword; and he made no other use of his victories than to render the vanquished happy. Happy as well as numerous were his subjects; his dominions extending from India, almost to Greece, and from the Caspian sea to Ethiopia. No less eminent and exemplary was he for his religious zeal. Of this the following edict is an irrefragable proof, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, *The Lord God of Heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea. Whoever among you is of his people, his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel; his God be with him.* Long seventy years had the unhappy Jews been in a state of captivity in a distant country; but now the humane, benevolent exemplary prince makes a public proclamation of liberty to the captives. Has not the French nation, by its vigorous exertions in the cause of liberty, distinguished itself among the nations of Europe? Have not you, by your glorious military achievements in this noble cause, spread

your fame from the east to the west, and from the north to the south? Is the work finished? Is the infamous business of slavery totally extinguished in France, and all its dependencies? Alas, no. Do you wish to do honour to yourself, good to mankind, and diffuse universal joy among all the friends of humanity? Proceed, without any unnecessary delay, to the gradual abolition of slavery, and total suppression of the slave-trade. Has liberty occasioned your unexpected elevation from the shades of obscurity to the summit of worldly splendour? And ought you not, will you not, distinguish yourself by the most strenuous endeavours, to emancipate, as far as your power extends, the thousands of your African brethren, who still remain in ignoble and painful slavery?

The revolution, which a few years ago, was accomplished in that great nation, at the head of which an all-disposing Providence has placed you, excited the attention, I might have said, admiration, of all the world. It certainly was, in its origin, progress, and various concomitant circumstances, one of the most remarkable national occurrences of modern times. You were called to fight, now you are called to rule. May your political glory equal your military! Our great Washington, like you, first fought our battles in

the field, and then directed our councils in the cabinet. May you, as he was, be the happy instrument of establishing a permanent form of government; a form of government and order, that will not only last while you live, but survive, long survive you! May wisdom from above direct you! The eyes of Europe, the eyes of America, the eyes of all the world are upon you.

You have, I am informed, restored the Roman Catholic religion in France. This information, I must confess, did not a little surprise and disappoint me. Is this step consistent with your former conduct? Is it consistent with the avowed object of the late war? I do not insist on the known sanguinary principles of the Romish church; or the too well known tortures of the infamous inquisition. I ask, Did not the French nation, during the late war, consider the royal throne and the popish altar as inseparably connected? Did they not fight against the latter as well as the former? Did they not fight to deliver themselves from sacerdotal tyranny and monkish superstition, as well as from monarchical despotism? Why were sacred images converted into current money; and consecrated bells metamorphosed into common cannon? Why were monasteries and nunneries opened, and devoted virgins

sent abroad, to mix with the mass of the unhallowed populace? Why were multitudes of priests banished, and multitudes massacred? Why did you perform prodigies of military valour; and why did thousands, myriads, bleed and die, to free the nation from superstition and despotism? You cannot be altogether unacquainted with the history of the church of Rome, and the millions in whose precious blood she has embrued her guilty hands. Are not their souls under the altar on high, urging for deserved vengeance on their persecutors and murders? Shall their cry remain, for ever, unheard, and their grievances unredressed? No. The great Judge of the universe will, in due time, infallibly make inquisition for blood. Do not, sir, misunderstand me. Do I plead for reprisals? No. Persecuted, murdered protestants have committed their cause to HIM, to whom alone vengeance belongs. The law of retaliation is no part of Christian morality. Our law is, to do to others, not as they have, but as they ought to have done to us. Papists, no less than protestants, are entitled to protection in the profession of their religion. Persecution for religion, as such, be it a true religion or a false, is antiscriptural, irrational, and impolitic; a measure that originates in ignorance, superstition, and bigotry; a measure which heaven never will

sanction. To protection in the profession of his religion, whatever it may be, every good citizen is entitled. It is his natural, valuable, and unalienable privilege. Between toleration and persecution I know no medium.*

