Are we, O men and Brethren? Did not he that made us in the womb, make you? and did not one fashion us in the womb? Job, 31. 15. How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge to avenge our wrongs and our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Rev. 6. 9.
THE
AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE:
OR A
SHORT VIEW OF THE EVIDENCE,
RELATIVE TO THAT SUBJECT;
PRODUCED BEFORE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS,
Interpersed with such Remarks as naturally flowed from it.

ALL MEANT TO EVIDE
The sound policy and moral obligation of its Immediate
and Entire Abolition:
AS ALSO,
Of adopting such measures as may ascertain Liberty to
the present Slaves in due time.

Phil nond mortalia pectora cogis,
Arum sacra fames?

Accursed, raging appetite for gold,
Which to attain, men's dearest rights are sold!
Who can thy sway, and dread effects describe,
Which reason, heart, and conscience canst to bribe;
Impel to deeds too horrid far to tell,
Whose due reward is deepest shades of hell?

Be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues:—for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you: for strong is the Lord God, who judgeth in the midst of her, for the merchandise of slaves, and souls of men. Rev. xviii.

EDINBURGH:
Published by J. GUTHRIE, No. 2. Nicolson-Street; and sold by the principal Booksellers in Town and Country.

M.DCC.XCII.
Subjoined is an Appendix, containing the late Debate in the House of Commons upon the important question of the Slave Trade, with some strictures on that Debate, and the decision which closed it; also a specimen of the Resolutions advertised to the Public respecting it, &c. and a Paraphrase of the Song of Moses in verse; or the Triumph of the rescued Captives over their oppressors.—

Seeing this subject hath of late deservedly engaged the attention of the Public, and since the Legislature hath decreed that the Slave Trade shall be still so long continued, it is hoped this Publication, which contains all the necessary information respecting it, will prove acceptable to that Public at large, many of whom could have no access to consult the Abstract itself, and so subserve the great cause of justice and humanity, in which so respectable a part of the Community have laudably embarked.
ERRATA.

Page 7. line 8. for primeval, read primeval,

9. for is not, read is not.

10. for inconcern, read unconcern.

11. for but, read yet.

12. read thus—to the mode of procuring.

13. for gaged, read gagged.

14. for conveyance, read intelligence.

15. for blind, read blunt.

16. for woman, read women.

17. for exceeding, read exceedingly.

18. for one, read me.

19. for unfuperable, read infuperable.

20. at bottom for there, read therefore.

21. for illiberal, read illiberal.

22. for yield their, read yield to their.

23. for happened, read happen.

24. for particular, read particularly.

25. for than, read that.
ADVERTISEM ENT.

In the Press, and soon will be published by J. Guthrie, No 2. Nicolſon-Street, the Pub-lisher of this, A Monitory Address to Britain, a Poem, in six parts, containing animadversions on our prevailing vices, and pointing out the Tokens of God’s displeasure already manifested on account of these, and what we have reason, if persifted in, farther to apprehend. To which is subjoined a Poem, intitled the Lady’s Skull, some verses on Du-elling, and Britain’s Remembrancer,—a valuable Tract, first published on the back of the Rebellion in 1745, and now republished, as a word still in season to these Lands. Also the late Royal Proclamation respecting the profanation of the Sabbath, and other immoralities, &c. The whole accompanied with a variety of large and useful notes; and enforced by suitable quo-tations from Scripture, and Extracts from the Pa-pers and other sources.

9 JU 64
ON THE

AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

Ah, yielded reason speaks the soul a slave!
Lewd lazy Repine broke primeval peace,
Seiz’d what he durst not earn.—Th’n Brother’s blood
First, horrid, smack’d on the polluted skies.
Enormous cruel deeds quite crush the land.
Ah, lawless men,
The last swort monsters of the braggy wood!
But let detesting ages, from the scene
Turn the thickening eye.

THOMSON on Liberty.

The sacred oracles inform us, that man was originally form-
ed after his Creator’s image, and constituted lord over the
inferior works of his hands. He was made but a little
lower than the angels, these first-born sons of light, who excel in
glory, wisdom, and strength, and intended for a state of equality
with them. Tho’ sadly fallen by his iniquity, yet, even in his a-
postate state, he retains some noble traces of his original dignity,
and still possesses a capacity of being restored to his primeval glory
and happiness. The Scriptures authorize us to say, that, in some
respect, he is still formed after the bright similitude of his glorious
Maker. The Apostle James, describing the tongue as an unruly
evil, full of deadly poison, adds, “Therewith blest we God, even
the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after
the similitude of God.” Jam. iii. 9.

This prerogative of human nature is not confined to the inhabi-
tants of any country or climate, nor monopolized by people of any
colour or complexion. Resemblance to Deity cannot consist in a-
y modification of matter, or delicacy of external form and hue, qua-
lettes of which the inferior creatures are capable; but in something
which all mankind must enjoy in common. The seat of the divine
image is the nature, the powers, and capacities of that intelligent
and immortal principle, of which the swarthy sons of Africa, and
the savage tribes of America in their native wilds, may boast in
common with the fair and ruddy European, and the proudly pomp-
ous
ous Asiatic; notwithstanding all their acquired and usurped pre-
eminence. This is the noble characteristic of man, by which he is
distinguished from, and exalted above, the beasts that perish, whose
voluntary actions are regulated by the principle of mere instinct,
and all whose enjoyments flow from the single source of sensation.
As the art of the Statuary can produce from a rude block of marble
a most finished statue; so the mind of a savage, or slave, may be
capable, by a proper education, of rising to all the elevated heights
of a Locke, or a Newton.

"God that made the world, (saith the Apostle) and all things
 therein, that is Lord of heaven and earth, hath made of one blood
all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and
"hath determined the bounds of their habitation." Acts xvii._24,
26. He is the Father of the spirits of all flesh, and the former of
their bodies, in whom they continually live, move, and have their
being; whence they are all, not merely his creatures, but his off-
spring. If the Almighty is then no respecter of persons, on ac-
count of any such unessential and adventitious circumstanc es as give
rise to temporary distinctions among men, must they not be all equ-
ally the objects of his paternal care? and must not the injuries any
of them sustain from the other engage the interposition of his
rectorial justice? Against the truth of this position, it is no conclu-
sive argument, that some are distinguished in the course of his Pro-
vidence, by the enjoyment of many advantages, both civil and sac-
cred, which are denied to others; unless man's whole existence and
enjoyments were bounded by the narrow limits of the present mix-
ed state. It is the due improvement of these advantages that will
make them prove such in the issue; for myriads among civilized
and polished nations shall with thro' eternity, they had spent all
their days on earth among the barbarous tribes on whom the rays of
enlightened reason, and the sun of heavenly wisdom never shone.
At the all-decisive day of final retribution, it will be more tolera-
ble for the most abandoned Heathens, who had only the light of
nature for their guide, than for mere formal Christians, who can rest
contented with little more than the name, or, under covert of that
venerable name, allow themselves in such practices as would shock
an honest Pagan.

If it be an allowed radical maxim of government, That all men
are born free, and remain free, and equal in their rights, while
not forfeited, then the legal subjection of one man to another must
reful.
result from voluntary compact, tacit or expressed, or be the just consequence of such offences against Society as forfeit the liberty of the individual, so far as may be necessary to compensate the injury sustained, and promote the good of the Whole. Tho' the Mosaic institution admitted of Slavery, yet was it only in certain cases, and to a certain degree; while the Master was responsible to the Public for his mal-treatment of those whom he had bought with his money, or the fate of lawful war put in his power. No man could be detained as a slave, after a certain term, without his own free and deliberate consent*; and when the wife and humane regulations, which were given on that head, came to be infringed, God himself interposed one way or other, and vindicated their right; as we see in the case of Saul and the Gibeonites, 2 Sam. xxi. Besides, during that economy, slaves purchased from the Heathen, who were generally, if not always, prisoners of war, and of course, according to the custom of the times, wholly at the mercy of their conquerors, greatly improved their condition, and, if not wanting to themselves, might have cause to rejoice for time and eternity in their change of state. They would therefore, to avoid worse, be content to be sold as slaves. When the Jews themselves took prisoners in a just war, according to the law of nations at that time, they became their absolute property, or legal captives; and, in both cases, neither cruelty, oppression, fraud, nor injustice had any share in procuring them. In these cases, it is more than probable that their captives would voluntarily submit to a state of servitude, as the Gibeonites did, Josh. ix. who were neither prisoners of war, nor

* On consulting the passages in the Mosaic writings, which respect the condition of bond-men, or slaves under that abrogated system, I am led to think, that the above privilege and some others seem to be restricted to those, of the Children of Israel who became such to their brethren: But then the Christian law views man as a citizen of the world at large, and extends the ties of brotherhood to men of all nations, complexions, kindred, tongues and languages, as our Lord clearly and forcibly inculcates in the parable of the man that fell among thieves. The law, with its various temporary rites and ordinances was given by Moses: but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; whence the old, now abolished, dispensation hath no glory, by reason of that glory which excelleth in the latter, or the Christian. By this we are taught to consider every man as our brother, and hence enjoined to extend our love even to our very enemies. Not a single argument therefore can be drawn in favour of modern slavery from that practiced among the Jews; for the cases are not parallel, and, besides, there is no toleration granted to Christians, to detain any man in perpetual slavery, or indeed to enslave any, if not for crimes which injure society, yet merit not capital punishment, according to the divine law.
bought with money, and being so happy as to meet with humane masters, would find their interest in continuing in their service. Indeed, every thing considered, as the world then stood, well they might; for in this situation they had access to enjoy every mean of public instruction and religious improvement, in common with native Jews; were taken under the special protection of the God of Israel; and many of them came to share all the blessings of his covenant, and to experience to their comfort, that whom he makes free are free indeed, whatever be their condition in civil society. This might be one great, if not the chief reason, why God tolerated slavery among his ancient people; and it is a reason worthy of his wisdom and goodness. But could this be pleaded in favour of modern slavery, the humane and benevolent Christian would have little reason to regret the practice, tho' still in itself not joyous but grievous. So far is this, however, from being the case, may we not venture to say, that the dealers in this inhuman traffic possess, in general, much less of the man, and the Christian, than the poor, unhappy objects of their avaricious pursuit, and injurious treatment; and that, to copy their example, would be to make themselves seven-fold more the children of the devil than they were in their untutored original state? To keep them grossly ignorant of every ennobling privilege of human nature, and of the Christian character is deemed a great object with their merciless oppressors, lest the gradual introduction of the rays of knowledge should open their eyes on all the horrors of their wretched situation, and render their struggles for freedom more politic, vigorous, and effectual.

But, after all, arguments drawn from that abrogated system, in favour of slavery under the more mild, liberal, and enlightened dispensation of the Gospel, prove too much, and consequently are not to the purpose; else we might urge the obligation all Christian states are under to punish adultery, idolatry, and disobedience to Parents with death; for the former was only permitted, but this expressly enjoined. I suppose, however, the patrons of modern thraldom would not be very fond of reviving this part of the Mosaic constitution, else, it is to be feared, some, perhaps many of themselves, would have been made ere now public examples. Some things were tolerated to that people, on account of their particular dispositions and circumstances, which the Christian Lawgiver, who came not to destroy men's lives, or liberty, but to improve and save them, saw meet to revoke and prohibit in the most express terms.
Tho' the Apostle exhorted such slaves as embraced Christianity, to be content with their present condition, if they could not better it, yet this implies no approbation of a state of servitude, much less of the conduct of those who attempt to reduce their fellow men to that state, or hold them in it: for many things may be submitted to, in certain circumstances, with a good conscience, and ought to be patiently endured, wherein the agents are highly criminal in the sight of God, and their conduct quite unjustifiable. Paul tells us of some, who not only bore patiently, but even "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods;" but would this exculpate their spoil- ers, or alter the nature of a conduct criminal in itself? God not seldom permits wicked men to distress his people, but then he has his own time and way to plead their cause, and avenge himself on their adversaries—Let such tremble at the thought. Neither our Lord, nor his Apostles, interfered with what was then deemed the civil rights of mankind; for their mission often led them where they could not claim the privileges of citizens and natives, as these are dispensed by human policy, but only the treatment due to strangers and sojourners, according to the customs which then prevailed. Their great business was, wherever they came, to plant and cherish Christianity, by their assiduous labours and exemplary carriage, well knowing that this, once properly understood, and duly embraced, would, of course, in all respects, meliorate the condition of the human race. The members of a State professedly Christian are, in this respect, on a very different footing; for as the great and ultimate end of government is the happiness of the people, so, when aggrieved, they have a right, by virtue of that mutual compact which subsists between the governed and their governors, whether understood or expressed, to seek redress in a manner becoming Christian subjects, and it is incumbent on their rulers, for that very reason, to listen to their petitions, and redress their grievances; being bound, as the official servants of the Public at large, so to exert and exercise the power and authority lodged in them, as to secure the above great end of their administration.

While the nations are struggling to shake off the galling yoke of despotism, which hath so long obstructed human happiness, and the Abolition of the horrid trade in slaves hath engaged the attention of the Public;—while this hath already undergone Parliamentary investigation, and is likely still to claim the interference of the British legislature, it will not be thought strange, it should be allowed
lowed to occupy a few pages in this Publication*. It is not the
Author's intention to enter into the merits of the cause, either in
point of argument, recital of facts, or description, for of this the
limits he prescribes himself would not admit. All this, he believes,
hath indeed been done to excellent purpose by others, with whose
laudable labours in the cause of humanity he does not mean to in-
terfere.

Having lately seen the Abstract of the Evidence taken before
the House of Commons, relative to the Slave Trade, and persuaded
this little Essay, intended to make the contents of that performance
better known, may come into the hands of some who may not have
access to peruse that, or perhaps any other production on the sub-
ject, he begs leave to lay before the Reader a short view of the evi-
dence contained in that Abstract, with some of those remarks which
the perusal of it naturally suggested. The detail of facts there re-
corded are enough to harrow up the feelings of the human soul; for
that heart must be to the last degree callous and unfeeling, that can
peruse them without the most distressing emotions. If the few hints,
here submitted to the consideration of the Public, serve, in any mea-
sure, to make the grievous sufferings of so many of our brethren of
men better known—to excite a more general abhorrence of the un-
natural cause of them; and, what is chiefly to be wished, to stir
up all good Christians to supplicate the great Father of mankind
in their behalf, that he would soon turn their wretched captivity as
streams in the south, convert their darkness to day, their forrows to
joy, and the voice of their mourning, lamentation and wo, on ac-
count of the power and tyranny of their cruel oppressors, into songs
of joy and triumph;—if these ends are hereby in the least an-
swered, the pains of the writer and reader shall not be wholly lost. If
our hearts were once excited and prepared thus to seek God in their
behalf, he would speedily incline his ear, and, in answer to our pray-
ers, turn the hearts of princes and great men to favour them; nay,
make their very enemies and oppressors to seek their peace. Did
such addresses accompany applications to the civil Powers, we
might entertain better hopes of their success. The present aspect
of Providence affords ground of hope, and, when the Lord begin-
neth to work, who can let, or hinder?

Let not any think that they have little or no concern in the mat-
ter; for who, possessed of the feelings of human nature, can remain

* This refers to a larger work, now in the Press, of which the Thoughts
on the African Slave Trade, now published, make a part.
indifferent to the sorrows and sufferings of his fellow-creatures, when once made known to him? What Christian, worthy of the name, but must ardently long for the spread of Christianity—for the coming of Messiah's kingdom, in its light and power—that his holy religion may be known, professed, believed, and practised over the whole earth? The recovery of civil liberty is in some measure necessary to the reception of the Gospel; for a mind clouded with ignorance, and depressed with bondage, and harsh usage, especially when occasioned by those who call themselves Christians, is not in a very favourable frame for the admission of heavenly light; from the means of which the poor slaves are moreover unhappily precluded.

The Societies, lately instituted for effecting the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade, are justly entitled to the thanks of the Christian world, for their humane and benevolent attempts to promote an object so desirable and important. Every real friend of the human race will cordially with success to their laudable endeavours, in a cause so worthy of Britons, and of Christians. It is good and praise-worthy to be zealously affected in a good thing. They have been directed to the most effectual method of gaining the sentiments of the public on the subject, and exciting a just detestation of such detestable traffic; provided the stated teachers of religion, to whom they more immediately address themselves, would so far lay the matter to heart, as to comply with their instructions and request. That humane and benevolent religion, whose public ministers they profess themselves to be, powerfully recommends and explicitly demands their most vigorous efforts to promote, so far as in them lies, the happiness of their fellow men; and, acting in character, they will not decline to employ them for that purpose. Jesus the Son of God, came to save men's lives, and to proclaim liberty to captives, and is not honourable to concur with him in so glorious a work? Too many however, in opposition to his benign example, and express precepts, while they mind their own things, feel not the general claims of philanthropy, or love to the human kind, where they themselves are not immediately affected; and, in this respect, it sometimes happens, that they who should be first to set the laudable example, are among the last to follow it, tho' it ought not to be so *.

* The Author has been told, that when the Publication, containing the Abstract of the evidence respecting the Slave-trade, was presented by a
Every one in his station should study to bear down that formidable opposition to a measure so wise and salutary, which arises, from the interest of those who have so long enriched themselves by the spoils of humanity;—from the prejudices which hinder others from seeing the deep criminality, of a commerce which they have been accustomed to think profitable to the State;—and from an indolent inattention in the bulk of men, with respect to a subject which does not come immediately home to themselves. These things may, for a time, counteract the beneficent attempt; yet approving Heaven will, it is hoped, crown it with success, and cause the long suppressed rights of injured man to triumph over all opposition; which must form the ardent prayer of humanity and religion.——The voice of truth and reason must at length be heard for these are powerful, and will prevail; whereas the iniquity alluded to shall be forced to hide its face, its deep enormity once seen, while its abettors are ashamed of their own past conduct, this being detected and exposed to public view. Shame shall be the promotion of fools: but they that walk uprightly, walk surely, and shall rise to honour. Tho' the God of the whole earth may seem for a time blind and deaf to the sufferings, the tears and the cries of his injured creatures, as in the case of the oppressed Hebrews in Egypt; but let not the hearts of their cruel oppressors be set in them to do wickedly, because sentence against member to one of our higher Church-courts, some received it with a sneer, asking, as if they had been insulted by the application, "What concern have we with it? What know we about such Societies, or the persons whose names are mentioned?" or words to that effect. He would however fain persuade himself it might not be really so, at least, that it was the mere unpremeditated result of the moment, which a little reflection would correct. There were however some present on the occasion, who, not swayed by such sage remarks, had the resolution and benevolence to plead the general cause of humanity. For the honour of that nature, which poor despised slaves possess in common with their haughty lord, and of the sacred office in particular, it is to be hoped few of that venerable order will treat a proposal so humane and beneficent, with such unfeeling apathy. They have special access to be well acquainted with that Book, which contains this expressive apothegm, *A merciful man is merciful to his beast!*

But how praiseworthy the example of late set by some Clergy, which does honour to themselves, and gives pleasure to the Public. It is hoped more will follow their example, and even those who might not at first advert to the importance of the object, and the moral necessity of the proposed measure.

The Reader will find a copy of the Society's letter, which accompanied the Abstract, subjoined to the *Thoughts on the Slave-Trade* here submitted to the view, and recommended to the attention of the Public.
gainst their evil deeds is not speedily executed. He has his fixed
time for appearing in defence of injured and oppressed innocence,
and of avenging himself on those who violate the sacred claims of
religion both natural and revealed. Tho' hand in hand such
shall not always pass unpunished; for suppose they may escape de-
served punishment from man, who often wields the sword of justice
with a partial hand, yet the great Lord of all will not suffer them
to escape his righteous judgment. From this there lies no appeal,
and against it no finite power can ward. Tho' apparently low in
its approach, yet does it advance with a determined and steady
pace, and usually overtakes, and strikes the decisive blow when leaft
expected; and, indeed, when do, such expect it? Tho' some, of
whom other things might be expected, should altogether hold their
peace at this time, yet shall there enlargement and deliverance arise
to our long-afflicted and oppressed brethren from another quarter;
but then such shall not be held guiltless: for God admits of no neu-
tral indifference where the claims of natural equity, the honour of
his government, and the unalienable' rights of his reasonable crea-
tures are concerned. There is but one Lord over all, and one law
to all, by which they shall be judged; for God, unlike man, is no
respeeter of persons.

With regard to the evidence contained in the Society's Abstract,
it extends to the procuring Slaves on the Guinea coast;—to the
treatment they usually receive in the Middle Passage;—and also, to
the many hardships, and the cruel usage to which they are generally
subjected in the Colonies, particularly in the West Indian islands,
by reason of which life itself becomes a burden, and often falls a prey
to anguish and despair. The whole evidence includes a period not
much short of half a century, and refers to the state of things at dif-
f erent times during that period. It is supported and corroborated,
in all its parts, by a large cloud of witnesses, not fewer than sixty
persons, who had sufficient opportunities of observing the facts they
attest, and, so far from having any inducement to exaggerate or
misrepresent them, were under strong and various temptations to
suppress their evidence, which some gave from a sense of duty, even
against their own apparent interest, and under the threats and pro-
spect of suffering considerably for such a conduct. From a series of
facts during about forty-five years, down so late as 1789, and 1790,
when the subject came to be investigated by the House of Com-
mons, is there not sufficient scope and materials whence to form a
judgment
That the witnesses are not only numerous, but also respectable and disinterested, we may infer from the stations they occupy in society; for among them are to be found Officers of rank, both in the army and navy, Gentlemen in the learned professions, private gentlemen of property and character, Ship-masters, &c. Persons of education, leisure and observation, some of whom spent a number of years in the situations to which the matter of their evidence refers, and were themselves concerned in one shape or other in the trade, must be allowed to be competent judges of the facts they attest.

As a further confirmation of these, the preambles and clauses of certain laws, enacted, at different periods in our sugar islands, for the protection and better usage of the slaves, are produced, as also some extracts from their own public prints. From these it evidently appears, that all or most of the cruelties specified in that part of the evidence which respects the conduct of the planters, in the West Indies towards their Slaves, have actually been exercised there; and to such testimony no relevant objection can be made. When Slaves who have run away from their masters, compelled probably to this step by ill treatment, are advertised as having their noses and ears slit and torn, or cut off, and their bodies so marked in certain places, which must have been done with a hot iron, or otherwise mangled and maimed, as marks by which to know them, does not this plainly say, that such cruel usages must have been practised by their inhuman oppressors? When a considerable reward is publicly offered to any that should bring them back to their masters, either dead or alive, does not this show how little value is put on their life? and yet all this seems to be quite common and nothing thought of among them. 'Tho' in the course of the evidence innumerable instances of murder occur, yet we find only one instance of a white person sentenced to death for the murder of a Slave, of which this crime however was but the pretext, he being previously hated by the white people, who were glad thus to get rid of him; and had neither friends nor money to pay for the Slave, else he would not have been brought to trial. The worst usage of a Slave, though he die in consequence of it, does not prejudice the criminal's character in society; for he is everywhere as well received as if no such thing had happened, and his own loss is the only subject of regret. This, and a number of other well attested circumstances, serve to shew how much this inhuman traffic tends to destroy every noble
noble feeling of the heart of man, and to sink his nature, in a moral view, beneath the brutal. When men can overlook the essential distinctions betwixt right and wrong, and allow themselves in practices from which the human heart, corrupt as it is, natively revolts, will not what an apostle says of a certain class of sinners apply to them: "What they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Wo unto them; for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward. These are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." Jude.

As connected with the same subject, and influenced by it, we have also a detail of cruelties exercised on the seamen, who are employed in this trade, which seems too well founded, and discovers in the clearest light the wretched impolicy thereof; to evince which is indeed the object of that detail. It thence plainly appears, that the feelings of those who are for any time engaged in this business are gradually so blunted, and seared as with a hot iron, that they come at length to be capable of any thing, and retain little human but the form. They seem to be given up to a reprobate mind, to commit all manner of cruelty with greediness. Are not our manners at home sufficiently calculated to deprave and petrify the human heart, that we must annually send so many of our fellow-subjects to distant climes to make sudden and dreadful advances in this diabolical perfection, and thence import the fatal pest to the families and places where they reside? A variety of circumstances concur to shew, that they have been but too successful, particularly one which cannot be overlooked. The papers have announced it as a fact, nor could I ever learn it was disproved, that a certain maritime town had burnt in effigy the Member of Parliament, who has had the honour to come forward as the advocate of an oppressed and much injured people, and to whom the thanks of a humane Public are due for his virtuous exertions in so good a cause *. There this pestilential disease, it would appear, had invaded all ranks, spread its degrading influence from the head even to the tail;—from the unfeeling Slave-merchant, thro' every mercenary retainer of the barbarous trade, down to the dregs of the people. B 2

* Liverpool, where Mr Wilberforce was burnt in effigy
It seemed as if their dearest interest was at stake. Wretched souls, that fatten on the spoils of humanity;—that feed on the tears and blood of the enslaved and slain. Is it difficult to determine who are the basest slaves? Nay, the infectious air wafted thence to the Capital, hath tainted the very Senate; for even there, strange to tell, Slavery, and that of the most cruel and basest kind, hath found her ardent patrons, advocates, and abettors! The truth of the matter is, slaves in one shape or other abound everywhere, at least slaves to the most corrupt lusts and depraved appetites and passions, who are indeed, in the eye of enlightened reason, the most despicable of all slaves:—"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." "Know ye not, that, to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." John viii. 34. Rom. vi. 16. Is it not then quite natural for such to countenance servile measures? for there is no inconsistency between being servilely dependant in one view, and imperiously despotic in another.— Such is the nature of the evidence on the side of the Petitioners for the abolition of the Slave Trade, which was produced in the House of Commons in the years 1790, and 1791, to substantiate the grounds of their application to the Legislature, and invalidate the pleas urged on the other side for the continuance of that trade. And indeed, this evidence, in whatever light we view it, claims the speedy abolition of a traffic so inimical and degrading to the human kind, so highly disgraceful to the British nation, and so criminal in those who pursue it, as a just and necessary sacrifice to the insulted laws of nature, and the ghosts of so many thousands who have perished by it, and whose sighs, tears and blood still raise an unremitting cry to Heaven for vengeance on their savage oppressors and murderers.

It now rolls with the friends and abettors of the trade in slaves, to combat the evidence on the other side, which they will, no doubt, if in their power be forward to do of their own accord. In consequence of the many petitions from respectable quarters, which were presented to Parliament, in the year 1788, for the abolition of this trade, the House of Commons came to a resolution to hear evidence on the subject. The Slave-merchants and planters were allowed to bring forward such witnesses, whose testimony they thought would be of service to their cause, and these were examined and heard in the years
years 1789, and 1790. These, we are told, consisted of such as are concerned in the trade, and of others whose ordinary situation and rank in life preclude from opportunities of discovering the treatment of the slaves. Besides, their testimony is wholly of a negative kind, only bearing that such things did not fall under their observation, and therefore cannot militate against the numerous positive and specific facts to be found in the evidence on the other side, as given by many respectable persons who had access to see them with their own eyes.—With regard to the former, who gave evidence in favour of the continuance of the Slave Trade, they are too friendly to it, and too much interested in the issue of the present dispute, to give a fair and candid Statement; and consequently, in ordinary cases, would be rejected as quite incompetent. Is it either uncandid, or unnatural to suppose, that those who have an actual concern in this trade, and are anxious to have it continued, after having access to know the mode of carrying it on, would not make conscience of representing it justly, with a view to its abolition? Is it possible that any should prosecute this traffic, in the face of such glaring proofs of its inhumanity and injustice, till lost to the principles of honour and conscience? If Butchers, Surgeons, and Soldiers are excluded from sitting in Juries in cases of life and death, with still greater propriety should such be rejected from appearing to give evidence in a cause of such magnitude, wherein the happiness, and the very life of myriads are concerned. Let any one read what is said in the Abstract of their conduct, relative to the poor slaves, a few more humane individuals excepted, and say if they can have any just claim to such a privilege; while they urge the policy, the expediency, and justice of this traffic, and discover themselves ready to defend and support it by every mean in their power? Are not such the very enemies of our common nature, who consequently forfeit all its peculiar privileges; yea, guilty of daring treason against the King of heaven, in presuming, under his own eye, and within the precincts of his dominions, to treat his creatures and subjects with such criminal outrage. Shall he not visit for these things, and avenge himself on such traitors?

With respect to the latter, whose testimony was meant to defend, and vindicate the Colonial Slavery from the imputation of ill-usage and cruelty, what knowledge could Admirals acquire, (for such are the other persons alluded to as evidence in this cause) of the usual treatment of the slaves, during their transient visits to the West Indian
dian islands, when stationed there, or short residence in them, which would be chiefly confined to towns, where the slaves are allowed to be better used? If they visited, at any time, some of the principal estates, either such cruelties might not be so frequently committed on these, or if they were, can we suppose the white people on them would entertain their respected visitors with spectacles shocking to humanity? No great policy was necessary to point out the propriety of concealing these, and forbearing their usual barbarities on such occasions. Their evidence therefore, which only imports that they had not seen such cruelties practised in the islands, may be quite true, and yet these abound among the planters; whence they could not be competent evidences on so great a question, for they had not the same opportunities of coming to the knowledge of facts, as those who bear positive and specific testimony on the other side. The Editor of the Abstract remarks, that these Gentlemen have shown themselves egregiously ignorant of a most notorious law, which is still in force, viz. "that the evidence of a slave is not valid against any white man;" which shews the unprotected state of the slaves, notwithstanding any late regulations apparently made in their favour. This law puts it in any master's power to maltreat, or even murder his slave, should his conscience permit, which they in general find means to subdue and silence, let ever so many black people be present, provided he only take care that no white person behold him. By this law, every other in their favour is easily evaded, and tho' the expediency of it in general may be plausibly urged; yet to reject the evidence of a slave in matters of fact, at least when other circumstances corroborate it, is to add insult and cruelty to injustice. Because these naval officers express themselves as if no such law existed, he takes it for granted, that they must have been unacquainted with it; and hence farther infers their incapacity as evidences on the subject of the treatment of slaves.

With reference to the mode of making slaves on the Guinea coast, the partisans in that infamous traffic give out, that these are exposed to sale by the native princes, in consequence of being made prisoners of war; or are sold as a punishment of crimes whereof they have been convicted. Thus would they legalize and defend a commerce directly repugnant to the feelings of humanity, and to all the precepts, the doctrines and prospects of Christianity; and at the same time replete with evils too numerous and shocking for description, that it may not appear to their fellow subjects in its native deformity,
formity, and moral turpitude. Too long have they succeeded in the attempt. Yet is such a representation at the expense of candour and truth, and must recoil in the issue on its authors. With the same view, we have been sometimes given to understand, that the slaves, thus procured from Africa, would be all put to death, were they not so disposed of; whence it became an act of humanity to take them off the hands of the native belligerent powers. This appears specious at first sight—But should any annex the usual ideas to the term war, in this connection, or admit the above view of things as matter of fact, he would find himself egregiously mistaken. What the Slave Traders call war is nothing else but pillage, robbery, and kidnapping, which blind customs sanctions, and to which the fordid love of gain prompts base and illiberal minds. To countenance such a species of iniquity must, however, be an indelible reproach to a civilized, still more to a Christian nation; for what are the commercial advantages resulting from it, compared to the countless evils which attend it, considered in a moral view? The advantages, weighed in God’s balance, are light as vanity, transient as a shadow: but the evils, to which it gives birth, are serious in their nature, and everlasting in their consequences. The former are stained with injustice and blood, and, with regard to those immediately concerned, to the last degree degrading;—such indeed as real virtue would fly from and disdain.

In the Evidence, the testimony of such as have visited the Continent of Africa proves but too sufficiently the many cruelties and enormities committed by the Natives on one another, in order to procure Slaves for the Europeans, who employ a variety of methods to excite them to this, and scruple not, when opportunities serve, to set the example. The fame is also confirmed by the Slaves themselves, after they arrive in the West Indies, in the account they give of the manner of their capture. When Slave ships arrive on the Coast, the petty princes of the country send out their soldiers on incursions from three hundred to three thousand at a time, generally on horseback, who attack and set fire to towns and villages during the dead of night, and so seize the alarmed inhabitants, while attempting to escape from the devouring flames. Thus are they surprized, perhaps when fast asleep, and amidst their dread and confirmation become an easy prey, yet seldom without the loss of some lives, while others are wounded. Mothers are often caught with
with their suckling infants in their arms, and fathers in attempting
to rescue their helpless children from the raging flames. Every
man, woman and child that can be seized by this armed unfeeling
banditti are carried off without mercy; the men stripped quite na-
ked, and chained together, and the women and children loose; and
in this manner are all driven by their own country-men towards
the place of sale, like sheep for the slaughter. Thus they repeat
their incursions till the number of slaves required can be completed;
and on these expeditions individuals of the white people, not sel-
dom, accompany them. This is the usual mode of carrying on these
wars in Guinea by which Slaves are procured for the Colonists;
and have not they, and all who take part with them, much honour
by it? These wars, as they are termed, originate from European avar-
cice, else they had never been heard of, and the blood shed in them,
with all their consequent evils, will one day be found in the skirts,
and on the devoted heads of those, who, for their own base ends
continue to abet them in opposition to the express authority of Hea-
ven. The guilt of all this may now fit light on the conscience, but
in that day it will be felt a heavy, an intolerable burden.

Ye who possess the sensibilities of a humane heart, imagine to
yourselves such a scene. Perhaps hundreds at a time, of all sexes,
ages, and relations, are driven like cattle for the space of two or
three hundred miles, or more, (for so far up the country do they of-
ten go on these occasions) till they reach the coast, where they are
confined, and, so soon as may be, sold and put on board the Slave
ships, without paying the least regard to their bitter cries and la-
mentations! Ah, the dearest relatives torn from each other's arms,
in all probability never more to meet! Such the mercy of their
captors and new masters, that even children are separated from their
Parents, except the sucking infants, who are permitted, for obvious
reasons, to accompany the mother. What a moving scene! Parents
and Children, Husbands and Wives, Brothers and Sisters, not only
forced from their native country, but denied in their exile and cap-
tivity, the small consolation of mingling their sighs and tears in
mutual condolence and commiseration! Such a scene must exceed
the powers of language to express, or of the human mind to con-
ceive, where not felt or seen. Some of the native kings keep a
number of war canoes always in readiness for these piratical expe-
ditions, some of which have six or eight swivels, a three or four
pounder lashed on their bows, and are generally furnished with a
quan-
quantity of cutlasses, muskets, and other arms, with an adequate complement of men. These return, in the course of between ten days and three weeks, with as many prisoners as they can procure, one of the evidence heard, once to the amount of twelve hundred; when notice is sent to the Captains of the Slave vessels, who have them equally divided among them.

For these barbarous expeditions the European traders furnish arms, and ammunition, and sometimes in person take an active part in the depredations which accompany them. They are so frequent, and so desolating to the country, that burnt and deserted towns and villages are every where to be seen. Thus, the Slave Trade is the occasion of kings making war, in the manner above described, on their own subjects, as well as on those of neighbouring princes. Tho' the ignorance in which they are bred may partly excuse this in them; can we once suppose God will hold those innocent who instigate them to these and the like cruel practices? Verily their day of retribution is fast coming, when God will distribute to such sorrows in his anger, if speedy and deep repentance prevent not.

Besides these, smaller parties go out for the same purpose, and lie hid in thickets till a favourable opportunity offer of rushing forth, and seizing their defenceless prey. These in their turn ravage their already too desolated country. This is called the left, and the former, the grand pillage. When no Slave-ships are on the coast, all such practices cease. If any of the native princes are found averse to pillage their subjects, as sometimes is the case, the traders contrive to excite them to it, by keeping them in a state of intoxication, till they obtain their object, at which, when sober, they are known to express regret.

Private traders also practise a variety of stratagems, to procure Slaves on their own account; for if princes and chiefs, who should lead in every thing virtuous and praiseworthy, can so far degrade themselves, as to act unjustly and tyrannically, thousands of their subjects and dependants will be found wicked enough to follow their example, and under its sanction justify themselves in the commission of the greatest crimes. Some noted traders are a terror to the country, for they openly and avowedly kidnap their brethren, having this for their professed occupation, and common practice, wherever they can seize any, whom they carry off gaged, lest they should alarm the country as they pass, with their cries. This mode is called by the Natives panyaring, or man-stealing, and the poor captives
captives so taken, are sold to the ships, who buy them without giving themselves any concern about the manner of procuring them; nay, encourage every species of pillage and depredation by which their cargoes may be speedily made up at the most easy rate. So void are the dealers in this trade of all sense of honesty and natural justice, that they are known to take up canoes at sea, and along the coast, and while waiting for their complement of Slaves, to decoy the natives on board, on pretence of traffic, whom they seize so soon as within their reach, and put in irons. The Captains of the Guinea traders and their agents endeavour sometimes to fill the natives drunk, and thus make them their easy prey, or get them to dispose of some of their relations, whom they would redeem when sober at any price in their power. This some of themselves have acknowledged on evidence, with shame and regret. By the same channel of conveyance, we are told, that there have been instances of their instigating the inhabitants of one town or village to quarrel with and seize for sale those of another, who might rival them in trade, but be inferior to them in strength. By this means, taking advantage of the confusion, some hundreds were captured or slain on both sides. How destitute must such worthless creatures be of all sense of moral obligation, with regard to the intercourse between man and man, who can act in such a manner?—The truth of the preceding view of the methods practised in procuring Slaves is attested by a considerable number, who produce in their evidence a variety of instances, which they had access to observe, or learn from others conversant in the trade.

So very unhappy indeed are the effects of this traffic to the Natives, that none of them dare venture abroad, even about their ordinary concerns, unarmed, while any Slave-ships are on the coast. When chased and attacked, by so many greedy dogs whose appetites are insatiable, they must, no doubt, always yield to superior force; yet such encounters are often attended with bloodshed and death; for some are killed on the spot, and others so wounded, that, thro' fatigue and want of care, they die in a few days, or drag life for some time only to suffer misery and wretchedness. The Factory's stores, instead of furnishing to the Natives what might administer to the comfort and convenience of life, in exchange for the produce of their country, are said to consist of little else besides ammunition and arms of various sorts, with chains, fetters, and other instruments of oppression and cruelty, to enable them to make successful
successful depredations on one another. O man, tho' proud as Lucifer, how art thou fallen!—Were it not for these infernal methods, they might live in peace, and mutual amity in their own land, cultivating its native productions, and improving in the arts of civilized life. The numerous evils to which they are unhappily subjected, are to be placed chiefly to the account of this unnatural commerce; for thence spring wars, plunder, murders, perfidy, cruelty, mutual jealousies and distrust, with ten thousand crimes which had never infested their borders, had no wicked avaricious Europeans visited their Coasts. These, under the domineering sway of the basest of all passions, an insatiable lust for filthy lucre, ever cry, with the daughter of the horfe leech, Give, gipse. O ye fair complexioned, but black hearted sinners of the human race, how can ye enjoy the sordid gains acquired by such infamous, such criminal practices? Compared to you, savages in their native wilds, are merciful and humane. Are not the evils incident to human nature sufficiently great and complicated, that you must make such horrid exertions to increase their number? Are you not afraid of drawing down the wrath of Heaven on your own heads, and entailing, with your so acquired riches, a heavy and lasting curse to your posterity? How long shall man find in man his greatest foe? How long shall sordid considerations case that heart with steel, which ever ought to be the seat of pity to the distressed, and benevolence to all; and arm these hands with shafts of misery and death, which should be still ready to relieve the indigent, and defend the helpless and oppressed!

The crimes specified as the ground of condemning some negroes to a state of servitude, are theft, adultery, witchcraft, &c. The numbers sold on account of these imputed crimes are, however, comparatively few, and the gentlemen who gave evidence on this head, declare it as their opinion, that in such cases these crimes are in general falsely imputed, for the sake of selling the accused; as their trial, if they undergo any, is but a mere pretext, or subterfuge, without the least regard to the innocence or guilt of the party concerned. It is reported by the Natives, that their chief men not rarely employ some of the best looking women they can find, well dressed, with a view to entice and decoy young men to a criminal connexion with them, that they may be convicted of adultery, and sold as Slaves to the Europeans. Some have afterwards declared that they had been so enticed. It is allowed to have been a com-

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mon practice with the traders to advance goods to the Native Princes and Chiefs, to induce them to inveigle their subjects and vassals, perhaps as above, or to lay hold upon them when opportunities offer. If, in this respect, they run in arrears, they are threatened; and not seldom some principal persons of their connections are seized and detained as pledges. In this case, both parties with crimes to abound, to lessen the odium of this iniquitous traffic; and if they do not, they contrive methods to find or make the innocent guilty. But the Slave-merchants consider fraud, injustice, and treachery as necessary branches of the trade; and indeed make no scruple, time and place convenient, to own it. Must not those be dead to every generous and virtuous feeling who can excite the natives to such practices?

But suppose that those who are sold for slaves, are justly adjudged in their own country to a state of servitude, for crimes there committed, do British merchants act in character in becoming the voluntary executioners of African justice? Is not this degrading themselves with a witness? They may be able to plead innocent, with regard to theft and witchcraft, two of the crimes charged on the poor Negroes, but in this age of dissipation and loose morals, can they all plead the same, with respect to adultery and uncleanness, these fashionable vices of the rich and great? With what confidence can we submit to be the instruments of punishing that in others, which we either allow in ourselves, or view with an indulgent eye in our neighbour and acquaintance? But to what will not some submit to gratify their ruling passion! — The means of protecting the property of the Planters, must be defrayed by the Public at large, and yet hath not the same fordid and mercenary spirit, which actuates in the traffic in question, discovered itself of late, in making the very occasion of increasing the national burden in this respect a pretext for levying a heavy tax from that Public, by an unnecessary, and exorbitant advance on the price of their commodities in order to enrich themselves at their expense; while laws are in force which make such a conduct highly criminal, and subject the culprits to a severe punishment. When one part of the Community attempts to over-reach and distress the other, by monopoly, and the like dishonourable arts does not such a conduct merit the interference of the Legislature, as subversive of national prosperity? Such a conduct is indeed in them perfectly in character, but no government can consistently permit a few to amass princely
princely fortunes* of a sudden, at the expence of grinding the fa-
ces of the poor, and oppressing all ranks and descriptions in the
Community. Surely the good of the whole is an object of much
greater consequence than the aggrandizement of a few unfeeling,
avaricious individuals, who should never be permitted to subject a
nation to their mercy, where their own private interest is concern-
ed. Laws are made for the lawless and disobedient, to prevent
their acting like the fishes of the sea, where the strong prey on the
weak. If modern luxury keeps no bounds in her disbursements,
it is the province of justice to set bounds at least to her extrava-
gant and unjustifiable resources.

But, in relation to the trade in Slaves, the various instances of
wicked artifice, and base treachery contained even in the Abbrevia-
tion almost exceed number. Besides the methods of capturing the poor
Africans already specified, they themselves, after they are enslaved,
relate many others of the same cast and complexion. Even from
the above short view of this infamous trade, in the very first stage
of it, must it not appear to every reflecting, unbiased person in the
highest degree destructive and iniquitous? and is it not truly sur-
prising it should find advocates among a civilized and enlightened
people.

For kings, who ought to love and protect their people, to haras,
enslave and destroy them, by such cruel and perfidious expedients,
is indeed highly criminal; but still more so in those who stir them
up to such practices, and encourage them in the prosecution of
them, while they have access to be much better informed about the
nature, the obligations and consequences of moral good and evil.
To set men at variance with one another—to sow the seeds of dif-
cord, animosity and strife among them—and to excite them to in-
jure, distress, and kidnap each other as they have opportunity, is a
conduct more characteristic of apostate demons than of genuine
Christians. Indeed, those who can be guilty of it must possess the
more striking features, and deeper shades of Satan's image, and
may justly be numbered among the most hopeless and wretched of
of his children and vassals; for they are of their father the Devil,
and, in following this traffic, so descriptive of his temper and cha-

* We have been told, that in the course of 1791 a West India Planter
cleared from his estate there above L. 80,000; and others in proportion, ac-
sording to the extent of their plantations.
ractcr, the works of their father they habitually practife; for he
was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth;
nay, like them, he goes about continually seeking whom he may
lead captive and devour.

Kidnapping, or the practice of stealing men, is declared by the
law of God to be a capital crime; “He that stealeth a man, and
“selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put
“to death,” Exod. xxi. 16. This immutable statute of Heaven is
so plain and express as to leave no room for doubt or evasion, un-
less it can be shown that the natives of Africa are not of the human
species, which the warmest friends of this trade will scarce attempt to
prove. If the powers that be are ordained of God, as the Apostle allows,
Rom. xiii. 1, surely he does not ordain them to trample on his own
authority, and enact decrees in direct opposition to his righteous
laws. That this crime is committed on all hands in the prosecu-
tion of this trade, innumerable instances produced in the Evidence
put beyond all possible doubt; and indeed there is no carrying it
on without being guilty of it. Can a king sell his own subjects,
one man steal and sell another, and foreigners, under the pretext of
traffic purchase, steal, and expose them again to sale for gain, as fit
occasions offer, and yet be innocent? Verily in all this they are ex-
ceeding guilty, God being judge, and his verdict admitted: He
that doth so, shall surely be put to death, faith the Lord. No, faith
a British Senate, in their late decision, We, in our mighty power to
counteract or reverse the laws of Heaven, and ward off their an-
sctions as to our wisdom may seem good, are determined to protec-
t them in prosecuting this traffic, and give it all the sanction of our
sofrage and authority, in spite of Heaven’s interdiction and men-
ace: so let the Almighty and his statutes depart from us, we de-
fire not the knowledge of his ways—“Tell it not in Gath, publish
it not in the streets of Aškelon, lest the daughter of the uncircum-
cised triumph.” When any court on earth presume to patronize
and sanction what the God of heaven hath expressly forbidden on
the pain of death, having access to know his prohibition, such is the
plain language of their conduct; and no compliance to any rank
should give law, where his honour and authority interfere. No
Christian need be afraid to declare so in the face of the world, while
the great God in effect says the same thing. “Wo unto him that
striveth with his Maker! Let the potherd strive with the po-
thers of the earth,” Isa. xlv. 9. Whether it be more becoming a

Christian
Christian State to secure the obedience of the subjects to the unalterable laws of the Eternal Majesty of the universe, and to punish those who transgress them, as he requires: or to countenance, and indeed sanction the gross violations of these laws, by patronizing those who are guilty of this; and whether of the two is most likely to promote national prosperity, is not difficult to judge. It is to be wished, we could plead in excuse of the decision above referred to, that they passed it ignorantly, while unacquainted with the evidence of the deep criminality of this trade, but the circumstances wherein they stood cut of this plea.

If God declares that they who are not openly and avowedly for him, when his claims interfere, are against him, and shall be reputed as his foes; what shall we say of those, who in the most open and avowed manner dare oppose his authority, and sanction iniquity by a law? If he who steals what a little white or yellow earth may purchase, is deemed worthy to expire on a gibbet, of how much greater punishment may they be thought worthy, who steal their fellow-creatures, one of whom is more precious in God's eyes than all the gold in the world? Do the latter merit, forsooth, to be supported and cared for, while the former are so punished? Laws should not be like cob-webs, which catch small flies, while they suffer the great to break thro'. But will not he who is higher than the highest regard this, whose judgment shall stand, and who will do all his pleasure? The dealers in this barbarous commerce are therefore condemned to death by the righteous law of the great Lord of heaven and earth, and their life, tho' spared and protected by man, is forfeited to his justice, nor will they escape his righteous judgment; while those who countenance and defend them become partakers of their sins, and are in no small danger of being made sharers of their plagues. But it is to be hoped, that more mature reflexion will lead both parties to view this subject in a quite different light; and may God grant them repentance for the past, that this iniquity may not prove their irremediable ruin! We beseech them in the name of their Country, already furcharged with an enormous load of guilt!—we beseech them in the name of every thing dear to man, and sacred to the honour of Deity, not to precipitate the aggravated, yet deserved vengeance of offended Heaven on our devoted land!

O that all ranks would bear in mind, that "there is (as one well ob-
observes) a certain measure of iniquity, which when communíc­
ties, or individuals, respectively, have filled up, the destroying an­
gei comes forth, and executes his commission! How ought both to
fear left the first admonition they slight, or the next guilty step
they take, should fill up their measure, and seal their awful, but ir­
reverible doom! There are signs of the times from which to judge
of this. When a deluge of wickedness, impiety and irreligion,
with a shoal of infidel principles, hath overwhelmed a land, then is
the time for the Lord to work;—the great Lawgiver will then ex­
ert his power, and vindicate his authority speedily;—plead his own
cause, and display the honour of his retributive justice, unless he
mean to infatuate an incorrigible and devoted people by continued
prosperity, that they may become more ripe for the merited de­
struction, when the hour of judicial visitation shall overtake them.
Wo, inevitable wo shall be to a person or people, when the Lord
ceases to reprove them, and leaves them outwardly to prosper in
the ways they have chosen; for then they shall perish, and that
without remedy.

How far the present case with Britain may be such, the counte­
nance given by many, in the higher ranks in life, to the base and
nefarious trade in question, after having access to know its crimi­
nal nature, and unhappy consequences, taken in connexion with o­
ther things, affords a believer in the sacred writings, and an ob­
server of the ways of Providence, but too much data or evidence
from which to judge. God hath of late been trying us both by
adverse, and by prosperous events; and yet may we not appeal to
every reflecting person in the nation, who hath any access to ob­
serve our prevailing manners, if we are not the same perverse and
infatuated people still, going on from evil to worse, from one scene
of levity and dissipation to another, fast filling up the measure of our
iniquity. May we not then remark, with a pious and judicious
observer of the times wherein he lived†. “The same causes will
produce the same effects; and when we, in particular, of these
happy, but sinful nations, consider our numerous, and aggravated
provocations, we shall see much greater reason to wonder that
the judgments of God have been so long delayed, than that they
should at last fall upon us with an infupportable weight.” Had

* Dr Horne on the Psalms.
† Dr Doddridge.
he lived in the present day, he would have seen still more reason to express himself thus. The Divine goodness and forbearance, the longer exercised towards an ungrateful and impenitent people, will only make incensed justice inflict at length a more severe vengeance; as a razor cuts the keener, being set with fine oil. But to wave, for the present, these practical reflections, to which the gloomy subject under review, but too natively led—

The treatment of the Slaves during what is called The Middle Passage, which often occupies, from the time they are put on board, many months; with the numerous unhappy consequences of their captivity and crowded confinement, affords but too many cogent reasons for the immediate suppression of this trade, which hath already too long disgraced the British character. Here, as in the foregoing pages, it is not intended to give a circumstantial detail; for such as wish to see this may consult the Evidence at large, where they will find innumerable instances. The Natives of Africa being deprived of their liberty in the manner already described, and confined on board the Slave-ships, without the most distant hopes of enlargement, are observed to shew signs of extreme anguish and despair. A thousand gloomy ideas will naturally intrude on the mind in such a situation. No wonder, that, brooding over these, their sorrows grow into a load too heavy for human nature to bear. Various conjectures, respecting the object of their captivation, will unavoidably present themselves to view. Reflecting on their past condition in their native country, with their relations about them, and on the horrors of their present situation and future prospects, no wonder untutored nature should succumb under the insupportable load, and, during the paroxysms of extreme grief, they should seek deliverance from the cause of their sorrow and wretchedness either by some desperate expedient, or self-destruction. The Female Slaves, tho’ allowed to go loose thro’ the vessel, yet so a to be kept separate from the Male Slaves, no insurrection being dreaded from them: yet do not hereby greatly better their condition. Brought on board, perhaps quite naked, or next to it, with distraction and despair painted in their looks, they are marked out by the Crew as their future prey. What must be their fate, when exposed to the wanton sallies of unbridled passions, in a situation too much calculated to inflame them in minds deftite of the principles of honour and virtue. Hence it is, in general, deemed no crime to vio-
late at discretion virgin chastity, and invade the wedded property of another; and that while their bitter cries and exclamations astound the ears of their own parents, husbands, and near relatives, if captured with them, in the same ship!—Would to God there was less truth in this representation!—Exposed to sale, like cattle, by those who ought to protect them,—torn from their friends and native land by a lawless banditti, whose injustice, fraud and cruelty they have already experienced, and beheld in various forms exercised towards others;—and having a gloomy prospect of unknown evils before them: to place the present situation of their minds in a full and proper light must exceed the power of any, who himself hath not felt, or seen the like;—nay, must exceed the highest efforts of language fully to describe. Let us suppose ourselves in a similar predicament, and judge what would be our feelings and apprehensions; for theirs are allowed to be, in general, no less delicate and acute. Sometimes, even before the vessels leave the coast, they make violent efforts to effectuate their escape, which prove not seldom fatal both to themselves and their tyrannizing, petty despots, who carry them away captive; and, every thing considered, it is not a little surprising these efforts are not more frequent and destructive. A dreadful instance of this we have had very lately in a French Guinea trader. Having got her complement of slaves, and waiting only a fair wind, a number of them broke loose, and somehow found access to set fire to the powder-room, by which means every soul on board perished, seven excepted, who were left, however, dreadfully scorched and bruised by the explosion. On such unhappy occasions both the white and black people are in a moment involved in one common ruin. Thus would they always, if in their power, prefer an immediate and violent death to the protraction of life on such wretched conditions. Being deprived of every thing for which it is worth while to live, life itself becomes a loathed burden. Hapless people, you can plead reasons for Suicide, to which European self-destroyers have no claim!—Indeed, with regard to such traders, their fate however awful, is too well merited; but what a pity that so many innocent, inoffensive people, should suffer with the guilty! These insurrections, however, being in time discovered, are generally quelled, tho' not without considerable loss, perhaps on both sides. Sometimes the whole ship's company become a sacrifice to their too just revenge, and scarce a year passes but such disasters happen in the trade. In consequence of them the
the poor Slaves are very severely used, cruelly flogged, and tortured; and a number of them not seldom put to death. Is not their conduct, however, justifiable on the principles of self-defence, and, consequently, putting them to death for it, is downright murder? If a man may defend his property, when unjustly attacked, much more his liberty and life. This farther shews the moral necessity of abolishing this traffic, since it cannot be prosecuted but at the expense of gross injustice and murder, which have already brought an immense load of innocent blood on our guilty land, increased by every succeeding struggle for liberty, which must be accounted for and felt in the day when God makes inquisition for blood. What a sad case, when men in self-defence must run the risk of incurring such guilt, and yet such is exactly the case of the Captors! Some of the captives being asked the reason why they rose against the ship's Crew, replied, What business have you to carry us from our country? we have wives and children with whom we wish to be. Ye who are husbands and parents, say if the reasons be not good.

To crowd so many hundred people, some of whom were never at sea, or perhaps never saw a ship before, into the hold of a vessel of no great burden must be attended with disagreeable consequences too numerous to describe. There the men are chained so close together, that each has less room, we are assured, both in length and breadth, than a man has in his coffin, and being so chained together that they cannot move either hand or foot, but with great caution and mutual consent; their situation must be very distressing. So much are they compacted together, that some of the Surgeons, who have been employed in that trade, tell us, They were obliged to put off their shoes when they had occasion to go among them, as they could not, with all their caution, forbear treading upon them, which often so irritated them, that they bit and scratched them in such a manner as to leave marks which time did not soon efface. Thus (says one describing their situation on board) they must fit, walk, and lie, for many months, sometimes for nine or ten, without any mitigation or relief, till they reach the West Indies, unless they are sick, in which case they are loosed from their fetters. Thus it is impossible for them to turn, or shift posture with any degree of ease, or without hurting themselves or each other; and tho' they are brought on deck once a-day, for the benefit of air, when the weather permits, yet in rough weather they are often deprived...
deprived even of this for a week together. In the time of a storm, and when the vessel heels to one side, they must find themselves very disagreeably lodged. Even the sick have no better accommodation than a bare plank to lie on, without the least covering, or defence from external annoyance. Such as are out of irons, are locked, to use their phrase, spoon-ways, to one another. They are thus floored every morning, and those who get not quick enough into their place, are compelled to it by the cat-with-nine-tails. Many are the sad effects of their being shackled together. These are stated in the evidence, and a reflecting person can easily figure them to himself. The very calls of nature must occasion, in such a situation, many hardships and inconveniences. Such severe confinement, and its dire effects are therefore assigned as the principal, if not the only reason, why the men die on the passage in double the proportion of the women, who are suffered to go loose.

So long as they are on deck thro' the day, for the benefit of fresh air, if the weather permits this, they take an additional mode of securing them; for to the shackles which bind them in pairs together is fixed a ring, thro' which a large chain is reeved whereby they are all locked in a body to ring-bolts, which are made fast to the deck. In this situation they are compelled at times to sing, and to dance, or jump in their chains to their own music. Such as refuse to comply, are flogged, and the necessity of exercise for the preservation of health is pleaded as a reason for this cruel treatment, to which the women are subjected no less than the men. In these violent exercises their shackles often peel off the skin, and though they be diseased, and so swelled in their legs, that they cannot move at all without pain; yet compulsion is always employed to force them to it. Their songs on these occasions, as those who understand their language tell, consist of mournful ditties respecting their wretched situation, torn from their country and connections, and the idea of never returning home. If, as the wise man remarks, he that singeth songs to a heavy heart, is as he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, Prov. xxvi. 20.; what must it be to urge the heavy hearted, by violent measures, to sing and dance? What a carriage towards human beings in extreme distress! But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

When afflicted with some of the diseases incident to their confined state, of which the flux is one, they are often very roughly used by the seamen, whose disagreeable labour is hereby increased.
Not seldom individuals, mustering up all their strength, have burst with a violent effort from their chains, and sprung at once over board, preferring the mercy of the fullen waves to the compassion of their cruel captors and oppressors, and exulting with apparent joy while swallowed up by the devouring deep. The ships trading for slaves are peculiarly constructed with a view to prevent this; notwithstanding which, near twenty have been known to leap over board during the passage! Were they not very narrowly watched, this would frequently happen; for they eagerly grasp at every opportunity, and are often prevented in the very attempt. Can any thing afford a more clear proof of their dissatisfaction with their situation, or rather abhorrence of it?

Can any virtuous woman reflect on the situation of the female slaves on board, and not feel the most pungent emotions of compassion for them, mixed with detestation at the author's of their ill treatment? They are allowed by the white people who have travelled among them in their native country, to possess sentiments of modesty and female honour in such a degree as would do credit to many British females, and of which none of them need be ashamed. To be exposed, in the state of nature, to the wanton gazes, and rough attacks of the rude sailors, as already hinted, whose passions and carriage cannot be supposed to be under the restraints of virtue and honour, must be a very distressing circumstance, and the consequence of it a sad aggravation of their affliction. This is indeed passed over in silence in the Abstract of the Evidence, yet some of those who have been employed in the trade give a very affecting account of it. Such shocking indecent and criminal usage must be the more grievously felt, as coming from white people who are but too justly the objects of their dread and aversion.

Some of the Slaves become furious and distracted by the confinement and severe treatment, and many are seized with a deep and incurable melancholy; so that the Surgeons employed in the trade give it as their opinion, That two thirds of those who die on the Passage, fall a prey to this distress, the native consequence of their mournful situation. Some are obstinate in their resolution to starve themselves to death, whence neither threats, flattery, force, nor severe whipping can prevail with them to open their jaws to receive food, or use the least effort to swallow it. One of the gentlemen observes, That his feelings were much hurt to be so often obliged to use the cat to force them to take their food; and that in the ve-
ry act of chastisement, they have looked up at him with a smile, saying in their own language, "Presently we shall be no more," others, that they were going to their friends, and would be soon beyond their reach. Some have supported the want of food, frequent floggings, and other species of cruel usage, for the space of eight or nine days, before they expired; mean while expressing their longing desires for death, to set them at liberty. On these occasions they are usually tortured with what is called thumb-screw, which make the sweat run down their face, and themselves to tremble all over, as if under a violent fit of the ague. Under the agonies of grief and despair, were their hands at liberty, they would tear their throats with their own nails, if nothing else could be had, or suffocate or strangle themselves, as some of them have done. The very children are often so affected with their situation, that they seem to choose rather to die than live. We have a very remarkable instance of a young child that refused all sustenance from some cause or other. The Captain, enraged at this, flogged him, and threatened to kill him, if he would not eat, using that horrid language too common among sea-faring men. This discipline he repeated several times without effect. The child's feet being swelled, he ordered them to be put in water, tho' the ship's Cook told him it was too hot. This brought off the skin and nails. Having used him about four days in this manner, the child died a few moments after he had been whipping him. The poor mother, refusing to cast him over-board when called for that purpose, was severely beat, and compelled to take up the body, and go to the ship's side, where, turning away her face to avoid the sight, she dropped her child into the sea, and continued for many hours to cry bitterly. In such a case, what could the most feeling mother among us do more? Can this trade, where such cruelties are too common, be a proper nursery for raising up a brave and gallant race of seamen, to defend their country in the time of danger? At home, are not Cock-fightings, Races, Boxing-matches and the like relics of barbarity sufficient to blind our nobler feelings, and petrify the heart into an adamant, that we must annually employ so many of the subjects in the African Slave Trade, to imbibe the most degrading dispositions? Ancient Greece and Rome raised temples of inanimate materials in honour of their gods: but Briton's consecrate the human heart to the residence of Mammon, and set open every avenue leading to it for the entrance of the blackest demons of hell!
We are told, that during the night the Slaves are often heard to make an howling, melancholy noise. Being asked by an interpreter the reason, they reply, that it was owing to their having dreamt they were in their own country, but finding themselves on waking in the hold of a Slave-ship, they could not forbear crying out in that manner. The woman, whose sensibility more frequently thus overcame them, were often found on these occasions in hysterical fits; such impressions did the thoughts of their situation make on their minds, and such delicacy of feeling do they possess.

The most distressing scene of all, however, is to be found below decks. When no fewer than six hundred persons are crowded into the hold of a vessel of 320 tons burden, as hath been not rarely the case, it is easy to judge how exceeding disagreeable their situation must be. Some room must be left for tubs, to answer the necessities of nature; and, betwixt so many breaths, the stench of excrements, and, if they are affected with certain diseases, the fetid smell of these must occasion, what a loathsome, melancholy condition! Some of the Surgeons, who have officiated on board of Guinea ships, accordingly tell us in their evidence, that the steam coming up thro' the gratings was like a furnace; that so great was the heat below, they could not remain down above ten minutes at a time, and even then their shirt would be as wet as if dip't in water. What must they then endure, who are forced to submit to all this, perhaps for eight days running, without a moment's respite when the weather does not permit their being brought on deck? In consequence of such excessive heat, they have been seen drawing their breath with all those laborious and anxious efforts, for life, which are observed in expiring animals, subjected by experiment to foul air, or in the exhausted receiver of an air pomp—should any thing happen to cover the gratings, thro' which they receive some little air, they are heard to cry in their own language, "We are dying—we are dying"; and on clearing these, they would appear in a violent perspiration, or dew sweat, with all the signs of terror, and pangs of suffocation. In these situations, many have died without any previous sign of indisposition, and others, apparently dead, have been recovered only by a current of fresh air. Must not that air be impregnated with the seeds of disease and death, which hath already passed thro' the lungs of hundreds, many of whom may be labouring under very infectious distempers? Thro' these combined causes, more than twenty have been seen at once fainted, or fainting, and this hath always been
been the case when the ships were full. Some have gone down apparently in good health at night, and been found dead in the morning. One case is mentioned, wherein, thro' a great swell of the sea, and a heavy rain, the vessel having got aground on the bar in coming out, the air ports were obliged to be shut, and part of the gratings on the weather side covered. The consequence was, almost all the men slaves were taken ill with the flux, and at the same time suffocated with heat and want of air. One case is mentioned, wherein, thro' a great swell of the sea, and a heavy rain, the vessel having got aground on the bar incoming out, the air ports were obliged to be shut, and part of the gratings on the weather side covered. The consequence was, almost all the men slaves were taken ill with the flux, and at the same time suffocated with heat and want of air. Tho' they were partly relieved for the present, by being hauled up on deck, yet several of them died now, and most of the rest before they reached the West Indies. The Surgeon, being down only fifteen minutes, became so ill that he could not get up without help, nor could he officiate during the rest of the passage, having caught the same distemper. Such the fatal effects of their miserably crowded state, that not seldom one of the two slaves, who are shackled together, is found dead in the morning, without any previous symptom.

The above great inconvenience is indeed partly remedied by the late Regulating act of Parliament respecting the Guinea Trade. By this act, a vessel which before carried six hundred slaves cannot exceed in her complement four hundred and fifty, or thereabouts; yet, "even on the present regulated plan, the situation of the slaves must be dreadful; (says the evidence) for their bodies not only touch each other, but many of them have not even room to sit upright;" as is clearly demonstrated by a calculation in the Abstract. What then must have been their situation on the old plan, when a third part more was added? But it must appear evident to every candid unbiased person, that no regulation of a Trade, so iniquitous in its principle, and so unjust and oppressive on any supposable mode of conducting it, can prevent its unhappy consequences. Can this cure a settled melancholy, while the causes still subsist? Can it prevent an injured people from seeking, and embracing an opportunity of effecting their liberty, and avenging themselves on their enemies, and merciless oppressors? Will any regulation remove the infected air, and prevent the epidemic diseases to which the mode of carrying on the Trade exposes, unless the number of slaves carried by each ship were to be so few as not to defray the expence of transporting them? All these considerations show the impolicy, not to say the iniquity of the Trade, on all the principles of justice and humanity; of which we should never lose sight in any branch of commerce. It must therefore appear strange to every Christian, or indeed
indeed to any person of common equity, how the British Parliament could content themselves with a few slight regulations of this trade, after having such evidence of its enormous criminality before them, as pointed out the moral necessity of its speedy abolition, on every principle of honour, justice, and humanity. Could they once imagine they would thus commute the matter with God, with respect to the national guilt already contracted in this traffic? or repair the injuries done to millions of their fellow-creatures? Had they indeed consulted either God, or a heart unwarped by prejudice, ignorance, or interest, it is certain no secular motives could prevail with them to pass a decision, for which, if not forgiven, they shall weep and wail in that day when all distinctions are abolished, that of the righteous and the wicked excepted, and when the poor slave will appear on a level with the haughty Peer; nay, perhaps have dominion over him. Yet is it still in their power to make some atonement for this trespass on the unalienable rights of human nature, to which may God, in mercy to themselves and these lands, as well as to the poor Africans, speedily incline their hearts!—How applicable in this view the observation of a late respectable Author, “When will the politicians of this earth learn to trust God in his own ways, rather than to trust themselves, and their own wisdom, in violation of all the rules of truth, honour, and conscience? Till then they will be caught in their own craftiness; and it is more than possible, that they may hasten the very distresses they are contriving to avoid.” Subjects, doubtless, owe honour and obedience to their civil rulers, and acting as Christians they will not decline this; but then no duty to superiors can oblige them to call evil good, and good evil;—to sacrifice their own reason and understanding so as blindly and implicitly to approve of all their measures: for should these in any instance unhappily run counter to the immutable Laws of Heaven, from which they are bound never to deviate, we must tell them, as the Apostles Peter and John told the Jewish rulers; “Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” Acts iv.19.—May that Supreme Power, by whom kings reign, and princes and nobles rule, and decree justice, even all the judges of the earth, so direct our Legislature in all their deliberations, that no part of their conduct may tend to aggravate the Nation’s guilt, which already cries aloud to Heaven for vengeance, and so accelerate our fate!

But,
But, to prosecute the representation given of the distresses and sufferings of the Slaves during the passage; all which originate from their unhappy situation, and are inseparably connected with the trade. Epidemic distempers must always in such cases prove very distressing, and fatal to many; and to these they are incident,—such as the Small Pox, the Dysentery, &c. which produce dreadful havoc among them. Amidst the ravages of these disorders, what a shocking scene will a Guinea ship present! and how much must the health, or life of the crew be thereby endangered? Says one of the Surgeons, *You cannot conceive a situation so dreadful and disgusting as that of the Slaves when ill of the flux.* He declares, that the deck of the vessel where he sailed resembled a shambles, or slaughter-house, being covered with blood and mucus. Having no better accommodation, even in their distresses and ailments, than bare planks to lie on, the prominent parts of their bodies are so excoriated, that the bones appear. The stench and foul air, adds he, were intolerable. To this loathsome distemper thousands of the Slaves fall a prey, and not seldom many of the ship's crew. The Small Pox also carries off vast numbers. In this last distemper, the Slaves, when removed from one place to another, leave, we are told, marks of their skin and blood upon the deck, forming a most horrid sight; and the platform presents one continued scab. At other times they may be seen wallowing in their own excrements and blood, quite unable to use the least effort for their own relief. In a morning eight or ten of them were hauled up dead, and when they took hold of their wrists, the skin and flesh peeled off. It is not a little surprising, that any, favoured with a liberal education, who have access to know the nature of this trade, could be induced on any terms to serve in it; for one voyage is indeed more than enough to give an incurable disgust to any mortal. On the supposition the trade in Slaves is still carried on, which Heaven however forbid, no doubt the assistance of medical gentlemen will be necessary; but it would be acting becoming their profession for all in it to decline such employment on any terms, as a testimony of their abhorrence of this abominable traffic.—So great hath the mortality proved on such occasions, that some ships lose a *quarter,* some a *third,* and others *half* of their cargo of slaves. From the account kept by several vessels, it appeared that out of 7904 purchased on the coast, 2053 one way or other perished in the passage. Add to this the numbers who lose their lives by the mode of procuring them in their native
tive country,—the many that die in the islands, soon after their im-
portation, in consequence of maladies caught on board,—and those
that are cut off by extraordinary disasters at sea; and say if this
barbarous trade hath not been the destroyer of countless myriads
of that much injured race, since it first commenced!—With regard
to man, the number so cut off from the land of the living, may be
unknown, or overlooked; but may we not at least say of them, what
our Lord says of the birds of the air, "Not one of them is forgot-
ten before God," "One of them shall not fall to the ground with-
out your Father," without his special notice and fixed purpose
one time or other to avenge their wrongs.

When any of the Guinea traders have been driven out of their
course by stresses of weather, and consequently run short of provi-
sions, Slaves have been made to walk the plank, a phrase in use among
the Captains in this branch of commerce, to denote making them
throw themselves over-board. In cases of shipwreck, they are either
left to perish, being entangled in their irons, or the seamen adopt
the barbarous counsel of the soldiers who sailed along with Paul,
namely, To kill the prisoners, let any of them should swim out and es-
cape. Acts xxvii. 42. One instance of this occurs in the Evidence,
which is marked with peculiar circumstances of horror.

About twenty years ago, a ship from Africa, with about four
hundred Slaves on board; struck, in the night time, upon some
shoals at the distance of eleven leagues from the South End of Ja-
maica. The officers and seamen landed in their boats, carrying
with them arms and provisions. The Slaves were left on board
shackled together in their chains. Having some how got out of their
irons, they were discovered at break of day very busy making rafts of
the broken parts of the wreck, whereon they placed the women and
children, while the men and others capable of swimming, attended
upon the rafts, as they drifted before the wind towards the island,
where the seamen had landed the preceding night. These, apprehen-
sive that the slaves would consume the water and provision which
they had brought with them from the ship, came to the horrid re-
solution of destroying them by means of their fire arms, and other
weapons. Accordingly, they in fact murdered between three and
four hundred of them, as they were attempting to make the land;
so that out of the whole cargo only thirty-three, or thirty-four were
saved, who were brought to Kingston, and there exposed to public
sale! What a strange expression of gratitude to Heaven for their
own deliverance! How literally verified that saying, "Let favour " be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in " the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold " the majesty of the Lord!" No wonder the Prophet should add, " Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they " shall see and be ashamed; yes, the fire of thine enemies shall de- " vour them." Isa. xxvi. 10, 11.

When the ships arrive at their destined ports, the slaves are sold either by public auction, or by lots; both which modes of sale are described in the Evidence. Previous to this much pains are taken to clean and anoint their bodies, that they may appear to the best advantage; just as a person would do with horse or cattle, of which he meant to dispose in a public market. From the description, it appears that several circumstances attend both modes of sale, which must render them very grating to the feelings of any humane person. Sale by lots, or scramble, as it is usually termed, is the more common way; yet marked with a kind of brutal ferocity, more characteristic of barbarous savages, than of a civilized people. Slaves sold by public auction, or vendue, are generally the refuse and sickly; who sell greatly under price. Such have been known to be sold for five dollars, for a guinea, and sometimes so low as a single dollar, per head. These are described as in a very deplorable state. A military officer of high rank declares, That he once saw a number of them, who had been landed from a slave-ship, brought into the yard adjoining the place of sale;—that such as were not very ill were put into little huts, while those that were in a worse condition were left in the yard to die, for, adds he, no body gave them anything to eat or drink; and some of them lived three days in that situation. Some, when put on shore, are in so wretched a state, that they are often carried to the vendue-master in the agonies of death, and expire in his piazza. On these occasions they are exposed to public view naked as they came into the world, without any regard to age or sex; and the Slave-merchants and planters view and handle them as a butcher does the cattle he is about to purchase for the slaughter.

Near relations may happen to be on board the same ship, yet not know of it, till, if sold on shore, they come to recognize each other, when collected in one place. Whatever present pleasure such a meeting may give, it can be but momentary. They are soon dispersed,
perfed, either to different islands, or to different parts of the same island; perhaps so as never to meet again in this world. In these sales, not the least care is taken to prevent such Slaves as are nearly related from being separated; for in this respect they are treated with no more ceremony than a parcel of sheep or lambs in a public market. Nay, the purchasers, for reasons of their own, in their choice violate all the ties of blood and relation; for no exceptions are made but of sucking infants, who are allowed for their own ends, to accompany the mother. Such cruel separation of the dearest relations and friends is frequently attended with the most melancholy consequences. Hereby some have been driven to offer violence to their own life, during the paroxysms of their grief and sorrow; being unable to support the pangs of separation. Can any thing be more barbarous and inhuman than such a conduct. To tear asunder the strongest ties of nature—to force the Husband from the arms of a dear and affectionate Wife, the sympathizing partner of his past cares and sorrows—to force the Parent from the tender embrace of a beloved Child, and Brothers and Sisters from each other, probably to see one another no more in time; how affecting the scene! and what monsters in human nature that can be guilty of occasioning it without necessity, or remorse!

Ye who stand in such tender relations, put yourselves for a moment in their place, and think how you would take to be so treated. They have feelings and natural affections as well as us; and in them nature often discloses itself much less corrupted. What! ye unfeeling sons of avarice, who traffic, from the love of gain, in your own species, can ye not allow the dearest relatives the small consolation of mingling their sighs and tears in the land of their captivity and thraldom? Was it ever heard that even Heathen nations so treated their lawful captives? But such as can thus act, in opposition to a Religion whose great end is charity, or love to God and man, must of all others be the most obdurate and depraved. But shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? With what measure they mete, it shall be measured to them again, Matth. vii. 1.; for as they have caused grief and sorrow, God will, according to his threatening, distribute forrows to them in his anger, Job xxi. 17. Heaven forbid, that the collected wisdom of a British Senate should longer lend its sanction to deeds so execrable and nefarious!—Can that be politically right which is in every possible view morally wrong? Can the wisdom from above, which is pure, peaceable, gentle,
gentle, full of mercy, and without partiality or hypocrisy, employ itself for the continuance of a traffic replete with fraud, knavery, injustice and cruelty. No, verily, such are none of her fruits; nor are those who abet them to be numbered among her votaries. But of that wisdom, or policy, which is conversant about this infamous commerce, is there not too much reason to say with an apostle; "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, "devilish," James iii. 15. Horrid and degrading as these epithets are, may we not appeal to every one, who considers for a moment the nature and effects of the trade in question, if, they convey not a striking idea of its characteristic features? so justly does the word of God delineate the dispositions, and the leading views of men.—Will that righteousness which exalteth a nation stroll to such wretched expedients, in order to promote commerce, and increase the public revenue? Can any nation or individual so plead, with their eyes open on all its dreadful enormities, and unhappy consequences, till dead to righteousness?—till dead to every humane and virtuous feeling of the human heart? and when that is once the case, they become ripe for aggravated ruin, and temporal judgments, or worse, cannot be at any great distance.

No wonder, then, some of the evidences once concerned in this nefarious trade should declare that they were induced to quit it from a conviction, the effect of mature reflexion, that it was unnatural, iniquitous, and villanous, and as such could not reconcile it to their consciences. One Captain declares, That from the whole of his experience, as an impartial man, he had long since formed an opinion, (which each succeeding day's experience has justified and confirmed) that it is a trade evidently sounded on injustice and treachery, manifestly carried on by oppression and cruelty, and not unfrequently terminating in murder. Another also makes declaration, that when he left the trade, he could have obtained the command of a ship in it, which at that time would have been very lucrative, but that he quitted it from a conviction that it was perfectly illegal, and founded in blood. One had access to observe the nature of this traffic, as conducted on the African coast, and who himself made three voyages thither for slaves, in capacity of commander of a Guinea ship, gives the following declaration, as a reason for publishing his sentiments on the subject—"If my testimony should not be necessary or serviceable, yet perhaps I am bound in conscience, to take shame to myself by a public confession, which, however sincere, comes too late to prevent or repair the misery

" and
"and mischief to which I have formerly been accessory. I hope it "will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me, that I "was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart "now shudders."

Must not these Gentlemen be allowed to be competent judges of the nature of a trade, wherewith they were so long conversant!— While they declare, as above, their conviction of its enormity and guilt, from what they had the best access to see and know; will any presume to justify and defend it from considerations of private temporal interest, or public, the most mean and sordid indeed, tho' the only ones, that can be urged in vindication of it? If the dictates of conscience, on extensive observation and mature reflection, have led those who once had a concern in it, and might be still gainers by it in a temporal view, to form such an estimate of it, do not the most cogent reasons and motives concur, to induce all Christians, however divided in sentiments on other points, to become unanimous in reproving this criminal and disgraceful traffic, and in making speedy application to the Legislature for the entire suppression of it?

Having access to know so much concerning it, let us not rebel against the light by shutting our eyes on such evidence of its guilt and demerit, and contenting ourselves with a kind of neutral indifference, as if we had little or no concern in the business. The claims of humanity demand a hearing from all, and truth is too mighty, ancient, and noble to fear the face of any. All therefore who have not put off the man and the Christian, will, in their station, regard the voice of both. That God, with whom is dominion and fear, at whose rebuke the pillars of heaven tremble, and before whom hell itself is naked, and destruction hath no covering, at every man's hand requires this. Can any deem it a small matter to offend this God, with whom is terrible majesty, and to fall into his hands with not only our personal sins, but with our share of the national guilt upon our head? Both gratitude and a regard to our own safety should lead us to fall in with his will; for upon whom does not his light arise?—Is there any number of his armies? and the thunder of his power who can understand? Job chapters xxv. and xxvi.

May the time to favour his oppressed and enslaved offspring soon come, even the time which he hath set! Soon may he reveal his Almighty arm for their deliverance, while those who would oppose his
his merciful designs are made to hide themselves in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth, and to manifest himself a Father, a Judge, and Guardian of the fatherless, the widows, the injured, and oppressed in his holy habitation!

How long, "O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth," how long, "Thou Judge of the earth, shall the wicked triumph? and the workers of iniquity boast themselves?—They break in pieces thy people, they slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. Yet they say, the Lord shall not see, neither regard it. Understand, ye brutish among the people; He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct?" Psal. xciv. How long wilt thou forbear to plead their cause? How long leave them to their oppressors? O deliver them from the oppression of man!

But to trace this gloomy subject a little farther. Happy could we say, that, when arrived under the venerable shade of the Brittish government, where Freedom boasts of the honour of primogeniture, the winter was past, and the rains over and gone. Alas! the native soil of boasted Liberty becomes the land of their oppression and wretched thraldom! Here liberty shews herself partial and unjust;—places a fence round white people, tho' they should be monsters of iniquity: but tolerates the most inhuman usages towards their fellow-creatures, because the sun hath looked upon them, and given their complexion a different hue. Ah, shall free-born Britons not scruple to deprest their Brethren to the lowest stage of wretchedness, of which human nature in the present state is capable; tho' at the expense of approving themselves Satan's very slaves and vassals! Compared to what they must now feel, all their former sufferings were but like the beginning of sorrows;—were but light and momentary, put in balance with that tedious weight of misery to which they are subjected, till death come to release from their sad state of servitude; unless unhappily driven, by their cruel task-masters, to anticipate that solemn event. What they before endured, tho' not joyous but grievous, was but as a few previous drops of that horrible tempest which is now poured out upon them without intermission, till they descend to that abode where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; where the prisoners rest together, and hear not the voice of the oppressor; and where the servant, or slave is free from his master. Job iii. Ye who dissolve in tears
tears at a feigned tale of wo, here are objects worthy of your com-
miseration;—scenes of complicated affliction, which demand the
tribute of a flood of tears! View such sufferings, of your fellow-
creatures, and suspend the workings of pity and compassion if you
can.

That part of the evidence which respects the cruel treatment of
the poor Slaves in the West Indies, is full and circumstantial, and
also confirmed by the corroborating testimony of many respecta-
able eye-witnesses. To recount particular instances, and declart
upon them, were an almost endless task; and, indeed, the less ne-
cessary as many of these are so near a-kin, and attended with cir-
cumstances and aggravations so very similar. Any attempt to recite
these, tho' ever so sparingly, cannot be a pleasing talk to the writer,
and must grate the feelings of the humane reader: yet as some ex-
planation serves to place the system of Colonial Slavery in a proper
light, and its baneful influence on those who are conversant with it,
it is necessary these instances of cruel usage should not be passed o-
ver wholly in silence.

This part of the Evidence is introduced with remarking, that
the Natives of Africa, when bought by the European Colonists, are
generally esteemed a species of inferior beings, whom the right of
purchase gives the owner a power of using at his will. Agreeable
to this, the evidences are unanimous in asserting, That “they have
“no legal protection against their masters;” and, of course, that
“their treatment varies according to their disposition.” If these
be good men, and happen to live on their estate, they are tolerably
well used: but if they are passionate, avaricious, and unfeeling, too
haughty to attend to the situation and complaints of their Slaves,
they must consequently suffer; and, indeed, too many things concur
to prove that the number of the humane and worthy is not great in
that quarter. They are represented as used with great cruelty, like
beasts or worse; that their state is inconceivable, and cannot be
described to the full understanding of those who have never seen
it, and that a sight of some gangs would convince more than all
words. In America, the state of the Slaves is allowed to have been
the very reverse of that in the West Indies; for there a few indivi-
duals only use them ill, whereas in the latter they are generally
ill treated, the number of those who use them humanely being very
few. Providence has employed American Independance as a mean
of enlarging the sphere of human liberty in general, and of extend-
ing that blessing to many of the slaves in particular. Here their state of servitude hath in many instances been over-ruled for their good; for the land of their captivity hath afforded them the means of becoming acquainted with Christianity, and obtaining that liberty wherewith the Son of God makes his people free. No such thing, however, can be said in favour of our West India islands; for too many circumstances conspire to render it a land of baptized infidels, a land of darkness, and the region of the shadow of death. When men cast off the fear of God, and trample on the most sacred institutions, no wonder they should divest themselves of the feelings of human nature in their carriage towards their fellow-creatures.