* Though toleration and intolerance are usually opposed to one another; the former, no less than the latter, originates in error and despotism. Toleration, whether granted by an individual or a government, necessarily presupposes, on the part of the granter, authority or right to grant, or not grant it. Now, can it possibly be in the power of any man, or set of men, to grant, or not grant me liberty to worship my Maker; and worship him in the manner, and by the means, which to me appear scriptural? Have I not a paramount right, nay, is it not indispensibly incumbent upon me, independent of all creation, to worship my God? Will any man pretend to grant to me, or withhold from me, a right which I derive from my Maker? If he does, he at once robs both my Maker and me. If a man grants me toleration to worship God, he indirectly grants God a liberty to receive my worship. If he assumes a right to restrain me from worshipping my Maker, he, in effect, assumes a right to restrain Him from receiving my worship. If my conduct is, in any instance, inimical to the state, or incompatible with the peace of society, the civil magistrate certainly has a right to take cognizance of it. But, with the religious intercourse between my Maker and me, he has nothing to do. If I be in an error, I am responsible, not to him, but to God, for it. The toleration of any thing intimates, that, in one respect or another, it is wrong. This is the necessary import of the word. How can it be wrong for me to worship Him that made me? Or, to do it in the manner which, after the most impartial deliberation, seems to me the most scriptural? Mistake, I may; but

Allow me, sir, to remind you of the constitution of the United States of America, and the liberty it grants to Christians of every denomination. I will take the liberty to transcribe the following article. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion; or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Is our constitution the choice and deed of the people at large? How congruous and necessary, that it secure to them all, without exception, liberty in its fullest extent, of what nation or religion soever they may be; is not this the spirit of true republicanism? Long may our people enjoy, and duly may they appreciate their republican privileges! It is not the least of the advantages of the republican form of government, that the people are, at once, the authors and the guardians of their constitution. The exercise of power is, in-

who is authorised to determine whether, and how far, I am in a mistake? Have I not the same right to judge for myself, in matters of religion, that a president, a consul, or a king, has? All that the magistrate has to do with me, in these matters, is to protect me in the profession of that religion which appears to me the best.

deed, immediately in the hands of the rulers. But are they the sole, or even the principal, palladium of constitutional liberty? No. To the people, who invested them with power, are they responsible for the use they make of it. And our elective form of government has also this obvious and important advantage—If our people be at any time dissatisfied with the official conduct of their representatives, they have always the near prospect of an opportunity to renew their choice. With this view, our people carefully watch the proceedings of their rulers. Every aggression or encroachment on their constitution, they are ever ready to repel. To the French people I would say, *go ye, and do likewise.*

Has France become a great republic! Has she fought for liberty, and obtained it? Why does she not grant privileges, civil and religious, indiscriminately, to men of all descriptions, and Christians of all denominations? Why does she bestow many religious privileges on one denomination which she denies to all others? Is not this measure impolitic? Is it not calculated to excite and cherish jealousy and envy between two great parts of the people? You cannot too often recollect, sir, that you have been, by very unexpected means, advanced to a high pinnacle of political

authority and power; that all the nations of Europe watch your motions with a penetrating, if not an envious, eye. Your situation, whatever sycophants may say, is truly critical. Your conduct, whether wise or unwise, must be attended with consequences most interesting to yourself, to the French nation, and to the world. May you, by an upright administration, procure unfading laurels to your own head, and raise the great nation, over which Providence has set you to rule, to prosperity and honour unexampled in former times! May religion and literature; arts, manufactures, and commerce, flourish in France!

Political revolutions, in favour of religion and liberty, open glorious prospects to every friend of piety and humanity. They presage the certain and speedy approach of that peaceful, blissful, millenial state of the church and of the world, which prophets and apostles have foretold; and in the joyful prospect of which the greatest and best of men have lived and died. Did the shaking of the nations usher our divine Redeemer into the world eighteen hundred years ago; and open the way for the spread of the gospel among the Gentile nations? Commotions and revolutions in the kingdoms of the earth, are fore-runners and presages of the speedy approach of his second ad-

vent. Then the mystery of Providence in the world, and of the economy of grace in the church, is to be finished. *This gospel of the kingdom*, says our Redeemer himself, *shall be preached in all the world for a witness to every nation under heaven, and then*, not till then, *shall the end come.* Within forty years after his ascension, Christianity was introduced into almost every part of the Roman empire, or the then known world. And then the end of the Jewish policy, civil and ecclesiastical, came. The gospel has been, or is to be, preached in every inhabited continent and island on earth, and then shall the end of the present state of the world, and of the church in it, come. Then shall the militant state of the church resign to the triumphant; and the earth be restored to its original, paradisaical state; the penal effects of sin and the curse being for ever removed from it. For, the last of all the inspired writers informs us, that he saw in vision *a new heaven and a new earth.* Have you been the instrument, in the hand of Providence, in re-organizing the state? It will shed an additional, unfading lustre upon you, to attempt, as far as your influence enables you, the reformation of the church, and the spread of the gospel, not only throughout France, but her colonies, and every other part

of the world, to which, by new discoveries, or otherwise, you may have access.

Now, sir, I must soon take my leave of you. I never did, and, in all human probability, never will, in this life, see you in person. But you have my best wishes and daily prayers for your prosperity and happiness. And a decisive day approaches, in which you and I will meet; and, with unutterable confusion, or with ineffable joy, give an account of ourselves, and of our conduct, to God. Can we then pass unnoticed or unobserved in the crowd of assembled worlds? No. The all-piercing eye of the Sovereign Judge no person, nothing can escape. This, truly, is a serious, a solemn thought! Deeply may it impress both your mind and mine!

I have insisted so much in the religious strain, that I dare say, you consider me in the light of a devotee or a fanatic. But whatever opinion you may be disposed to entertain, concerning me, I must take the liberty to tell you, that religion is of indispensible necessity; and in the language of Heaven, must forewarn you, that *except you repent* you must unavoidably *perish*, as repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are essential parts of salvation. If you

violate the obligations of religion, and usurp the rights of your fellow citizens, what compensation can you make to them, or how shall you appease the anger of Heaven? To the Deity, pride ever has been, and ever must be, hateful. *The proud*, whether he sit on the dung-hill, or be seated on a consular throne; whether arrayed in robes of state, or covered with rags, *is an abomination to the Lord.* When I recollect your origin, and your sudden elevation, I cannot but be afraid, on your account. Fatal have been the effects of pride. It precipitated millions of the original inhabitants of Heaven down to Hell. It converted myriads of angels into devils. Often recal to your mind the fate of the Babylonian monarch, the most potent of all the monarchs of the earth. For the pride and vanity of his heart, he was not only displaced from his majestic throne, despoiled of his royal robes, divested of his imperial authority and power; but degraded far beneath the rank of a man, and obliged to associate and live with the beasts of the earth. Miseries and woes, countless and unutterable, has pride introduced into our world. It is not who, or where; but *what* we are, that constitutes us happy, in this world, or that which is to come. A heavenly humble nature alone can enjoy heavenly, beatific bliss. Seldom, perhaps, during your pros-

perity, do you recollect these serious things. But worldly prosperity cannot last for ever. The caresses and flatteries, which you now, day after day, receive, will soon, perhaps suddenly, cease; and to concerns of a most solemn nature you *must* then attend. Then will you wish, and, perhaps, wish in vain, you had, at an earlier period, seriously bethought yourself, and had become *wise to salvation.* To your own reflections on these serious topics, I shall, for a little time, leave you; and take the liberty, before I finish my letter, to expostulate with you on matters of another nature.

Having freely apprised you of your danger in a future world, in the event of final inattention to your eternal interests, permit me to remind you of your duty and your danger in a political point of view. Have you duly adverted to the genius of that great nation over which you now preside? Are they not, almost to a proverb, jealous of their national rights, and liberties? Have they not proved to the world, that they are a nation of Brutuses!! Are they, on this account, to be condemned? Surely not. Have they sacrificed countless lives, and almost exhausted their treasures, to procure for themselves, and transmit to their posterity, their national rights and privile-

ges; and shall they not be tenacious of them? The man, or set of men, who despoil them of privileges obtained at such infinite expence, literally robs them of the vast treasure they expended, and virtually murders the many brave heroes, who sacrificed their lives, to purchase liberty for their country, and their children, and proclaim to the world, that these heroes, fought and bled, and died in vain. To imagine that the French people will allow themselves to be, with impunity, despoiled of their dear-bought privileges, is to suppose them, not only without patriotism, honour and generosity, but without a mind and without a memory. Shall they, after the bloody struggle, transmit to coming generations a despotism so unmanly and fatal? Shall they deposit, in the hands of their progeny the sanguinary sword, all stained with the blood of the patriotic sons of France, when a little more courage and perseverance, would secure their liberties? In what contempt and detestation would posterity hold them? Would not their children and their children's children execrate their cowardice, and curse the tyrant, while rotting in his grave, with his parisitical advisers?*

* Here I cannot forbear to hand down to posterity, for detestation, the name of Fontanes.