The Slaves in the Sugar-islands are divided into domestic and field on s. The former, both in town and country, are allowed to be in general better fed, and clothed, and less wrought than the latter; and consequently to look better. Some, however, complain of their being much pinched for food, and the women often so as to be driven to prostitution. If their mistresses happen to be choleric, capricious, or cruel, they suffer much from being continually under their eye, and subject to their humour and caprice; whence they sometimes envy the situation of the field slaves. Those who go under this description, are bought for plantation use, and employed in cultivating the cane, and manufacturing it into sugar, and other labours on the estate. They are called out to their work by day-light, and must continue, without intermission, till sun-set, except one half hour in the morning, and two hours at noon; which, considering the length of their day, must be extremely hard. If any of them happen not to reach the field early enough, they are sure to be immediately flogged in the presence of their companions. They know this so well, that when they get within a few paces of the rest, they throw down their hoe, lift their hands over their head, and stand patiently till they receive the appointed number of lashes, and then proceed to their work. During the intervals mentioned above, they are not suffered to be idle, but must range about in quest of grass for the cattle. On some estates this is done after the labour of the day, but, in either case, it is justly complained of as a great grievance. In droughts grass-picking becomes peculiarly hard, because it is difficult then to find it at all; and yet, if they do not bring it in sufficient quantities, they are punished, the fear of which sometimes tempts them to steal it.
One of the evidence says, that "he has seen some of them flogged for not getting so great a quantity of it as others, and that at a time, when he has thought it impossible they could have gotten half the quantity, having been upon the spot." This is said to be one of the most frequent causes of punishment. In the labours of the field, the weak must keep up with the strong, else be flogged by their unfeeling drivers, a certain number of whom are allotted to each gang. These, and the no less unfeeling overseers, proud of the power vested in them of punishing whom, when, and in what manner they please, use this power in general without mercy. The extreme fatigue this treatment occasions, and the cruel usage to which it exposes, often bring them to an untimely grave. Even the Female Slaves find little indulgence, and that in situations which excite the commiseration of any who are not quite hardened against their kind. The drivers in using the whip never distinguish sex, nor spare the most weak and helpless. Pregnant women are often thus constrained to work abroad, till within a few hours of their delivery, and in that state have been known to receive thirty-nine lashes for such petty offences, as are among the planters usually thought worthy of punishment. We are told, that it is not uncommon on some estates, to dig a hole in the ground, making the pregnant women lie in it, that the prominence of their belly may fill up this vacuity adapted to receive it. This expedient they take, that they may not excuse punishment, nor yet endanger the life of the woman or child. Hard field-labour is assigned as a general cause of miscarriage; and not rarely is this the consequence of severe flogging, which sometimes proves the death of both mother and infant. Those who escape, and bring forth a living child, have no better accommodation than the bare floor, or a plank to lie on in their wattled huts, which are not proof against rain, dews, or wind. To this purpose, says one of the evidence, "The sides of the huts in which the pregnant women are delivered, are no more defence against the cold night-damps, than one of our mullure-hed-ges." Most of the children accordingly die of convulsions within the eighth day; but should they survive, the mother must soon appear on the field with her infant on her back, and there keep up with the rest. So hard are they pulled, and so little time is afforded them to attend their wants, that a mother has been seen, while fackling her child, remanded to her work by a severe blow of the cart-whip.
Some hold it as a decided point, that the harder the Slaves are wrought, and the more sparingly they are fed, tho' their days should hereby be shortened, the greater gainers are the owners upon the whole. Calculations are therefore said to have been accurately made, to determine which was the preferable, or the more saving method of managing slaves:—"Whether to appoint them moderate " work, plenty of provision, and such treatment as might enable them to " protract their lives to old age? Or by rigorously training their strength " to the utmost, with little relaxation, hard fare, and hard usage, " to wear them out before they became useless, and unable to do " service; and then to buy new ones to fill up their place?" These calculations unhappily led to adopt the latter mode as much cheaper; and indeed, in consequence of it, seldom are slaves, so used, found to live above nine years on the estates. To such a height is the above barbarous conclusion carried, that we find in the evidence a wretch boasting that he would have his penny-worth out of them in four years, and after that cared not what became of them. By this cruel practice he however made not rich, for it is added, that his estate came to be sold to satisfy his creditors. So true is it, They that walk uprightly, walk surely: for it is God that giveth power to become rich, and, what is more valuable, addeth no sorrow therewith; without which riches may prove a burden and a curse. To the same cruel and unwise maxim may be traced the opinion which is said to prevail among the planters, namely, "That " he is the best overseer who makes the largest crops;" which criterion of his merit hath proved destructive to thousands, who are killed by being over-wrought. Humanity would rather say, "He "is the best overseer who preserves the slaves."

Can those who make such haste to be rich, do it with innocence? Such conduct reminds one of the fable of the goose that laid golden eggs, which the owner killed, in the fond hope of obtaining them all at once: for such measures are, doubtless, not founded on good policy,—Inhumanity alone can dictate them, and nought but ignorance and prejudice can varnish over their base turpitude and guilt.

We are told that in the Crop Season, the labour of the slaves increases, and they are obliged to work as long as they can keep awake, or stand on their legs. Those who are employed in the sugar-mills, as many of them are, being overcome with want of rest and fatigue, sometimes fall asleep, and the rollers catch hold of their arms, while
while feeding the mill, and tear them off, which not unfrequently
happens. It appears from the evidence, that on some estates the
slaves have two days of the week, to cultivate their little pittance
of ground for their own subsistence, namely, Saturday and Sabbath;
on others, the latter only, and on some but part of that day, being
required to gather meat for the cattle twice thereon, and sometimes
forced to work for their masters. On no estates are they allowed
more than that day in time of Crop to cultivate their own
lands. These lands are said to be in general sufficient to afford the
means of supporting natural life, could they find time to labour
them; but being perhaps at the distance of three miles from their
huts, they are so exhausted with the toils of the week, that they are
able to do little for their cultivation on Sabbath for their own use;
whence they must suffer materially in the means of subsistence. It
is also asserted, that not seldom when they have cleared and im-
proved a piece of ground, allotted them for the above purpose, their
master takes it from them to plant canes, and appoints them other
wood-land spots to be cleared afresh in their stead; whereat and the
removal of their houses, many of them are often so mightily disheart-
ened as to die of grief and despondency. Some are allowed money
to procure provisions for themselves, but no sum is fixed, this being
entirely left to the discretion of the owners or overseers. Those who
are fed more immediately by their masters, are said, however, to be still
worse supplied. The quantity of Indian corn assigned them, they
must grind, as they best can, after they quit the labours of the field,
which is no small hardship. The little fish allotted them, is in ge-
neral in such a state as to be past using by the white people. Half
a rotten herring is perhaps deemed a sufficient allowance at a time.
With regard to the acquisition of property, the greatest flock they
are ever known to have is a pig, and perhaps two or three fowls;
for we are assured that never hath an instance occurred, in the Bri-
tish plantations, of a slave acquiring so much property as to pur-
chase his own liberty. Having had occasion lately to converse with
a Gentleman from Jamaica, who himself has a number of slaves
and some property there, he assured me the case was far otherwise
in the Spanish plantations. He instance Cuba and Hispaniola in par-
ticular, where, he observed, a Slave might, in the course of four or
two years, acquire, if diligent and careful in improving the many
holy-days he enjoyed for his own benefit, sufficient property to pur-
chase his liberty. He indeed, as might be naturally expected, with-

ed to deny, or extenuate and excuse the cruelties of our planters, and with that view decried the evidence adduced before the House of Commons; yet in the course of conversation such hints dropped inadvertently from him, as served to confirm some of its most material parts, particularly that inhuman piece of their conduct, in turning off the aged, and such as were unfit for labour. This gentleman, no doubt, had many opportunities of observing the treatment of the slaves, having spent many years in the above-mentioned island, and occasionally visited most, if not all of our sugar islands; and sure, so far as his acknowledgements went, they may be relied on. I suspect much, it would be so with many others, who are led to befriend this traffic, were they to speak the genuine language of the heart, and not suffer interest or prejudice to gain the ascendant.

The whole evidence allows, that our slaves are in general wretchedly provided with food, both as to quantity and quality. Hence, however much branded by the whites with the odious epithet of thieves, it is granted that they are seldom, if ever, known to steal anything but provisions, which they sometimes attempt at the risk of their very lives, being urged to it by the most imperious of all appetites. In such attempts they are often severely wounded by the watchmen; but hunger, according to the common saying, will break thro' stone walls—will lead a man to run any risk in order to gratify its uneasy cravings. To represent this in the strongest light, the Reader need only be told, that if a horse, a mule, or any other animal perished in the fields, some white person is appointed to burn it, lest, if buried, the slaves in the night should dig it up, and make use of it, being compelled thereto by dire necessity. This is the reason, the witnesses are of opinion, why they are sometimes seen to devour putrefying animals, if they can come at them anywhere.

We are also informed, that they are in general but very indifferently clothed, and that the one half of them go almost naked in the field. Some of the evidence agree, that, so far as their experience went, the masters did not expend for the clothing of their slaves more than two and sixpence, or three shillings sterling a year per head. This shows how very groundless the fears of some are, who think that the abolition of the Slave Trade, or of Slavery, would hurt home manufacture, whereas the very reverse would be the case. Were so many thousands allowed a little compensation for their labour, and put in the way of acquiring some property, they...
they would doubtless consume ten times more of British goods than they do at present; and besides, a variety of new branches of commerce might be carried on with the Native Africans, to which that trade is now an effectual bar.

As to the accommodation for lodging afforded the slaves, their houses consist of wretched hovels, or four square huts, of their own rearing, composed of flakes fixed in the ground, and wattled together with reeds at the top and sides. These are quite insufficient to defend from wind or rain. In the centre of these they lie on the bare ground, before a little fire, without any better accommodation; unless they can procure a board or mat to lie on: and even women in child-bed must put up with the same hard usage. A few of the head slaves are indeed said to have cabins of boards raised from the floor whereon they lie, but no bedding, unless they can procure a coarse blanket or cover. These, including Artificers, such as House-carpenters, Coopers, and Masons, and the Drivers, all of whom belong to the Plantation slaves, are said to have in general a more certain allowance of provisions, and to be in other respects better off.

Several white people who have got a few slaves, and yet have little work of their own, allow them to hire themselves to others, and oblige them to bring home so much by the day or week. This becomes very hard and oppressive, as they are often unable to find work, and so earn the stated sum, in which case however they are severely punished, without any regard to such just pleas in their favour. They have been known, thro' fear of such treatment, sometimes to steal grass, and sell it, to make up the sum required. Some of these are employed as porters, of whom their master exacts at the end of the week a certain sum. Having no fixed rates, they are hereby exposed to great hardships, both abroad and at home. If they complain that they get too little from those who employ them, they are beaten, and receive nothing; and should they refuse the next call from the same person, they are summoned before a magistrate, and sentenced to be publicly punished for refusal; while they are subjected to the same treatment from their master, if they fail to gratify his avaricious expectations. In the same wretched predicament stand such unhappy females as are sent out for the base purpose of prostitution. If these are handsome, the reward of their prostitution is expected to be greater, and returning without it in full, they are made to feel all the tyranny of arbitrary power under the
the direction of unbridled passion. That covetous wicked wretches should so employ and use their female slaves, may be credited, when we reflect, that even in the better sort of families, it is an usual compliment which the Landlord pays to his Visitors, to present them with his female domestic slaves, to chuse among them at discretion; and if they refuse, or are reluctant to prostitute themselves for the gratification of worse than brutal lusts, the very person, who of all others is chiefly bound to protect them from injuries and ill usage, is the first to use violence and ill treatment to enforce obedience to his unnatural commands: On most of the estates indeed, the white people claim the right of gratifying their beastly appetites among the female slaves at pleasure. Accordingly, if they comply not at once when called for this purpose, they are ordered to be flogged. It is of no service for a woman to plead that she is married, or that a man claims her as his wife; for if she is handsome of person, every such objection is disregarded. Thus conjugal attachments among the slaves are wantonly violated; or prevented; and not seldom the injured party, unable to brook such usage, resigns life by self-violence, as a burden no longer worthy to be dragged about. The planters in general disapprove marriage among their slaves, and probably for the above among other reasons, and encourage the most promiscuous connexions; and, indeed, instead of being improved in moral habits by their example, they are in constant danger of being grossly corrupted. If evil communication corrupts even good manners, no wonder their untutored minds should suffer much by what they daily hear and see practised by those, who make such pretensions to learning and refinement, and presume to bear the Christian name. Can Christianity come recommended to the Heathen by those who dare offer such an outrage to all its precepts, prospects, and examples; and that while they suffer themselves to be numbered among its votaries, and to bear the most venerable of all names? No wonder the greater part of our adventurers to that quarter should fall an early sacrifice to their own excesses, or carry about with them an emaciated body, and, what is worse, a guilty, self-accusing conscience. If any of them have had the advantage of an early education, such examples as are set habitually before them must soon wear off every impression of virtue and piety from the mind, and gradually transform them into little better than incarnate devils. Sure, our sugar-islands is the last place in the world, where a person of religion, or even common humanity, would chuse his friend to go, be his temporal prospects there ever so flattering; for it is next
next to a miracle, if he continue long in this head-quarter of vice
and cruelty, but he is undone for Eternity. Tho' they should gain
an estate, will this compensate the loss of virtue? nay, the loss of
the soul, which constitutes the man? Too many of those who re-
turn thence to their native country, may ask, as one of their motley
race is said to have done, when drawing near the port whence
he set out, "Captain, I left something here when I went abroad,
"do you think I shall now find it?" Being asked what it was, he
rejoins, My religion. A commodity scarce indeed in the West In-
dies. Few import it, and still fewer carry it thence.

In the planters appears in the most striking light, what a dan-
gerous engine despotic power is, when not under the direction of
wisdom and virtue. Even self-interest, powerful as that principle
is in some breasts, must yield to the sudden impulses of violent pa-
fions; for anger is allowed to be a short madness. When chastife-
ment is put wholly in the power of the party offended, justice and
equity are not likely to find place. Hence, scarce fewer than a
score of extraordinary punishments have been devised, in the mo-
ments of passion and caprice, to correct and torture the poor slav-
es. Of these, the whip is more generally used, which is made of thongs
of cow-skin firmly plaited, with a thick strong lash. This instru-
ment of chastisement and pain is so formidable in the hands of some,
that by means of it they can take the skin off a horse's back, or
impress the marks of it on a solid board. When applied to a slave's
back, the very first stroke makes the blood spurt out, and so oft-
en as repeated tears away the flesh from the bones. Some young
gentlemen, on their first entrance into the islands, have been so af-
fected with such shocking scenes, that their frame was out of order
for a considerable time after, till, seeing them frequently repeated,
they lost the power of producing such effects. Yet, inhuman as
this discipline is, it is often so repeated after certain intervals, by
inflicting thirty-nine lashes at a time, that in the course of a few
days, from a hundred to a hundred and fifty, and sometimes two
hundred have been given; the poor delinquents being in the inte-
rim confined, or put in the stocks. After the application of the
lash, an ebony bush, which is more prickly than our thorn, is used
to bring out the clotted blood. When the shocking operation is
over, all from the hams to the small of the back appears one mass
of raw flesh, with wounds deep enough to hide one's finger, all over
oozing blood in abundance. In this state, the part affected is bath-

† G 7 ed
ed over with salt pickle, which produces such excruciating pains as throw them into violent fits and convulsions. The reason assigned for this last piece of torture is, to prevent a mortification, which, and death itself, is indeed the frequent consequence, in that sultry climate, of such barbarous usage. In this, however, that old saying is verified, *The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel;* while "a righteous man regardeth the life of his beast." Prov. xii.

10. Few escape this chastisement one time or other, and on some is it so often inflicted, that their backs, even when whole, present nothing but one undistinguished mass of lumps, holes, and furrows, which no time can efface. An evidence declares, That many have been known, after such whippings, sent to the field under a guard and worked all day, without being allowed any food, unless their friends gave them some by stealth out of their own poor pittance; and returned in the same manner at night to the stocks, and thus used for several days successively. Some die under the lash, and many, thro' want of food, and care to keep the sores clean, within a few days after. It is added, that to his own knowledge, this cruel whipping, hard working, and starving, have led many to commit suicide;—that no fewer than fourteen slaves, from bad treatment, rebelled on a Sabbath, ran into the woods, and there all cut their throats together. Such melancholy facts not seldom occur, and it is easy to see at whose door the principal part of the guilt lies. Saith Solomon, *'Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad,'* Eccl. vii. 7. and is it surprising then it should sometimes produce such effects on persons who enjoy so few advantages? We are told, that they are often badly treated for being averse to work, when in reality they are sick and unable. So much are some under the power of malignant dispositions, that several have been known to purchase slaves from their neighbours, who had some how unhappily offended them, with no other view than to wreak their passion of revenge upon them! Who are these? and whom do they serve?

In the towns, many have their slaves flogged on their own premises, in which case it is performed by one who is paid for it, and who makes frequent circuits in quest of delinquents. Such as chuse not to disturb their neighbours with their cries, send them to the wharfs, or goals, to be there corrected. At other times they are either publicly whipped round the town, or tied down, or made to undergo this in a standing posture. On the wharfs their arms are tied
tied to the hooks of the cranes, and heavy weights suspended to their feet, when the crane is wound up, so as to lift them nearly from the ground, and keep them in a stretched posture, while the whip is applied.

In the country the mode of punishment does not materially differ, which in general is, to stretch the slave upon the ground on his belly, while each hand and leg are held by another, or made fast to a stake. The punishment is inflicted by a negro, with a long whip tapering towards the point, at every lash of which the flesh is drawn out, without giving the least concern to him that presides. The Overseer sometimes cauſes the delinquent to be beaten before his own door. If he has any in the stocks, at a certain hour he orders a driver to follow him with his whip, when they are brought forth, stripped and bound to a ladder by the arms and legs. If the overseer thinks the driver does not lay home well enough, he sometimes knocks him down, or makes him exchange place with the delinquent, and undergo the same punishment. One of the witnesses declares, that he knew a negro die of a mortification of her wounds two days after she had been whipped: and another, that he saw a woman whose side, in consequence of the same usage, appeared in a mortifying state, and almost covered with worms, whereof she died in a day or two. A planter is said to have flogged his driver to death, whereof he afterwards boasted.

Besides scourging in the above inhuman manner, other modes of torture have been invented. Sometimes a collar of iron is put about a slave's neck, having hooks projecting several inches both before and behind, which put it out of their power to lie down in a posture of rest. Some have had a weighty cattle chain put on them, and heavy weights affixed, when drove a-field. The cutting of the ears close to the head, and putting the leg in an iron boot, obliging to wear it for some time, which sometimes occasions the loss of it, are mentioned also as a species of punishment. Likewise the cutting off a hand, for lifting it against a white person, tho' in self-defence; whence many have been maimed. This piece of cruelty and injustice is exercised, should the most insignificant white scullion depose to it, tho' there should not be a single witness of the fact. Some have had their teeth pulled or knocked out for the least offence.—As a specimen of the wanton barbarity too often exercised upon the slaves, the following instances are extracted from the Abstract.

G 2

A master
A master is said to have suspended one of his Female Slaves by the hand, flogged and cruelly cut her on the back, belly, breast, and thighs, and left her in that condition till her fingers mortified. Another is said to have been scourged with ebony bushes, so that the skin of her back was taken off down to her heels, and that she was then turned round, and flogged from her breast down to her waist, in consequence of which, unable to get up, she walked upon all four. A merciless overseer wreaked his revenge, or passion, on a poor slave by throwing him into the boiling cane-juice, probably while at work, whereof he died within four days. Another instance is recorded of a girl whom her master suspended by the wrists to a tree; and while the gentleman who attests the fact was occasionally passing by on the other side of a hedge, alarmed by her shrieks and cries, he saw him with a flaming torch or fiery stick in his hand, which he now and then applied with a kind of infernal pleasure to the lower parts of her belly, as she swung to and fro, till, by threats and stones, he obliged him to desist. Another is related of an old woman, who having run away, was brought back and hung up by the neck in a private apartment, without the least ceremony, in spite of all her cries and intreaties, locking the door upon her till she expired. The overseer and the clerk on the estate were the persons who executed, with their own hands, this mighty feat. We also find an instance of a Male Slave, whose leg his master ordered the surgeon to cut off, as a punishment for having eloped from him, a punishment not uncommon; which he refusing, the master took a bar of iron, and therewith broke it in pieces, enjoining the other to cut it off now in the line of his duty. Masters and overseers are represented as sometimes stabbing or shooting their slaves in a fit of passion, and with the utmost unconcern ordering their fellows to carry away their corpse and bury it. An overseer sent for a slave, and while talking with him, he hastily struck him on the head, with a small banger, and gave him two slabs about the waist, whereof he died that very night; yet the murderer was never questioned about the matter. "A manager of an estate in Tortola, sitting at dinner, in a sudden resentment at his cook, went directly to his sword, and ran the negro woman thro' the body, and she died upon the floor immediately; and the negroes were called in to take her away and bury her." In the same island, a negro having run away, the overseer having orders to take him dead or alive, found him a while after in one of his huts, fast asleep, in the day-time, and
shot him thro' the body. The Negro jumping up, said, "What, you kill me asleep!" and dropped dead immediately. The overseer took off his head, and carried it to the owner. Another witness knew a similar instance in the same island. "A planter, offended with his " waiting man, a Mullatto, stepped suddenly to his gun, on which " the man ran off, but his master _shot him thro' the head with a sin- " gle ball." One of the witnesses tells us of a certain wretch of "the name of Rushie, a Jamaica planter, who among other instances of cruelty, used to drop hot lead upon his negroes, which he often saw him practice during his residence in that island. He farther adds, that he once found the same planter, _in the act of hanging a negro, in whose favour he interceded in vain. "It was notorious "that he _bad killed many of his negroes, and destroyed them so fast, "that he was obliged to sell his estate." Another witness observes, that there was a certain planter in the same island, whether the a- " bove, or some other, appears not from the evidence, who "in three "years destroyed forty negroes, out of sixty, by severity." The rest of the conduct of this planter, as described by the evidence, was, after a debate, cancelled by the Committee of the House of Commons, as containing circumstances too horrible to be given to the world." But to recount particular instances of this nature were endless, and indeed the humane Reader will think he has got but too much of this sort; yet those given in the evidence, we are told, are only few, compared to what might be adduced if necessary.

A slave running away is punished variously, but on absenting himself for a certain time, he may be punished with death, and any who secret him. Should he be seen any day, except Sabbath, wandering about, and even then without a ticket, he would be taken up, put in jail, and advertised as a runaway.

The practice of turning off slaves when superannuated, or disa- "bled by accident or infirmity, which is called in the islands _Giving them free_, is to the last degree unjust and barbarous. When a master found any of his slaves no longer fit for his service, he turned them a drift, leaving them to beg, to steal, or starve. So much hath this prevailed among the planters, that of late some laws or regulations have been enacted in the islands with a view to restrain it; too plain a proof not merely of the existence of this crying e- " vil, but of its super-abounding. These poor miserable creatures are often to be seen (at least previous to the acts referred to, if not still) wandering about the wharfs and beaches, and in the roads and fireets,
streets, reduced to the very last stages of wretchedness, without raiment, without food, without habitation, having no friend to commiserate, till death puts an end to their misery and present state of existence together. Accordingly they are seen in want of every thing; some digging in the dung-hill for food; others lying miserable objects about the places mentioned above, scarce able to stir, till death, that restrains the wicked from troubling, and sets the weary and captive at rest, translate them beyond the bounds of mortal things. To the truth of all this several respectable witnesses bear their attestation; and indeed the Jamaica gentleman already mentioned * frankly owned that it was no uncommon thing with some, to neglect or turn off their slaves when past labour. Can such as are guilty of this profess the faith of Christians? or even the reason and feelings of men? By such treatment they may assert their despotic authority over their slaves, but it is at the expense of degrading human nature in their own person, and proclaiming themselves to the world the most abject and wretched of all slaves. Can any piece of conduct place human depravity in a more unfavourable light? Would a humane person so treat a dog or a horse that had for a time served him? But indeed humanity is not the predominant quality of a West India planter; for in that untoward soil this choice plant is such an exotic as seems scarce anywhere to prosper. But with the same measure that they mete withal, it shall be measured to them again.

To such a length was this diabolic spirit carried, that it is mentioned as the practice of a certain planter to "frame pretences for the execution of his old worn out slaves, in order to get the island allowance," granted in cases of public execution, which is forty pound, and it was supposed that he dealt largely in that way. The cruelties exercised on the slaves on some occasions are so barbarous, and attended with circumstances so shocking to modesty and humanity, that the House of Commons, when the Evidence relative to the Slave Trade came before them, after some deliberation, agreed, as suggested above, to suppress part of that evidence, as being quite unfit for the inspection of the Public.

Even women, and those too of rank and station, laying aside all that is amiable in their sex, make a principal figure in this tragedy. The malignant passions, indulged to excess, are capable of transform-
forming even the fairest part of creation into furies of the most hideous appearance. For the honour of the female character in general, and of the British ladies in particular, it were much to be wished that such degrading examples of barbarous usage could be buried in perpetual oblivion: but the theatre on which they were exhibited is too public to permit them to escape notice. This affords another powerful argument for the speedy Abolition of this debasing traffic, more debasing to those who carry it on, than to the unhappy objects of it; for the native tendency thereof is to impair and destroy every noble feeling of the human heart. What sort of education can be expected from mothers inured to scenes of cruelty and blood? and yet from them the dispositions and character of children must receive an early bias and a future cast, whether in favour of virtue or vice. Surely a British Senate, having once duly weighed the matter, cannot longer patronize measures which tend to reduce the Colonists into monsters in human shape; or, if so already, will be anxious to reform them by every eligible mean, that the children may not inherit the vices of the parents, and people our plantations, should they remain ours, with a motley breed which must entail an indelible disgrace on the parent State that owns and protects them. No acquisition of wealth can compensate for such a sacrifice, or appear in the eye of wisdom once worthy to be put in the balance with the ruin of human nature on the one side, and the depredations committed on it upon the other.

All the witnesses respecting the treatment of the slaves in the West Indies, agree that it was common not only for women of low degree, but even for those of respectability and rank to order and superintend, nay, sometimes to take an active part in the punishment of their slaves, and that with such severity as not seldom terminated in death. One of these demirep viragoes on a morning ordered the whipper to take two of her domestic slaves, who were decent women, and flog them for some slight offence they had given. The gentleman who attests this, being present, interceded, but all his remonstrances were in vain. He had the curiosity to follow them when the whipper bade them turn their back to him and uncover, which they instantly did. They bore the chastisement with great fortitude, which inflicted, each made a courtesy to the chastiser and thanked him, as is usual on these occasions. Probably the mistress would stand by to witness and direct the operation, had not the witness been present; if not take a part in it. In what
what light must such heroines, armed with a whip, or some other
instruments of cruelty, and transported in applying it into so many
furies, appear to their children and domestics? To see their features
distorted with passion, their bodies put in violent motion and una-
natural postures, and their hands besmeared with blood, would be,
quite intolerable in any woman, but must in a lady, (excuse, my
countrywomen, such an application of the term) be to the last de-
gree repugnant to every human feeling? Ah, the wretched off-
scourings of our fallen nature, sunk into the very lowest dregs of
depravity! These punishments are often inflicted for mere over-
sights or accidents, which a person of ordinary humanity would fre-
quently overlook, and that sometimes even without assigning a rea-
son. Spilling a cup of tea, or breaking a plate, and the like, is
deemed sufficient cause to merit such cruel treatment; or to extort
confession. Their arbitrary discipline is not confined to the female
slaves, who are more immediately under their inspection, but is also
exercised towards the males. With regard to both, they have been
seen ordering the mode of punishing them, and the number of lath-
es, which, if not executed to their mind, they flog the negro-driver
with their own hands. The flitting of the nostrils,—the knocking
out of their teeth,—the making them wear thumb-screws on the
left thumbs, which cause the blood to gush from the ends of them,
while compelled to work with the needle,—the making them to
kneel with their bare knees on pebbles, and to work at the same
time, are mentioned as modes of correction in common use among
domestics. An instance is adduced of two young ladies of fortune,
sisters, who were exasperated at the pregnancy of a slave belonging
to one of them; and, to wreak their resentment, tied her with their
own garters neck and heels, and then beat her almost to death with
the heels of their shoes. Another is mentioned whose head her
mistress bruised almost to a jelly, by beating her unmercifully with
the tame weapon, and would have killed her outright, had not two
military officers happened to come in just time enough to prevent
it—and all for the crime of not bringing so much money as she ex-
pected from on board ship, where she had sent her, for the purpose
of prostitution. Among the various expressions of female cruelty
specified, the pouring hot sealing-wax into the wounds of the slaves,
after flogging them, is particularly stated; and also the use of
pepper in a manner too horrid and indecent to be related.
Besides the instances specified in the information, the gentleman on
evidence declare, that they could produce many similar, if necessary; they being almost innumerable among the domestic slaves.

What a wretched situation! to lie at the mercy of every wanton fally of caprice and passion, in minds corrupted by the unbridled exercise of unlimited power. A lion or a tyger from the forest, roused into fury by the most urgent of all appetites, is not more ferocious and insatiable, than a proud imperious person burning with choler and resentment. That the white people in the West Indies must be in general grossly depraved in their morals, is but too evident from the small account made of such barbarous treatment of their fellow-creatures, taken in connexion with other circumstances. This is overlooked not only in men, but even in women, and those too of wealth and fashion, who are not one whit the worse received in any modish circle for what would render them quite odious in most civilized nations under heaven, and fix an indelible stigma on their sex. So much indeed are their notions of female delicacy and decorum perverted, by custom and example, that it is deemed a necessary property of an industrious wife, that she be rigid and severe in punishing her slaves. Did the law afford them protection and redress, they would be less in the power of the cruel and capricious; but this provides none, at least none but what is easily evaded, and will be evaded, while, to use a common phrase, the law-makers are the breakers of the law. Does not the same reason still hold, why we should not exceed in punishing our fellow-creatures, who may be in our power, for their offences; namely, lest they should appear vile in our eyes?—"And it shall be, if the wicked man be worthy to be beaten, that the judge shall cause him to lie down, and to be beaten before his face, according to his fault, by a certain number. Forty stripes he may give him, and not exceed: lest if he should exceed, and beat him above these with many stripes, then thy brother should seem vile unto thee." Deut. xxv. 2, 3. Here there is nothing left to the caprice of a master; and the judge is restricted, and enjoined to preside while his sentence is executed; that the rights of humanity may not be infringed, nor the demerit of the offence exceeded. What a striking contrast to the mode of punishing our slaves by the planters!—Tho' their laws require, as of old, that the stripes inflicted on a slave for an offence should not exceed thirty-nine; yet, to keep to the letter of it, and at the same time gratify their irascible and headstrong passions, they either split a crime into many, for each of which
which they inflict the number specified, or divide the times of punishment, by allowing intervals between, in which case they can multiply the stripes at pleasure. Thus some flog them at three different times in one day, others at greater intervals; confining them in the interim in the flocks. The evidences give it indeed as their opinion, that the Slaves reap little or no benefit from the late salutary regulations enacted in the islands, with the ostensibly view of amending their situation; as these were passed not from love to them, but to silence murmurs and complaints in the mother country: for they add, that, so far as their experience went, they were seldom, if ever, put in execution. They however serve a valuable purpose, for they are instead of a thousand witnesses, to prove that the evils complained of really existed among them. Even in cases of murdering a Slave, atrocious as that crime is, no legal inquiry is made, unless to recover damages, if the murder is committed by a neutral person. Does not this fly in the face of that Divine mandate, *He that killeth any man shall surely be put to death.* Levit. xxiv. 17. Does not this include Slaves, unless their masters can prove that they are not of the human species? And, is it not added, by the same authority, "Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country?" To him who ought to wield the sword of justice with an impartial hand, the great Judge of all addresses himself; "Thine eye shall not pity, but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." If we may credit the evidence on this subject, innumerable instances of bloodshed are suffered to pass unavenged; and who may call in question an evidence corroborated by the testimony of so many respectable witnesses, who reflect, that, according to the Divine law, and the laws of our own land, two or three such witnesses are sufficient to establish any fact, even in cases of life and death. Are not the causes then which God assigns for punishing ancient Israel to be found in our Colonies? so that the same charge may be brought against them—"Their iniquity is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and their cities full of perverseness: "for they say, The Lord hath forsoaken the earth, and the Lord "seeketh not." Ezek. ix. 9. Seeing God expressly declares, that blood defileth a land, and that a land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that sheds it, *Numb. xxxv. 33;* how polluted must our islands be in his sight; and what a tremendous load of guilt and wrath must hang over them! Whether
ther men will hear or forbear, doubtless the effusion of blood crieth to Heaven for vengeance on the murderers, and the cry hath long since reached God's ears, and will procure a solemn answer; whence, as they spared not the blood of the helpless and innocent, he may give them blood to drink; for they are worthy—as he hath of late given to some of their neighbours, and brethren in iniquity.

Thus the Reader is presented with a series of the principal facts recorded in the evidence, respecting the mode of procuring Slaves on the Guinea Coast,—the mode of treating them on the Middle Passage, and in the West Indies; with such reflexions, all along, as naturally flowed from the subject. He is, however, to bear in mind, that it is only a short abstract of an abstract; yet his feelings will probably tell him, that he has got enough of the subject. Not a single circumstance is knowingly misrepresented, or exaggerated; and indeed there is too little temptation to either. Some of the evidences declare, That every description of the treatment of the Slaves, with which they had met, falls short of the reality, and, compared with that treatment on the spot, would be found too favourable. No wonder then, they should “denounce the vengeance of God on the white men, their oppressors,” alledging that burning chaldrons, and such things, are reserved for the future punishment of white people, for oppressing their Slaves.

The evidence goes also to prove, That the Natives of Africa, procured, transported, and enslaved as above, are equal to the Europeans in Capacity, Feeling, Affection, and Moral Character; and that where individuals are found inferior in these, it is to be ascribed to their connexion with the white people, or to the trade in Slaves. Several instances are produced to shew the strength and delicacy of their social affections. They are allowed to be very benevolent and hospitable, friendly, grateful and affectionate, harmless and innocent, just and punctual in their dealings, and as capable of virtue as the whites. They are described as susceptible of all the social virtues, as possessed of generosity, fidelity, charity to all in distress, and a strong attachment on the part of the parents to their children. Some of the witnesses declare, that they never knew an instance of a Native of Africa who did not own the existence of a Supreme Being. One farther remarks, that he always considered them as a keen, sensible, well-disposed people, where their habits are not vitiated by cruel usage on the part of the Europeans, or intercourse with them.
In reviewing the nature and effects of this Traffic, we should remember that many of the Slaves imported into our Colonies, have been persons of rank and distinction in their own country, often sons of their chiefs, or their children, and not seldom princes, or sons of their kings. Few or none of them indeed have been originally slaves, for such there as possess slaves will not part with them; but are free men, till captured for the use, and at the instigation of Europeans. These, taught from their earliest years to view themselves as superior to the common herd of mankind, carry with them, even into the land of their captivity, such sentiments and views as elevated birth, in every state of society, naturally inspires; and hence no wonder their minds should revolt at the very thought of being reduced by white people, the objects of their too just aversion, to servitude at a great distance from their native country, and prefer the most imminent danger, or death itself, to the degradation and servility of such a state. Actuated by these views, we find one of them, who had been a great man in his own country, refusing to work for any white man, and being therefore punished by the overseer, he desired him to tell his master, that he would be a Slave to no man. Being ordered to another estate, as he passed along a bridge, with his hands tied behind his back, he jumped into the water and disappeared. They naturally deem it as ignoble and degrading to serve white people, as we would do to be compelled to serve them, and indeed with good reason. How then will they brook such usage from them as the evidence relates? They experience the too literal accomplishment of the curse of Canaan, "a servant of servants shall he be," Gen. ix. 25. with this exception, that it is not to a people worthy of the name of brethren; for in too many of their oppressors the old proverb is verified, Set a beggar on horse-back, and he will ride to the devil.

Let any of our Slave-merchants, or of our representatives, who are for continuing this traffic of man in man, reflect with themselves for a moment, how they would like to be dragged from Britain, from their friends and possessions by a lawless banditti of Africans, under the specious pretext of fair commerce, and to be treated in their country, as we treat them in our islands; and yet in the eye of reason, and in the sight of God, they have as good a claim to our servitude as we have to theirs. Let them not spurn at the supposition, for it is quite in point, and tho' man, ever partial to himself,
self, may now vainly think otherwise; yet is it certain the Father
of the spirits of all flesh will so conduct himself at the final Audit,
where every proud distinction shall be entirely and for ever abolished. "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to
you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the Pro-
phets. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged:
"and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you a-
gain." Matth. vii. 12, 2. These unerring dictates of Holy
Writ are founded in natural justice, and must approve their equity
to every man's conscience, so soon as made known to him. God
heareth the cry of the afflicted, and " executeth judgment for all that
are oppressed," and therefore let their oppressors prepare to meet
him in judgment, and there defend their cause. Job xxxiv. 28. Psal.
ciii. 6. For those who now afflict them, or, being in authority, ne-
glect to exert that authority for their protection, and the redress of
their wrongs, must answer to him for their conduct; and would do
well to bear in mind, that their Redeemer and Guardian is strong, the
Lord of hosts is his name, and " accepteth not the persons of princes,
but regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the
work of his hands." Jer. 1. 34. Job xxxiv. 19.

One would imagine that the hundredth part of the evidence pro-
duced, respecting the enormous criminality of this traffic, were suf-
ficient to convince any reasonable person of its illegality; and, no
doubt, where the judgment is not biased by interest, and the heart
of course steeled against conviction, it certainly would. This alone
can account for the stand made for its continuance, and that by ma-
ny of whom quite other things might be expected, yea, by some who
have every reason to be ashamed of the concern they have too long
had in it. There are who so mind earthly things that they glory
in their shame. Have we humanely abolished Slavery in those
parts of the British empire where its rigour was never felt; and
shall we still continue it where it rules with a rod of iron, and cha-
tifies with scorpions? Whatever causes might operate to its Aboli-
tion at home, these and ten thousand more might be urged for ex-
tending the same favour to the Colonies. In this respect, one law
should be to all who live under our government.

HAVING taken a transient survey of the treatment of our Slaves
in the West Indies, let us see what construction the Divine law puts
on that treatment. So carefully did God provide for the safety of
the meanest member of the Community, that if a man, in his passion, so smote his bond-servant or slave, that he lost an eye or a tooth, from that moment he forfeited every claim to his service. "He that smiteth a man so that he die, shall be surely put to death." This is expressly limited to a servant or slave, one said to be bought with his money—though the instrument of correction should be a rod, from the use of which death might not be expected to follow, provided he did not survive a day or two. "And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, that he die under his hand; he shall be surely punished." Exod. xxi. The nature of that punishment is elsewhere clearly defined. "And he that killeth any man, shall surely be put to death;" any man, be he bond or free, black or white. Lev. xxiv. 17. The same penalty is expressly annexed to the crime of kidnapping. "And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his bonds, he shall surely be put to death." Exod. xxi. 16. The planters may not be guilty of this crime in express terms; yet, while they purchase and detain those who are so taken, having access to know this, they are to all intents and purposes, in the eye of justice, brethren in the same iniquity. These laws are perfectly consonant to the dictates of natural equity, written on every man's heart, and of course still binding on the conscience before God, whence every master who so beats, or otherwise injures his slave, that he die within two days, according to the divine law, supposing his right to him valid, which that of our planters to their slaves is not, is a murderer in his sight, and therefore ought not to be permitted to live. As such, tho' he may escape deserved punishment at the hand of man; yet the Lord our God, who is no respecter of persons, will not suffer him to escape his righteous judgment. The guilt of murder cannot be done away from a land, God and not man being judge, and his verdict admitted, but by the blood of him that sheddeth it; for no man, or body of men, hath power here to mitigate, much less reverse the sentence, or commute the punishment. Can murder be less heinous in the sight of the great Author of life under the merciful and enlightened dispensation of the Gospel, than it was under the Mosaic economy? And yet we find uncertain murder, by a divine appointment, expiated under that dispensation with peculiar solemnity. The elders and the judges of the adjacent cities were enjoined to measure the ground to the place where the slain person lay, and whatever city was found most con-
contiguous, the elders of it were to wash their hands over the substituted victim, at the same time appealing to God with respect to their own innocence, and their ignorance of the murderer: "Our hands have not shed this blood, neither have our eyes seen it. Be merciful, O Lord, unto thy people, and lay not blood to their charge." Deut. xxi. Would to God that our Judges and Juries would lay this duty to heart, who suffer murderers of various sorts to escape, in defiance of the express mandates of Heaven, while he who alienates his neighbour's property, perhaps to no great amount, is punished with death! They cannot plead ignorance of the authors of such crimes, or of the laws human and Divine which fix, beyond possibility of mistake, the nature of their punishment. To them may we not apply the words of a prophet to king Ahab; "Thus saith the Lord, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people?" 1 Kings xx. 42.

From the preceding remarks, relative to the commerce in question, supposing for a moment the permission given to the Jews, to purchase and enslave their fellow-creatures, were still in force, our planters must be allowed to have, in general, forfeited all right to their slaves; nay, to have forfeited their own life for their treatment of them. It is certain, according to the evidence, that many of them are chargeable with murder, and that of the deepest dye, on the footing of the Divine law, the decisions of which, no powers on earth can alter or reverse; and should such be suffered not only to live, but to detain still the reward of their iniquity? They may indeed still share the protection of human laws, but have forfeited and renounced all claim to the protection of Heaven. Will not the Judge of all the earth do right? Will he always seem to wink at the most enormous crimes? Will the earth always cover the blood of so many of his intelligent offspring? and will their cry have no place? "Behold their witness is in heaven, and their record is on high," Job xvi. 18, 19. Did not the same God that made us in the womb, make them? Did not one fashion us in the womb? Job xxxi. 15. and shall he not then have respect to the work of his hand? "Are not the eyes of the Lord in every place, beholding the evil and the good?" "And do they not run to and fro throughout the whole earth to shew himself strong in the behalf of them" who groan under the rod of oppression? Prov. xv. 3. 2 Chron. xvi. 9.