All that is wanting to render them happy, is perseverance in the vindication of their just rights and unalienable privileges. Of vast magnitude and importance is the cause of liberty. It is not the concern of a city or a country; it is the concern of Europe, nay, of the world. It is not the concern of a day, of a year, or of an age; it is equally the concern of the present generation, and of many generations to come. Recollect, sir, your political conduct may be productive of much happiness or of much misery to many millions yet unborn. Figure to yourself your political misconduct inscribed, in very small characters, on a young tree, and the inscription to encrease with the tree; in what large characters would posterity read your infamous departure from political and moral rectitude? You should always remember, when you are planning for posterity, that neither wisdom, nor virtue, nor honour, nor courage, is hereditary. Portentous are the times in which we live. Great is the trust deposited in your hands. How many millions are committed to your care! Many are the vicissitudes of fortune they have already experienced. Manifold difficulties and dangers have they both encountered and escaped. High is the eminence on which you now stand. Vast is the prospect before you. Happily may you contri-

bute to the prosperity; or unhappily may you conduce to the misery, of Europe. Inattentive must you be to your duty, your interest, and your honour, to the interest, and the honour of the French nation, if you are not inspired with the most laudable ambition and zeal, to secure to them such a free and happy government, as they risked their all to obtain. Has not the world seen the French nation great in adversity, struggling with the difficulties incident to a revolutionary war, amidst the intrigues of unprincipled men among themselves, a number of whom have met the fate they merited; and shall they not be great in prosperity; and continue to defend their rights, as a lioness does her cubs? Immense is the hurt which, by misconduct, you may now do. By a virtuous administration, on the contrary, you may do more for the interest and honour of the nation, at the head of which you now stand, than all your former victories and conquests have done. Were not the Lacedemonians, in external circumstances, inferior to many of the other states of Greece; and yet, by their virtue and their valour, did they not obtain a pre-eminence? Have not the most celebrated heroes of antiquity been distinguished and famous for their contempt of worldly riches and honours? In what low circumstances were many of the most cele-

brated champions of ancient Rome; such as Fabricions, Cincinnatus, Regulus, and others? And yet those were the times, in which public, as well as private virtue, shown with unrivalled lustre. Their poverty, far from being a reproach, added fresh laurels to their fame. The reason is obvious. It indicated such a noble contempt of riches as rendered them superior to all the arts of corruption and bribery. In modern times, as well as ancient, public virtue possesses charms, which attract attention, and add a dignity to nations, which is superior to riches and power; commanding respect, where pomp, splendour, and magnificence, are despised. The people of France are not ignorant of the necessary prerequisites and essential qualifications, which constitute an upright magistrate, or a virtuous government. They know that a good magistrate is a friend to the liberties of the people, makes their interest his own, and is happy when they are happy. Readily can they also recognize when an individual tyrant, or a government of them, deviates from the path of rectitude; prostituting their consciences and their power to the most unworthy purposes. A nation, delivered from local prepossessions and sentimental prejudices, sees with new eyes, and hears with new ears. Curious, as well as contaminating is prejudice; ac-

commodating itself to all the propensities and passions of the human mind. In what mind, noble or ignoble, learned or illiterate, does it not find a residence? What mind is not, in a greater or less degree, under the influence of political or religious prejudice? Like the spider, it can fix its residence, and live any, or every where. Let the mind be as empty as the walls of an uninhabited dungeon, or polished like the walls of a palace; let it be informed or uninformed, prejudice, if not disturbed, will keep possession of it. But when the time arrives at which a political revolution is to be accomplished in the state, or a religious in the church, prejudice, however obstinate, must yield. The revolution which has taken place in France, in the political sentiments of the people, no less than the political state of the country, is, doubtless, in all its causes, concomitants, and effects, one of the most extraordinary in the annals of the world. Great, indeed, is the change in the political sentiments of the French nation. Are they as much as ever deaf to political ignorance and error? Are they as much as ever liable to the impositions of designing men, and enterprising demagogues? Are they as much as ever apt tamely to submit to any tyrant or despot that may wish to enslave them? Or is the mind swept of its former political cobwebs, and