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Is not this commerce in human kind mentioned as one of the causes why God should visit mythical Babylon with exemplary vengeance: her merchandise, among other articles, is described as consisting in slaves and souls of men, Rev. xviii. "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and the shall be utterly burnt with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." "Is not destruction (saith Job) to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?" If destruction and a strange punishment await wicked men, and the workers of iniquity in general; what must be the fate of those who can perpetrate such enormities as attend this traffic? The description Eli- phaz gives of wicked men, applies with too great propriety to such, and have they not reason to fear their fate, which is indeed not seldom realized in their experience? "How abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water? The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor. A dreadful sound is in his ears; in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him. He wandereth abroad for bread, he knoweth that the day of darkness is ready at his hand. Trouble and anguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, as a king ready to the battle. For he stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He shall not be rich, neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth. He shall not depart out of darkness, the flame shall dry up his branches, and by the breath of his mouth shall he go away. Let not him that is deceived trust in vanity; for vanity shall be his recompence. Fire shall consume the tabernacles of bribery. They conceive mischief, and bring forth vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit." Job xv. Because these things are not speedily executed, let not the hearts of any be set in them to do evil; for they will be all fulfilled in their season: both hand join in hand, the wicked and impenitent shall not be unpunished. Lord, is not their sin very grievous, and the cry of it great, and come unto thee? Gen. xviii. 20, 21. Let thy mercy prevent them, and the power of thy right hand turn from their evil ways, and their doings that have not been good, that they may do no more so wickedly. Let not man tyrannize longer over man to his own destruction: But send thy word to enlighten, to heal, and to reform the nations, that the dominion of the Prince of Peace may become as universal
fal in its extent, as it is benign in its sway, and everlasting in its duration.—While the nations are shaking, may the Governor among them take to himself his great power and reign,—command the South to give up its swarthy tribes, and the North not to hold back—to bring his sons from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth. May that God who delights in Righteousness, and beholds the upright with a pleasant countenance, increase the friends of truth, liberty, and justice, and crown with the desired success the laudable exertions now made for the speedy suppression of a traffic, the most horrid and criminal that ever disgraced the annals of this, or any other nation! May those who have so honourably taken the lead in pleading the cause of injured innocence, receive a hundred fold into their own bosoms the joy they impart to others; while a much oppressed race, in this and future generations, rise up and bless them, and embalm their memory in a grateful remembrance!

But the Abstract of the Evidence now before me, reminds one of my purpose to subjoin a few other articles contained therein, and which merit a place in this publication. As the preceding view of the Slave Trade, in all its stages, furnishes too many cogent arguments to enforce its speedy abolition; so the concluding chapters of the above production contain such matter of information as still farther ascertains the necessity of such a measure, both in point of moral obligation and sound policy. That the Reader may have a complete view of the subject in all its parts, enabling him to form a proper judgment upon it, the great outlines of that information are also here subjoined.

The fears and precautions of some are alarmed at the thought of the suppression of the trade in question, as if our national prosperity would be necessarily affected by such a measure. So far is this, however, from being the case, we have sufficient ground to assert, upon duly weighing existing causes, and their probable, or uniform effects, that the period we cease to trade with Africa for Slaves, may be viewed as giving rise to a commerce, valuable and beneficial both to them and to us. Hence the proposed and desired abolition comes recommended to us, not only by the dictates of humanity and natural justice, which too many disregard; but also by the consideration of national prosperity, and personal interest, which, to the great body of a commercial people, furnishes a more powerful motive. The gentlemen who gave evidence on this business, and
and had access to be acquainted with many parts of the Continent of Africa, inform us, that the soil is capable of producing the most valuable commodities, and, for several, no way inferior to the East Indies. Among these are particularly specified millet of various sorts, pulse, judia corn, and rice of a superior nature to that produced in the Carolinas; also excellent cotton, indigo, sugar-cane, and tobacco. Pepper of various sorts, particularly the Cayenne are raised here, as also a species of ginger, cardamum, wild nutmegs and cinnamon, one sort of which is not inferior to that imported from the East Indies. The soil and climate are indeed allowed to be exceeding favourable for the cultivation of spices in general. There are gums of various kinds; and a celebrated Naturalist, among nearly three thousand plants, which he collected there, found a great part, if not the whole of the Materia Medica, as well as drugs of various manufacturing uses. Here are also to be found iron, wood, bar-wood, cam wood, and ebony; also various woods, roots, and vegetables for dyeing. The root of a certain plant dyes scarlet, and the stalks a beautiful yellow. Orange and brown dyes are produced from vegetable productions, grow in such abundance, that the whole army of one of the Native Princes is dressed in cloth dyed from these. A kind of bean is also mentioned, which is used in dying, and carried on camels for this purpose, in quantities, to Morocco. Beautiful wood for cabinet work is to be found in great plenty, and also fine timber, fit for ship-building, in great abundance on different parts of the coast. One of the gentlemen who ascertained the above, as consistent with his own knowledge, adds, that "he once saw a "vessel actually built of the woods of Sierra Leon," where a purchase hath been lately made by some of the British merchants, with a view to a settlement, having for its professed object to counteract the influence of the Slave Trade, and encourage a spirit of commerce among the Natives. There is a certain species of wood, found in plenty all over what is called the Gold Coast, which is considered as the best in the world for ship-building; it possessing the remarkable property of being proof against worms, and corrosion by iron. To the above valuable articles are added, wax, honey, palm-oil, ivory, and gold; besides plantains, yams, sweet potatoes, eddoes, cabbage, coco-nuts, bananas, pine-apples, oranges, limes, wild grapes, and indeed all other tropical productions. One gentleman on evidence states, "that there are many parts of Africa, where the soil "is the same as that in the Province of Guezzarat in the East Indies,
"dies, where he found the real sandal-wood." May not the above, and similar commodities, which the soil of Africa is said to produce in such abundance, and of such excellent quality, furnish ample scope for British industry, and for enlarging the sphere of our commerce, that we perfect no longer in a traffic which bids defiance to Heaven, proclaims war against human nature, lays extensive provinces desolate without inhabitant, and destroys the morals and the lives of myriads of our fellow-creatures, and fellow-subjects? Strange that the mercantile part of the nation, concerned in this traffic, should so long overlook such sources of fair and profitable commerce, and chuse to continue one which is repugnant to every feeling of a heart not yet corrupted by the base principles and motives, as well as to all the doctrines and precepts of natural and revealed religion! It has become very fashionable to deny the innate depravity of human nature, and extol the inherent goodness of the human heart: but the dealers in this traffic afford too melancholy proofs of the degradation of our nature from its original rectitude and dignity. Whence else is it, that we love to tread in forbidden, tho' destructive paths; while those inviting ones of Wisdom are neglected, whose ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace? Is not the ancient proverb, which experience verifies, a clear proof of this, *Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant, tho' earned by iniquity, and rewarded with disgrace.* Prov. ix. 17.

That the Natives of Africa possess a spirit of commerce, enterprise, and industry to avail themselves of the advantage which the natural productions of their climate put in their power, we are also assured. To encourage them in this would be, doubtless, more honourable and beneficial to ourselves, and more humane and equitable towards them, than to employ them, as heretofore, as the panders of our avarice, and the instruments of oppressing and captivating each other. Shall Britons still bow, in this respect, to Mammon? and sacrifice, as they have already too long done, the peace, the liberty, the happiness, and the lives of millions at the shrine of this dung-hill deity; while the Father and the Friend of mankind points out an eligible plan by which we may meliorate their condition, increase the flock of human felicity, and, at the same time, honour and enrich ourselves? That wretch deserves to die a thousand deaths, who prefers his own little interest to the happiness of myriads of his kind, and would put a little filthy lucre in the balance.
lance with every thing that men count dear, and the enjoyment of
which alone can render life supportable. How dignifying that
Christian principle which requires that a man lay down his life
cheerfully, when the good of his brethren calls for it, when com-
pared to that for did principle which would sacrifice every thing to
its own gratification?

The evidences are of opinion, that the Natives would cordially
embark in a new trade with us in the productions of their own
country, did not the trade in slaves prove an insuperable imped-
iment in the way; and that this genius and industry are such as to
render commerce with them of the highest consequence both to
them and to us. They tell us that they have an extraordinary ge-
nius for commerce, and that their industry is in all respects pro-
portionate to their demands. Besides serving themselves, some raise an
overplus of corn and rice for the supply of certain towns, and oth-
ers for the shipping that come among them; which they ex-
change for European goods. Some go in armed bodies, even a
month's journey inland, with various articles of trade, which they
received from the vessels and traders in exchange for slaves, and
sell them to their own countrymen. They are ever ready to wood
and water the slips when called, and hire themselves out to work
at a low price both in boats and on shore. In short, they are ne-
ever indolent or idle when they can work to advantage, and are al-
ways willing to do any thing for which they have a prospect of be-
ing paid. They expressed their wish to trade more in their own
produce; and said, that were a greater supply of rice wanted for
the shipping, they would put more land in cultivation; which ap-
ppeared in the increase of their industry with the rise of their de-
mands. One of the witnesses expresses his assurance, that, if pro-
perly encouraged, they would make any barter the Europeans plea-
sed. But the trade in slaves effectually prevents the extension of
commerce in the natural productions of the country; for the mer-
chants give such constant encouragement to this, that the minds of the
natives are of course so engrossed therewith, that they can attend to
little else. This barbarous trade not only diminishes the encou-
ragement for every other, but renders it dangerous for the Natives
to make the attempt, however willing; as hereby they would rife
being kidnapped, and carried into perpetual slavery. So great is their
dread of this, and precaution against it, that they never venture a-
broad into the fields, unless well armed, while any slave-ships are
on
on the coast. This throws a restraint upon their industry, and entirely checks every other branch of commerce. It is indeed observed, that, in those parts of the coast where there is little or no trade for slaves, they are actually more industrious than in those places where trade is carried on. Cultivation is found in by far the highest state where that inhuman traffic does not exist, or exert its ravages; and just the reverse where it had unhappily gained footing. Some of the black traders being asked, what they would do if the Slave Trade were abolished, replied, They would soon find out another; and that they had employed themselves in cultivating the ground for their support, during some interruption it received in the time of the late war.

To erase the unfavourable impressions the Natives have in general got of the Europeans, in consequence of this traffic, will require time, and a line of conduct quite the reverse of what they have experienced from us hitherto. One, writing on this subject, observes, that, "with a few exceptions, the English and the Africans reci-
procally consider each other as consummate villains, who are always watching opportunities to do mischief;" and that if you charged a Black with unfairness and dishonesty, if able to clear himself, he would answer with an air of disdain, What! do you think I am a white man?" To justify such a charge, we are assured, that, in our dealings with them, "not an article that is capable of diminution or adulteration is delivered genuine or entire. They are considered as a people to be robbed and spoiled with impunity. Every art is employed to deceive and wrong them. And he who has most address in this way, has most to boast of." It is added, "Thus the Natives in return, in proportion to their commerce with the Europeans, and particularly with the English, become jealous, insidious and revengeful."

So little are some impressed with the sufferings and afflictive situation of their fellow-creatures, that we sometimes hear such random expressions as the following, "The slaves are happier in the Euro-
pean Colonies than they were in their own country;" they are as well treated as many of our servants, and are happier than our labouring poor, or the natives of the Highlands, who are obliged in crowds to seek an asylum from oppression in a foreign land. Such vague assertions must proceed from gross ignorance, or something that places human nature in a still more unfavourable light. If a servant happens to be with us ill used, he can claim the protection of
of the law, and sue for damages; or, at worst, he is free at the expiration of his term. Our labouring poor, whatever be their hardships, enjoy many comforts, which render their condition unreasonably preferable to that of the slaves in our plantations, and liberty, which gives them all a relish; whence many of them share more real happiness than the rich with all their envied greatness. If contented with their lot in life, as the appointment of a wise and good God, and exercising love to and a dependance on him, this cannot miss being the case; for in this respect human happiness is more equally divided than appears at first sight. Indeed any comparison between the state of the two, as one of the evidence expresses it, is an insult to common sense. That many of the poor Highlanders are in a very wretched situation, appears but too evident from a well authenticated account, lately laid before the public*, to the indelible disgrace of too many of the land-keepers, who cannot endure to see their tenants prosper under them; yet the very consequence of their misery in their own country is a plain proof how much their situation is preferable to that of the poor slaves. The proprietors of land may screw them in their rents beyond what they can afford to give,—may deny them leases to make it worth while to be at pains to improve the soil, which is in general poor, and turn them off at pleasure to shift for themselves; but they cannot deprive them of the privilege of endeavouring to provide for themselves elsewhere, and better their condition whether at home or abroad. This is one happy fruit of freedom in the very lowest stages of life, of which the slaves, be they ever so wretched, are deprived.

That their situation in the Colonies is, in their own estimation, and in reality, not once to be compared with what they might enjoy in their own land, did European avarice permit them to remain there undisturbed—appears from the whole evidence, yet we find a separate Chapter in the Abstract of which this is the professed object. To render an African more happy in the West Indies, in the capacity of a slave, than he was in his own country, it must be made appear that he was a slave there, and that African slavery is more rigorous and oppressive than that which prevails in the Colonies, and also

* See Appendix to the last Anniversary Sermon, preached before The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge, which contains much useful information on this head.
also that a man can bear bondage of the severest kind, and misery of the most complicated nature, with greater ease among strangers and oppressors in a foreign land, than at home among his countrymen and relations. The very reverse is the ease, if we may credit the report of several of the witnesses. According to them very few slaves in the Colonies are such as have been slaves in Africa; because those who have them there do not like to sell them. They are said to be better used than those in the West Indies, and indeed to be never ill used by their own people—to be treated as Europeans treat those of their own family: for they eat and drink with their masters, and are not distinguishable from them; so that one of the evidence declares, he never saw any whom by their treatment he could say were slaves, they being all well used, and treated with kindness. If even slaves are thus allowed to be much happier in their own country than in the West Indian Colonies, there can remain no doubt that freemen must be still more so. Were it otherwise, whence comes it about that even the best used of them in the West Indies still express their praise of their own country, and their regret at leaving it; while they speak with pleasure when sick, of their going to die, and of their going home from the White Man's country? Must they not be allowed to be the best judges of what gives them pleasure or pain? In vain would you persuade them that they are happy, while they feel themselves to be miserable. There is no reasoning a man out of his senses; so his own feelings are to him instead of a thousand arguments. In vain is their situation represented in a mild and flattering light, while they cannot find it to be so.

All the witnesses, who give an account of the state of the slaves in the sugar-islands, agree in this, as a fact quite notorious, that the Africans, when brought into the Colonies, frequently destroy themselves. The causes of this are described to be in general ill treatment, the desire of returning home, and the preference of death to life when in the situation of slaves; all of which are so many proofs of their superior happiness in their own country. So frequent are such acts of self-violence on the plantations, that it hath been commonly remarked, "that the Gold Coast Negroes, when driven to despair, always cut their own throats, and those of the most indolent country most openly hang themselves." Some instances of both are given in the evidence, out of many that might be adduced. So much did a Negro boy detest slavery, that he refused all support,
port, which brought on a dropsy that killed him. A person who was of some consequence in his own country, to whose case I have elsewhere referred, resolving he would be a slave to no man—while conducted with a guard, he threw himself over a bridge they had occasion to pass, and perished in the water. These are two facts which one of the evidence relates from his own knowledge, waving a great many others of which he had not so distinct a recollection.

Another attests that he has known many instances of suicide, among new Negroes especially, both by hanging themselves, and dirt-eating, which they knew to be fatal. In one year he lost twelve new Negroes this way, tho' he fed them well. On remonstrating, they constantly told him, they preferred dying to living. A great proportion, adds he, of the new Negroes, that go on sugar-estates, die in this way. Another instance is given of six slaves, purchased from a Guinea ship, that were put on a small island to plant cotton. The overseer, the only white man on the island, leaving them on Saturday night, on his return on Monday, found all the six hanging near together in the woods. The witness, having enquired of the most sensible Negroes what could be the cause of such actions, received for answer, that they would rather die than live in the situation they were in.

As a farther proof of the superior happiness enjoyed by the Negroes in their own country, we are justly referred to the extravagant joy and mirth they discover at the funerals of their fellow-slaves, from a fond persuasion that the deceased have not only escaped from slavery, but gone home to their own country. On these occasions, they sing, make merry, and dance; and addressing the remains of their departed fellow-slaves by name, they exclaim, He is gone to Guinea. All this is attested by those who had repeatedly seen the mode of conducting their funerals; and the Gentleman from Jamaica, already referred to in these sheets, when speaking on that subject, said, that on these occasions they continued their extravagant mirth, (he did not chuse, for an obvious reason, to call it rejoicings) throughout the night, to the great disturbance of the neighbourhood. Upon no other occasion are the slaves seen to discover the least sign of happiness. This is the more remarkable, as in Africa their funerals are allowed to be attended with the most mournful cries. One of the gentlemen on evidence, who hath an estate in Grenada, observes, that tho' he might have had the means of putting it under cultivation,
vation, yet having had an opportunity, when on the coast of Africa, of knowing how happy the negroes were in their own country, and knowing the unjustifiable means by which they were made slaves there, their cruel usage when on board ship, and their severe usage when in the West Indies, he could not consistently with his ideas of what is right, purchase any slaves, and particularly as he did not intend to remain on the plantation himself.

It appears to be clearly proved, both from the opinions of persons in the Evidence, as also from other facts, that the Africans, being well used, may so increase by population in the Colonies, as entirely to supersede the pretended necessity of continuing the Trade in Slaves.——The Reader will be pleased to see a few things serving to prove this, which are extracted from the Abstract. One of the evidence declares, that he knew three estates in the island of Jamaica, which he particularly mentions, on which there was a considerable increase of the slaves by birth. Another confirms the above, as to one of these estates, adding, that the proprietor had not bought a negro, for ten or twelve years, during which time, however, the slaves had considerably increased; and also, that he knew another estate, where the negroes were all Creols, a term denoting those who are born on the plantations or islands. A variety of estates are specified, where the original stock of slaves was not only kept up without any new additions by purchase, but increased, and even doubled. Indeed, this is allowed to be always the case where they are but tolerably well used, and might be still more so were they treated with greater care and attention. One estate is mentioned, on which there was not a new slave bought for forty years back, and yet they increased; and several others who kept up or increased their number for a considerable time, without any addition by purchase. Domestic slaves are allowed to increase universally by births, owing to their being in general better treated than field-slaves. Those imported to America have increased so by propagation, that, after supplying themselves, in some instances the overplus were shipped to the West Indies. Even where they were not thought to be well treated, in consequence of increase by births, the proprietors have had too many for their own use. The evidences, however, unanimously maintain, that the usage of slaves is better in America than in the West Indies; and authorize us in saying, That a slave in the former, said to be not well used, would be considered as well used in the latter. The Africans are said to be very proli-
fic, and the climate of the West Indies is allowed to be more favourable for their constitutions than that of America; and yet in Virginia, to which few slaves have been imported from Africa since 1772, they increase so rapidly, without importation, that it became a general opinion, that it was profitable to hold slaves on this account, exclusive of the profits of their labour.

From the above and other considerations, more largely given in the evidence, it may be justly concluded, that all the labour of our West Indian plantations may be carried on by the present flock of slaves, if well treated, without any future importation; whence the necessity of continuing that horrid trade in the human species, to the cultivation of our sugar-lands, and the prosperity and revenue of the mother-country, on which so many strenuously insist, exists only in imagination. But tho' the very existence of our West India commerce depended on the continuance of the horrid trade in Slaves, does he deserve the name of a Christian, who wishes the existence of such an evil, an evil indeed of infinite magnitude, that good may come out of it, viz. The importation of cotton, sugar and rum? That the trade in question is a real, an enormous evil, seems to be the sentiment of the nation at large; and shall we then say respecting it, "Let us do evil that good may come:" for in this case our damnation would be just, peculiarly and manifestly so, the God of Truth being Judge, whose decisions will not yield to the acts of any earthly tribunal. Rom. iii. 9. Some indeed there are, strange to tell! who affect to rise in rank and knowledge above their fellow-citizens, yet scrupule not to declare and argue, that they see not evils enough attendant on this traffic, that the abolition of it should compensate the least advance in the price of commodities imported from our West India islands. One is almost tempted to imagine, that such strenuous advocates for modern slavery, with all its infernal train of consequences, must have very dull heads, or very unfeeling and wicked hearts, which ever they please to allow.

To plead for the continued importation of the Natives of Africa, after the inexpediency of such a measure hath been so fully and satisfactorily demonstrated, involves a wanton insult to Heaven itself, as well as to the common sense of mankind, and the most inexcusable violence to our common nature, and all its sacred claims. What a poor pitiful figure must such fordid misanthrops, or men haters, as they may be justly called, make in the eyes of superior intelligences! My soul, come not thou into their secret, into their assembly, mine
mine honour be not thou united with them. Let their wisdom perish from the earth.

We find in the Abstract some of the principal causes specified, implied in the terms good usage, of the increase by births, and certain regulations pointed out, by adopting which the Colonies might insure an universal increase. The most remarkable instance of good usage we have in the practice of a certain French Marquis of St Domingo; whose example, recommended by its success, merits the imitation of all planters. On his estate the slaves were never overwrought. He suffered no improper intercourse between the sexes: every man had his own wife, and no white person was suffered to invade or break that union. The sick and pregnant had the benefit of an hospital. The latter, when far advanced, were taken in there, and employed in work suited to their condition, till the time of their delivery. They were excused from field-labour, and not called forth thence, till the child could be supported without the mother's help, or their strength permitted to return with it to the husband, and take the chance of work. The above humane and prudent management superseded, after some years, the necessity of any new supply of slaves. So much did it conciliate their affection, and of course reconcile them to their situation, that it would give pleasure to see how his slaves used to look upon him as a father. But leaving his estate for a couple of years to the care of a nephew, matters went to wreak. At his return, instead of the happiness which reigned when he left it, he found nothing but misery and discontent. In his absence, as is too common, the whites had seized upon the women, as fancy and corrupt appetite led them; their husbands, resenting such usage, ran away, and the labour falling heavier on the rest occasioned discontent, and made the work go on badly; so that it cost him two years to re-establish order, and restore things to their former state. We here see what good usage, and the reverse are capable of producing.—In addition to the above regulations, other two are mentioned as practised to good effect on some estates. On one, instead of obliging the negroes, as usual, to carry the canes on their head, some mules were employed for that purpose, which so alleviated their labour, as to occasion an increase by births, whereas before it was otherwise. The other cause producing this effect was, the proprietor's attention to his slaves, going frequently among them, hearing their complaints, and not suffering them to be punished without his knowledge.
The very reverse of the above is allowed by the evidence to be the too general practice in the Colonies. Forcing the slaves to labour beyond their strength, is said to be the means of bringing many of them to the grave. Their complaints arose generally from extreme fatigue, as a little rest, without the aid of medicine, usually restored them. This part of their hard usage was owing to a general opinion, that if they were not kept constantly at work, they would become unruly; whereas nothing tended more to give them a disgust both at their masters and their service. The various punishments of unlimited severity inflicted on them, perhaps for very trivial faults, doubtless tend to harass human nature, and, in conjunction with other causes, to decrease population. A number of the witnesses agree in attesting that no attention is paid to the marriage of the slaves, so that one man should be restricted to one woman, but that there is a promiscuous intercourse amongst one another as they please. Not only so, but the white people also violate the chastity of the female slaves at discretion, and indulge in the most promiscuous connexions with them; often using means to infuse this at which humanity must shudder. The usage of the pregnant women, in respect both of labour and chastisement, also the little attention paid to them and their offspring, after delivery, with the other circumstances mentioned above, too well account for the necessity, on the old plan, of a continued supply of new slaves: but then these evils may and ought to be remedied, and of course that necessity would cease, which affords no solid argument against the proposed abolition. When infants are kept from the mother for the first eight days, and given to a woman who has a child of her own, perhaps some months old, and who, besides, is hardly wrought, and poorly fed, is it strange they should not survive that period? They accordingly die, in general, of convulsions, or the locked jaw, within the eighth day; whereas, where they have warm bowels, kind treatment, and are fed to the mother's breast, few are known to die. Obliging the mother to go out to the field too early after delivery, where hard labour makes her milk feverish,—and exposing the infant in a basket to the too powerful rays of the sun, and unsheltered from the rains, is mentioned as a prevailing practice, which often proves fatal to the negro children. It is time an effectual check were given to such wanton outrage on human life, in its most helpless period, and, the more especially, when we reflect how much blood-guiltiness we contract at home, by the continued neglect of punish-
punishing Child-murder, in one part of the British dominions. It is easy to see, that the above circumstances must militate against the propagation of the slaves, yet they are of such nature as easily admit of a remedy. Justice and humanity require the speedy suppression of the cruel traffic of the Natives of Africa, tho' no other argument could be urged in favour of such a measure, but its probable tendency to induce the planters to treat their slaves more humanely, while Providence permits them to remain in their power.

Several other regulations are deduced from the Evidence, which, if adopted, would greatly lighten and diminish plantation labour, and hence serve to increase the comfort and the number of the slaves. The introduction of the plough is recommended, where that may be used, as a mean of saving the slaves much labour. It is observed, from an experiment made, that one plough, and two men, do as much work as thirty negroes, after which little labour is required to prepare the ground for the cane. In the earthing of canes, the East-Indian shovel is recommended as greatly preferable to the hoe, the instrument commonly used in the West Indies for that purpose; for a gentleman, who had access to know both, declares, that with the former two persons will earth up more canes in a day than ten with the latter. Instead of giving premiums on crops, which lead the overseers to press the slaves to perform more work than human nature could bear, it is recommended, that they should pay so much per head for the increase of the slaves. Also that grass-picking should be entirely abolished, by laying out pasture land, or that a grass-gang be selected for that purpose, that this hitherto oppressive task may not encroach on the usual intervals for rest. The grinding of their corn for them, which might be effected at no great expense, would greatly relieve them. This labour devolves on the women, who are obliged, after returning home, to grind corn for present supply, by the strength of their arms rubbing it between two stones. They must also rise with the earliest dawn to prepare their food, that they may be in the field in time to prevent punishment. This is a great discouragement to marriage. It is also recommended, that tasks should be assigned them, when the nature of the work will admit, which hath been practised in America to the great advantage both of the planters and the slaves. This would supersede the need of drivers, who serve only to force work, and four of whom are usually employed to a hundred slaves, and also save them from
from the degrading discipline of the whip, so often and barbarously exercised in the West Indies. Hereby the weak obtained the help of the strong, and nature had time to recruit her exhausted powers, so that they return with fresh vigour to their work, and accomplish more in one hour than they could otherwise do in two.

One of the gentlemen on evidence tells us, that he tried the politic method of working by task with sixty hired Negroes in Jamaica, and found his benefit in it. They had a certain extent of ground measured out to them every morning, which they finished by one or two o'clock, and had the rest of the day to themselves. The driver carried no whip, and only went occasionally to see that the work was properly done. This last circumstance is thought to form a difference in the treatment of American and West-Indian slaves greatly to the disadvantage of the latter. The avoiding of the whip, by which these are incessantly harassed, is alone of great importance. Several other advantages attend it both to masters and slaves, which ought to induce the planters to adopt it without exception.

Hereby the work is apportioned to the strength of the slaves, and the weak are not obliged to keep up with the strong, as on the old system. Hereby too they would have leisure to cultivate their own little pittance of land, and to prepare their provisions; and yet have sufficient time to rest: all which would greatly add to the ease and comfort of their lives, and of course to their natural increase. Those employed as above, are said to have finished by one or two o'clock the same quantity of land, which took others, on the adjoining field, till dark, even with the driver. The reason is obvious: man was made to be led as a reasonable creature, but not to be driven as a beast, and the more humanely treated, the more will his mind lie to his work, and the better will it succeed. As by this means, time would be gained to raise provisions for themselves, so it is recommended to the planters to allow them a sufficient quantity of land for this purpose, the food so raised being found more conducive to their health and vigour than any dry or other provisions imported. Epidemic distempers are ever found most fatal to the poor and ill-fed slaves. An instance of this is mentioned, which attacked all ranks of Whites and Blacks, of which few of the well-fed negroes died, and not one white man, but it proved fatal to the poor, ill-fed slaves.

It is also recommended that every encouragement should be given to the moral and religious instruction of the slaves, a thing culpably
pably neglected in the West Indies, as we learn from the evidence and other sources of information. Were the planters careful to make their Slaves more intelligent, and better men than they find them, instructing them in the great principles and duties of Religion and Morality, there would be less occasion to reprobate slavery, and pray for its speedy abolition. To the honour of many masters in America, and the immortal felicity of thousands of their slaves, this hath been the case; whence their house of bondage became, in the most important sense, the land of their liberty and enlargement. But, to apply a common saying, can we suppose Satan will reprove sin? that those who are so remarkable for every thing impious, vicious, and blame-worthy, should recommend and enforce any thing pious, virtuous, and praise-worthy? Their great object is to acquire a fortune speedily, whether by fair or foul means, and to this every thing must yield. There has been, however, in the knowledge of some of the witnesses, here and there a solitary instance of attention paid to slaves in respect of religion and morals. The evidence says, that where this hath been encouraged they have shewn a better disposition and behaviour, that they have been also more generally attentive to marriage, and have increased more by the births. What might be then expected, should this become more general? It is certain, was the plan of managing the slaves, which the Abstract recommends, universally adopted and enforced in the Colonies, their increase would be proportionably accelerated; and that such a plan is practicable, and stands recommended by the dictates of justice and humanity, must appear evident to every one who duly considers it.

To shew the weakness and futility of the pleas usually urged by the advocates of the Slave Trade in its defence, even on their own principles, various means are pointed out by which the deficiency arising from the natural deaths of the present slaves might be supplied, till the succeeding generation were grown up for labour. As these means have been already suggested in the course of the evidence, it is unnecessary to resume them here. Suffice it to say, that, by adopting a more mild and humane system, and introducing animal labour where it may be used, the lives of the present slaves would be greatly lengthened out, drivers, watchmen, &c. which the present wretched plan requires, might be converted into field-slaves while cultivation might be carried on to the present extent, and with better effect, by half the present number. For pomp and shew,
a train of domestic slaves are kept up, the one half of whom, or more, might be spared for field service. And it is allowed, that white people, by habits of temperance and regularity of hours, might be employed, without prejudice to their health, in the different branches of mechanics, which have been appropriated to the slaves. No people work harder than our sailors there. Here I shall only add, that our Slave-mERCHANTS at home may annually provide for the Colonies a fresh supply of hands, at much less trouble and expense, and with more honour, than by procuring slaves from Guinea. Crimes of every kind abound among ourselves, and since they are so zealous to punish these in the poor Africans, where they have no legal evidence of their existence, let them discover the same zeal at home, by applying to the Legislature to transport to our sugar-lands the crowds of thieves, swindlers, robbers, adulterers, &c. that swarm every where in the British dominions. These have done much to forfeit their liberty, but as for the poor natives of Africa, what have they done? Let them employ the officers of justice and others, to discover and apprehend all persons of the above description, wherever they can be found, without respect of rank or wealth; for this would grant a happy delivery to our prisons and gibbets, which are at present so well occupied. Thus would they acquire the laudable name of reformers, and deserve the thanks of their country: instead of meriting its execration as the horrid scourge of an unoffending race, the degraded panders of West Indian cruelty, avarice and lust, and the criminal instruments of increasing our national guilt, and hastening national judgments.

It is mentioned as a prevailing opinion in the Colonies, that it is cheaper to buy or import slaves, than to be at any pains to increase them by Population. This opinion, so wicked and inhuman in its principle, has been productive of a world of mischief. Hence, if a negro supported his hard fare and hard labour for seven years, the period particularly specified in the evidence, his death was accounted nothing. A certain planter is mentioned, who reduced his calculation to four years, treating his slaves most cruelly, and saying that four years labour of a negro was enough for him; for that he then had his pennyworth out of him, and he did not care what became of him afterwards! Did ever a merciful man so express himself with respect even to his beast? That the notion of its being cheaper to buy than to rear slaves is not well founded, appears from this circumstance, that one-third of all that are bought die in what is
is called the seasoning; that is, the time an African takes to be so habituated to the Colonial labour, as to be counted an effective supply. One of the evidence recollected an instance of a planter who bought a lot of thirty new negroes, and lost them all within the year; and, taking it on an average, one-third at least of the new negroes imported, are said to die in the first three years. Hence, those estates which bought the greatest number of new negroes, so far from being thought the most flourishing, were found exactly the reverse. Ill usage is said to be inseparably connected with the buying system. The former invariably lessens the number and the labour of the slaves, and both unite to diminish the produce of the estate. The person mentioned above, as working up his slaves in four years, was reduced to the necessity of delivering up his property to satisfy his creditors; and those who prefer buying new slaves to rearing on their own estates, are said to be very commonly involved with Guinea merchants; such unnecessary purchase being the main cause of their embarrassments, and the accumulation of their debts. Being obliged to mortgage their estates and slaves, and not able to relieve them, both came to be sold by auction, much under value; so that some have been known to be obliged to become overseers where they were proprietors before. One of the witnesses expresses his assurance, that seven-eighths of the planters would have been in much better circumstances, if they had not bought any negroes, during the time of his residence among them, but had used those they had with humanity and care. In Carolina the Legislature laid a duty on the importation of slaves, which amounted to a prohibition, for this express reason, because they found, that the purchase of new slaves had involved the planters greatly in debt; and the same cause seems to produce the same effect in a still higher degree in the West Indies. The above are some of the circumstances which tend to show the great mistake of the prevailing notion or opinion, that buying slaves is cheaper than breeding them by encouraging population. The preference of the latter mode is fully established; for it appears from the evidence, that wherever estates are mentioned in the evidence as flourishing, and the proprietors of them as clear men, it is where they have adopted the principle of breeding, and of treating the slaves they have had with humanity and care. In some parts of America, the breeding of slaves was considered so profitable, that people held them for this purpose alone, independently of any prospect from the fruits of their labour; as we do cattle in this coun-
try. Many other advantages appear from the evidence to result from the system of rearing Slaves, and treating them well. Suicide and rebellion are peculiar to the imported Slaves, and what humane person would not, if in his power, remove every temptation to these. The master's interest, safety, and peace of mind are materially concerned; for it fully appears, that the home-bred Slaves, or Creoles, alone are reconciled to their lot, and hence do much more work than others in the same time.

The Abstract concludes with some remarks respecting the policy of extending the cultivation of the Colonies, by the continuance of the Slave Trade. One of the evidence states, by means of official papers from the Custom-house, that the British West India islands, in their present state, produce annually a greater quantity of sugar and rum than is requisite for the consumption of Great Britain, her immediate dependencies, and the kingdom of Ireland, and, to extend the cultivation, he considers to be very impolitic, for two reasons:

First, Because such extension can only be made from British capitals, that might be disposed of to better purpose at home, and which must thus be transferred to the most vulnerable parts of the empire, and rendered precarious in a degree inadequate to the profit arising from them, from the contingencies of climate and of war: for if but one island should be lost, it is a complete loss of so much capital to the empire. Their extremely hazardous situation appears from the capture of six of them, and the final separation of Tobago in the late war.

The other reason is, because the present produce of the islands being more than sufficient to answer the demand of Britain and her other dependencies, what is produced by extending their cultivation, must be exported to foreign markets. The great impolicy of this, the evidence states from the consideration, that the French islands can afford their sugar (which he shews by official papers) so much cheaper than the British, that, in order to enable our planters to sell it at the same price as their rivals, Government must give large and destructive bounties. He farther states, and that too officially, that before the late war, when our islands were in their most prosperous condition, the French planters were able to sell their sugars from twenty to thirty per cent. cheaper than the British planters:—and he conceives it to be a maxim thoroughly established in national commerce, that it is unwise to push forward by monopolies, restrictive
restrictive regulations, or bounties, any branch of commerce or manufactures, which cannot be carried on, after a fair trial, within fifteen per cent. of the prices of other rival countries.

It is thought that rearing their own slaves would in a great measure remedy the above inconvenience, as the opposite practice hath been ever found attended with debts, mortgages, and ruin; and put it in the power of the British planters, without any destructive bounties from Government, to meet their rivals on an equal, or perhaps a more favourable footing in foreign markets. Another gentleman states his belief, that if the Slave Trade were abolished, and every proper regulation adopted, to encourage the breeding of negroes in the West Indies, the flock of them would gradually increase, so as to be adequate to the clearing and cultivation of all the islands, to the full extent of which they are capable; and that without needing any capital from the mother-country, to the hazard and detriment of the nation and planters, but to the certain emolument of both.

These strictures and matter of fact contained in the evidence, tending to prove the expediency of the proposed abolition in point of interest and sound policy, and the moral necessity of that measure, are closed with the remarks of one of the witnesses, whose judgment on this subject deserves to be regarded. "Finally," says he, "as the result of my observations and most serious reflection, I hesitate not to say, that the trade for slaves ought to be abolished, not only as contrary to sound policy, but to the laws of God and nature; and were it possible, by the present inquiry, to convey a just knowledge of the misery it occasions, every kingdom of Europe must unite in calling on their Legislatures to abolish the inhuman traffic. This is not a hasty-nor a new sentiment, formed on the present discussion, which has, in no respect, influenced my judgment. The same opinion I publicly delivered fifteen years ago in Kingston, Jamaica, in a society, formed of the first characters of the place, on debating the following question, (proposed, I think, by a well known gentleman, who had been forty or fifty years the most eminent Guinea factor there.) "Whether the Trade to Africa for Slaves was consistent with sound policy, the laws of nature and morality? This discussion occupied several meetings, and at last it was determined by a majority, "That the Trade to Africa for Slaves, was neither consistent with sound policy, the laws of nature and morality."

I have
I have hitherto omitted to lay before the Reader the pernicious consequences of the African Slave Trade, with respect to the Seamen who are employed in it. This part of the evidence occupies several pages in the Abstract, and furnishes too many weighty reasons for the speedy suppression of that hateful traffic, in addition to those which may be deduced from the rest of the evidence. As the view here given of it is much more full and circumstantial than was at first intended, to overlook a branch of the subject, so interesting to us as a commercial nation, would leave it materially defective, and put it out of the Reader's power to form a proper estimate of the nature and fruits of this odious traffic. The order in which things occur in the Abstract has been all along attended to, except in this particular, which however is not very material.

Is it no object to a Christian and mercantile state, whether they still prosecute, or discontinue a branch of commerce, which is found from experience to prove destructive to the health, and lives of many thousands of our sailors, that valuable part of the community? Should motives of humanity and religion fail to move, it might be expected that, at least, reasons of sound policy, or national prosperity would prevail. The secular interest of the body politic is too dearly bought at the expense of the happiness of well-deserving individuals, even in circumstances where these two are incompatible, which however is not the case here.

Tho' the statements of individual witnesses sufficiently prove that the Slave Trade is the grave of our mariners, to remove every ground of objection here, the account given in the Abstract is extracted from one that was made up for the inspection of the House of Commons from the muster-rolls of such slave-ships as have failed from the ports of Liverpool and Bristol for a number of years back, and were returned into the Custom-Houses there. From this account it appears, that out of 350 vessels, employing 12,263 seamen, 2643 were lost, more than a fifth of the whole number. These muster-rolls, however, cease at the West Indies, and consequently include not the whole loss of seamen sustained in that traffic. On arriving there, some desert and others are discharged, few of whom recover from the dislemers they have caught; for when a vessel has once sold her slaves, the requires but few hands to bring her home. Owing to one cause or other, nearly one-half of those who go out with the ships are constantly left behind. On this point, a certain Captain of the merchants' service, tells us, that the crews of the African
can ships, when they arrive at the West Indies, are so generally in
a sickly, debilitated state, that he knew not a single instance to the con-
trary; and that the seamen, who are discharged, or desert from
those ships there, are the most miserable objects he ever met with.
He has frequently seen them with their toes rotted off, their legs
swelled to the size of their thighs, and in an ulcerated state all over.
He has seen them on the different wharfs in the islands of Antigua,
Barbadoes, and Jamaica, particularly at the two latter, and also ly-
ing under the cranes and balconies of the houses near the water-side
expiring, and some quite dead. To corroborate this account, a Cap-
tain of the Navy afferts, that among the crew of a Guinea ship con-
sisting of seventy, he was able to select but thirty, who could have
been thought capable of serving on board any ships of war. He adds,
that when those thirty were surveyed by order of the Admiral, he
was reprimanded for bringing such men into the service, who were
more likely to breed distempers than to be of any use, and this at a
time when seamen were so much wanted, that almost any thing would
have been taken. This he declares was generally the case; for that
he had many opportunities of seeing the great distresses of crews of
Guinea ships, when they arrived in the West Indies. Another Cap-
tain of the Navy adds, to the same purpose, that tho' he may have
boarded near twenty of these vessels, he was never able to get more
than two men, fit for being impressed, thro' fear of infection, having
seen many of them in a very disordered and ulcerated state.

The above is confirmed by a great many witnesses, who farther
describe the seamen belonging to the slave-vessels as wandering a-
bout the streets or islands full of sores and ulcers, and apply to them
the epithets of sickly, emaciated, object, deplorable objects; and men-
tion them as destitute and starving, and without the means of support;
no merchantmen taking them in because unable to work, and men of
war refusing them for fear of infection. Many of them are described
to be laying about in a dying state; and others as found actually
dead, and the bodies of some as seen carrying by the Negroes to be
interred. As a farther proof of all this, they are termed, by a pec-
culiar cant-name, according to the place they usually haunt, Whar-
fingers, Beach-Horners, and Scowbankers.

So insupportable is this diseased and forlorn state of the seamen
from the Slave Trade, that the different evidences have witnessed
it wherever they have seen Guinea-men arrive. They at the same
time assert, that they never saw any other than Guinea seamen in
that
that state in the West Indies. The reasons why such vast numbers are left behind there, as are found in this deplorable state, are these: Some seamen leave their ships for ill usage—Captains in that trade are said usually to treat them ill, that they may desert and forfeit their wages. It is stated, that they purposely leave them behind, and that it was no uncommon thing for them to send on shore, a few hours before they fail, their lame, emaciated, and sick seamen, leaving them to perish.