prepared for the reception of generous political ideas? Can they be supposed ever to return to their political ignorance and prejudices? As soon may a scholar totally forget his alphabet, or a wise man become an idiot. Can the mind once duly informed become uninformed; or unknow what it knows? Apt, indeed, are vulgar minds to be dazzled with the slendour of courts. But often are the despotic actions, and enormous expences of the latter, the means of undeceiving the former, and the veil of ignorance, when once torn, can never be repaired, as ignorance is only the absence of knowledge; it is obvious that though a man may be kept ignorant, he cannot be made ignorant.

Let me, in a particular manner, inculcate on your mind one momentous truth. It is this—notwithstanding appearances to the contrary, there is not a description of men, that more clearly see your danger, or more heartily despise your conduct, in the event of its proving unhappily despotic, than those very characters, of the *diplomatic*, senatorial, and judicial departments, who now daily surround, and flatter you. Interest obliges them to wish you to oppress the people; because they expect to enrich themselves at the expence of the public. In the event of your acting the basest part, self-interest would incline

them to approve and eulogize your conduct. Sensible are they, that if you could see your danger, as they see it, your government might speedily come to an end; and they would lose their places and pensions. But, well do they know, that if you infringe the privileges of the people, your head will not be out of danger; but while you keep your head upon your shoulders, they wish to keep their lucrative places like the flatterers of Robespiere, and his premature and ignominous death, will prove the authenticity of my assertion. You certainly cannot have forgot the tragical end of this sanguinary monster, that for a time, ruled the French nation; who received a thousand addresses and congratulations, filled with the most fulsome flattery, on his escaping a supposed plot for his assassination. And you cannot but remember what happened about one month after. He was brought to the scaffold; and, for the very great service they had done to society, by extirpating such a monster from the earth, his executioners received upwards of fifteen hundred addresses of thanks from the people. But to shew, beyond a doubt, that the French nation know what their chief magistrate is, or ought to be, I will here transcribe that declaration of the rights of man, which was made the basis of the new constitution, and

which by order of the national convention, was circulated throughout France, at the commencement of the revolution. It runs thus :—

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN AND OF CITIZENS.

By the National Assembly of France.

'The Representatives of the people of FRANCE, formed into a National Assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights, are the sole causes of public misfortunes and corruptions of government, have resolved to set forth, in a solemn declaration, these natural, imprescriptible, and unalienable rights: That this declaration being constantly present to the minds of the members of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and their duties: That the acts of the legislature and executive powers of government, being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be more respected: and also, that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestible principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the constitution, and the general happiness.

'For these reasons, the NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, doth recognize and declare, in the presence of the Supreme Being, and with the hope of his blessing and favour, the following *sacred* rights of men and of citizens:

'I. *Men are born and always continue free, and 'equal in respect of their rights. Civil distinctions, 'therefore, can be founded only on public utility.*

'II. *The end of all political associations is the 'preservation of the natural and imprescriptible 'rights of man; and these rights are liberty, pro- 'perty, security, and resistance of oppression.*

'III. *The nation is essentially the source of all 'sovreignty; nor can any* INDIVIDUAL, *or* ANY 'BODY OF MEN, *be entitled to any authority which 'is not expressly derived from it.*

'IV. Political Liberty consists in the power of 'doing whatever does not injure another. The 'exercise of the natural rights of every man, has 'no other limits than those which are necessary 'to secure to every *other* man the free exercise 'of the same rights; and these limits are deter- 'minable only by the law.

'V. The law ought to prohibit only actions 'hurtful to society. What is not prohibited by 'the law, should not be hindered; nor should any 'one be compelled to that which the law does not 'require.

'VI. The law is an expression of the will of 'the community. All citizens have a right to 'concur, either personally, or by their representatives in its formation. It should be the same 'to all whether it protects or punishes; and *all 'being equal in its sight, are equally eligible to all 'honours, places, and employments, according to 'their different abilities, without any other distinction than that created by their virtues and talents.*

'VII. No man should be accused, arrested, or 'held in confinement, except in cases determined 'by the law, and according to the forms which it 'has prescribed. All who promote, solicit, execute, or cause to be executed, arbitrary orders, 'ought to be punished; and every citizen called 'upon or apprehended by virtue of the law, ought 'immediately to obey, and renders himself culpable by resistance.

'VIII. The law ought to impose no other penalties than such as are absolutely and evidently

'necessary: and no one ought to be punished,
'but in virtue of a law promulgated before the of-
'fence and legally applied.

'IX. Every man being presumed innocent till
'he has been convicted, whenever his detention
'becomes indispensible, all rigour to him, more
'than is necessary to secure his person, ought to
'be provided against by the law.

'X. No man ought to be molested on account of
'his opinions, not even on account of his *religious*
'opinions, provided his avowal of them does not
'disturb the public order established by law.

'XI. The unrestrained communication of
'thoughts and opinions being one of the most pre-
'cious rights of man, every citizen may speak,
'write, and publish freely, provided he is respon-
'sible for the abuse of this liberty in cases deter-
'mined by the law.

'XII. A public force being necessary to give
'security to the rights of men and of citizens,
'that force is instituted for the benefit of the com-
'munity, and not for the particular benefit of the
'persons with whom it is entrusted.

'XIII. A common contribution being necessary for the support of the public force, and for 'defraying the other expences of government, 'it ought to be divided equally among the members of the community, according to their abilities.

'XIV. Every citizen has a right, either by 'himself or his representative, to a free voice in 'determining the necessity of public contributions, the appropriation of them, and their 'amount, mode of assessment, and duration.

'XV. Every community has a right to demand of all its agents, an account of their conduct.

'XVI. Every community in which a separation of powers and a security of rights is not 'provided for, wants a constitution.

'XVII. The right to property being inviolable and sacred, no one ought to be deprived of 'it, except in cases of evident public necessity 'legally ascertained, and on condition of a previous just indemnity.'

Whether your future official conduct shall accomplish or disappoint the expectations of the friends of liberty, it is certain, that such a government, as is here recommended, may exist, nay, has, in fact, existed, both in theory and practice, for a series of years. That nations, populous, and inhabiting countries of great extent, may be, if they will, free and happy; here is an irrefragable proof. Here, in the United States of America, are persons of all nations, and of all languages, who brought their prepossessions and prejudices, propensities and passions, with them; who, notwithstanding, live in harmony and friendship. Neither can the poor be said to be opprest here, nor the rich pampered. The different departments of government are established and supported on principles of economy, rather than extravagance. Here no provision is made for a despot to live in magnificence and splendour, at the expence of the poor, as well as the rich; the mechanical, as well as the mercantile part of society. Neither our executive, nor our legislative bodies, have any occasion for guards, to protect them from an infuriated populace. Where such defence is necessary, it unavoidably occasions a suspicion, that some fatal source of public discontent exists, from which the necessity of it proceeds. And unhappy, indeed, is the man,

whether called a consul or a constable, who is obnoxious to the vengeance of a nation on account of his tyranny. The inimitable general, and patriotic statesman,* who lives, and will for ever live in the affection of the people of America, and to whom, under God, we are indebted for the independence, liberty, and prosperity, we now enjoy, permit me to repeat the sentiment, WHAT A NOBLE PATTERN FOR YOU TO IMITATE!! After his example, consecrate your fame; give to France a well-adjusted and rightly-organized constitution; a constitution which, adapted to the character and local circumstances of the nation, shall establish their prosperity on the solid principles of liberty and good order. This once accomplished, her acquisitions will form the basis of substantial greatness; but, if otherwise, they will fly away, like the painted, but unsubstantial forms of a magical lanthorn.

Is not France now, in a particular manner, the object of the jealousy of the other European powers? The states, at whose expence she has been aggrandized, will not be easily reconciled to her; but will, with impatience, watch the moment of retaliation. Should France be cursed with a distracted government, or, which is worse still, a

* General George Washington.

military or a hereditary despotism, which God forbid! opportunities will not be wanting. The friends of France have considered the late revolution as the most glorious epoch in its history, and the most consoling presage of its future greatness. But remember, sir, its future happiness depends, in a great measure, on your official conduct; particularly the rectitude of your heart, and the purity of your intentions.