This trade is observed to be productive of bad effects to the seamen, not only while employed in it, but even after their return to their native country. One of the evidence who was Surgeon for sometime in the Bristol Infirmary says, that the greatest part of the diseased seamen there, were such as once belonged to the slave-vessels, and tho' these generally went out better than when they came in, yet so much was their health impaired that there was no hope of restoring it perfectly. No such unhappy consequences accompany any other branch of commerce whatever; and there is every reason to believe, that a trade in the natural productions of Africa would by no means be equally destructive to the health or lives of seamen. In slave-ships insurrections and contagious disorders, the constant concomitants of the traffic, must be natural causes of mortality to the sailors, which cannot exist in vessels employed in any other trade. The few merchantmen that trade to the Guinea coast, and all the men of war which occasionally visit it, experience no uncommon degree of unhealthines, and suffer no such proportion of loss.

The Seamen employed in the Slave Trade are allowed to be in general barbarously used, which is supposed, not without reason, to spring from the very nature of this trade. They are worse fed, both in point of quantity and quality of provisions than the seamen in other trades, and have little or no shelter night or day from the inclemency of the weather, during the whole of the Middle Passage, both which all or most of the evidences acknowledge. Some instances of personal ill usage, extracted from the larger Evidence which contains many more, are to be found in the Abstract. A certain gentleman affirms, that the seamen in all the Guinea-men he sailed in, except one, were generally treated with great rigour, and many with cruelty. Among many instances he recollected, he relates one of a chief mate, whose name, as that of the ship and of the Captain he mentions. This man would knock down the sailors for any frivolous thing with a cat, a piece of wood, or a cook's axe, with which he
he once cut a man down the shoulder, by throwing it at him in a passion. He also mentions a certain Captain who was in use to tie up the men, and give them four or five dozen lashes at a time, and then rubbing them with pickles. Made use of certain vulgar expressions. He himself, when his cabin boy, was tied up by the hands, flogged with a cat, and kept hanging for some time, and all for the heinous offence of accidentally breaking a glass. He adds, that the seamen are generally treated ill when sick, that he has seen them lie and expire upon the deck. He has heard the doctor, when the men intreated to have their wounds or ulcers dressed, tell them, with oaths, to take their own dung and dress them. Another gentleman mentions a boy whom the chief mate was always beating for the merest trifles. Having one time threatened him for not getting his tea-kettle soon enough boiled for breakfast, the boy fled to the fore chains, and the other attempting to haul him in, he jumped overboard, and was drowned. He relates another instance of the same mate's cruel treatment of the men. Ordering one of them, whom he was in use to beat unmercifully for very trifles, to go into the women's room to scrape it, the poor man, who was very unwell, said he was not able. Being however obliged to go, because he observed him not to work, and got the same answer as before, when asked the reason why he did not, he struck him on the breast with a handspike he threw at him, whereupon he dropped down to appearance dead, and, tho' he afterwards recovered a little, died the next day. He relates other instances of ill usage, and says, that in all slave-ships they are most commonly beaten and knocked about for nothing. One is of the boatswain and five of the crew of a Bristol ship, who had made their escape and were taken up again. The Captain ordered them to be chained by the necks, legs, and hands, and to have each a plantain a day only. The whole six died in their chains, the first raving mad.

Another of the evidence, speaking of the treatment on board a slave-ship in which he failed, says, that the chests of the crews were brought upon deck, and starved and burnt, and themselves turned out from lying below; and if any murmurs were heard among them, they were inhumanly beaten with any thing that came in the way, or flogged, both legs put in irons, and chained abait to the pumps, and there made to work points and gaskets during the Captain's pleasure, and very often beat just as he thought proper. The witness often saw the Captain as he walked by, kick them repeatedly, and should
should they say anything he might deem offensive, he has immediately called for a lick to beat them with; they, at the same time, having both legs in irons, an iron collar about their necks, and a chain. When arrived on the Guinea coast, if not before released, they were put into the boats, and made to row backwards and forwards as occasions required, still both legs in irons, an iron collar about their necks, with a chain locked to the boat, and at night taken out, and locked fast upon the open deck, exposed to the heavy rains and dews, without any thing to lie upon, or to cover them. This was a practice on board the ship alluded to.

He farther says, that a similar treatment prevailed on board another vessel in the trade, in which he had failed. One of the seamen had both legs in irons, and a collar about his neck, and was chained to the boat for three months, and very often most inhumanly beaten for complaining of his situation, both by the Captain and other officers. Becoming at last so weak, that he could not sit on the boat's seat, he was put on board the ship to pick oakum, and allowed only three pounds of bread a week, and half a pound of salt beef per day. In this situation he remained with both legs in irons for the latter part of the time, only freed of his iron collar. Coming aft one evening to beg something to eat, or he should die, the Captain unmercifully beat him, using a great many reproaches, and ordered him to go forward, and die and be damned. He died in the night. On board the ship where this took place, the ill treatment is said to have been general.

Another instance is mentioned. One of the hands complaining that he was long at work without meat or drink, the boatswain severely beat him, and cut his head in several places, so that he was all over blood. While telling the witnesses the reason of such treatment, by order of the Captain, the mate, the surgeon, and boatswain came forward, and all of them together, fell to beating him with their canes. The surgeon struck him on the side of his eye, so that it afterwards mortified, and was lost. After being so beat that he could not stand, he had both his legs put in irons. Thus was he put into the boat next morning, and locked to it with a chain, and obliged to work till his strength quite failed. Thus he remained some weeks, lying before the foremast, till, being almost dead, and seemingly insensible, he was ordered to be taken to the shore, and there left any where. He died soon after, and was thrown over board. It is mentioned that he was kept in irons on the deck even
even after he was very ill, and that his allowance was stopped; it
being the surgeon's opinion that this was the only method of curing
any of them who complained of illness. If these were his best pre-
scriptions, he might keep them to himself.

Another evidence being called upon to speak to the ill usage of
seamen, says, That on board one of the ships which he names, he
has seen them tied up, and flogged with the cat frequently. He
relates an instance of an old man, who was boatswain of her; that,
having one night some words with the mate, he was severely beaten,
and had one or two of his teeth knocked out. Threatening to
jump over-board, he was tied to the rail of the quarter-deck, and a
pump bolt put into his mouth by way of gag. The witness
always considered him as a quiet, inoffensive man. On board the
same ship was a black boy, who was daily beaten. One day after
being so used, he jumped through one of the gun-ports of the cabin in
to the river. Being picked up, and asked if he did not expect to
be devoured by the sharks; he said he did, but that it would be
much better for him to be killed at once, than to be daily treated
with so much cruelty.

The same witness adds, That on board this vessel, the black cook
happening one day to break a plate, he had a fish-gig darted at him,
which would certainly have killed him, if he had not fainted or
dropped down. He was tied up, stripped, and flogged with great
severity. After that, he had salt-water and cayenne pepper rubbed
upon his back. Also, the carpenter's mate having suffered his pitch-
pot to catch fire, was flogged as above. He farther relates an in-
stance of a person who came on board in a convalescent state, ha-
ving formerly belonged to another Liverpool vessel, which had been
overfet at New Calabar. He was severely beaten one night, for
what cause the evidence did not learn, upon which he applied to
him for something to rub his back with. The Captain interfered,
forbidding to give him any thing; and ordering him to go forward.
The witness visited him very often, as he lay under the forecastle,
at which times he complained of his bruises. After this, he had a
return of his flux, and died in or about three weeks of the time he
was beaten. The last words he ever spoke to him were, after shed-
ding tears, "I cannot punish him," meaning the Captain, "but God
will." So general was the ill treatment in this ship, that he
says, there were only three out of fifty persons, who escaped being
beaten.

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To the above agree the observations of a respectable Commander in the navy, who, tho' he was never in the Slave Trade, had yet great opportunities of obtaining information on this subject. He says, that those seamen, whom he saw in this trade, while on the coast in a man of war, complained of their ill treatment, bad feeding, and cruel usage. They all of them wanted to enter on board his ship. He observes, that it was the custom for the seamen of every ship he saw at a distance, to come on board him with their boats; most of them quite naked, and threatening to turn pirates, if he did not take them. This they told him openly. He is persuaded, if he had given them encouragement, and had had a ship of the line to have manned, he could have done it in a very short time, for they would all have left their ships. He has also received several seamen on board his ship from the woods, where they had no subsistence, but to which they had fled for refuge from their respective vessels.

That the above are not the only instances of barbarity contained in the evidence, and that this barbarous usage is peculiar to, or springs out of the very nature of the trade in slaves, may be inferred on from other accounts. A Captain in the merchant-service declares, on evidence, that he believes the seamen are, in general, treated with great barbarity in the Slave Trade, and he does not know of their being ill treated in any other service.

Another Captain of the navy concludes, from the many complaints he received from seamen, while on the Guinea coast, that they were far from being well treated on board the slave-ships. He mentions one who swam from a Liverpool vessel in the trade, to claim his protection, while he was in extreme danger of being devoured by sharks. His Captain wrote for him, but he refused to return, saying his life would be endangered. He was therefore kept on board till the ship was paid off, and approved himself a diligent, willing, active seaman. On a like account, several of the crew of another slave- vessel belonging to the same port, swam towards his ship, when passing by, two of whom only reached her. The day before the greater part of the crew came on board in a boat, to complain of ill usage; but he returned them with an officer to inquire into and redress their complaints. It is probable that such application procured only fresh matter of complaint, whence so many of them had been induced to make the above desperate attempt the very next day. He also adds, that he received many letters from seamen.
seamen in slave-ships, complaining of ill usage, and desiring him to protect them, or take them on board. He is inclined to think, that ships trading in the produce of Africa, are not so ill used, with respect to their men, as those in the slave-ships. Several of his own officers gave him the best accounts of the treatment in a vessel trading for wood, gums, and ivory, near which their ship lay for some weeks.

Another Navy Officer says, that on his first voyage, when lying at a Fort on the Guinea coast, they were hailed by some seamen belonging to a slave- vessel then in the roads, who requested that they might be taken from on board their own ship, and put on board the man of war; for that their treatment was such as to make their lives miserable. The Captain sent his boat to the Guineaman, and one or two men were brought on board him. On his second voyage, he recollects that on first seeing a certain slave-vessel, he carried a press of sail seemingly to avoid them. Not finding this practicable, the Captain brought a seaman on board the day after, whom he wished to leave, complaining that he was a very riotous and disorderly man. On the contrary, he proved very peaceable and well behaved, nor was there one single instance of his conduct, from which he could suppose that he merited the character given him. He seemed quite happy at quitting the Guineaman, and informed the witness, that he was cruelly beaten both by the captain and surgeon; that he was half starved; and that the surgeon neglected the sick seamen, alleging that he was only paid for attending the slaves. He also informed him, that their allowance of provisions was increased, and their treatment somewhat better when a man of war was on the coast. He recollects another instance of a seaman, whose leg was shockingly ulcerated, that requested a passage with them to England; alleging that he was left behind from a Guinea trader. He described various instances of ill treatment he had received, and confirmed the account above given by the other sailor, respecting the increase of their provisions, and the abatement of their ill treatment, when a man of war was on the coast. During the witness’s stay on the coast, the ship’s boat was sent to a Guineaman, and on her return three men were found concealed under her sails, who had left the slave-ship, and assigned as the reason, that their treatment was so bad, that their lives were miserable on board—beaten, and half starved.—There were various other instances which escaped his memory. He says, however, that he has never heard any complaints from West-Indiamen, or other merchant ships;—on the contrary,
contrary, they wished to avoid a man of war; whereas, if the Captain with whom the witness failed had listened to all the complaints made to him from sailors of slave-ships, and removed them, he must have greatly distressed the African trade.

A Captain of the Navy, speaking on the same subject, asserts, that as to peculiar modes of punishment adopted on board the Guinea traders, he once saw a man chained by the neck in the main top of a slave-ship, when passing under the stern of the Crescent man of war, in Kingston-Bay, St Vincent's; and was told by part of the crew, taken out of the ship, at their own request, that the man had been there one hundred and twenty days. He adds, that he has great reason to believe, that in no trade are seamen so badly treated as in the slave-trade, from their always flying to men of war for redress, and when ever they come within reach; whereas men from West Indian or other trades seldom apply to a ship of war. This circumstance of seamen in the slave trade being desirous of leaving their ships, and of those in other trades staying by them, when in sight of men of war, is confirmed also by other Captains of the Navy. We are told, by the Editors of the Abstract, that several specific facts of the ill treatment of seamen in the slave trade have been omitted in that account; as also the confirmation given of it by several other respectable witnesses besides those whose names are there mentioned. From the original evidence, seven Captains, we are told, may be traced, who have had the merit of going against the current of bad example in the abuse of seamen in this trade; but what are these to the number employed in it, during the period to which that evidence extends? Considering such general ill usage on board the Guinea traders, it may seem strange they should be able to procure hands to man them. To this the evidence replies, "that whereas some of them enter voluntarily, the greater part of the seamen in that trade are trepanned; for that it is the business of certain landlords to make them intoxicated, and get them into debt, after which their only alternative is a Guineaman, or a jail."

The last evidence cited in the Abstract on this subject, is a gentleman, who had for some years every opportunity of observing the usual treatment of sailors in this service; and he agrees with the account already given of it. He however adds, that he believes the slave trade itself is a great cause of it;—for he thinks that the real or supposed necessity of treating the negroes with rigour gradually brings
brings a numbness upon the heart, and renders most of those who are engaged in it too indifferent to the sufferings of their fellow-creatures; and he supposes there is no trade in which seamen are treated with so little humanity as in the African slave trade. He has himself seen the sailors, when sick, beaten for being lazy till they have died under the blows. The Reader has now whatever was deemed material for his information in the Abstract, and if more fully and circumstantially than was at first intended, it is presumed he will easily dispense with this liberty. What remains will be taken up with some observations, which the review of the subject suggested, but which could not be so well introduced in the course of the preceding detail.

I beg leave to mention a circumstance, which hath fallen within the compass of my own knowledge, because it tends to corroborate the account given of the ill usage of the sailors employed in the trade to Africa in slaves. A number of years ago, a relation of my own, a stout healthy young man in the seafaring line, was somehow prevailed upon to take a voyage to Guinea,—from which he returned in such an ailing situation as in the course of a few weeks brought him to his grave. He complained much of the treatment he received on board, and, if I remember well, attributed his distress to it, and the nature of the trade, which he always reproached in the strongest language. During a fever which he took on board, he declared there was less attention paid him than if he were a dog, while he lay neglected and exposed on the deck of the vessel, without any the least shelter from either heat or cold; and that had it not been for the kind offices of a female slave, who shewed him every attention in her power, he would have doubtless perished for want of care. Often, he said, did he earnestly pray that God would take away his life, so very wretched was his situation. The account he gave of the treatment of the slaves in the passage to the West Indies, corresponded exactly to that published in the Abstract. There is one circumstance, however, not mentioned there, of which he took particular notice. The Captain, he said, selected from among the female slaves several of the very youngest and best looked, whom he always kept in the cabin for his own use, and who were often heard to cry and shriek on account of the liberties taken with them. One feels horror and indignation in recounting such a circumstance; yet is it to be feared, that the captain alluded to
to here was not singular in this beastly conduct. Those who have been in the trade, and seen the evil of it, own that the female slaves in general suffer, in this respect, during the passage much ill usage from the sailors and others. How shocking to the feelings of a parent, a husband, a brother, or a near relation, should any such happen to be on board, to be forced to see a beloved child, wife, sister, or relative so used in their presence; or to hear their piercing shrieks and cries, while they are unable to give them the least relief; and are only insulted and beat for returning their tears and cries with their own!

What a pity we should have been so long led, from motives of apprehended interest, to prosecute a traffic so very destructive of the health, the morals, and the lives of so many of that part of the Community, who contribute so much to the strength and riches of a warlike and commercial people! The trade in slaves is replete with imminent hazard to all three, so that one fifth part at least of those who embark in it never revisit their native country, and of those who do, how many carry the effects of it with them to the grave? According to the number of seamen employed in this traffic, the computation is deemed very moderate, which states the annual loss, upon an average, to amount to or exceed sixteen hundred, besides those who suffer in their health by it, and eventually in their life too. They who deem this a small matter, not to be put in balance with a little gain, forfeit the character of men, and deserve to be ranked with the beasts of prey, or rather with the malignant fiends of hell. Besides the danger on the coast from the too just resentment of the injured natives, provoked by acts of cruelty and injustice, which often proves fatal to the seamen, and the danger arising on board from epidemic distempers, the unhappy and inseparable consequence of the crowded confinement of the slaves, waving other causes of mischief and death to them, what numbers are cut off by the insurrection of the captives? and how must the constant risk of this keep their minds in a state of constant dread and anxiety? We can at times exceed all bounds in our vain boasts of the strength, the valour, and prowess of our Navy, yet they owe us little gratitude as a nation. The advocates for the Slave Trade postpone their lives to gain, and the Legislature that patronizes it, in effect forfeits their allegiance; which can rest only on the basis of protection to their persons, and the security of all their rights as free-born subjects. How impolitic, ungrateful, and cruel
cruel to encourage and sanction a traffic, which scatters vice, disease, and wretchedness among all that are employed in it, and destroys thousands of them? Should not those in power be more sparing of that useful race of men, while they plead the disagreeable necessity of impressing them into the service of their country on every emergency? — a practice oppressive in itself, inconsistent with the liberty of a free people, and disgraceful to the policy of a nation, allowed to be wise, great, brave, and generous. If our Navy constitute the bulwark, and the wooden walls of our nation, as we often arrogantly boast; do we not liberally reward their meritorious services, by employing them in a traffic in the highest degree degrading to human nature, and subversive of their happiness, not content with all the injuries they suffer in the time of war, in the dearest rights of men and of Britons, thro' our tyrannical and wretched mode of supplying our naval demands? How oppressive this arbitrary and despotic system, worthy of the darkest ages and the greatest tyrants, to many of the most useful and laborious part of the Community. In our coast-towns, our fishermen in time of war, or on any sudden emergency that calls for manning the Navy, are obliged to furnish government with a man out of every five or six of their number, in order to obtain protection for the rest, to the no small prejudice of many poor families, and of the public at large; and that while we are so prodigal of the lives of so many of our fellow-subjects in a traffic criminal in itself, disgraceful to the nation and people that countenance and practice it, and attended with the most fatal consequences to myriads of our brethren of the human race. How long shall base motives induce us to arm man against man? to trample on the statutes of Heaven, and the dearest rights of men? to insult the great Redeemer of mankind in those, whose nature he has deigned to assume, and spread arrows, fire-brands, and death over extensive regions, under the specious pretext of commerce, and regard for national prosperity? Such pleas shrivel before the beam of reason, even at the light of Revelation, and will confound those who urge them at the bar of God, however much they may now weigh with the rocky-hearted sons of avarice.

But, with respect to the fatal effects of this odious trade, if the negroes sometimes rise up against the crews of the slave vessels, and cut off such numbers, who are to blame? and on whom does the guilt of shedding their blood devolve? Not surely on those who shed
shed it in self defence, but on the authors and abettors of this inhuman traffic. A well known periodical publication contains a paper, which, while it furnishes several striking proofs of the ingenuity, the courage, and resolution of the Africans, discovers in a very strong light the dangerous nature, and the detestable policy of a commerce which cannot be too much reprobated. It relates to a Plot formed by five hundred Negroes at Goree, with a view to effectuate the recovery of their liberty. Happily for the White people, the plot, being in time discovered, miscarried, but the reasons they assigned for their conduct would have done honour to an ancient Roman patriot. The ring-leaders were cruelly put to death, and the rest embarked on board a ship, that they might be carried off and sold. There they found means, thro' the imprudence of the Captain, to free themselves of their irons, and had they not been in time observed, all the white people on board would have fallen a sacrifice to the love of liberty, that powerful principle so congenial to the human breast. They could not however be quelled, till two small canons, loaded with grape shot, were discharged among them, which soon made such slaughter as drove those who survived to the hold for shelter. In this attempt two hundred and thirty seven perished. Such are the frequent, but unhappy consequences of this trade in the human species. View them, ye sons of Mamon, and ye unfeeling advocates for such a traffic, and blush at your attempts to prosecute and defend it.

That a man may lawfully defend his property, if attacked by a villain, or attempt to recover it, when forcibly taken from him, should an opportunity offer, tho' this should prove the death of the assailant, the light of nature dictates, and the criminal laws of every civilized country allow. But should a thief or a robber kill another in making such defence, would he not be justly charged with murder, and, if apprehended, punished accordingly? The White people concerned in this traffic, in whatever flag of it, and the captive Africans, stand in the very same predicament, with this circumstance in favour of the latter, that a man's liberty is more precious to him than any part of his effects, or even the whole, and therefore the defence or recovery of it must still farther warrant his taking

* The Edinburgh Magazine for January. The Author did not see it early enough to give the above paragraph a place in the Articles on the Middle Passage, where it would have come in more naturally.
taking the life of the aggressor, if it cannot otherwise be secured. In the above instances, tho' all the white people at Goree, and on board the vessel, had been cut off, it would not be murder in the negroes, but self-defence; whereas every one of them that fell in the unhappy attempt to recover their liberty, brought the guilt of murder on the whites who had an hand in it. The same reasoning justly applies to the late insurrection of the slaves in St. Domingo. The planters and their abettors, prejudiced in favour of slavery, and partial in their own cause, may call their conduct rebellion and murder: but in the sight of that all righteous God who is no respecter of persons, it is self-defence, a duty enforced by that radical law of our nature—self-preservation; whereas the blood of those slaves who fell in that melancholy dispute will be found in the skirts of those white people who shed it, in that solemn day when he shall make inquisition for blood. There is indeed no evading this conclusion, all circumstances considered: if unbiased reason is allowed to speak, and the word of God to determine; whence we may infer the deep criminality of this traffic, which no considerations of political expediency can justify, and which indeed cannot be prosecuted without incurring an enormous load of guilt. Against this it is no solid argument in favour of the white people, that they are reduced to the disagreeable necessity of employing force against their slaves; for who were the original aggressors? and who still continue the ground of the quarrel? One crime may indeed lead to the commissioin of another, but will by no means excuse it. The planters cannot plead ignorance, with regard to the mode of procuring slaves on the African coast; and, therefore, in purchasing, and detaining them in a state of servitude, they make themselves partakers of other men's sins, and deserve to share in the punishment thefe merit: for no formalities of purchase can constitute a valid claim, in opposition to the essential and unalienable rights of nature. At best they are but like the receivers of stolen goods, knowing them to be such, whom the law accounts accomplices; for will any say that they acquire a right to use them as their own, even tho' they should give some compensation for them to the original thieves, and have had them for some time in possession? Sure none can plead for the continuance of this execrable traffic,—a traffic which derives its origin and supports from hell, and secures so vast a revenue to the prince of darkness,—the god of this world whom its votaries serve and worship, unless from ignorance of its nature.
and effects, or from reasons still more unjustifiable. Can that per-
son be under the government of justice and humanity, not to men-
tion the benevolent religion of Jesus, who prefers a little worldly
gain, the basest motive that can actuate the breast of man in such a
case, to the happiness of millions of his kind, or is content to ob-
tain it at the expense of complicated and intense misery, and of
death itself, to unknown numbers of his fellow-creatures?

Respecting the Africans, tho' the annual loss of lives cannot be
exactly ascertained, yet we have more than mere conjectures from
which to draw conclusions on this head. We are informed by those
who had access to know, and were at pains to calculate, that no
fewer than one hundred thousand of them are annually exported by
Europeans from all parts of Africa. In procuring these, what de-
pradations and bloodshed are committed! Tho' they do not bring
armies to the field, and seldom fight pitched battles, yet these pi-
ratical excursions, attacks, and skirmishes, which are termed wars,
are in general bloody; for it is believed that the number of the slain
exceeds the number of the captives reserved for sale. Here are a
hundred thousand at least cut off each year on the continent of A-
frica by wars, to which the prospect of selling the prisoners to Eu-
ropeans furnish the powerful incentive. What an annual accumu-
lation of blood and guilt, crying against the nations of Europe con-
cerned in this traffic, and more especially against Britain! Of the
above number, about sixty thousand are allowed to be annually ex-
ported in English bottoms. It is computed, from clear documents,
that a fourth part of this number perish in the passage to the West
Indies, and another fourth part there, in what is called the sea-
soning, while, thro' poor fare and hard usage, few of the adult survive
the ninth year after their arrival in the Colonies. Waving the pro-
portion of the loss of lives in which other European nations are con-
cerned, let me bring the matter a little home to ourselves; and may
God deeply impress the result on our hearts! Here are sixty thousand
murdered annually in the country, in order to furnish us with the
demanded supply of slaves;—and other thirty thousand between
the passage and the seasoning; while the surviving thirty thousand
and their seed, are doomed to perpetual slavery. Calculate this for
fifty years back, the period to which the evidence almost reaches,
on the supposition that the export during that time might, upon an
average, be much the same. Here are three millions cut off in A-
frica during the above period, in consequence of the trade in slaves;
—another three millions torn thence, of whom the one half have perished in the passage, and before they could become an effective supply in the Colonies, and the other consigned over with their offspring to the most deplorable state of unbounded servitude. In whole, four millions and a half may be viewed as massacred by the hands of Britons. The remaining million and a half that were reduced to slavery, may indeed be considered as treated in the same manner; for when the planters, by their cruel usage, shorten the period of their existence, so that few of them are said to live above nine years on the plantations, what is this in effect but murdering them? Here the Creols, or those born in the islands, are left out of the question. Farther, It is not refining too much to say, that they are virtually chargeable with the same crime, with respect to all the children whom their mode of management, and ill-treatment, whether of the mother or offspring, cut off in infancy; and with regard to the propagation of the species which these causes prevent. This is doubtless countering the wise ends of Providence, with respect to the human race, and rendering, as much as in them lies, that original and all operative decree or mandate, at first addressed to Adam and Eve, when God formed and blessed them, of none effect, “Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.” This is not the only instance wherein the dealers in this bloody and unnatural commerce counteract the laws of creation, and fly in the face of their Maker’s authority. He hath said, with respect to the marriage-union, “What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder;” and yet, in direct defiance of this express injunction, they wantonly separate husbands and wives, never more to meet in this world: but verily they shall have their reward. Wo be to them who presume thus to strive with their Maker, and from fardid ends oppose the laws he hath originally established. Let the potholders of the earth strive with one another, but let them not dare infringe on that benign order which the God of nature hath wisely adopted and observed from the beginning in the government of this world.

During the period mentioned above, this traffic hath proved the grave of about eighty thousand of our seamen, allowing only one to eight of those who are computed to have been employed in it. But if we take them at one out of five, which seems nearer the truth, the number will greatly exceed; for England alone is said to em-
ploy yearly about eight thousand hands in this trade, more than a fifth part of whom never return. What an irreparable loss to the community? Probably most of these died in the prime of life, in which case the State would be deprived, not only of the profits that might arise from their future services, were they employed in a traffic favourable to health and the continuance of life, but also of an increase of members, and consequently of revenue, by cutting off their posterity in the root. If the strength and wealth of a kingdom consists in the number and industry of its subjects, sure this cannot be viewed as an object of trivial concern, no way meriting the attention of the Legislature. Such of them as were married would, no doubt, leave poor widows, and helpless orphans to become a burden on the Public. But besides those who are cut off from year to year immediately in this trade, what numbers have their health impaired by it, and whose lives fall at length a sacrifice to its inseparable concomitants?

But allowing they should survive, there is another loss which the nation suffers by this traffic, and which cannot be deemed a matter of trivial moment, whether viewed in a moral or political light; I mean its unhappy influence on the minds of those who are conversant in it. Some exceptions there may be, but, in general, it is morally impossible that men should be long engaged in this trade, and yet not have their best feelings blunted, and their sense of right and wrong, which rather needs to be cherished, gradually impaired. What sort of parents, husbands, masters, &c. are such likely to make? Will not these cruel and wicked dispositions, which find such scope in a slave-ship, vent themselves more or less in every circle in which they move, and hence come to be more extensively diffused than one is at first aware? As this commerce in human kind prevails chiefly in England, it is perhaps more than probable, that we are to trace to this source these savage dispositions which delight so much in cock-fights, horse-races, boxing-matches, public executions, and the like, for which barbarous relics of Gothic manners too many of the vulgar, I wish there was no reason to add of the genteel too, are much noted; and which rapidly diffuse their influence on the north side of the Tweed also. The noble exertions made there at present for the Abolition of this traffic, does them however much honour, and, it is hoped, the dispositions which inspire these exertions, will in due time wipe off this reproach. Says one of themselves, speaking of this trade, in which he was for a time engaged,
engaged, “In general, I know of no method of getting money, not e-
ven that of robbery for it on the high-way, which has a more di-
rect tendency to efface the moral sense, to rob the heart of every
“gentle and humane disposition, and to harden it, like steel, against
“all impressions of sensibility.” Is it not then to be hoped, and
devoutly wished, that our Legislature will have the dignity to set
a laudable example to other nations, by removing from our laws
the reproach of licencing this detestable traffic in the blood and
flesh of men, which is productive of obduracy of heart, of rapine,
cruelty and murder;—that our mercantile intercourse with Afri-
can may cease to be polluted with the blood of its inhabitants.

Add to the above enormous load of blood-guiltiness, contracted by
the nation in this traffic, the numbers cut off in the East Indies
since we acquired property there, if we may repose any credit in
the impeachment of Mr Hastings and others, and also the crying sin
of suffering so much blood-shed at home, in Child-murder and Duels,
to pass unpunished, and say, if we have not much to account for in
that day when we must all appear before the sacred tribunal of
Christ, to receive according to the deeds done in the body, whether
good or bad? O Britons, are you prepared to meet your God on
this day, and to render an account to him of the blood so shed in
your dominions, to which we have long been accessory by our sin-
ful silence, if not by an active concurrence and a sharing of the
spoils? If the sufferings and death of the Saviour of the world is
expressly charged on the elders, the chief priests and scribes among
the Jews, Matth. xvi. 27. because they wished and solicited these,
though they were inflicted by others; and if the people at large are
directly charged by an apostle with the horrid crime of killing him
the Prince of life, Acts iii. 15. though this was the deed of the Roman
soldiers, because they cried with one consent, Away with him, a-
way with him, crucify him, crucify him; is there not too much rea-
son to assert, that all that deluge of blood will at last be found in
Britain’s skirts, and that all those who wish and plead for the con-
tinuance of the trade in question, make themselves chargeable with
it in the sight of Heaven?

All ye that fear God, mourn and sigh for the abominations done
and tolerated in the land; and deprecate that wrath which our ac-
cumulated guilt deserves; for upon this generation God may justly
visit all the innocent blood shed by means of Britons for centuries
past. Is it a matter of small moment to have so many myriads of
souls
foul's pleading against us, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" and that blood like Abel's crying incessantly from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive it from the hands of the murderers, to Heaven for the merited vengeance? How can we bear the thought that they should thus lodge their complaint against us at the throne of that God who saith, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay it"? His awful wrath, which we have been so long treasuring up, hangs over our guilty land, only waiting his commission to burst forth in consuming torrents. He is not slack concerning his threatening, as some men count slackness, but long-suffering to usward, that his goodnessmay lead us to repent of our past conduct, which abused, as, alas! it is by millions, the day of his penal visitation shall not slumber. Moral causes produce their effects, and such are to be found with us, as in other nations have proved the certain harbingers of awful judgments. What reason can be assigned why they may not prove so to us also? Can we advert to our Lord's solemn menace of the Jews, without feeling some secret dread for ourselves, when we reflect on our national abuse of the best of privileges? **Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruit thereof," Matt. xxi. 43. Did he not awfully execute this threatening within the space of forty years of the time he pronounced it, however unlikely it might then appear? and who can say, that he will so long exercise patience with Britain? He had been just, and manifested to be so, had he long ere now executed such a judgment upon us: may his grace incline us to repentance, and his mercy suspend and avert it? Ye who are the Lord's remembrancers, give him no rest; for it may be he will hear your cry, and in answer to your prayers avert the impending doom. The Lord stayed the raging plague, when his servant Moses interposed between the living and the dead; and the consuming wrath of Heaven was appeased, when Phinehas in his zeal executed judgment on a daring transgressor. Let all ranks plead with our Rulers, by every constitutional method, that they would thus shew themselves true patriots, and real well wishers to the continued prosperity of their country. In this respect, we cannot say to them, relative to the guilt incurred in this traffic, as the priests of old said to Judas, What is that to us, see ye to it; for that wrath which their measures may draw down on the land will involve the Public at large; whence
whence our application on the present occasion is too well founded, and claims an impartial hearing, and a speedy compliance. But should they think proper, in their wisdom, still to sanction this illegal traffic, after all the evidence laid before them of its nature and effects, which Heaven in mercy to millions prevent, reason, observation, and Scripture will authorize us to consider such conduct as a certain token of the near approach of national judgments. Should we thus, by our Representatives, refuse to abolish it, with our eyes open on all that guilt and mischief with which it is replete, is it not more than possible, that before they have another opportunity of doing justice to a much injured people, God may appear to plead their cause, and avenge their wrongs in a manner that will make his and their enemies tremble?

"Need I beg the Christian Reader's indulgence for dwelling so long on these practical remarks, when he reflects that we are deeply concerned in them more ways than one? Before I dismiss them however, I cannot forbear relating an anecdote, which I recollect to have once read, in the life of one of the Christian fathers, as they are called. After the Roman empire embraced Christianity, in a popular tumult, that happened, if I remember well, in the city of Antioch, the statues or images of the Emperor and Empress were broken down, and treated with indignity. Exasperated at such conduct, the Emperor sent commissioners with strict orders to search out and punish the guilty, by which means many were put to death. As they one day passed along the streets, a poor man, whose venerable appearance attracted their notice, accosts them to this effect: "Sirs, I earnestly beg that you would remind the Emperor your master, that if he is so heinously offended at the inhabitants for demolishing a few inanimate representations of himself, which may easily be repaired, how will God bear to see him destroy so many of his living images, whom neither he nor all the world can restore to their former state?" The gravity of his looks, the earnest importunity of his address, and particularly the weight of his argument, procured him attention, and a promise to transmit the message to the Emperor, which induced him instantly to prohibit any farther effusion of blood. The Reader will be before hand with me in the application. From the statement already given, which is more than problematical, several millions of God's living images have been degraded, maltreated and destroyed since the commencement of this infernal branch of commerce, and that by the hands,
or thro' the influence of Britons. "Say not with yourselves, How 
106  doth God know? can he judge thro' the dark cloud? Thick 
" clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not. Is not God in 
" the height of heaven? doth he not walk in the circuit thereof?"
Job xxii. Do not his eyes go to and fro in the earth, beholding 
the evil and the good, and to manifest himself strong in behalf of 
those who trust in him;—in behalf of all that are injured and op-
pressed? Yes, God beheld their treatment,—their record is on high, 
and their injuries and blood shall be required; for the Judge of all 
the earth will do right, and redress the wrongs of those who have 
no help from man. Let not the oppressors of the poor and helpless 
conclude from his apparent silence hitherto, that he is such a one 
as themselves; but he will reprove them, and set their evil deeds 
in order before them. "Now consider this, ye that forget God, 
left he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." Psal. 1.
The precept given to Noah respecting murder, or the obligation on 
Society to punish a murderer with death, is urged by the con-
sideration that man was formed in the image of God. An apo-

tle employs the same reason against reviling our fellow-creatures, which 
must conclude still more strongly against treating them ill, or ro-
bbing them of their liberty or life. Both reasons apply in the case 
before us, and should be allowed their full weight."

The Psalmist, in delineating the character and conduct of wicked 
man, gives but too just a description of many employed in the traf-
ic in slaves. "The wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor. 
He boasteth of his heart's desire and blesteth the covetous, whom 
the Lord abhorreth. God is not in all his thoughts. His ways 
are always grievous. He sitteth in the lurking-places of the vil-
lages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: his eyes 
are privily set against the poor. He lieth in wait secretly as a 
lion in his den: he lieth in wait to catch the poor: he doth 
catch the poor when he draweth him into his net. He crouch-
eth, and humbleth himself, that the poor may fall by his strong 
ones. He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth 
his face, he will never see it."

Such being the practice of the wicked, with great propriety does 
David intercede and expostulate with God against them, in terms 
too applicable on the present occasion. "Arise, O Lord, O God, 
" lift up thine hand: forget not the humble," or, as the margin 
renders it, "the afflicted." "Wherefore doth the wicked content

" God?
God the Father hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it. Thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief and spite, to requite it with thy hand: the poor committeth himself to thee, thou art the helper of the fatherless. Break thou the arm of the wicked, and the evil man: seek out his wickedness till thou find none. The Lord is King for ever and ever: the heathen are perished out of his land. Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble, or the afflicted; thou wilt cause thine ear to hear; to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppress. The Lord’s throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.”

Psalms x. and xi.

It may surprize not a little, that a traffic so unjust and debasing in itself, so cruel and iniquitous in the mode of its prosecution, and so productive of the most pernicious consequences to myriads of our inoffending fellow-creatures, should find advocates in a Christian land of boasted liberty, for the sake of gain, which may be emphatically termed polluted lucre! There is reason to hope, that the abhorrence and detestation of this infamous branch of supposed national prosperity, will become so strong and universal, that the patrons and abettors of Slavery will be looked upon with general contempt, as the very worst kind of misanthropes, or men haters; and that, ashamed of their past conduct, they will soon give up their present opposition. They may varnish over their real motives with a pretended concern for the public revenue, but were they to speak their genuine sentiments, it would be in the language of Demetrius of old to his brother-craftsmen, “Sirs, ye know that by this craft, we have our wealth;”—ye know, that to the traffic in question we owe our private fortune, and present splendor; and therefore we must make every exertion to secure its continuance; for such is the present popular clamour about humanity, justice, religion, and what not, that not only this our darling craft is in extreme danger to be set at nought; but also, that the temple of the great god Mammon should be despised, and his magnificence destroyed, whom all Britain and the world worshippeth in one form or other. notwithstanding all the tumult and uproar made against the merchandise of Slaves. Acts xix. Allowing it were so, that the reve-
nue gains by this traffic in the rights and lives of men, and that the loss sustained by the proposed Abolition in this respect, could not be reimbursed from any other quarter; yet these are not true patriots—real friends of their country, who would put the price of blood into the public treasury, and attempt to exalt a nation by the produce of iniquity, which, tho' it may seem to promote our prosperity for a season, must prove at length like the worm that gnawed the root of Jonah's gourd, by which it withered away. This little leaven will leaven the whole lump—this root of bitterness will impart a deadly contagion to every thing that comes nigh to it. What the apostle James denounces against wicked rich men in general, never applied to any with greater propriety than it does to those who have made rich by this traffic, and never repented of it. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of your labourers, who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud,—the tears, the sighs, the stripes, the wounds, and the blood of your slaves, who have cultivated your estates cry: and the cries of them are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just, the innocent and forlorn: and he doth not resent you." James v.

It is at present in the power of our Parliament to transmit their name with distinguished honour to posterity—to bring the blessing of thousands ready to perish on their own head, and to wipe off our national reproach in the eye of foreigners: but should they now refuse to grant the prayers of such a respectable part of the community, this must tarnish the luster of the British throne, fix an indelible stigma on our laws, as if written in blood, and employed as the engine of injustice, cruelty, oppression and rapine, and perhaps produce consequences too great to be in their power to remedy, and when too late to be prevented. Never did a more favourable opportunity of rising into fame among the nations present itself, and never can it be embraced with so good a grace as at the present crisis. To remain deaf on the present occasion to the voice of reason...
son, humanity and religion, would serve to justify the heavy charges contained in a late letter said to have been sent from a respectable quarter, be it genuine or fabricated. I allude to the letter produced in the House of Commons by Mr Grey, on the question of the Russian armament, said to be a copy of one from the Grand Signor to Sir Robert Ainslie, our Ambassador at the Porte. In it that Monarch taxes the English as a people on whom no reliance can be had, because they buy and sell all mankind—as a servile people, and adorers only of money—as having avarice, if he might depend on his information, for their chief character—whence they would sell and buy their God—money being their Deity, and all things commerce with their ministers—that they banish truth, as they do virtue, from all their conduct and actions with each other, as keeping no engagements but while it suits their own avarice or ambition—as having no religion but gain,—avarice being our only god,—and the Christian faith we profess but a mask for hypocrisy, and other vices.

These accusations strike deep, yet is it to be hoped, that as applied to our general character and conduct, they are unjust; but severe as they are, they apply with too great justice respecting the horrible trade in question, and all those who abet and patronize it. Those who can be guilty of violating the best and dearest rights of men in one point for the sake of gain, will not hesitate to do it in another, when in their power, and self-interest prompts to it; and indeed it may with propriety be said here, “He that offends in one point is guilty of all.” Such measures as are pointed at above, should they be found in any department of the State, must disgrace a people in the eyes of other nations, and infure the heavy judgments of the Almighty.

O Britain, how art thou fallen by thine iniquity, when thou canst employ low artifice, and open violence to enslave the perfons, and debauch the morals of fellow-creatures!—when a majority in thy august Senate can exert their eloquence, and authority, and lend the sanction of their suffrage to perpetuate a traffic, which hath long proved the scourge and bane of human kind, and the deep disgrace of Britain, and other European nations; and all from the sordid love of gain! The apostle tells us, that the love of money is the root of all evil. That it is the root of this enormous evil is beyond a doubt—while thousands feel the fruit that grows from it to be bitter as wormwood. The late political changes in the world may
teach statesmen, if they will be taught, that the wishes and feelings of a nation are not to be tampered with, when they have justice on their side, and only plead the cause of God and humanity. For my own part, I am free to say, that were it possible my country could desire the continuance of this odious trade, after such evidence of its hateful nature and deep enormity hath been laid before the Public, however much I love it, and desire its prosperity, scarce could I wish longer to call it mine; and indeed such a conduct would mark us more than ripe for some awful, but singular visitation of Divine Providence, which, in all probability, is at no great distance, unless God mean to give us up as a reprobate people, whom he will no longer strive to reform. Who would glory in the name and privileges of Britons, should Britons be still legally authorized to prosecute a line of conduct degrading to our nation, and to human nature itself, and involving almost every crime of which that nature is capable, and disposed to avail themselves of that authority? But may we not hope better things, when assured that our Prime Minister heartily wishes for the proposed Abolition, whose sentiments on this head may be supposed to correspond with those of his Majesty? If he is, indeed, hearty in the cause, and gives it its ministerial weight, it is not a little surprising he should find himself in a minority on this question, while on every other occasion a great majority support his measures! Ah! how disgraceful to desert him in the cause of humanity, while every other meets their countenance and suffrage! But the hearts of kings and great men are in God's hand, and he can turn and mollify them at pleasure. The avarice and cruelty of men shall praise him, and to the remainder of these will he set restraining bounds. Let every Christian therefore earnestly pray, that God who hath the hearts of all men in his hand, and the disposal of all events, would effectually abolish this odious trade, and extend the blessing of liberty, and the means of salvation to every brother of the human race; for we ought to depend much more upon his goodness, and gracious interposition in answer to prayer, than on the humanity of men, where interest interferes, because this indulged, blinds the eyes, warps the judgment, and renders the nobler feelings of the heart obdurate and callous. Heaven forbid we should be such monsters in human nature, as not feel for the sufferings of our fellow-creatures, and lend them the best thing in our power, our pity and our prayers? Tho' the time of presenting petitions to the British Senate
Senate for the suppression of this cruel and bloody commerce be fixed, and will soon be past, should the necessity of future application be superceded; yet still have we access to the prepared throne of that God, who is the Guardian of the oppressed, and there may we fill our mouths with arguments. Allowing the object of the present application were now gained, yet much remains still to be done, respecting which, in present circumstances, the unbiased dictates of humanity, Christian benevolence, and natural equity, will not permit our remaining silent. We would fain hope, that even those of our fellow-subjects who were unhappily induced to reprobate the idea of abolishing the Trade in Slaves, when that subject first engaged the attention of the Public, will, upon more mature reflexion, have the virtue and humanity to change their sentiments respecting it*. Surely the humane exertions of late made by such a number of respectable Characters in the Community cannot, in this respect, be wholly in vain.

Those Members of Parliament who have with such laudable zeal, embarked in this cause, and persevered hitherto in the face of much opposition, and the respectable Societies both in England and Scotland, who have humanely united themselves into a body, with a view to support that cause, and second the benign exertions of our worthy Representatives, deserve, no doubt, to be had in grateful remembrance, as the friends and patrons of the human race, and merit well of their country, as true patriots who wish to secure its continued tranquility on a solid basis, by the timely suppression of a system of iniquity which threatens our destruction. There is only one thing in which their plan appears to fall short of the real magnitude of the evil complained of, which is, that it secures too little redress for those who are already in a state of slavery, and look up to the Parliament of Britain to guarantee their rights as men, to which

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* Here I particularly allude to the inhabitants of Bristol, where, and at Liverpool this trade hath been carried on to great extent for a long time back. A well-known newspaper of April 1791 gives it as a public report that "at Bristol Mr Wilberforce's effigies was burnt with every mark of disgrace." To this the Publisher adds, "But if the inhabitants of Bristol cannot contradict this, their town will lie under a disgrace that will be for ever indelible." We have never yet seen that report contradicted. In referring to this circumstance, page 13, by mistake it is Liverpool instead of Bristol, owing to the extract having fallen by when that part was transcribed.
which they have a claim as living within the precincts of the empire. The Abolition applied for is, no doubt, a very important object, and once obtained, will, it is hoped, be attended with many happy consequences to all parties concerned. But then how will this indemnify those, who are still detained in a state of servitude, for the loss of their liberty? or atone to God for the continued exercise of injustice and usurped authority? for such it must be, if no man can have a just and legal claim to the service of another for life, who never forfeited his liberty, and that against his own consent, and without any proper compensation. Tho' the situation of the slaves, by such a measure, may on the whole be bettered, and this of course lessen the guilt of those concerned in them in future; yet cannot this justify a right allowed to be usurped, and in itself illegal and arbitrary.—Shall we say, "Let us do, or approve and authorize, evil that good may come?" So far as slavery is in itself a moral evil, contrary to the laws and the whole genius of Christianity, and to the unalienable rights of man, and inconsistent with the enjoyment of all that happiness the means of which the Creator provides for his intelligent creatures on earth; we are not at liberty to commit it ourselves, or approve and authorize it in others, from a pretence, or even persuasion that partial good will result thence to Society or individuals. Does not the Apostle say of such as thus act, that their damnation is just? and who may call the equity of his conclusion in question, or separate the connexion that subsists between moral causes and their effects, both in the nature of things, and by the just determination of God? If it be lawful, on the principles of Christian morality, to employ men as slaves, without any fault of theirs to merit it, I must confess that I see not why it may not be also lawful to use the most eligible means to procure them. The chief arguments that go to prove the moral necessity of abolishing the trade in slaves, conclude equally strong against detaining our present slaves in perpetual bondage; whence we are forced to condemn slavery so qualified in gross, in order to justify our present application. Grant the friends of this trade, that it is justifiable in its principle, and their cause is gained,—they can easily find an answer to every other argument, by proposing certain regulations to be in future observed in the different stages of it; and we must grant this much, would we justify the toleration and practice of slavery in our Colonies, suppose on ever so humane a system. The matter will not bear a strict scrutiny; for, weighed
weighed in the balance of reason and equity, the claims to modern slavery will be found destitute of all solidity. As particular instances of the more lenient usage of slaves cannot refute the evidence adduced of their ill treatment in general, nor frustrate the arguments for the abolition of the trade; so no proposed improvement in the mode of conducting it can justify that which is illegal or unjust in its principle, or give the planters a moral right to the continued service of their slaves without compact or compensation; and indeed, supposing their claim valid on such an improved plan, to secure this would be found not very practicable; for the condition of those who are subjected to the arbitrary will of others must ever be precarious and wretched.

That perpetual slavery is repugnant to the laws and spirit of the gospel, and to the unalienable rights of man, and inconsistent with the full enjoyment of all that happiness which the common Father of all intended for him, none who is not biased by prejudice, and blinded by interest, will attempt to deny. I mean not however to plead for an immediate abolition of slavery in the fullest sense, but only for such salutary restrictions as would effectuate this desirable object in due time. Neither do I mean that the present owners of slaves should have no indemnification allowed them, tho' everything considered, most, if not all of them, can have no claim to this in strict justice. What I would insist on is, that the idea of continuing our present slaves and their seed in a state of perpetual servitude, suppose them ever so well treated, appears to me, and I think will to every one who duly weighs the matter, highly unbecoming a free and professioned Christian people, and subversive of the plainest dictates of natural equity, not to mention the impolicy of such a measure, as what in all probability will be productive of the most serious consequences to the planters themselves. Might it not then be recommended to the Legislature to adopt certain regulations serving to ascertain the time and manner of their emancipation, their matters being previously remunerated by their labour or otherwise, for any expence they might have been at in purchasing or educating them, meanwhile enjoining on the planters the strict observance of such wholesome rules as are suggested in the Abstract, taking effectual measures to have them carried into execution? This would furnish a powerful motive to the slaves to act, during the interim of their servitude, with diligence and propriety, and to bear it with contentment and cheerfulness. Is there any thing unjust in such a restric-
restriction? or rather, would it not be a breach of justice to disregar
d it? With respect to the adult already on the plantations, five
or perhaps six years of future service might be allowed their ma-
ters; for this would probably be enough to repay the original pur-
chase price, tho' the whole period of their servitude had been con-
fined to it. As to the children of slaves, born and educated on the
estates, let them remain the masters property till arrived at the age
of 24 or 25, unless at the expiration of that term they voluntarily
chuse to continue with him, which many of them probably would,
were they well used. Those who have been long slaves, if ill usage
permits any of them to drag out life to advanced years, should, in
equity, be set immediately at liberty, with some provision for their
comfortable subsistence, that they may enjoy a little calm in the e-
vening of life. I am verily persuaded that the above plan comes
so short of what strict justice requires. Neither the number, nor
the wealth of the transgressors should screen them from deserved
punishment, where the charge of criminality can be carried home
to individuals, much less authorise them to detain always in posses-
sion what they have obtained and used in ways disallowed of Hea-
ven, if the truth of the Evidence can be relied on. Reason, justice,
and humanity, revolt at the thought of dooming a helpless race of
men and their posterity to perpetual slavery, suppose it ever so
mild, without any fault of theirs to merit it. We may, in our weak
policy, or imperfect views of justice between man and man, err;
but the Judge of all the earth will do right: for the oppressor and
oppressed are his, and his honour is concerned to plead the cause of
the latter, which he will not fail to do in his own time.

The continuance of slavery but on some such terms, appears to
be highly unjust in itself, and likely to be attended, one time or o-
other, with the most fatal consequences to those who practise and en-
courage it; for no expediency can be urged as a plea for violating
the express mandates of Heaven, and that commerce must be high-
ly criminal, which cannot be prosecuted on any other terms. But
the plea of necessity will appear groundless, when we reflect that
those nations whose planters cultivate their lands, and manufacture
their sugars by means of free men, bring them to market on much
easier terms than those who employ slaves; and that this is really
the case is a well known fact. To such a degree is this indeed the
case, that our West India merchants are supposed to have received
for sugar alone, in fifty years back, above seventy millions sterling
more
more than it would have cost at any other market. If any of them fail in their circumstances, it cannot be owing to the low prices of their commodities. If it is a truth, that the blessing of God alone maketh rich, and superaddeth no sorrow, no wonder then this should be denied to those who tread in paths disapproved of him. Honesty, uprightness, and compassion, will be eventually found the best policy; for they alone who walk uprightly, walk surely.

Without doing something in favour of the slave, similar to that suggested above, tho' their condition should on the whole be bettered, in consequence of the wished for abolition, yet their bondage, after the hopes they have of late entertained, will fit heavier and be more sensibly felt than ever. Solomon tells us, that "hope deferred makes the heart sick," what then must hope entirely cut off occasion? The present slaves on our plantations, tho' emancipated, could not indeed all at once avail themselves of the blessing of liberty, but by a humane treatment, and enjoying the means of instruction and religious improvement, for which some effectual provision should be made, they might, in the course of a few years, be fitted for acting in the capacity of free men, with honour to themselves, and benefit to the community at large. The case of ancient Israel, when set free from the servile and oppressive yoke of their task-masters in Egypt, plainly shews that a people all at once emerging from bondage, may not be in condition for some time to make a due improvement of the blessings resulting from freedom and connected with it. And, indeed, this is a native consequence of passing, all of a sudden, from one situation to its very opposite; witness the present case of France; unless the mind is gradually prepared for the important change. In order to fit for this, the planters should be bound to provide the means of learning, and religious instruction for their slaves and their children, (or if this cannot be, the nation should do it at their own expense,) and when the period of their liberation comes, should be required, like the Jews of old respecting their enslaved brethren, to give them a little stock where-with to begin the world, either in land or in money, if not in both, that they might live under them, if they chose, as cotters, or hired servants, and to assist them with their best advice for the future regulation of their conduct. All this is not a great matter for a master whom they had long served with fidelity, and who has perhaps made rich by their means. Such a plan common equity seems to require, and without doing something like this for them, we may naturally
naturally expect that Providence will interpose, and set them at liberty in a manner less beneficial, but more degrading to us. The writer is persuaded, such a plan would meet the ideas of every Christian, who knows the value of his own liberty, and considers the tenure by which he holds it; and, notwithstanding the strong light in which the matter may be placed, in point of strict justice and equity, such a plan would meet his cordial concurrence: but too many weighty reasons put it out of his power, as a man and a Christian, to acquiesce in any that falls short, at least, of the spirit of it.

I am persuaded, that the Societies lately instituted for effecting the abolition of the trade in slaves, and indeed all who possess sentiments of humanity and religion, would rejoice to see not only this important object gained, but also the entire suppression of slavery itself. But they seem to think the Legislature might not consent to the latter, at least, that an application to this effect would afford ground of clamour to the friends of that trade as an attempt on civil property. What the Legislature might be induced to grant, we cannot say with certainty, tho' we should hope they will be disposed to grant to the wishes of the nation what is right and equitable in itself, when the matter is duly represented. This we should at least ask, as we would not sanction and assert the claims of justice and humanity only by halves; for the Legislature can determine without us, whether they shall grant the object of petitioning them in whole or in part. With regard to the Planters claim of property in their slaves, it may suffice to say, that when the right to any commodity, or rather the actual possession of it, is acquired by unjustifiable means, the possessor may be lawfully deprived of it, and yet have no just cause to complain. Possession alone cannot constitute the validity of a right, which must be founded on something else. Would any one sustain it as a sufficient reason why a thief or a robber should be allowed still to possess what he had stolen, or forcibly taken from another, because he had it for some time in his custody? If the Planters are not guilty themselves of stealing their fellow-creatures, yet are they art and part with those who are, while they buy them of their hand, knowing how they come by them. Do we ever hear that they entertain any scruples, or make any question on this head? The receiver of stolen goods, having access to know them to be such, is justly deemed equally criminal with the principal. It would be, therefore, just and equitable to deprive the
the planters of the unrewarded labour of their slaves, without any indemnification, as a just punishment for dealing so long in an iniquitous traffic, and exercising their usurped authority with so much rigour and barbarous cruelty; for on this head the public seem to be of one opinion?

But to remove every specious imputation of injustice, and ground of clamour and opposition in this respect, let either the mode recommended above be adopted, which is barely doing justice to the slaves, or some other more eligible; or, should they be set at liberty within a shorter period, let the nation at large reimburse in part the loss the planters may sustain by such a measure; for I am persuaded every real friend of humanity and of his country would not scruple to contribute according to his ability. I say in part, for even that would be an act of generosity, and not of strict justice: for is it ever heard that states make any compensation to their subjects for being just, humane, and equitable in their carriage towards their fellow-men, or for making reparation for past injuries? Human laws annex penalties to disobedience, but never did a Legislature dream that they were bound to grant any other compensation to the dutiful and obedient, but the protection and security of these laws; and hence they have no positive reward annexed to them. But the planters and West-Indian merchants are before hand with the nation; for in the exorbitant advance they have made in the price of their commodities, by which means some of them have acquired princely fortunes, they have levied some millions to which they could have no legal title, were the laws against monopolizing put in execution. The neglect of enforcing good laws, when the welfare of the community requires it, tends to bring the laws, in general, into disrepute; for they are all enacted by the same authority, and he that offends in one point is in effect guilty of the breach of all. The Legislature, who claim the right of taxing the nation, and whose taxes are in many instances not a little burdensome, should doubtless provide, that no part of the subjects openly oppress and fleece another with impunity. The above and similar considerations duly weighed, who would not with that slavery were totally abolished so soon as possible, a measure which natural justice demands; and the continued prosperity of the nation, and of our colonies themselves, as well as the happiness of thousands of our fellow-creatures seem to make, in present circumstances, absolutely necessary. Every thing short of a measure that will at least ascertain
this desirable object in due time is like attempting to skin over a dangerous wound, while the matter is allowed to fester within, which may break out at a future period, perhaps with greater violence, and then render the cure more difficult and hazardous. What is wrong in a moral view, cannot surely be right in a political one; and tho' it may prosper for a time, yet the latter end of it will be disappointment, bitterness, and remorse; whence justice should have its course be the present apparent consequences what they may.

When our slaves hear how the nations of the earth exert themselves with success to shake off the yoke of despotism—and how the British Parliament have extended favour to their countrymen, in exempting them from the depredations of the Slave Trade, (I speak on the supposition they will be so humane and wise as to do so,) while they and their posterity are denied the most distant prospect of liberty, what will be the probable consequences? Without pretending to the spirit of prophecy, we may venture to predict, that they will be hurried into desperate measures, and contract a still greater aversion to their white tyrants. Having so often experienced their cruelty, the question is natural, How will these men who are so long accustomed to do evil—to maltreat us, and tyrannize over us, learn to do well—to use us with justice and humanity? Till they get other hearts, how will their manners become humane and gentle? The sugar merchants, foreseeing this very thing, have exerted every nerve to compel ministry to aid the operation of their whips by the terror of our bayonets, an office unworthy of the forces of a free people.

From the stir made in Britain about the Slave Trade, the slaves in our plantations are naturally led to entertain hopes, but should these hopes be eventually disappointed, the consequences may be serious. This may unhappily induce them, in the paroxysms of grief and desperation, either to offer violence to their own lives, or to plot and rise against their masters, as of late in St Domingo, which may terminate in their mutual destruction, and in the ruin of the Colonies. To oppose and resist an authority justly acquired, and lawfully exercised, is rebellion: to resist one usurped in itself, and unjust and tyrannical in its exercise, is self-defence.—Having mentioned St Domingo, who can forbear remarking, that the hand of Providence seems visible in the horrid devastations committed in that island, and that the sin of the white people may be read in their punishment? If I remember well, when the National Assembly were
were deliberating about extending liberty to the slaves in their plantations, a measure which the radical principles of their Constitution require, no doubt, to be adopted, the planters in this very island opposed it with a menace. If they had concurred with the idea of the Assembly, so far as to give their slaves the certain prospect of emancipation in the course of a few years, this in all probability would have kept all quiet, secured their property, and prevented all the unhappy consequences of the late insurrection. An over-eager pursuit of the world blinds men to their true interest, and defeats its own object. But now more damage is done than would have paid for their labour for many years to come, and will be much more severely felt. The loss of property sustained was some time ago computed at twenty-five millions sterling, besides the loss of lives, and the deficiency of crops till the island can be restored to its former state of cultivation, which will take several years, allowing things to proceed now ever so prosperously. But these disturbances are not yet at an end, and what farther evils they may produce, who can tell? At a moderate computation, all this may be supposed to amount to an equal sum. The very interest of this, at five per cent, would hire two hundred thousand of their present slaves, at the rate of 12 l. 10 s. each per annum, which would afford a competency along with a little land from which to raise provision for themselves and families. Such a number of male free servants would be more than adequate to the cultivation of the island, while their wives and children might be employed in some useful branches of manufacture. Thus the planters would be happily freed from the constant terror of insurrections, which so often prove fatal on the present wretched system. It is just with God that those who seek to acquire riches by unlawful means, and will not return to the paths of truth and rectitude, should meet their punishment in the ways they have chosen, and be disappointed in their hope. But men will sooner submit to disappointment, misery and sorrow in ways of their own devising, the latter end of which is death, however flattering they may appear in their blinded eyes, than seek prosperity and comfort in paths approved of Heaven. When a people walk contrary to the Most High, it is usual with him to walk contrary to them. Tho' the abolition of the Slave Trade, so far as it concerns the future importation of the natives of Africa into our Colonies, must meet the wishes of every humane person, who will there cordially desire that success may crown the present application.
lication of the friends of that measure; yet one cannot help fearing that if it rest here, the remedy will be found incomplete, and that the continuance of slavery will at length prove the ruin of the British Colonies.

The unhappy disturbances in St Domingo have been ascribed, by the papers of January last, to the folly, treachery, and insolent cruelty of the white people themselves; and the plain narrative of the Governor, and the Municipality of Portau-Prince referred to in proof of it. They are charged with adding insult to breach of faith. To the same effect, a member asserted in the National Assembly, that "it is the infernal vanity of the whites which made them perjure themselves, by refusing to execute the Concordat, to which they had sworn twice, that produced the effusion of blood; and led the free people of colour solemnly to swear to one another, to perish rather than renounce the rights of citizens".

Surely it cannot be deemed good policy to prosecute such measures as tend to make those our enemies who may have it in their power materially to hurt us, but who might by other measures be made our steady friends, and of essential service to us in the time of need and danger. On the present miserable mode of managing our slaves, what can be expected from them in case of a war with any neighbouring power, or the invasion of our islands? Will not the love of liberty, and the desire of avenging the wrongs and injurious treatment they may have received, principles deeply rooted in the heart of man, naturally lead them to side with our enemies, and abet their hostile attempts? Were the slaves at present in our Colonies to be humanely treated, gradually freed from the galling and debasing yoke of thraldom, and put in a way of acquiring some little property, like other British servants, they might strengthen the interest of government in these Colonies, and fight bravely in their defence in case of any sudden emergency; whereas at present they need British forces to secure their subjection, as well as to ward off the attacks of foreign powers, both which coasts the mother country vast expence of blood and treasure;—while on the present illiberal and unjust system it might be naturally expected, they would prove our greatest foes, should any such emergency arise. The fear of this, and of their attempts to revolt, must make their masters jealous of them, and create themselves many uneasy apprehensions: but, like the dog in the fable, by grasping greedily at the shadow, they come to lose the substance.
If we may rely on the judgment of the justly celebrated author of the Wealth of Nations, the natives of Africa are well entitled to rank among free men, and might make the best use of a well-placed confidence. In his Theory of Moral Sentiments he has the following striking remarks concerning them. "There is not a Negro from the coast of Africa, who does not possess a degree of manliness, which the soul of his sordid master is too often scarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her empire over mankind, than when she subjected these nations of Heroes to the refuse of the jails of Europe, to wretches who possess the virtues neither of the countries which they came from, nor of those they go to; and whose levity, brutality, and base nes, so justly expose them to the contempt of the vanquished."

There is good reason to believe that he drew not this character of the Africans, and the servile, petty despots that keep them in thrall, from mere hearsay, or by random, but from the best information, and knowledge respecting both.

Some lay a mighty stress on the permission granted the Jews to purchase slaves, and convey them, in common with their other possessions, to their heirs; and argue as if our Lord's silence on this head, and that of his apostles amounted to a ratification of this under the Gospel. Without entering into the merits of the argument, I think this may be asserted as a general and fundamental truth, which may be applied in particular cases; that nothing in the Mosaic institution which is not clearly deducible from the moral law, and consonant to the dictates of natural religion, can be binding, or tolerated under the Christian dispensation; unless it can be made appear that our Holy Religion expressly admits and recognizes its obligation. This rule seems to admit of no exception, nor is it difficult to apply it. Those who would justify slavery from the concession made the Jews, allow that any right one man can have to enslave another, who has not injured him, or forfeited his liberty, is not by the law of nature, which indeed acknowledges no such right, but only in virtue of an express revelation; and consequently, being the sole result of a Divine permission, cannot be any longer in force than we can claim the privilege of such permission as explicitly granted to ourselves. No where in the New Testament is such a permission recognized, or incorporated with the Christian system, as conferring any such right; whereas we find several express precepts, the full observance of which is quite inconsistent with
with the right pleaded for, of reducing our unoffending fellow men into a state of perpetual servitude, and reaping the fruit of their labour without making them the least compensation. We know from our Lord's discourses with the Jews, that several things were tolerated to that people, which were not so from the beginning, or once meant to be a precedent to us; and which he, by abolishing or not recognizing, hath made quite unjustifiable under the Gospel; of which I conceive the permission above alluded to to be one. It is evident, from the whole Old Testament history, that God gave the Jews a kind of superiority, or pre-eminence over the nations, in a civil as well as in a religious view, while they acted as his loyal subjects, whence these, both in a collective, and individual capacity, were made in various respects to yield their comfort and happiness. This accounts for the toleration given them to procure persons from among these nations to be employed as bond-servants in servile work, in perfect consistence with the benign reasons suggested in the introduction to this tract. In this he acted as their King, who rewarded their fidelity with the service of the Heathen; and as the proprietor of all men, who had a right to dispose of them in what manner, and to whom he pleased; and in this view, it deserves notice, that he chastised Israel for their sins by reducing them in their turn into a state of subjection to the neighbouring nations. The mode of his procedure towards men is in this respect now changed, for one more adapted to the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom. The wall of partition betwixt Jew and Gentile, and betwixt one nation and another, is now abolished by Him who came to be a light to enlighten the benighted nations, and God's salvation to the ends of the earth; and of course the essential rights of the individuals who compose them are reduced to a level. I mean their rights as subjects of the Divine government, which every Christian is bound to hold sacred and inviolable. As the Christian system teaches us to count every man our brother, or neighbour, whatever circumstantial differences may take place between him and us in point of situation, manners, religion, or civil rank, so the same duties that one native Jew owed another by the divine law, we as the professors of a religion whose leading law is love to God and man, owe to every brother of the human race. This is no supererogation; for tho' hereby we may benefit men like ourselves, yet can we not profit God. No Jew could make his brother a bond-servant without his own consent, and even then the period of his servitude was limited,
mitted, and the mildest treatment meantime secured. From the beginning God enjoined on man to rest from servile labour one day in seven, and to observe it as a holy Sabbath to himself, the observance of which wise and benign institution was enjoined with peculiar solemnity on the whole Jewish nation, as an indispensible part of the moral law. The great Lawgiver in this had a respect not only to the happiness of man, but also to the ease and convenience of that part of the brute creation which is employed in his service; and doubtless to the ease and comfort, as well as the religious improvement of servants of all descriptions: for in this view the same law was to the stranger and bond-servant as to the home-born and free Jew. How would it be taken in ancient Israel, should a master send out his servants to labour in his field on the Sabbath? and yet our planters urge their slaves to the alternative of either working habitually on that day, or perishing for want; by which they pour contempt on the authority of the great Lord of all, and shew themselves destitute of that compassion for their fellow-creatures, by whose labours they are enriched, which a person of ordinary humanity would discover toward his labouring beast. No wonder the curse of Heaven attends their property, and one time or other seizes their persons.

As the religion of Jesus enlarges and improves the privileges of men in general, is it not just and natural to suppose that it rather enlarges than diminishes them with respect to these duties of benevolence and love which they owe to one another? Need I repeat, that the exhortations which the apostles gave such slaves as embraced Christianity to live contentedly in their present situation, if they could not better it, cannot, with any consistency, be construed into a tacit approbation of such a state, tho' some would so understand them. With equal propriety may we consider their exhortations to Christians to be in subjection to the powers that then were, as implying an approbation of the manner these acquired and exercised their authority. The truth of the matter is, they were bound to submit to civil authority as they found it, however unjustly acquired, and, in many instances employed, when it did not demand any thing which interfered with the duty that they owed to their divine Master; and the same thing may be said of slaves. But should any construe admonitions to obedience in such cases, and so qualified, into an avowal of the equity of that authority which required it, or of the right of those who exercised that authority, this would be
asking God to approve usurpation, injustice, oppression, and persecution; for all these were allowed by those who held that authority, and committed under it. Whatever the apostles thought of the civil governents which obtained where they planted Christianity, which must be allowed to have been none of the best, or of the principle and exercise of servitude which then prevailed, and which, by the bye, was far milder, and more humane than that practised in our Colonies, their great object was, to exhort converts to Christianity to adorn that station where it found them, till Providence put it in their power, and gave them a clear call to change it for a better. It would be imprudent in the extreme in the apostles and first Christians, to inveigh against the civil powers for their mal-administration, and against the practice of slavery which had obtained in the Roman empire and elsewhere, as this would irritate those in authority, bring on themselves the odium of meddling with what was deemed the civil rights of men, obstruct the progress of the gospel, and in a manner justify to the world all the persecution which they endured. For these and similar reasons, their silence on these topics discovers the wisdom from above; but should a master impose on his Christian slaves, or a magistrate on his Christian subjects, any thing which their divine Lord forbids, in that case they were to submit to any hardship or sufferings rather than obey. But while they enjoyed liberty to serve God, according to the dictates of his word and their own minds, they were to bear patiently any external inconvenience or loss, however guilty those might be in the sight of Heaven who subjected them to this. From the above and other considerations, the apostles might consistently exhort Christian slaves to bear their situation without repining, at the same time that they viewed slavery as quite unjustifiable, and repudiated the means commonly employed in reducing the innocent into that state.

Can we once suppose, that he who hath strictly forbidden one man to steal the least article belonging to another, would tolerate the violent seizure of his person, and his reduction to a state of slavery for life? Such a conduct be far from him, and such a thought far from us. If he gave permission to his ancient people to buy slaves, there is reason to believe that this was not more out of kindness to them than to the persons so exposed. Would the righteous Lord and Judge of all permit them to purchase men procured as our plantation slaves originally are; or at least, to abet the hateful practice?
We never read of their travelling to distant countries in order to procure them. The cruel practice of exposing not only prisoners of war, whom the conquerors claimed as their property, but also children who were often sold by their own parents, obtained among the Heathen nations; and it was humane and merciful to permit the Jews to buy them, as hereby they were insured of better usage, and would have a favourable opportunity of becoming converts from idolatry to the true religion: whereas, were they sold to the Heathen, they could not enjoy the latter, and might in all probability fail of obtaining the former. Their continuance in a state of servitude might be necessary under that dispensation to maintain the privileges of native Jews distinct from that of strangers of the Gentiles, and to remove every temptation of returning to their own country, and the idolatrous worship of their fathers. Yet we learn from the sacred history, that some who were originally slaves were promoted, on account of their worth and piety, to offices of power and trust, and this might be the case with many besides those particularly mentioned. That ancient nations, among whom slavery obtained, often used their slaves in the same manner appears evident from the earliest human records now extant, as also from the promotion of Joseph in Egypt, and of Daniel and the three Hebrew worthies in the court of Persia, and some others mentioned in scripture. But do we ever hear that any of the natives of Africa are promoted in our Colonies, be their birth, their talents, or worth what they will, unless the degrading office of drivers, to harry and whip up their brethren, can be deemed a promotion? In ancient Greece and Rome, the same humane and equitable system was adopted, whence we find many, once slaves, acquiring both liberty and possessions, and becoming useful and illustrious members of the community. May we not from this infer, that modern slavery as practised in our plantations, is much more cruel, oppressive, and degrading to human nature than that which took place among the Jews, or even among the ancient Heathen, tho' no other circumstance should lead to the same conclusion? for it was reserved for the boasted light and civilization of modern times, and of professed Christians and highly favoured Britons, to refine so far on the iniquitous system of oppression, injustice, and cruelty. In this respect, will not the Pagan world one day rise up in judgment against us, and their conduct condemn our more heathenish port?
Every argument that militates against the trade to Guinea in slaves, militates equally, if I am not mistaken, against continuing those in slavery who were at first obtained by that infamous trade. If the one is cruel, unjust, unnatural, oppressive, contrary to the duties man owes to man, and to the genius of Christianity, and the like; all which and more the opinion of the Public respecting it, as lately expressed, fully admits: so is the other also. The figure which the apostle employs on another subject, applies here with propriety, “If the first-fruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches;” and the same holds should we reverse the terms: for as is the root, so are the branches; as is the tree, so is its fruit. While we deem ourselves bound in duty to God and our fellow-creatures to solicit the Legislature to extirpate the tree, as a root of bitterness and iniquity by which many are defiled and made guilty, and the streams of human happiness tainted or cut off, is it proper that we should spare the branches, and water them from the fountain of Legislative authority, and protect them by the fence of national power? What is wicked and unjust in its principle, can never be innocent and equitable in its practice and effects: for the one partakes of the properties of the other, as necessarily as a stream partakes of the nature of the fountain whence it flows, or fruit of the nature of the tree that produces it. To be consistent with ourselves then, and with truth and justice, we must reprobate Colonial slavery as no less repugnant to the dictates of humanity, natural equity, and the Christian religion, than the trade in slaves, and exert ourselves for the abolition of the one as well as the other. If those in power refuse to hear the cry of mercy and justice, Providence hath put the power of redress within the reach of the Public, independent of our Rulers; and who would not deny himself a trifling gratification, while the bounty of Heaven, in other respects is so liberal, and an object so interesting to the life and happiness of millions, and the continued prosperity of our Country is at stake? Let us not content ourselves with being just only by halves, or rather, by forbearing acts of rapine and injustice in a certain line in future, while we attempt not to secure real and effectual redress for thousands who have borne these in time past, and still groan under their effects. Such redress should not be wholly left to the caprice and precarious will of others; for the principle on which our hopes here rest is not uniform in its exercise in breasts under the government of various unruly lusts and passions, which
run counter in their demands, and reign by turns. We know who hath said, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil," Jer. xiii. 23. As soon may our slaves change their swarthy hue, as we by regulations at home, expect to change the manners of our planters. Could an act of the Legislature give them new hearts, new views and dispositions, then something effectual might be done; but the mere motive of self-interest, however strong in other cases, is too slight a barrier against the violent impulses of passion, which is too much verified in the whole Evidence; for in the cases of oppression and cruel usage there recorded, a due regard to their own interest would have dictated a very different conduct. The slaves therefore can find no effectual redress but in measures that will ascertain their liberty in due time, and thus present a ground of hope on which their minds can securely rest under their present bondage and every intervening instance of ill usage.

Out of our own mouth may God judge us; for while we acknowledge, as with one voice, the enormous iniquity of the trade in question, do we not in effect pass sentence on ourselves? In cases of injury between man and man, does not the law of God, and even the dictates of natural conscience, require that reparation should be made to the injured party, so far as circumstances can admit, without which, no professed repentance can be deemed sincere, or accompanied with divine forgiveness? Here it is acknowledged on all hands that many thousands now in our Colonies have suffered extreme injuries, in rights the most dear and sacred; but will any say that these shall be all effectually redressed by the proposed abolition? This is not so much as pretended, and while we consent to their servitude, we in effect sanction all the wrongs they have endured, and reward the perpetrators with their future labours, and, for the present application, those of their children's children to latest posterity. We would have more reason to hope for the favourable interposition of Providence, to second our endeavours, did we limit the prayer of our Petitions only by the requisitions of humanity, justice and religion, according to our own express and public acknowledgments, leaving it with our Rulers to grant what to their wisdom may seem meet, declining at the same time to partake in their guilt, should they refuse to grant what the God of justice now demands by the voice of his vicegerent Conscience, speaking in the united addresses and declarations of many thousands. How can we as free men
men and Christians consent, that a people who have never offended us, nor even those who hold them in bondage prior to their captivity, should, with their seed, remain still deprived of the inestimable blessing of liberty, whithout which life itself loses its chief attractions? He who deliberately thinks so, and gives his explicit consent to the continued exercise of such injustice, shows himself in effect unworthy of that freedom wherewith Divine providence hath favoured him.

In what light would we view the conduct of a judge, should he rise up in open court, and offer such a plea in favour of a culprit clearly convicted of theft or robbery: It is very true the pannel at your bar has been fully convicted of these crimes which the law punishes with death; but as he has been accustomed to these practices now for a long time, so that he is become rich by them, as he hath many brethren in the same iniquity, which is digested into a system, and has had the property so acquired for a long time in his possession, it would be altogether improper and impolitic now, either to punish him according to the demerit of his crimes, or even to deprive him of the booty so obtained. Let him enjoy that peaceably, and in order that none may disturb him in the possession of his ill-gotten wealth and property, let him have the sanction and protection of Government; all that remains with us to do, is to adopt such measures as will put it out of his power in future to commit similar depredations. I suppose such reasoning would not be listened to in any of our Courts of justice; and yet, if I am not greatly mistaken, the case is exactly parallel. So far as evidence can go, our planters stand convicted at the bar of the Public of having long had a deep hand in a traffic iniquitous in its principle and mode of management, and branded in every flag of it with practices of a disgraceful and infamous nature, and crimes of the most horrid dye, for such, or worse if possible, is the judgment of the Public concerning it; and may we not view their silence hitherto, with respect to these charges, as the effect of a conviction in their own consciences that they are too true. To the whole they in effect plead guilty; for, amidst all their sage reasons for the continuance of the traffic in question, not one is to be found tending to exculpate themselves. They have grown mighty by their iniquity, and hope their wealth and influence will plead for them, but it is the business of a humane and free people, and of an equitable Legislature, to take the prey from the mighty, and to deliver the unlawful captives, the unhap-
py victims of cruelty, oppression, and injustice, who are doomed by merciless men, whose gain is every thing, to pass their wretched days in slavery of the basest kind. Can we then, in consistency with the duty we owe to God, to our fellow-men, and ourselves, grant an unbounded toleration to the direct effects of a traffic which we in express terms condemn, and the necessity of the speedy abolition of which we plead and urge on principles of natural equity, humanity, and religion? If it be unlawful to make slaves of any of our fellow-creatures, while chargeable with no crimes to forfeit their liberty, which seems to be granted by all who candidly weigh the matter as a first principle of moral equity, then is it unlawful to detain such in a state of wretched captivity; for in granting them liberty, we only restore that of which we unjustly and forcibly robbed them; and that in a much worse condition than we found it; for it is not in the power of Britain to give them an adequate compensation for the blessings they have lost, and the miseries they have endured, in consequence of being dragged from their native country, their relations and connections. It would be therefore worthy of a just and generous nation not only to grant them liberty but to put them in condition to subsist themselves with comfort. In this view it merits our attention, that when God freed his people from Egyptian thraldom he recompenced the labours extorted from them, by the spoils of their oppressors, as well as avenged their wrongs by their destruction. Is he not the same God still? and are not the people in question his creatures as well as the Jews. Will we say that he has cast off all care of the many thousands who are now in a state of slavery in our Colonies; and reserves no mercy for them? Should we decline to do them justice, will it not be just and equitable in him to plead their cause; and redress their grievances, and avenge their past wrongs? Tho' he should do all this in the manner he did of old in behalf of Jacob's oppressed offspring, could we tax the equity of his procedure; or say to him with confidence, What or why dost thou so?

Would it not be strange reasoning, to argue, or suppose, that a primary act of injustice legalizes every subsequent one to which that may lead, and deprives the person injured by it of all just claim to the recovery and possession of that which is allowed to have been, previous to that act, his natural and unalienable right? The importation of slaves and slavery itself are like cause and effect, and if we cannot as Christians and Britons consistently plead for the continuation
tinuance of the former, then the very same reasons which oppose this, require our disavowal of the latter; for the arguments urged in the one case conclude equally in the other. If it be found inexpedient to suppress slavery all at once, yet let the claims of justice be acknowledged, and things put in such a train as may expedite an equitable adjustment. The policy of statesmen, who seldom make the word of God the rule of their measures, may deem some things expedient which that word condemns, and which Christians should of course reprobate and abhor. We should therefore testify against modern slavery as repugnant to the Christian system, to the spirit of the British Constitution, and subversive of the most valuable rights of men. A tacit or expressed approbation of it in us is criminal, and condemns all the struggles of our forefathers for the recovery of the privileges whereof, as Britons and Christians, we now boast. If it is lawful in the planters to detain their slaves for life, and in us to countenance them herein, then surely it was still more lawful in the race of Stewart to subjugate their subjects to their own will, and of course it must have been rebellion to resist their authority, which rested on a very different basis from that of the planters over their slaves; which, in fact, is no better, when viewed by the light of truth, reason, and equity, than the claim a thief, robber, or receiver of stolen goods has to the unlimited and undisturbed use of them. If it is unlawful in the slaves to resist the usurped, and too often cruelly exercised authority of their masters, as of late in some of the French islands, and frequently in the insurrections they make with a view to recover their liberty; and if the blood they spill in such attempts be murder, as their white tyrants affect to call it, then our ancestors in these lands were chargeable with this crime, for much blood was shed in their struggles to recover that liberty wherein we now glory, and oppose the pernicious encroachments of the crown. We acquit the man of murder who takes, in defence of his property, the life of one that attempts to rob him of it; and yet a man's liberty is much more precious in itself, and of much greater consequence to him, than any part of his effects. If I may justly defend my property and freedom against violent attempts to wrest them from me, tho' such defence should occasion the death of the assailant; then, with equal justice, may I attempt to recover them, when Providence puts this in my power, tho' in the attempt my oppressor should perish.—So stands the case with our slaves.

They are unjustly deprived of liberty, and their attempts to reco-
ver it are justified by that radical principle of our nature, the law of self-preservation requiring, and leading to self-defence; but this would not be the case, were it lawful in their present owners to keep them still in a state of servitude: for it is morally impossible that two rights directly opposite, and subversive of each other, should subsist at the same time. If the planters may detain their slaves on principles of justice and equity, then it is unlawful in them to resist, or for a third party to interfere: but if, on the contrary, the slaves, in common with the rest of mankind, cannot be divested of the inherent right of vindicating their liberty, should Providence put this in their power; then their opposition to an illegal and usurped authority, and attempts to recover so valuable a blessing are justified by the laws of nature; and those who are put to death for such attempts are in effect murdered, and the Judge of all will require their blood. How odious in God's sight attempts on the liberty of a free people are, may be inferred from the awful plagues with which he punished Egypt of old for such a conduct, tho' not favoured with the advantages of those European nations who exceed them far in this respect. It deserves to be attended to, that tho' it was Pharaoh's cruelty and obstinacy which procured such heavy chastisements, yet his subjects were involved with him in the dreadful calamity. He refused to let the oppressed Hebrews go, when God, by his messengers, demanded their release; and now that Providence hath been for some time past pleading the cause of an oppressed people, let our Rulers beware how they copy such a pattern, lest he that hears the cry of the afflicted, and executes judgment and righteousness for all that are oppressed, should make our plagues wonderful; and indeed the most foreboding presage of this is an obstinacy on our part, in refusing to hear the language of his Word and Providence. Is there any impropriety in viewing God as now expressing himself in behalf of our afflicted African brethren, as he of old did to Moses in behalf of the oppressed Israelites? "The children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up unto God, by reason of the bondage. And God heard their groaning, and looked upon them, and had respect unto them. And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters: for I know their sorrows. Now therefore behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have
“have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.” Exod. chap. ii. and iii.