If your administration shall unhappily prove to be incompatible with the political principles which you and the French nation profess; and repugnant to the character of a just ruler, a good citizen, and an honest man; if it shall eventually encroach upon the natural rights of man, as man; particularly that most valuable of all rights, and most sacred of all property, liberty of conscience, what must the necessary consequence be? It will not only exhibit your *political hypocrisy* with a witness, and your *systematic villainy* without disguise, but will assuredly prove a prelude to your ruin.

Unhappy is the situation of Christians, whose consciences are oppressed with legal penalties, and fettered by civil tests. You may be assured, that the people of France are feelingly alive to high sentiments of freedom, honour, propriety,

justice, and the eternal rules of rectitude. They may suffer long, but not always. They will, at last, infallibly assert and maintain their violated liberties and privileges; and transmit them, as a sacred deposit, to their children, and their children's children; and thus prove true to themselves, to their posterity, to their country, and to the world. By improper behaviour, in your official capacity, you may do more hurt to the French nation, than ever you have done to any other nation by your sword. If you establish a civil, a military, or an ecclesiastical despostism* in France,

* While I contend that civil liberty is the greatest of all temporal blessings, I must affirm, that despotism is the greatest of all temporal curses, because it precipitates the innocent, as well as the delinquent, into a labyrinth of misery, orphans and widows in particular, and the indigent in general, feel its baneful effects. To maintain despots in their extravagance, they must pay enormous taxes for their food, cloathes, habitations, and even for the light of Heaven; and, at the nod of a tyrant, nations are often plunged into all the horrors of sanguinary warfare, while the poor, as well as the rich, must pay the cost. And yet, astonishing to think, many of the oppressed sons of men fawn at their tyrant's feet, hug their galling chains, and despise the paramount blessing of civil liberty. Facts, stubborn facts, illustrate this speculative reasoning. What limits are there to the prerogatives and powers of a chief magistrate, who receives 25,000,000 livres annually out of the public taxes, for his civil list, and, at the same time, empowered to create places and give pensions to his parrasites. Where this is the case, civil liberty is in danger of being

or in any way, infringe the valuable rights of the nation, you will wound, in the house of its professed friends, the best of civil causes; you will fulfil the predictions of your enemies concerning you: you will make sad the hearts of all the friends of liberty; and, in short, cause it and its treacherous enemies to commence a sanguinary intestine war, the final result of which the fate of the benevolent Louis XVI. and the malevolent demagogues, whose subsequent guilty and hypocritical pretensions brought swift destruction upon them, will abundantly illustrate. In this event, liberty, or its enemies, must fall; and whether this shall be its fate or theirs, the wise Disposer of all things, and he alone can, with certainty foretell. Are you not, through the fascinating love of popularity, the insinuating addresses of sycophants, and flatterers, and the intoxicating influence of power, in very great danger of being misled from the path of political rectitude and duty? I have my witness in Heaven, that I wish you no

annihilated. Corruption necessarily engenders round such a man. His fellow citizens must become his vassalage; bow with reverential awe at his nod, and obey his arbitrary commands at the point of the bayonet. Hence a few interested villains are exalted, and millions consequently debased and degraded to the lowest pitch, and the object and end of society is finally frustrated. *Despotism is the radical cause* of all these, and many similar evils.

harm, but aim at your welfare, and that of the nation whom you govern. May Heaven preserve you from vanity, and its consequent fatal effects! May you feel the sublime pleasure, the supreme delight, of ruling only to make other men happy! Often shall I ask, Has unexpected prosperity made any change in the temper and conduct of the First Consul of France? Does he continue to be a friend to the liberties, and a promoter of the happiness of the people? Does he love virtue, and shew himself grateful to his great benefactor on high? An affirmative answer to these interesting questions will, on your own account, always afford me the truest pleasure. Usefully may you live; happily may you die! May happiness await you in the world to come!

I must now, sir, bid you a final farewell; and my last admonition is, *that you never employ your executive power*, but to fulfil the dictates of your conscience, and the duties of your station.

I have the honour to be, *with all due respect*, sir,

Your most obedient,
Humble servant,
THE AUTHOR.

FINIS.