There is an argument drawn from a certain passage of scripture, to justify the attempts made to enslave the Natives of Africa, and the detention of those who are already enslaved in perpetual servitude. I refer to the predictive imprecation of Noah: “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren,” Gen. ix. 25. The argument drawn from this curse, dooming Canaan, or, if you will, his posterity to a state of servitude to their brethren, would scarce merit notice, did not some employ it who would be thought wiser than others, and seem to lay considerable stress upon it. To make this apply to the people in question, they ought in the first place to prove, that they are the lineal descendants of that Patriarch, and that the malediction is to be understood as extending to all generations, and to every individual of the race; a thing absurd to attempt, and impossible to evince. But allowing they were, such a consequence will by no means follow, else we may justify the worst actions that were ever committed under the sun. The miseries and calamities of mankind in every age are the just punishment of sin, denounced against transgressors in the oracles of truth, and in many cases actually foretold; but will this justify the conduct of those who have been instrumental in inflicting that punishment? On the same principle we may vindicate the active hand wicked men took in the sufferings and death of the Son of God; for these were predetermined, foretold by the prophets, and expressive of God's displeasure against sin. Would not this be making him to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children of them that hate him, not merely to the third or fourth generation, but perhaps to a thousand generations, should the world last so long, without any respect to their inheriting the vices of their wicked ancestors, which is quite contrary to the Divine procedure? Do the Guinea traders, and their brethren in iniquity the planters, intend, while enslaving their African brethren, to execute the curse alluded to, or to enrich themselves? I suppose the latter. Those who believe that their slavery is the result of that predictive curse, and the punishment of the offence of so remote a progenitor, a notion which highly reflects on the equity of the divine administration, should bear in mind, that a woe is pronounced against such as add to the grief of those whom the Lord hath afflicted. Granting that the poor Africans lie under the curse of Heaven, and that Britain and her
her planters, on account of our extraordinary virtue and piety, have obtained an undubitable right from above to enslave them, since the friends of this trade will have it so, we would however do well to peruse with attention the awful things which are imprecated or threatened on those who persecute him whom the Lord hath smitten, and talk to the grief of those whom he hath wounded. Psal. lxix. Do we then oppose the will of God in pleading for their liberty? If they must suffer for an offence committed so many thousand years ago, and if we think it too soon yet to release them from the effects of a curse which they never merited any more than we, sure we must confess that eternity itself will scarce suffice to punish our own personal sins, considering our advantages; for those who talk so, in effect adjudge themselves to perpetual misery, and stand condemned by their own lips. I the rather make these remarks, to shew the pitiful pleas which some urge in defence of this traffic.

Having formerly touched on some of the points which the Reader will find in the preceding pages, I would not resume them again with enlargement, did I not know that many earnestly contend for the lawfulness of the practice of slavery among Christians, and happened, in the interim, to converse with some who laid a great stress on the silence of our Lord and his apostles respecting such usage; and the admonitions which the latter gave to the converted slaves to be content with their lot, if they could not meliorate it, which, according to them, they neither would nor could consistently do, if slavery was not tolerated by the Christian as well as by the Jewish Law-giver, or was not in itself quite lawful under the gospel. How far the above hints tend to refute that notion, is submitted to the Reader. Tho' the remarks on this part of the subject have, for the above reasons, been extended beyond what he will perhaps think necessary, or even be disposed to excuse; yet the writer begs leave to hope that he has not darkened counsel by multiplying words without knowledge, tho' a happier genius might, with fewer, place the argument in a more clear and forcible point of view.

If it be allowed then, that both justice and sound policy require that such measures should be adopted as will ascertain the emancipation of our present slaves in due time; it will be surely granted, that it is of vast importance they should be gradually prepared for such a change, and that the most effectual means should be fixed on and employed for that purpose. It is doubtless highly interesting

that
that the slaves in general should become acquainted with Christianity, yet this object, desirable as it may appear to all who have the real happiness of their fellow-creatures at heart, hath hitherto been lamentably neglected. If the proprietors of slaves have no due concern for their own eternal interests, as, it is to be feared, is too much the case, it cannot be supposed they will pay much attention to theirs; yet the Nation, and particularly the Legislature, having so long countenanced the traffic in slaves, should, in decency, make some effectual provision for Christianizing them, if not from better motives, at least to palliate the odium arising from it. The West-India merchants and planters can indeed never repair the injuries to which this trade has given occasion, yet is it in their power to make some small atonement, by providing the present slaves with the means of knowledge and religious improvement. With this view should they frankly contribute some part of their late exorbitant profits, to help to form a permanent fund, for supporting a competent number of able Teachers and Missionaries, that their slaves perish not for lack of knowledge, and their blood be found on their head. The consideration of the past profits derived from their labours should induce to this, even on the supposition they were all in due time set free; for it is only performing a duty towards them which hath been too long criminally neglected, to the indelible disgrace of Britain and her Colonies. If they are worthy to bear the Christian name, and to share the privileges of British subjects, they will cordially accede to this plan; for the ties of duty and charity, may more, of gratitude and justice claim this at their hands. Should they decline to burden themselves with this, would it be unjust in the Legislature to interfere, and assess them according to the extent of their property, if Britain has any claim to the subjection of her Colonists?

But the Nation at large should sanction and aid such a measure, and, to render it more effective, put it in the power of the Society for Propagating Christian knowledge, who in addition to their other laudable cares and labours, would probably undertake this on proper application and encouragement, to provide them with the means of instruction; or in the power of any other Society that may be instituted for that purpose, that they remain not in a state of gross heathenism, while connected with professing Christians, and employing their labour for their behalf. Have we been so long regaled by the fruits of their hard toil and servitude, whence Government hath acquired so much revenue, and individuals such vast fortunes, and can we be content that
that they and their children, even to latest posterity, should not only wear the degrading yoke of thraldom, suppose in its mildest form, but also remain grossly ignorant of the rudiments of literature, and the great discoveries of Christianity?

With respect to both, that royal law of our Divine Master, which is said to have attracted the admiration of a Roman Emperor, should be allowed to have its weight with us, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." So universal is this law, that it binds at all times and places, in every situation, and all persons; and yet so plain, that every one may find an infallible interpreter in his own breast, if he only consult it without prejudice. Were we in their case, and they in ours, it is easy to judge what we would wish they should do to us; and let us, so far as in our power, do the same to them; for so their and our common Lord requires, upon pain of incurring his displeasure, as contemners of his authority.

How lamentable to reflect, that men should so eagerly hold fast their iniquity, and refuse to let it go, whatever it may cost them and the nation in the event! We have been told that a large meeting of the West India planters, alarmed at the applications to Parliament for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, agreed, that the proposed abolition of this trade, would be the destruction of the Colonies; and accordingly appointed some of their number to wait on the Minister with their decision, and to remonstrate against such a measure. Such a determination is a gross insult to the great Author of nature, as if the preservation and prosperity of any part of his dominions was necessarily connected with a system of iniquity which he utterly abhors, and could be secured only by practices against which he hath denounced in his Word, and often executed in his Providence, the highest expressions of his displeasure. Foul as this aspersion on the Divine administration is, unhappily it is not the only instance in which their conduct involves a gross insult of their Maker. Does not the trade in question offer a continued indignity to the infinite Majesty of the universe, while, in the prosecution of it, his most express laws are wantonly violated, and his intelligent creature man, whom he hath made after his own image, is degraded into a level with beasts of burden, and used with much greater cruelty. But such indignity to the glorious Author of human nature, who himself hath deigned to assume and wear it, in its present abased state with all its innocent infirmities, shall not always
always pass with impunity. The incarnation of the Son of God, affords a weighty reason for the abolition of slavery among Christians, which did not exist among the Jews. For a nation or individuals to imagine they cannot subsist or prosper, without trading in their own species—without robbing their brother of the precious blessing of civil liberty, an iniquity to be punished by the Judge, is as unnatural and ridiculous as for a person to fancy he cannot live or enjoy good health, unless he eat his own flesh, or the flesh of his fellow-men. But granting the prosperity of our sugar islands were concerned in the continuance of this traffic, which hath been as clearly demonstrated not to be the case as the nature of the subject will admit, if this plea be valid and conclusive, the thief, the highwayman, and the pirate, may urge the same argument, in defence of their equally honest, humane, and honourable pursuits.

Reason and Scripture being judge, the traders in slaves are a disgrace to a nation professing Christianity, and an horrible curse to many of their species, who are brought by them into a house of bondage where they chuse strangling and death rather than life. Men greedy of gain, and whose god is the world, where they seek all their portion, may varnish over this scandalous traffic with the fair pretence of national advantage: but it is laid up in store with God, and sealed up among his treasures, as a national iniquity, and shall receive a just recompence of reward. All worthy of the name of men and Christians should confederate against the avowed contemners of Heaven, and destroyers of the natural rights of men—these beasts of prey in human form; for whatever wealth and influence they may now gain in Society, yet shall they one day be found to have been the very pest of the places where they lived, and, in fact, the worst enemies of the State that gave them encouragement and protection. Of the advocates for buying and selling their fellow-creatures, as mere objects of commerce, as oxen or cattle for the yoke or slaughter, it may be said, in a worse sense than of Nebuchadnezzar, that their heart is changed from man's, and a beast's heart given them, a beast of the most savage kind. Let such read the following, and the like solemn declarations of Scripture and tremble at the prospect. "The Lord will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he referveth wrath for his enemies." "He will not be slack to him that hateth him: he will repay him to his face." "To me (faith he) belongeth vengeance, and recompence, their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand,"
hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. I
kill and wound: neither is there any that can deliver out of my
hand. I will heap mischief upon them, I will spend mine arrows
upon them. For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for
ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold
on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will
reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with
blood, and my sword shall devour flesh." Deut. xxxii. Because
they were cruel, avaricious, and blood-thirsty, I will give them blood
to drink, for they are worthy. These are not impotent menaces—

vain words of course. They have been already often executed up
on sinners; and are still pointed, as the artillery of Heaven, against
guilty, obnoxious transgressors.

But it is less surprising to find those who are making rich by this
traffic, pleading for its continuance, than some others of whom a ve-
ry different conduct might be expected. The Public have been
lately told, that the Court of Common Council held at Guild-hall,
consisting of the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, two Sheriffs, and about
two hundred Commoners, when the question of a petition to the
House of Commons, praying for the Abolition of the Slave Trade
came on, there were for the petition only forty four, against it se-
venty, twenty-six of a majority for the continuance of that traffic.

On this the publisher of one of the papers remarks, "It is very lit-
tle to the honour of the city of London, that its Court of Com-
mon Council should be so far behind the rest of the kingdom,
both in political and commercial knowledge, as to afford a major-
ity against the Abolition of the Slave Trade." To be perfectly
just, is an attribute of Deity, to be so to the utmost of their power, is
the glory of those who fill public offices. When such as have the
administration of justice in their hands, neglect, or refuse to protect
the oppressed and helpless, or perhaps, proceed so far as to take the
oppressors under their protection and patronage, they counteract
the example of the Supreme Judge; and, instead of averting the de-
served judgments of Heaven, when ready to break forth on an irre-
ligious and profligate people, draw them down with aggravated ven-
geance. When a Nation ceases to maintain a due regard to justice,
and their Magistrates and Judges can be influenced by any thing
foreign to the real merits of a cause, it is no random assertion to
say, that such a nation is halting to its ruin. If the mean passion
of worldly mindedness enters into a decision, as is evidently the case
in that referred to above, and some others, it is morally impos-
sible it should correspond to the pure dictates of justice.

It is not in the power of the people of Britain, their Senate, or
King, to redress the injuries which so many thousands of our fellow-
men have already sustained by this traffic, yet is it in their power,
in some degree, to avenge them, by preventing the repetition of
them in future. The protection of the oppressed, and the punish-
ment or restraint of oppressors, is a task worthy of a great Nation
and an illustrious Prince; and the Slave Trade furnishes ample mat-
ter for doing honour to the British people, Senate, and Crown, and
wiping off the infamy already contracted. Princes should ever be
jealous of their honour in the decisions of those in authority under
them, and the prosperity of their subjects; and a people in the con-
duct of their representatives, whose public acts become of course,
the acts of the Nation at large. What a pity they should ever for-
get that nothing but Righteousness can exalt a nation, while every
system of iniquity, that receives its countenance and support, must
infuse its disgrace and ruin.

Every free Briton, and professing Christian, acting in charac-
ter, will surely arise, and with one voice assert the rights of human
nature, by condemning, and for ever disclaiming an usurped claim
to a traffic in blood, that our national character, our seamen, and
myriads of our fellow-creatures, with their dearest rights, be no
longer sacrificed to the sordid love of gold. The speedy abolition
of this accursed commerce in human kind, will derive greater glory
to Britain than all the victories she hath gained these fifty years;
and the longer such a just and necessary measure is put off, the more
disgraceful to the Nation, and the more serious, in all probability,
will be the consequences. Should the Legislature be so unhappi-
ly influenced by the partisans of this base traffic, as to persist in
refusing their concurrence to the so much wished for suppression of
it, after they have had such ample evidence of its cruel and unjusti-
fiable nature, and pernicious consequences, one would be tempted
to think, that they were ripe for any attempt to wreath a despotic
yoke about the necks of their fellow-subjects, should a suitable temp-
tation and opportunity present themselves. Such a measure, in pre-
fent circumstances, would also furnish too much reason to fear, that
Heaven will not long suffer such a wanton insult on the rights of
humanity, and the claims of justice to pass unpunished. The un-
justifiable practice of reducing human beings to the degrading con-
dition,
dition of mere objects of commerce, tho' not attended with such shocking circumstances, nor followed with such a horrid train of cruelties and oppression, while every Christian must lament that these should have ever existed, we have reason to wonder and regret that a sense of justice and humanity on this head hath lien so long dormant. With regard to the comparative innocence of this traffic, respecting the nation at large, before its enormity was so well known, and the increase of guilt, arising now from the increase of light and evidence on this subject, may we not use the language of the apostle, when speaking of the gross ignorance of the Heathen world prior to the promulgation of the gospel; "The times of this ignorance God winked at: but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness," Acts xvii. 30, 31. commandeth all men who are employed in this commerce, or abetting to it, to break off this sin by sincere repentance, this iniquity by doing righteously, because God will bring their every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or bad; when, from the vast mass of evidence laid before the world, and the means used to reclaim them, an obstinate perseverance in it will exceedingly aggravate their guilt.

For the Rulers of the nation to be more concerned for the accumulation of revenue, and personal property, allowing the trade in dispute were the certain road to both, than for the protection of the liberty and lives of fellow-creatures, would fix an indelible blot of infamy on our administration; and yet this is the plain language of the struggles made for the continuance of this trade. But it will appear the less surprising that our laws and administration should treat the Natives of Africa with such supercilious contempt, when we reflect, that even at home they put a higher value on property, tho' not of great extent, than on the lives even of dutiful subjects. It is well known, and the stigma of it has been often felt and regretted, that in the rewards paid to those who apprehended a thief or a murderer, the very different estimation in which our law holds life and property appears so glaring. For the apprehension of a man who has stolen, tho' less than forty shillings, forty pounds— for the apprehension of a murderer nothing! This bears no friendly or respectful aspect towards the subjects, while it bespeaks a spirit basely mercenary. It implies a gross insult both to our understanding and feelings; as if we deemed it an higher act of favour in
the Legislature to fence our property than our lives, or the lives of our dearest relatives. In the administration of justice, this degrading partiality is exemplified; for, while a murderer is rewarded, by being conveyed from the place where the crime has been committed, and character consequently lost, to another more wealthy part of the nation, where these circumstances are unknown: at the same time that the thief must expire ignominiously on a gibbet, or suffer a transportation worse than death, is not this the case with a witness? I allude to the custom, so long established in North Britain, contrary to the laws of God and the land, of passing Child-murder with impunity—a custom, contrasted with our strictness or severity in other things, highly disgraceful to the nation, and heinously offensive in the sight of God. But we find what ought to be deemed more valuable than life annually bartered for revenue, I mean the morals of the people, on which the State makes dreadful inroads every year by their Lottery. Low sunk are we indeed, when money takes place of everything, and is deemed more than an equivalent for the dearest blessings men can enjoy.

While individuals are sacredly bound to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God, can it enter into the mind of any to conceive that the same is not required of nations? that they are at liberty to act unjustly, to favour and exercise cruelty, and insult the God that made them? Too many, indeed, act as if they thought they had a tolerance for all this, that the sanction of general custom, and old usages, will authorize the grossest vices of which human nature is capable. In whatever manner the House of Commons may determine on the Slave Trade, the discussion it has already received will, it is hoped, be productive of some good effects, with respect to the Public at large. In consequence of this, their attention has been excited to a system of cruelty, too painful even to recite; and, if redress is denied in one form, that Public have it in their power to obtain it in another, with which the Legislature have no right to interfere, and on which they cannot put their negative. Sure we are, that discussion will increase the guilt of those who still support and defend it; and tho' this may be deemed a small matter, yet will it sometime be found of deep concern. How can such pretend to the finest feelings of human nature, who plead for, and are exercising cruelty unprecedented in the darkest ages, and most barbarous climes? Tho' the rank soil of sordid avarice hath given birth to the noxious plant of Colonial slavery, with its vicious productions,
productions, injustice and rapine, yet inhumanity alone could propagate and rear it to its present growth, while the poisonous fruit is complicated misery in the extreme. The wealth derived from this horrid traffic, which, in a moral light, involves in its nature and consequences crimes of the deepest dye, and guilt of the highest magnitude, has unhappily created an influence which hath hitherto secured its continuance; so that many would have that act of the Legislature which authorises it, to be unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Those who have become rich, by the spoils of human nature, or seek and expect to become so, have no better arguments to offer in support of it than empty opinions, and sophistical reasonings. Being slaves to temporary interest themselves, to secure this, they are content to oppress, torment, and entail perpetual slavery on others. Should any humane person but turn his thoughts for a few moments to the miseries and bloodshed occasioned by this trade, in its different stages, both to the natives of Africa, and the seamen employed in it, he will find his imagination shrink with horror from a scene that has too long been a blot upon the page of humanity; yet the poor, unhappy men who are still content, nay defirous to be the authors of such complicated and extreme miseries to their fellow-creatures, for the sake of base lucre, are much greater objects of horror, and, in one view, of pity too. In the prosecution of this odious commerce they are present with temptations to crimes, and have not virtue, alas! to resist them, which the Judge of all pronounces worthy of death, and requires to be so punished by the civil magistrate. Compassion, therefore, for them, as well as for that much injured race whom that commerce immediately respects, may well lead every person of the least humanity ardently to wish its speedy and entire suppression.

But if it is so lucrative to us, that so many struggle hard for its continuance, and had rather provoke God and man than let it go, pray, what do the Africans gain by it? Hath it not tended to destroy any moral virtues they might possess? Being naturally led, from what they have seen and known of our conduct, to view us as knaves and monsters of cruelty, they have had too strong a temptation to encounter us with our own weapons. To instance no other bad effect of our intercourse with them, by introducing among them the use of spirituous liquors, and supplying them with these, in exchange for their kidnapped countrymen, have we not introduced their concomitant vices, to which before they were utter strangers?
gers? The Public entertain the agreeable hope, that very different consequences will result from the new settlement in the island of Bulam, in Africa, the chief intention of which is given out to be, to effect the Abolition of the slave trade, and raise sugars and tobacco for home consumption. We have been told, that "their go-
"vernment is to be founded on the *right of man*, without any re-
"ligious distinctions, or establishments, the civil offices of the Go-
"vernor and Council being perfectly free to all parties." To a plan so liberal, and an object so humane, every real friend of man-
kind will cordially wish success. Should the desired success attend
this philanthropic enterprise for civilizing the natives, and should it be found practicable to reclaim them from their practices of mak-
ing each other slaves, to which the Europeans, to their great dis-
grace, have all along encouraged them, it may pave the way to a
commercial intercourse with millions of people in that vast Conti-
nent, who may in the course of a few years become purchasers of
our manufactures, furnishing us in return with raw materials, from
which the ingenuity of our artists may open new sources of trade.
This will much more than counterbalance any loss the revenue may
sustain by the proposed abolition, which is a strong argument in fa-
vour of that measure; because the traffic in slaves is a bar to any
such commerce, allowing it were ever so lawful in itself. But when it is proved to be the very reverse, to be in fact like a poisonous root, which diffuses its malignity to every branch, can sound poli-
cy suggest any effectual expedient but its entire suppression? Such a just, humane, and politic measure would give additional lustre to
the British Throne, and transmit the honour of our Senate, and the
present administration to latest ages. When the bill for the Abo-
lation miscarried last year, the Publisher of one of our news-pa-
ers remarked; "Having bestowed much pains and attention on
"this subject, we cannot for a moment hesitate in saying, that
"the trade for slaves to Africa ought to be abolished. It is
"disgraceful to us as men, and as Britons. It can be vindicated
"by no arguments save one, and that in all cases the most contempti-
"ble, Interest. It has been decided by a very great majority, that
"this traffic is not to be abolished—a decree which the honour of
"the nation requires to be reversed, and humanity and every Chris-
tian principle calls loudly for it." Should this decision be once
more repeated, these remarks will apply with additional force.

Among
Among the impartial and unprejudiced, it seems to be the unanimous opinion, that this is a traffic the most iniquitous and cruel, that ever disgraced a commercial people, and as such deserving to be had in universal abhorrence—and that its very impolicy argues the necessity of an immediate abolition, it destroying more than twice the number of our seamen, than all our other foreign trade does, besides ruining the health of multitudes. Hence, it may be presumed, that it cannot find one avowed advocate, unless among such characters as have an apparent personal interest in its continuance; and, paying little regard to the moral or political ill consequences resulting from it, are contented to fasten without remorse upon the spoils of humanity! Tho' this may prevail for a time, yet truth and justice will prevail at last, if we stint not in the pursuit, and the sooner the better; tho' their triumph should be the confusion of the sons of avarice. The history of every people under Heaven bears witness to the truth of this plain axiom: National prosperity can be permanent only when it rests upon justice and equity as its solid basis.

They must be a degraded race of mortals, tho' bearing the name of Britons, and the more venerable and dignifying name of Christians, who contend for the right of enslaving their fellow-men as the most valuable of all their privileges. So say the exertions of the planters, and their partisans, for the continuance of that traffic by which they have their accursed gain. Hitherto indeed they could shelter themselves under the sanction of an act of the Legislature, along with the other abettors of it, which however cannot abate their guilt, where that, and their use of it, run counter to the Laws of Heaven; but it is high time they should be deprived of this subterfuge, under which they cloak their crimes, and screen themselves from deserved punishment. A great part of the nation have discovered an amiable example of humanity on the present occasion, and let us always bear in mind, that humanity, properly directed, must be founded on justice as its basis, which is the same in every clime, and despises the little distinctions of colour and local distance. This ought ever to secure and protect the rights of the former. With what confidence can a free people employ the means of national defence in the time of danger, and the public treasure, for "the purpose of supporting a few individuals in violating every principle of law and justice, and of defending them in the exercise of the most dreadful tyranny over half a million of persons, born in islands which,
which, when it serves their purpose, they pretend to be ours; but
of which they have in fact usurped the absolute sovereignty.

May we be preserved from such courses as are offensive to the Supreme Being, and may eventually prove destructive to ourselves.

The violent efforts made to secure the countenance of Government to this traffic and its abettors, remind one of the words of David: "The transgression of the wicked faith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, until his iniquity be found to be hateful. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: he hath left off to be wise, and to do good. He deviseth mischief upon his bed, he setteth himself in a way that is not good; he abhorreth not evil." Psal.xxxvi. But if the planters must be indemnified for any loss they may sustain by the suppression of the trade in question, and the future emancipation of their slaves, a measure which both policy and justice seem to require, because Government hath hitherto patronized them in maintaining slavery in our islands, we venture to say, it would be more grateful to the nation at large, that the late abatement of our taxes should be appropriated to such a purpose. The sums already fruitlessly expended, and likely to be yet necessary, for procuring the desired redress, would form no contemptible accession to such a fund.

But if, after all the applications already made, a majority in Parliament be disposed to continue the Slave Trade as long as possible, and to grant no effectual redress to the present slaves;—if they are determined that we shall not have sugar at a moderate rate, but thro' the medium of slavery, and as drenched with human tears and blood, it would be a proper and necessary expression of our humanity and love to justice, to deny ourselves in that particular. Every argument and motive, calculated to operate on a humane and generous mind, might be urged to induce to this; but the principal of these will easily occur to any reflecting mind, that takes the trouble to survey the evidence respecting this traffic. So far as we are under the influence of the principles of morality, and the solemn sanctions of religion, we will rejoice that the diminution of the miseries occasioned by it depends not solely upon the exertions of wealth, of rank, or power; but that each in his place can contribute his share to the suppression of such evils.

Let us reflect, that, according to the moral maxim, Whatever we do by others, we do ourselves,—that, by promoting the consumption
tion of such articles as are prepared for our use by slaves, to procure which the necessity of enlaving them is pleaded, we in effect encourage and promote slavery itself, with all its horrid train of consequences;—and if this be allowed to be a crime, then, tho' the number partaking of it may lessen the shame before men, it cannot diminish the turpitude and guilt arising from it before that God who cannot be imposed on by false appearances, nor diverted from justice by specious reasonings. If our professed abhorrence of this traffic proceed from a virtuous principle within, we will not deem it either a hard or unreasonable sacrifice to break off the use of a luxury, which, with its common attendants, habit alone can convert into a fancied necessary of life, tho' probably at the expense of subjecting ourselves to many disorders to which we would otherwise remain strangers. A temporary self-denial, with respect to these articles, will be the most direct way to obtain them for a continuance on honourable and reasonable terms; at any rate, it becomes a necessary measure in present circumstances, whether we view it as a just expression of repentance for our national guilt contracted in the slave business, or a mean to prevent our contracting similar guilt in future. All that have any fear of God upon their minds should concur in observing whatever may be a mean of averting deserved judgments, and lengthening out our public tranquility.

Husbands and Fathers may feel a reluctance at imposing such self-denial on their wives and daughters, if it come not of themselves; but, when they consider the important consequences likely to result from such a sacrifice, they will not long hesitate in making it. It is indeed seldom that the female part of the Community are behind hand in testifying against whatever is cruel, oppressive and inhumane. Many of them have already, to their honour, denied themselves the use of this modern luxury; and it is to be hoped more will follow the laudable example. Should the Ladies in general give up the use of sugar in tea and pastry, the Gentlemen cannot surely continue the use of it in punch. In a moral light it may be viewed as stained, yea, ingrained with blood. The Legislature may refuse to grant the prayer of our petitions, but cannot compel us to purchase and use the fruits of complicated iniquity. The Reader, if he has not seen it, may consult a small pamphlet on this subject, entitled, "An address to the People of Great Britain, on the Propriety of abstaining from West India Sugar and Rum; 70,000 copies"
copies of which have been dispersed in the course of a few months, with such success, that, in England alone, 25,000 people, we have been told, have given up the use of these articles, and the number still so much increasing, that in the County of Cornwall only, no fewer than 12,000 are said to have of late adopted this measure. Does the apostle say, with respect to articles much more necessary and nourishing to the life of man than those in question, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing where-by thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak:" "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, least I make my brother to offend?" Rom. xiv. 21. 1 Cor. viii. 13. Should not we, after his example, in a matter more urgent and extensive in its consequences, say, If the use of Sugar and Rum, or any other such article, induce a brother or fellow-subjects to offend, by enslaving and cruelly treating those who are bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, we will not taste the dear-bought sweet while we have a being. We should be particularly careful, that our reason and informed judgment condemn us not in what we allow.

Tho' arguments, drawn from such political considerations as ought to weigh with statesmen, may be urged in favour of the much desired abolition of the trade in slaves, yet those that are of a religious nature are still more worthy of the pious regard of Christians. Indeed the best human policy is that which includes a due regard to the motives and sanctions of religion, which are enforced by the Supreme Governor of the world. "Every plan (as one observes) which aims at the welfare of a nation, in defiance of his authority and laws, however apparently wise, will prove to be essentially defective, and if persisted in, ruinous. The Righteous Lord loveth righteousness, and he has engaged to plead the cause, and vindicate the wrongs of the oppressed. It is righteousness that exalteth a nation, and wickedness is the present reproach, and will, sooner or later, unless repentance intervene, prove the ruin of any people." If God hates robbery, oppression, and cruelty, and is no unconcerned spectator of the injuries and sufferings of his innocent creatures, then he will, without a peradventure, one time or other visit the authors and abettors of this inhuman traffic with the awful expressions of his righteous displeasure, when neither their power, their number, or wealth can screen from his a-venging wrath; and too many things concur to give reason to fear that
that such visitation may not be far distant, if repentance and amend-
ment prevent not. Tho' this consideration may weigh little with
many baptized infidels in Britain, who are abject slaves to the most
degrading passions: yet doubtless there are still many among us
with whom it cannot fail to have weight. Some Court parasites,
who idolize that power which can confer places and pensions, may
plead that it is the duty of subjects on every occasion to submit
implicitly to the decisions of those in authority: but does not the
very principle of self-preservation, putting all regard to the Deity
and our fellow-creatures out of the question, call upon us to remon-
strate against these by every constitutional mean in our power, when
we see them calculated to bring down the just judgments of Hea-
ven upon us? Will our Rulers screen from these in this day of
wrath, when calamities become national? and if we can be silent,
and neglect to testify against such practices as are highly offensive
to God, he will view us as approving of them. The Supreme
Ruler and Governor among the nations has his set times for punish-
ing national guilt; and, considering the ties that subsist in society,
even the innocent are involved in public calamities. Tho' the
Judge of all the earth will not punish the children for the sins of
the parents, if they tread not in their steps; yet, when they come
to imbibe their temper and dispositions, and copy their example, it
is just with him to visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the chil-
dren, along with their own, even to the fourth generation; and this
he often doth in the course of his providence. Full to this pur-
pose, our Lord assured the Jews that all the righteous blood shed
upon the earth, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacha-
riss, should come upon that generation; Matth. xxiii. 35, 36. and
who does not know how awfully this was accomplished? If any are
hid in God's pavilion, in evil days, they are those who sigh and
mourn for the abominations done in the land where they dwell, and
bear testimony against them, in their different stations, as they have
opportunity. Amidst these the Lord knows how to deliver his
own; and if they fall by them, to make them subservient to their
chief good: for often one event is outwardly to the righteous and
the wicked. Their souls will at least be given them for a prey, and
if these are hid in heaven, they cannot on the whole suffer by what
happens on earth.

How awful the denunciation of the Psalmist, which the wicked
should read with fear and trembling—"Thine hand shall find out

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"all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men. For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform. Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings, against the face of them." Psal. xxi. What a dreadful situation, to be set as a mark against which the Almighty directs his arrows! In the deplorable case and final destruction of Jerusalem, while encompassed by the Roman armies without, and torn in pieces by the animosity of desperate and bloody factions within, till its ruin was accomplished, to which the Spirit of God probably refers above, sinners may see a counterpart of what they are to expect. From the melancholy fate of the Jewish nation, every Christian community under heaven, in which the symptoms of degeneracy and apostasy appear, may infer the absolute necessity of speedy repentance, as they would prevent a similar doom.

Let all that fear the God of Heaven, and love their country and their fellow-creatures, implore his interposition in behalf of our afflicted African brethren, that he would in mercy not only free them and their country from the depredations and fruits of the slave trade, that this Heaven-daring traffic prove not our national ruin; but also bless them with the knowledge of the gospel of peace, and thereby with that glorious liberty wherewith the Son of God makes his people free. Let such deprecate that accumulated wrath, which our guilty land deserves, earnestly beseeching and intreating that God, who is justly provoked at our offences, to spare us in his mercy, and to lengthen out our tranquillity; for deplorable and faint hope is the case of that nation in whose behalf the Lord refuses to hear the prayers of his people. The case of the poor unhappy men, who engage in this traffic from fordid motives, or lend it their aid and support, is a case which claims our compassion as Christians, while it rouses our just indignation. The more aggravated their guilt, and of course their impending doom, the greater objects of pity are they. Tho' they have sinned heinously, against much light and many checks of Providence and conscience, yet is it to be hoped that they have not sinned beyond the reach of mercy. It may be the Lord will yet be graciously intreated in their behalf; and therefore
therefore let us not cease to pray for them, that they may obtain
the grace of repentance for their evil deeds; be plucked as brands
out of the burning; and saved, tho' it should be so as by fire. Let
compassion for them also excite us to plead with our Rulers, till the
abolition of that accursed traffic is obtained, which makes them
seven-fold more the children of hell than they would otherwise be.
Tho' their conduct justly excites our indignation, yet let us not
hate but pity them; for they are in reality much greater objects of
pity and commiseration than their slaves. They exhibit, in the
strongest light, what fatal speed those make in the paths of destruc-
tion, whom Satan and their own lusts drive. We are sure that the
judgment of God is according to truth, against them who commit
such things as are chargeable on the dealers in this trade, and that
it is in vain they hope to escape, if deep repentance intervene not.
After their hardneſs and impenitent heart, they treasure up unto
themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the
righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man accord-
ing to his deeds; even indignation, and wrath; tribulation and
anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil. Rom. ii. These
things considered, the exhortation of the Lord by his prophet, comes
home with particular force: "Before the decree bring forth, before
"the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come
"upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which
"have wrought his judgment, seek righteousness, seek meekness:
"it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph.
ii. 2, 3.

If, in the course of the preceding pages, some things should
seem rather severe, let the Reader reflect with himself what
effect a close review of such a subject must have on a mind
possessed of the least sensibility, and he will at least excuse any
severity he meets with. Tho' the writer can pretend to no
uncommon share of that humane quality, yet reflection on the mis-
eries of our fellow-creatures, occasioned by this traffic, as decri-
bcd in the Abstract, hath often brought tears from his eyes, and
sighs from his heart. Yet is it a more pitiable case to see wicked
men going on in sin, and violating God's law; a consideration which
made rivers of water run down the eyes of a victorious warrior and
mighty king. Psal. cxix. 136. Those who apply for the Abolition
act the part of real friends to such as are concerned in this trade;
for this obtained, they would be delivered from many temptations.
to the commission of such crimes as now render their name odious, and will make their memory rot. In reflecting on abuses so grossly wicked, he has been sometimes, by a kind of involuntary impulse, led to intreat that God would plead his own cause, and avenge himself on his adversaries. It is a serious thought to reflect that the prayers of myriads are against their traffic, and in effect against themselves too, while they hold it fast, and refuse to let it go. Indeed he has sometimes found it no easy matter to suppress his indignation at their base motives and flagitious conduct within due bounds; and God forbid he should be such a monster in human nature, as to be able to review such a train of horrid crimes with indifference! He is happy to find that the sentiments of his fellow-subjects, respecting this iniquitous trade, as lately published in the papers, so much accord with his own, and so far justify the mode of his expressing them. While they, as with one voice, declare it to be, in their deliberate judgment, cruel, oppressive, unjust, repugnant to the feelings of human nature, subversive of the rights of men, and contrary to the laws of God, and the genius of Christianity, and the like; every one must allow, that in this they pass no encomium on those who have hitherto carried on this traffic, or who support and countenance them in the prosecution of it. Immoral practices always impart moral turpitude to those who practice or patronize them.

Whatever is urged, in the preceding pages, to enforce the propriety and moral obligation of commencing as speedy and effectual a subversion of slavery in our islands, as the circumstances and situation of the slaves will admit, concludes also against the importation of additional slaves. The writer has, in the preceding sheets, allowed that object, to which the present application to Parliament is restricted, its full weight; so that should the Reader not see reason to adopt his views respecting the former, he may still read this Tract without prejudice, as finding it subservient to the proposed abolition, which meets the writer's hearty concurrence so far as it goes, tho' he does not think it secures all the redress needful. To him it appears an inconsistency, to view the effects of the Slave Trade as what may be tolerated without injuring man, or offending God, (a condition without which nothing indeed ought to be tolerated) while we reprobate its principle as iniquitous and quite unjustifiable. He could not see how the streams can be pure that flow from such a tainted fountain,—how that which is deeply criminal
minal in the first instance, can become innocent in its continuance. He cannot help thinking it altogether unbecoming free Britons, and professing Christians, to sanction the continuance of slavery in any part of the British dominions, while they have seen it stained with injustice, cruelty, blood, and a numerous train of other enormous evils, the very least of which merits to be reprobated, and have openly confessed all this to the world; and that while no effective provision is made for the better treatment of the present slaves in future. He has been therefore induced to declare his sentiments on that point without reserve. Who can be content they should be denied justice and redress, who reflects that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth as the Judge and Guardian of all that are oppressed, to execute judgment and righteousness for them—reigneth as a Father to the fatherless, and a Judge of the widow in the holy habitation of his Providence?

After what hath been already said, need the Reader be cautioned against supposing that I plead for the immediate liberation of the slaves, or that it should be done in a manner prejudicial to the true interest of the planters, or that would deprive them of their future labours on moderate terms. Tho' they were set free, or placed on the footing of hired servants, yet, by proper management and regulations, their labour might be so secured to their present masters, that they would not go from one to another without mutual consent. Thus plenty of hands would be always had to carry on the cultivation of the islands; and poor is that soil indeed which cannot afford a little compensation for the labour of those who dress it, or foridly avaricious must that worthless wretch be who cannot find in his heart to part with this out of his liberal income.

If the author differs in his views on this point from those respectable individuals and bodies of men, who have, so much to their honour, espoused with laudable zeal the cause of the injured and oppressed, it is with all due deference he does so. He persuades himself, however, that they are so far of his sentiments on this head, as to wish the very same thing, but thought this might be asking too much at once, and endanger the success of their application, by affording more ground of objection to the opposition, which hath unhappily already manifested itself too formidable. While he therefore applauds their views and measures, so far as they go, and heartily wishes and prays for their success, he hopes none will tax him
him with vanity, or presumption, for venturing to declare his sentiments on this subject, and some of the reasons which induce his conviction.

This Publication, tho' a hasty production, may, it is hoped, prove subservient to the great object of the late humane Associations for the purpose of effecting the abolition of this inhuman traffic; at least, that constitutes the great wish and sole motive of the Author. As the copy was dispatched to the Printer in detached parts, so soon as transcribed, and distance from the Press prevented opportunities of revising proofs, this may be admitted, in part at least, as an apology for any severity, or inaccuracy of expression, which a more cool review might soften or correct: for, tho' it is not a time to say smooth things on such a subject, the author would be sorry to give any just ground of offence to any, be the reasons leading to it ever so urgent and important. The Reader has his thoughts just as they ultrainently flowed from the subject, which has carried him sometimes beyond his design: but, tho' the Publication may suffer by this in point of method; it is hoped, that it will not make it less useful in respect of information, or less acceptable to those who peruse it. It might prove an acceptable service to the Public, and conducive to the great object in contemplation, should any take the trouble of collecting, and publishing in one connected view, the sentiments of the Nation at large on this important subject, as lately communicated by means of the newspapers. The Reader will find a specimen subjoined to this Tract.

With what felt concern should every Christian pray, that the Great Lord of heaven and earth would soon proclaim liberty to the Captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound—proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God—pray that he would soon, every where, break the jaws of the oppressor, and pluck the spoil out of his teeth,—visit with the light of his Gospel those dark places of the earth, which are now full of the habitations of cruelty, and thence take a people for his name.

APP E N.
APPENDIX.

As the important question of the Slave Trade hath been once more discussed in the House of Commons, and received a decision; I persuade myself, it may gratify some of my Readers to see the Debate on that occasion. It was therefore thought proper to subjoin the speeches of some of the principal speakers on both sides, so far as communicated to the Public.

HOUSE of COMMONS, MONDAY, April 2. 1792.

Mr Wilberforce moved the order of the day, for the House resolving itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the petitions against the Slave Trade.

The House resolved itself into a Committee accordingly, Sir William Dolben in the Chair.

Mr Wilberforce again rose, and expressed much satisfaction, that, in the motion he was about to make, it was not necessary for him to trouble the House so long as on a former occasion. He could not speak of the system of the Slave Trade, he said, without warmth and reprobation; for he was convinced that it was a system, cruel, unjust, and tyrannical: it was a system which created the worst tyranny, the tyranny of the low-minded, the ignorant, and the base; for the man who could raise forty pounds, might obtain dominion over a slave: it was a system that degraded and debased our fellow-creatures to a level with beasts; for they were kept in fields to work under the whip, and were frequently branded. It was unnecessary, he said, for him to go into arguments to prove that regulations for the better treatment of slaves were futile; the evils that had existed, and did exist, could not be cured but by an abolition of the trade; an abolition alone offered a radical cure. Colonial regulations could be of no avail, when the evidence of a Negro was not admitted, and when the connexion and interest of the Whites inclined them to screen each other in the commission of cruelties. He was ready frankly to declare, that he did not yet think the Negroes were in a fit
At state for emancipation, but was convinced that measures could not be too speedily adopted to bring them to such state, for their own happiness, and for the security of our islands. True liberty was the child of reason and order; it was his wish that the Negroes might have their minds opened, and by reason and order be brought to the possession of liberty. The Honourable Gentleman took notice of the insurrection in St Domingo, which, he said, had not been occasioned, as had been inferred, by discussions or by societies in this country, nor had it been occasioned by a dispute between the Blacks and the Whites of that, but by the oppressive conduct of the Whites to the People of Colour, who armed for their own defence; the Blacks then rose, and were led on by People of Colour, who made them instruments for their purpose. The various contradictory decrees, and the agreements made and broken, in consequence of the disorder, were fully sufficient to account for all the mischiefs that had happened. No man lamented them more than himself; and no man more ardently hoped, that similar mischiefs in our own islands might be averted; for that reason he wished his motion to be adopted, for preventing the further importation of Africans into our islands, well knowing that we had at present as many as we could manage with safety, there being, upon a moderate computation, 300,000 Blacks in Jamaica, to 20,000 Whites: the former were continually increasing by importation, and the latter number continued nearly stationary.—He was convinced that an Abolition of the Trade would be attended with the happiest effects; that it would be felt by the planter, by the islands, by this country, and by the blacks; the Negroes would become attached to their masters; the islands would be improved; and every moment would tend to render the Blacks happier: the increase of their happiness would make the planter richer, and the islands more flourishing. If, therefore, the islands were the only object of the present question, he was convinced, that it would be for their interest and safety that the motion should be carried; for, by removing the evils that did now exist, the increase of the population of the Blacks would be rapid and decisive, and do away every argument in support of importation. It had been argued, he said, that the slave trade was of importance to our navy; but this was controverted, even by the muster-rolls of the persons who supported the trade; which documents proved, that, instead of being of advantage to the country, it was extremely injurious, by the mortality it occasioned among our
our seamen. The honourable Gentleman said, by a comparison of
the West India trade and the slave trade, it would be found, by the
muster-rolls, that out of 12,263 men, employed in the slave trade,
2640 died in the average of twelve months. But that out of 7640
employed in the West India trade, on an average of seven months,
118 only died: But deaths alone, in the slave trade, was not the
whole loss of our seamen; for it would be found that numbers quit-
ted their ships, and that not more than half the number shipped from
England ever returned.

It had also been argued, he said, that the abolition would be in-
jured to our commerce and general polity; but against both those
arguments, he thought sufficient had been advanced last year; he
was convinced, that when we should quit the trade, we should soon
be enabled to export more of our manufactures for honest commodi-
ties, than we did now for the blood and flesh of fellow-creatures.
It was idle, and injurious to the character of the country, to affect,
that the abolition would be contrary to the general polity of the
country; for the trade to Africa formed but a very trivial part of
the general trade of the kingdom, and even but a small part of the
trade of Liverpool and Bristol. If the House consulted the prin-
ciples of humanity and justice, they would at once decide in favour
of his motion: but on humanity he did not rest alone the merits of
his cause; he looked to the situation of Africa; that arrested his
heart, and was a cause he never would give up. Africa, by our
means, was rendered a scene of horror that no tongue could express,
or mind conceive. General reasoning had always satisfied his mind,
that the constant purchase of Slaves made it the interest of the
Princes and Chiefs of Africa to procure them by any means; by
war, by rapine, or perfidy, by a promotion of conduct, that had
rendered a naturally fine and productive country, a continued scene
of devastation and slaughter, for more than three or four thousand
miles along the coast. This was proved by the evidence laid be-
fore the last Parliament; by that evidence it was incontrovertibly
proved, that when Kings or Chiefs wanted Slaves to sell to the Bri-
tish ships, they frequently set fire to the villages at night, and se-
zed the Natives as they were endeavouring to escape. Slavery
was made the punishment for the most trivial offences; and part of
the money arising from the sale of a Slave, was the perquisite of
the judge who condemned, and the man who accused; the laws
were therefore turned to oppression, and the judge was intereste-
†
to condemn. If he were to go into a detail of the cruelties occasioned by our trade, he should never have done; many of them had been stated in the last year, but one or two of a most atrocious nature, and aggravated by their having been committed since the discussion in that house, he thought it would be necessary to state:—

They would prove, that our vessels hovered on the coasts of Africa, for the purpose of promoting war and rapine; and were like vultures hovering over a field of prey. The transactions, he would prove, were such as would shew the whole system to be founded in robbery and in blood. Upon a former occasion, he had stated, that several Negroes had been seized, and taken from the coast of the Cameroon river, by British ships; a different colour had been attempted to be put upon that transaction, but it remained unrefuted. A transaction of a similar kind had come to his knowledge. An English ship, slaving off the Cameroon, had sent away one cargo to the West Indies, but the Captain wished to take another; he sent a few White men on a watering party, and with them one Black man: a native trader seized him for debt, which being made known to the Captain, he took a strange method of revenge; he formed all his crew on the deck, and told them to blacken their bodies, and habit themselves like negroes, to execute a plan of his to revenge the seizing of the Negro. He armed them, and went to the house of the unfortunate trader, who, hearing a noise, beat a drum to collect his friends. The Captain's party fired, and killed three of the trader's children, and wounded his wife in so desperate a manner that she died in three hours. One of the sailors was killed, and the others wounded, and they with difficulty regained their ship. The Captain, however, remained trading for several weeks, as if nothing extraordinary, or out of the common train of his business, had happened; but the Africans proved that they had feelings, and were capable of taking opportunities to shew them. One of their Chiefs came, with his usual familiarity, to ask for muskets, and powder and ball, to go up the country to procure Slaves, half of which the Captain was to have; the Captain complied, as he in a Court of Justice protested he had frequently done before; he gave the Chief what he desired, and proved himself to be a true Guinea Captain, whose avarice was promoted and gratified by blood, by misery, by rapine, and slaughter. The Chief, however, and his party, had no sooner obtained the muskets, and powder and shot, than they seized the Captain, threw him into the boat, and took
him to the shore; where they compelled him, on promise of permitting him to return to his ship, to give an order for all his goods; the goods having been obtained, they released the Captain, and out-did him in faith and in mercy. These transactions came out in a suit commenced by the sailors against the Captain for a recovery of their wages. The facts were given in evidence by the Captain himself, as matters not uncommon; but they were circumstances which fully proved the manner in which the trade was carried on.

The honourable Gentleman said, he would state another transaction which took place no longer ago than August last, and a more flagrant and disgraceful act to this country never had passed. Six British ships were anchoring off the town of Calabar; the Captains, thinking that too high a price was asked for the Slaves, consulted together, and resolved to fire on the town to compel them to take a lower price: they sent notice of their determination to fire in the morning, if their offers were not accepted; no answer being returned, the Slave Captains, when their word had been given for a bloody and cruel purpose, kept it; they brought their guns to bear upon a defenseless town, and fired on it for three hours, in which time they did considerable execution. The Chief sent out to procure a cessation, but not offering terms low enough, the Captains commenced firing again, and continued until their terms were accepted. By this disgraceful and murderous transaction, he doubted not but the Liverpool and Bristol merchants were some hundreds of pounds richer than they would have been, had it not been adopted. But bloody and ferocious as these Captains had proved themselves, they had not the courage to venture on shore to purchase the Slaves, but sent, as was not customary, the Surgeons; from one of whom he had this information.—The Surgeon saw three of the poor wretches in agonies of death, and was informed of twenty more that had been killed.—What rendered this transaction still more disgraceful to Britain, was, that a French Slave-ship was on the same station when the bloody purpose was proposed; the French Captain, however, would not agree to be participator in it, but purchased the Slaves at the price offered, and failed. The British Captains postponed their purpose until the Frenchman was gone, and then put their bloody design into execution. What he had stated, was no matter of secrecy at Bristol or Liverpool, where the conduct of the Captains was not considered as improper; but, as was to
be presumed by their being furnished with new births, their conduct was considered as meritorious, and men capable of such conduct considered the fittest for Slave-ship Captains—[a call of name, name.]—The honourable Gentleman said, it had not been his intention to name the parties, or to call for their prosecution, being adverse to prosecute and punish persons concerned in a trade, while that trade was countenanced by Parliament; but as he was called upon to name, he had no objection: The ships were the Thomas, Philips, of Bristol; the Recovery, ——, of Bristol; the Thomas, ——, of Liverpool; the Anntree, ——, of Bristol; the Betsey, Doyle, of Liverpool; and the Wasp, ——, of Bristol. After dwelling some short time on the atrocity of such conduct, he called upon the honour, the humanity, and the justice of the house, to resist and put an end to such proceedings, by voting for the abolition of the trade.

The honourable Gentleman next noticed the Middle Passage, in which, he said, all attempts to do away the mortality would prove ineffectual, until the House could triumph over nature, and enter into resolutions to influence the mind. The mortality arose from a melancholy in the Blacks, in consequence of their being torn from their native country, from their relatives and friends; that melancholy could never be done away.—In stating the cruelties practised in the Middle Passage, he said he had it in his power to relate to the House, the conduct of one of the Captains of the ships he had before mentioned: A poor Negro girl of fifteen, who was in such a peculiar situation, that induced her, from modesty, to sit with her body bending down, was suspended by the wrists, by order of the Captain, and exposed to the whole crew. He afterwards had her flogged; then suspended by her two legs, and again exposed to the crew; and, not having exhausted his cruel invention, had her suspended afterwards, first by one leg, and then by the other, until, worn out by torture and by pain, she fell into convulsions, in which she continued for three days, and then died. The barbarous wretch who thus perpetrated this murderous deed, was Captain Kimber.—To the Slaves alone this tyranny and ferocity was not confined; instances might be produced of shameful conduct to the seamen; as a proof of which, he need only state, that out of a whole ship's crew, six or seven only returned. Who was to regulate, he wished to ask, a trade carried on by such agents, agents bred up in robbery and murder, and whose habits and conduct could not be eradicated,
but which would continue as long as the trade was permitted? It was a trade too bad to be continued; it was a system the House ought to condemn, as disgraceful to the British nation.—Whatever way it was looked at, robbery, murder, perfidy, and desolation stared us in the face; in Africa, in the Middle Passage, and in the Islands, the same horrors were to be found, and those who carried on the trade would be found the most abandoned beings; they were accustomed to cruel and ferocious habits, and proved themselves to be capable of unmixed, unsophisticated wickedness. He who loves justice will condemn the trade; for that man who loves justice must love mercy.

The Honourable Gentleman noticed the resolution of Denmark to abolish the trade, as an argument against the assertion of its supporters, that, if quitted by this country, it would be taken up by others. The present, he said, was a time Great Britain was peculiarly called upon to abolish the trade; possessed of prosperity and happiness, we were called upon to promote that of our fellow-creatures; we were called upon to promote it, not by gifts, but by ceasing to inflict on them evils. The people of Great Britain had expressed their sense against the trade, and had addressed the House, as they valued the favour of Heaven, to abolish it. If the petitions of the people of Great Britain were attended to, and the trade abolished, we should be enabled to establish another of greater profit with the natives of Africa. By abolishing the trade, the House would do good in every part of the world. He invited all those therefore who were inclined to do good by wholesale, to vote with him for the abolition. He hoped Gentlemen were at length convinced of the wickedness of the trade; and that the House would that night come to an unanimous vote for its annihilation:—He thought the recent enormities had been permitted by the providence of Heaven, for the purpose of rendering it impossible that any one should dare to rise in defence of the trade.—He concluded by moving,

"That it is the opinion of this Committee, that the Trade carried on by British subjects for Slaves on the coast of Africa, ought to be abolished."

After which he intended to move, "That the Chair-man be directed to move for leave to bring in a bill for that effect."

Mr Bayley, after desiring the petition of the West India planters to be read, declared that the question before the House was a question
tion of great importance. The views of Mr Wilberforce, he had no doubt, were benevolent and humane, but his attention was directed to a wrong object. Mr Bayley stated himself to be an agent to the West India islands; he also stated himself to be a proprietor of Negroes; he was therefore interested in the subject, which had occasioned him to direct his attention more immediately to the discussion of it. He conceived that the Slave Trade implicated, in its several departments, a great part of the Trade of Great Britain, which Trade would of course be materially affected, if the motions received the concurrence of the House.—The discussion of last year had occasioned all the disturbances in St Domingo, which had been sufficiently proved by the author of the pamphlet lately published in favour of the Slave Trade. The Honourable Member then proceeded to read a great part of the pamphlet, after which he concluded by declaring the situation of the West India Negroes to be comfortable; and that the witnesses who had given evidence in favour of the Abolition, were a set of low, ignorant wretches, selected purposely from the refuse of mankind.

Mr Vaughan declared himself to be a West Indian and a merchant. In the early part of his life he was for the abolition of the Slave Trade. He went to the West Indies on purpose to prove whether that opinion was well founded or not; while in the West Indies, he convinced himself that the Negroes were not in a fit condition to be restored to freedom.—Freedom generated certain mental wants. Slavery possessed only bodily wants. If they were now to be emancipated, they would immediately degenerate into idleness and wickedness. Their situation certainly might be mitigated, but it was by no means so bad as had been asserted. He had also convinced himself that they were not ill used—and slavery and particular circumstances of cruelty excepted, their situation was certainly as comfortable as that of the lower orders of the people of Great Britain. The present stock of Negroes could not be kept up on account of the decrease of population. This decrease was stated to be owing to cruelty, but the fact was otherwise.—It was to be attributed to celibacy, and to the small number of females compared with that of the males. Mr Vaughan concluded, by adverting to a combination of many people against the West India planters, to injure them by not purchasing sugar, on account of its being produced from the labour of slaves.

Mr Thornton conceived, that both the gentlemen who had spoken
against the abolition had totally forgotten the main point, by omitting all allusions to the manner in which slaves were obtained. Mr Bayley had stated the Negroes to be as comfortable as they could be, and Mr Vaughan had acknowledged that their situation might be meliorated.—This was an argument that only enforced the necessity of an immediate abolition, which could alone produce that melioration.

It had been industriously circulated, that the great political characters were on one side, and the mercantile men on the other side. —He certainly meant to argue the question in a mercantile point of view, not however on any narrow principles of commerce, but on principles liberal and enlarged. By the way, the two opposers of the abolition seemed to defend that proverb in the play, *My son, get money—honesty if you can—but get money.* Get slaves—honestly if you can—but get slaves. They seemed to have totally forgotten all those horrid instances of cruelty adduced by Mr Wilberforce; and, tho' they had travelled to the West Indies, they had never paid a visit to Africa. Mr Thornton then related some nefarious practices that had been adopted near the settlement of Sierra Leone. The relations of a King of a neighbouring district had been kidnapped by a Captain Coxe, and sold in the West Indies. This circumstance induced the King to transmit the following letter to the Sierra Leone settlers. "My subjects, and the subjects of other Kings, have been stolen away by the inhabitants of all nations who visit this coast. Three of my own relations have been taken away by a Captain Coxe, and sold for slaves—for what reason I know not. I never molested the property or person of others—I love the Natives of Great Britain—I have borne many insults from them, which have occasioned me to be silent so long—whether I shall see my relations again I know not, but those who took them will be called to account for their actions one day or another."

There was one view of the subject which had not been stated by Mr Wilberforce. It was of the utmost importance that the credit of Parliament should not be suffered to decay—It was apparent that the people were for the Abolition of the Trade, to which, if their representatives refused to accede, a sufficient ground might be given to those who wished to prejudice the constitution in the eyes of the nation.

Mr Vaughan said a few words in explanation.

Colonel
Colonel Tarleton said, humanity was a passion seldom applied to in vain, but he should beg to remind the Committee, that to be estimable, it ought to be tempered with justice. If we were inclined to relinquish the traffic, the other nations of Europe would not follow our example, but would make their advantage of our folly. The Danes and the French would deride us for giving up our share in a beneficial commerce, which would nevertheless go on. The losses would be ours: The profit would be theirs. An equal number of Slaves would continue to be imported into the West Indies; and the case of the African was exactly the same, whether he crossed the Atlantic in an English, or any other European bottom. Much force of logic was not necessary to detect the fallacies, and expose the mistaken zeal of the sectaries and enthusiasts who patronized this measure. Plain reason would go beyond sophistry and enthusiasm; and he should be able, without any laboured ingenuity, or pathetic efforts, to dissipate the acculsion of rapes, murders, impaling of children, and the long list of fancied horrors, which haunted the imagination of the Honourable Gentleman. What had been the effect of such doctrines disseminated amongst the slaves in the islands? Plots—massacres—insurrections—which had obliged Ministry, after making a parade of reducing the military establishment, to send out troops for their suppression, and if the chimerical resolutions proposed to the Committee be carried, all the troops of Great Britain may, in a short time, find employment in the West Indies. The statements of the people certainly deserved every respect; but, in the present case, they were not fairly obtained. Of the petitions on the table, very few had so much as been read: people had been tricked out of their humanity by hearlay of what passed in that House, and the circulation of despicable pamphlets, thro' the agency of advertising empirics and itinerant clergymen. Every grammar-school in the country had received a ceremonious visit from the friends of the Abolition. The boys had been promised holidays for signing their names, and the names of all the neighbours which they could recollect; porters and carters had been called off the streets to sign their petitions; when all was not sufficient, they were desired to exercise their inventive powers, to let imagination loose,

"—— And give to airy nothing,
"A local habitation, and a name."

Was this a decorous mode of collecting the voice of the people? Could it be called the sense of the people? No; it was equally a mockery
inocckery on the people, and on the House of Commons. Considered in a commercial view only, a deficit of four millions per annum would be deeply felt by this nation, flourishing as was its commerce, independent of the total loss of the West India Islands, which would be the consequence. England's debts were so enormous, and her credit so entirely depended upon her commerce, that, instead of circumscribing any means of traffic, the House should consider how to swell the tide of Trade, and give new enterprize. If the Trade were now to begin, he should be zealous against it, but now he would protect it. By mediatory means abuses might be rectified, but with hostile hands to destroy it, would be to be guilty of a suicide upon our laws, our commerce, and our constitution.

Mr M. Montague said, Liverpool merchants, and other interested persons, must be expected to oppose the resolution, but he put it to the conscience of Gentlemen, whether they ought to be influenced in their votes by the assertions of those who were manifestly ignorant of what they were so deeply interested in.—He thought it a disgrace to the Legislature to hesitate between justice and expediency, but should even be content to rest his arguments solely on the policy of the Trade, and had no fears of being refuted by those who spoke without serious consideration, or perhaps upon the assurance of their friends, that the measure would be disadvantageous. The country at large had spoken upon the subject, and their voice was responsive to the opinions of the best men and the best politicians of the age. Whatever ridicule the Honourable Gentleman (Mr Tarleton) might endeavour to cast upon it—it was his interest to do so—he would venture to say, was as unfounded in fact as it was inapplicable to the argument. He concluded by declaring, that the cause of the slaves should never want an advocate while he lived; and that he would rather lay down his life than relinquish his hopes of seeing that detestable traffic abolished.

Mr Whitbread said, The arguments adduced to prove that the trade was either founded in justice or in policy, had so completely failed, that he could not hesitate a moment in the vote he was to give.—Were it possible for him to conceive, as some of the advocates for the trade endeavoured to prove, that the Negores were rescued from torment, or from death in Africa; that they were transported in the most commodious manner to the happier clime of the West India Islands; that there, instead of painful and extorted toil, they passed the day in healthful and easy labour, the evening in cheerful
cheerful and innocent recreation, retired to rest with bodies unfa-
tigued and hearts at ease, and rose alert and vigorous in the morn-
ing, to pursue the same course: Were he to believe, that in sick-
ness they were attended with tenderness and care, and that their
old age was worn out in peace and plenty—even then he should
vote for the abolition; for he could never forget that Slavery was
one of the worst of evils, and that no practice could sanction a prin-
ciple essentially and radically wrong. He could not forget, that
they were forcibly torn from their country, and all that human af-
fecions rendered most dear; that where man was delivered over to
man, there must be tyranny on the one hand, and a deep sense of
injury on the other; that it was the quality of despotism to cor-
rupt the heart—and that, without the aid of such corruption, many
were by nature unfeeling and cruel. But there were many expres-
sions of the Gentlemen who wished to represent the condition of the
Slaves in the fairest point of view, that convinced him of the exis-
tence of cruelties disgraceful to humanity. In an account of selling
off the flock of a plantation, it was said, that the slaves fetched les
than the common price, because they were damaged—Damaged!
How damaged? What was this but an admission that they were
worn down by labour, sickness, or age; and that, instead of recei-
ving the indulgence their situation required, they were to be trans-
ferred from one task-master to another—the latter, perhaps, more
inhuman than the former. It was said, by the author of a pamph-
let on the subject, that a good Negro needed no character, for that
fetters would gall, and the whip make weals; and the Slave, who
bore not these indelible marks, had certainly never deserved the
punishment. Then it must be true, that fetters and whips were the
instruments of punishment, and that both were inflicted till the marks
of the gallng and the weals became indelible.

An honourable Gentleman (Mr Vaughan) who had gone to the
West Indies to inform himself of their situation, whose arguments,
in his speech, all tended to support the trade, but who had decla-
red, in his explanation, that he would oppose it, had said, that he
was surprised to see the Slaves in so good a condition, that they
were poor creatures, of an inferior species, he seemed to think; and
that, put slavery and cruelty out of the question, and their situation
was as good as they were capable of—slavery and cruelty!—What
but slavery and cruelty do the advocates for the abolition wish to
put out of the question?—that slavery and cruelty, whose inevitable


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effect it is to sink man below the dignity of his nature, till he seem at length hardly to belong to the same species. Their patience and resignation too surprised him; but what is it to be resigned, but to have got over the first ecstasy of despair? When it was said, that the simple question, What did your Master buy you for but to work? was sufficient to convince them what reply would have been given to their argument, had they used any but the whip.—The petitions against the Trade were said to be got by collusion, and signed only by ignorant persons, but evidence that was entitled to still less credit, since it came from persons whom the Gentleman to whom it was addressed did not even know. He could answer, that the petitions from his constituents was signed by persons as well informed as any among them. That they were so much alike, was no argument against them; for they had but one plain tale to tell, and that they told it pretty nearly in the same way, was rather a test of truth than a proof of collusion. The supporters of the abolition had been charged with enthusiasm. He was as strenuous a supporter of that measure as the honourable Gentleman who moved it, but he had never entertained, any more than that honourable Gentleman, the doctrine invidiously imputed to him, an immediate emancipation of the Slaves in the islands. The honourable Gentleman knew too well, that neither their habits, their characters, nor their degree of instruction made them capable of immediate emancipation, with any benefit to themselves; and he was too wise and too temperate to entertain such a wild idea. Was this a proof of fanaticism, or of cool and moderate enquiry? A system of gradual emancipation, so ably stated last year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was what every rational man had in view. If, on this great question, men of such pre-eminent abilities as that Right Honourable Gentleman, and his Right Honourable Friend were united, while they differed on many other points, what was it that had united them but the clearness of their understandings, and the force of truth? He disclaimed all exultation on the calamities of St Domingo. If there were any persons who felt such exultation, let them be pointed out, in order to be driven from the society of those who supported better principles on better grounds. But he denied, that these calamities were owing to the debates on the Slave Trade. They were owing to the Trade itself. There was a point of endurance, beyond which human nature could not go, and the mind rose by its native elasticity, with a violence proportioned to the
the degree to which it had been depressed. Whence did the Negroes in St Domingo learn the cruelties they had practised? whence, but from those on whom they had practised them? Had not Africans the same feelings, the same passions, and the same resentments as other men? If you prick them, do they not bleed?—if you wrong them, shall they not revenge?—What is the consequence if a Negro wrongs a European? Punishment studiously, ingeniously cruel. When the Negro rises to revenge his wrongs, do we wonder that he should remember the lesson we have taught him?

Mr Milbanke was for abolishing the trade.

Mr Secretary Dundas said, his opinion was well known to the honourable Gentleman who introduced the abolition. Though he differed as to the mode, he was as warm as to the object; and yet he doubted whether he could agree to the motion as it stood. The question had been argued so much in extremes, that it was difficult for him to shape out the course he wished to steer between the two. The honourable Gentleman contended for the immediate and complete abolition of the Trade; while those who opposed him contended for its unlimited continuance, and the system of Slavery as essential to the cultivation and progressive improvement of the West India islands. He agreed with the honourable Gentleman in all his leading points, viz. That the Slave Trade was not founded on any sound principle of justice or policy; that it was not ultimately essential to the cultivation and improvement of the islands, and that there was nothing so unfavourable in the climate of the West Indies as to prevent the stock of people employed in cultivation from being kept up, and even increased, without constant importation. But then, without meaning the most distant imputation on his motives; for sure he was, that a purer heart never inhabited a human breast; he doubted the prudence and the practicability of his mode. By an immediate and total abolition, was his honourable friend sure that he did not do more violence than was necessary to the habits, and even the prejudices of persons concerned in West India property? He would answer, that they were interested, and ought not to be the judges; but if he could effect all that he had in view, without alarming their fears unnecessarily, was not that an object worthy of his most serious consideration? Was he sure that he did not counteract the great principle of attention to property and private rights, on which Parliament always acted. On that principle, it was usual to treat licensed abuses with caution. They who had
embarked capitals in West India trade, who had lent money or pur-
chased lands, had all done so under the sanction of Parliament, and
hence it was the duty of Parliament to take care that their prop-
erty should not be depreciated by any sudden change of system. If
Parliament thought the former system wrong, it had the power to
take a new line, but then it owed a tender regard to the property
of those whom its former error had misled.

In the next place, he doubted whether the mode proposed was
practicable. He meant not to repeat the argument, that altho' we
gave up the trade other nations would continue it, and therefore
we might as well go on, because he was convinced that if the prin-
ciple was wrong, it was our duty to abandon it, without regard to
what might be the conduct of other nations, but merely to observe,
that altho' British subjects were prohibited from buying slaves in
Africa to supply our islands, the subjects of other nations might find
the means of doing it from St Eustatius, and other places, and to
defeat all the good which we expected from the abolition both in
the Islands and in Africa. What means had we of preventing ships,
shipped out at Ostend, or any Dutch ports, from doing this? Yet,
when he mentioned these objections, he disclaimed the continuance
of the trade indefinitely. All the inconveniencies might be avoided,
and the trade abolished by proper regulations, perhaps more speedi-
ly than by his Honourable friend's own plan. He did not propose
a system of regulation to perpetuate the trade, but a system that
should carry in it the seeds of abolition. Of this the first part would
be all that could be devised to encourage and increase the popula-
tion of the Negroes in the islands; Second, An immediate Abolition
of hereditary Slavery; Third, A limited duration of the Trade.
These, he thought, would be sufficient to effect a complete aboli-
tion of the Slave Trade, and of Slavery, without any of the dan-
gers or alarms of an immediate abolition. If it were true, as asser-
ted, that none were made Slaves in Africa but those who had in-
curred it as the punishment of their crimes, it could not surely be
contended that this punishment ought also to be entailed on their
innocent offspring; attention to rearing and educating the children
would not only increase, but render the flock more valuable, and
while this course was pursuing, it would have the advantage of a-
scertaining experimentally, that the abolition was practicable, with-
out danger or alarm. Let his right honourable friend, (Mr Pitt)
or the right honourable gentleman over-against him, (Mr Fox) who
seemed
seemed to agree on the practicability of immediate abolition, prove their theories with all the clearness and force of conviction to be expected from their great abilities; still persons concerned in West India property would have reason to complain, that their property was hazarded on theory; that they had no security for it but arguments, by which they themselves were not convinced. In the other mode they would have all the certainty of experiment. When he proposed the abolition of hereditary Slavery, he meant that the child should be reared and educated by the master of the parent, and that he should be entitled to so many years of its labour when arrived at maturity, as might be thought a sufficient compensation for the expense. Considering the motion of his honourable friend as susceptible of the modifications which he had stated, he might vote for it consistently with his own opinion; and should certainly not vote against it.

He wished next to say a few words to those who maintained the other side of the question, whom he conjured to weigh well, whether or not the extreme for which they contended could be supported. They could not entertain a doubt but that it would be for their advantage to abolish slavery in the islands, if that could be done with safety to their property. There was but too much evidence of cruelty exercised in the islands, although the majority of the planters treated their slaves with humanity, and these their own hearts must teach how unseemly it was, that their lands should for ever be cultivated by such hands. —It was expressly said by Mr Long, who wrote before the present question was in contemplation, that all the disorders among the slaves originated with those who were recently imported. How could it be otherwise, if their own argument was true, that they imported only the criminals of Africa? Every year that they continued to struggle against a gradual abolition, they were only bringing into the heart of the islands the cause of their own tears. Besides, what right had they to conclude that Africa would always continue to supply them with slaves, and that the trade might not be abolished, by causes over which neither they nor the British Parliament had control? He had heard that the petitions did not speak the sense of the country. Let them not flatter themselves; that the trade was unjust, impolitic, and disgraceful, had laid deep hold on many of the most enlightened minds in the kingdom; that it was odious to those who knew it only by name, could not be disputed. They would, therefore, if they con...
continued obstinate, have it extorted from them on much harsher terms than they might now obtain. It was impossible that it could endure. If they listened to reasonable terms, all the fears of danger to property would die away in a few years, and the only wonder would be, that they should ever have been entertained. He remembered the abolition of the slavery of the colliers in the northern part of this kingdom. No fears could be more strongly or more unanimously expressed than they were by all the proprietors of the coal-works, that the works would be ruined, and the price of coals raised to an extravagant rate. The abolition at length took place in 1775, and in less than a year all the fears were forgotten; the works had prospered, and coals been cheaper than before. He might quote a more recent example. In the late regulations for the slave trade, the parties concerned all affirmed, that the regulations must infallibly ruin the trade. The regulations were passed, and the trade, they now admitted, had prospered under them. He therefore called upon all gentlemen who entertained the same moderate sentiments on the subject as he did, to unite with him, and there could be no doubt, but that they should effect a compromise between the two extremes, whatever abilities there might be on the one side, or obstinacy on the other.

The Speaker professed to be one of those moderate men, who were for abolishing the trade, only, if it could be done without a convulsion. He agreed with the Secretary of State in his ideas of a gradual abolition; and he agreed with all his ideas of regulations, except that of freeing the children. He thought rather, that they should have their freedom, after a period of service of ten or fifteen years, to pay their master for the expense of rearing and educating them. And he thought there should be a regulation, to give a bounty on the importation of women into the islands, to increase the breed. He thought there should be also bounties on rearing children—and likewise bounties on every means of diminishing negro labour.

Mr Fox spoke in answer to the Secretary of State, and the Speaker, with such warmth and vigour of eloquence, that we lament our inability, at so late an hour, to give an idea of his eloquence. He said, they had begun a more severe and efficacious resistance to the motion than the open and direct opposition which it met with from other gentlemen. They had hit on a nearer means to preserve the traffic for years, perhaps for ever. He rose to depreciate all deceptions
tions and delusions. He knew it was an unpopular thing to renounce moderation; but he did not profess moderation on this subject. In Middleton's life of Cicero, there was a passage which exactly described what he thought of moderation applied to the Slave Trade—a man might break open a house at midnight, for the purpose of robbery, and might murder the father, mother, children, and domestics—but, said the passage, all this might be done with moderation. So, in like manner, by this sort of reasoning, we might proceed in this trade; we might rob, plunder, kidnap, murder, and depopulate a whole country with moderation. He professed no moderation; there could be no qualification of such guilt; he was equally an enemy to all their regulations; regulations as disgraceful as they would be impotent. It was said, Give a bounty on the importation of women. What? Call on the Parliament of Great Britain to give a bounty, and not only authorize, but tempt and provoke men to steal, kidnap, and buy women, for the purpose of dragging them into slavery, for the purpose of a forced procreation? He should like to see the clause by which this inhuman measure was to be presented to the Parliament of England. He should like to see the man with a mind capable of conceiving words to frame such a clause. He exposed in the same way the regulations of Mr. Dundas, who wished to begin by emancipation, instead of abolishing the trade; who called a mere regulation of trade an invasion of property; and who himself proposed the very extinction of their property in the first instance. This country began to feel as it ought this disgraceful trade. It began to hate itself for having countenanced robbery and murder. It had been well compared to the crimes that were the object of discussion at the Old Bailey; but it was not remembered, that the very same offences which at that tribunal were punished with death, gave reward to the persons engaged in this trade. He was a member of the Committee who had conducted this question, and he heartily approved of the pains that had been taken to circulate knowledge, and to publish the evidence: that evidence ought to be in every man's hand. It had been objected to this evidence, that some of the witnesses were poor, as if poverty and veracity were incompatible, and Lord Rodney, and other great names, were quoted as contradicting it. Neither the evidence of Lord Rodney, nor any other of the distinguished officers, did contradict one tittle of it. Upon that evidence it appeared, that 22,000 negroes were annually torn by base and wicked means from their
their native homes, and dragged into slavery, and they were said to be convicts; convicts, made so for the purpose of being sold; they were convicted of witchcraft; and we went to Africa to punish witchcraft; because we had no such crime at home. Adultery was another crime, for which we dragged these miserable fellow-creatures into slavery. Surely, if adultery deferred to be so punished, we had no need to go out of England to find criminals. Mr Fox went thro' all the means that were used to trepan, to steal, to rob, and to procure slaves in Africa, by war, instigated on purpose by treachery of all kinds; and he said, of those things they had ample and legal evidence, substantiated even in our courts of law. He desired the gentlemen to put the case to their own hearts, and to demand whether it was a philosophical opinion, that colour could take from a human being his feeling. If they were brute beasts, nay if they were inanimate gods, he would be against the traffic. He desired that they should yield it up, not as a boon to the people, but to rescue them from the opprobrium. He desired them to do their duty, without caring whether other nations followed their example. He had no fear but the example would be followed, for the reputation of this country, for its wisdom was as high as was its prosperity. The colonies would never leave the side of England, for their interests tied them to us. This question must be carried, for it should incessantly be moved. He would never abandon it but with his breath. Let us then enter into an association to press it, whatever may be our situations, and however small be our numbers. He described the great difference between political and personal slavery, and said the most wretched peasant in the most despotic state was as much above a slave as an Englishman was above such peasant. He gave a warning to the planters and merchants not to resist what they could no longer maintain, and said, that if, after the abolition, a case for compensation could be made out, he would not shrink from the duty of meeting it liberally.

Secretary Dundas said, to relieve himself from all embarrassment, he would move an amendment to introduce the word gradually before abolished.

Mr Jenkinson stated the precise question to be, Whether any essential benefit would be rendered to any considerable number of our fellow creatures by the abolition of this trade? He maintained the negative. He said that policy forbade it; for if we laid it down, other nations would take it up:—That the mortality in the passage...
was less in our ships than in foreign. In British ships the mortality of the passage was only 3 per cent.—in French ships it was 10 per cent.—in Dutch ships it was 7 per cent.; and consequently it was for the benefit of the Negroes that the trade should be in our hands as 3 per cent. was to 10—at least, as 3 was to 7. Slavery, he owned, was an evil; but were there not many evils in this life?—It would gradually cure itself. It wanted only regulation, and he had two propositions to that effect to offer. They were,

1. An Address to his Majesty, that he would direct the Governors of the Islands to recommend to the Assemblies, to grant premiums to the proprietors or overseers of plantations, where the greatest number of children were reared. He proposed for Jamaica ten annual premiums, from 500l. to 50l.; and for the other islands four premiums of from 300l. to 100l. To each mother, who should rear five children, a bounty—and that there should be schools erected and maintained in the islands.

2. That a bounty of 5l. per head, should be paid for every woman under twenty-five years of age, imported in any ship, above the equal proportion of males and females in the said cargo. These were his propositions, and, that they might come regularly before the Committee, he moved that Sir William Dolben do now leave the Chair.

Mr Pitt rose to support all the observations of Mr Fox, except where he lamented the principles of Mr Dundas, and the Speaker. He rejoiced in what he said; for though he differed from them, he was pleased to see, that neither they nor Mr Jenkinson actually approved of the trade, but differed only as to the mode and time of abolishing it. From this hour, the sentence on this trade was sealed. It was gone past; nothing remained but to arrange and settle the plan of ending it; to do this they must examine the opinions of his right honourable friends, and he would do this rigorously. He differed from them entirely. He thought the true course was an immediate abolition. He repeated his old statements, to shew that the flock in the islands would be maintained without recruits by this abominable trade, against which the feelings and the philosophy of the age revolted. He argued the expediency of the measure at great length, and with the most forcible eloquent manner of which he is possessed. He next came to the injustice of continuing a trade that had so long disgraced the country, and which could not be too soon put an end to. He then went to the different
ent reasonings of the friends to the Slave Trade, and those who wished it might be gradually abolished, all of which he refuted in a clear and argumentative manner. Having gone thro' the injustice of the trade, he replied to what had been said as to the propriety of a gradual, and not an immediate abolition of it. He called the attention of gentlemen to the situation of their own country, in the earlier stages of its history, and having stated the probable consequences if the same conduct had been followed towards our ancestors, that we had so long, and so improperly adopted towards Africa, which would have totally prevented us from being in the situation of singular prosperity and happiness, in every respect, that we now enjoyed, and which made our country the admiration of all the world. Having proceeded to every point that had been started by those who went before him on the other side of the question. He concluded by stating, that for the various reasons he had given, the solid and substantial arguments that had been used both on this and former occasions, in favour of the abolition, he should find himself obliged to vote against the motion for adjournment, against the motion of amendment; and, lastly, if divisions were persisted in, for the original motion, as made by his honourable friend who opened the business.

The question was then loudly called for, and the House divided on the motion for adjournment,

Noes, 234.—Ayes, 87.—Majority, 147.

Then on the amendment moved by Mr Dundas, for the gradual abolition,

Ayes, 193.—Noes, 125.—Majority, 68.

And lastly, that the motion as amended do pass,

Ayes, 230.—Noes, 85.—Majority, 145.

The second resolution, with the amendment, was then reported and agreed to; and leave was given to bring in a bill for the gradual abolition of the Slave Trade.

At seven o'clock, on Tuesday morning, the House adjourned.

On Mr Wilberforce's motion for the abolition of the Slave Trade last year, the numbers were Ayes 88, Noes 163.

The summary view above given of the debate on the question of the Slave Trade, affords room for many remarks, which cannot be overaken here. I cannot, however, pass them wholly over in silence. To Mr Wilberforce's...
berforce's speech we are indebted for so much new information on
the subject. In the conduct of the Captains alluded to, and their
Owners, the Nation is insulted afresh, and the jurisprudence of their
Country set at open defiance. If such wretches are permitted to
escape the hands of justice, farewell to our national honour and pro-

erity; for, as a judicious writer observes, " When a nation once
loves its regard to justice, we may venture to pronounce that such
" a nation is hastening to its ruin." We have indeed been told,
that one of them is apprehended, in order to stand trial for the
shocking instance of cruelty mentioned in the debate; and it is much
to be wished that the other Captains may be arrested in like man-
er, and duly punished for the enormities of which they are said to
have been guilty on the coast, unless they can satisfactorily disprove
the charge. Besides the many other circumstances which corroborate
the evidence on the Slave Trade, the particular mention of the names
of vessels employed in it, as in that part of it which respects the cruel
treatment of the seamen, and here in Mr Wilberforce's speech, we
have a conclusive argument of the truth of that evidence: for such
a specific charge, by which both officers and owners are in effect
pointed out, gives them every advantage of refuting it if innocent.
Their silence hitherto on this head is more than a presumptive
proof of their guilt. It is with justice Mr Wilberforce remarks, at
the close of his speech, that " he thought the recent enormities
" had been permitted by the Providence of Heaven, for the pur-
pose of rendering it impossible,' that any one should dare to rise
" in defence of the Trade."

Colonel Tarleton's speech can be viewed in no other light than
as a gross insult to the Nation. While he presumed to express
himself in the manner he does, surely a due regard to the People at
large should induce the House to call him to order; for did he use
the same freedom with any Member, he would not be permitted to
proceed without interruption. His speech is void of truth, of com-
mon sense, and of all due regard to honour, to justice, and decorum.
If the names exhibited to the petitions were procured in the man-
er he describes, and consist of such characters, how comes it about
that the wise and intelligent part of the nation do not come for-
ward with their remonstrances to support him and his friends; for
they have the same access to petition the Legislature with those
who have? To represent those who patronize the abolition as en-
thusiasm

th拳头s and sectaries, who have taken the most indirect methods to procure subscriptions to the petitions, is a piece of unsufferable insolence. Are the Livery of London composed of such characters? and have they too used low and illiberal expedients to fill up their petition? We have been told that their meeting was numerous; that when the hall was fullest of Livery, there might be about 2000 present,—that their petition was immediately signed by crowding multitudes. The petitioners must be admitted to be the popular majority, let the friends of slavery fret and exclaim as they may, till we hear that an equal number of petitions have been received on the other side of the question.

The chief argument to be found in the speech of this servile advocate for thraldom, amounts to this, If we practiseto not the Slave Trade, others will, and it is indifferent to the natives of Africa whether they are carried from their own country in English, or any other European bottoms. A robber may use the same plea, when he overtakes a gentleman on the high-way, If I spare him, another may not; and therefore it is as well I rob him myself. The arguments and the cause are a-kin.

Colonel Tarleton, a few days before the question came to be discussed, expressed his warm hopes, that the petitions, which he viewed as so much useless lumber on their table, would be soon consigned to oblivion, by a great majority in the House. To this Mr Wilberforce replied, That "if the sense of the people of England and Scotland, expressed so generally and so loudly, could fail to have its due weight on the present occasion; he would fairly confess, that, if the Honourable Gentleman's expectations should be realized, and his own motion be negatived by a larger majority than before, he should then, indeed, concur with him in wishing that the petitions might be consigned to oblivion; because so long as they continue in remembrance, they would continue a reproach to the character of Parliament, and add to the disgrace which could not but tarnish the honour of a British House of Commons, whilst this detestable traffic in men should be suffered to exist."

With regard to Mr Dundas, it is not difficult to perceive the object of the amendment he proposed, and which a great majority in the House thought proper to adopt. Nothing could be more craf-ty and insidious, than such a specious pretence of moderation, which has already had its intended effect with such as content themselves with a superficial view of the subject; and whose feelings re-
speaking the claims of justice, where interest interferes, are not very nice or delicate. The Prim'ers speech is allowed to have been full to the purpose. What a pity any should take occasion to represent it as meant only to save appearances, and secure popularity; while they view the speech of his friend as more congenial to his real sentiments, or rather as an echo to his political views! Statemen may be capable of such things, but they redound not to their honour. That old maxim, contained in a book which seldom attracts their notice, is however worthy of their attention: *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely*, the neglect of which hath occasioned more of them to be discarded with disgrace, than ever it raised to honour, even in the eyes of the world. But let us persuade ourselves it is not so in this case, while facts appear not to the contrary.

Is it not truly amazing to hear one reprobating the traffic in slaves, as founded neither in justice nor policy, and yet voting only for its gradual abolition, without saying any thing specific in respect of the time or manner; which is in effect doing nothing at all? The claims of justice however, are not a nose of wax, which may be moulded and fashioned at pleasure; for what is unjust to-day will be so twenty years hence. If it be lawful to continue the Slave Trade for any given time, why not for double that time, or as long as you please? If otherwise, can a decree of the Legislature change the nature of things, convert acts of injustice, cruelty, and murder, to the very opposite virtues? What wretched policy to continue a traffic which is at the same time owned by its very friends to be unjust and impolitic! Such wisdom, however much some may applaud it, springs from and favours of the earth; for it is directly repugnant to the dictates of the wisdom from above. Their own suffrage in this cause testifies against them; for while they reprobate the traffic, and own the necessity of its abolition at a future period, do they not in effect pronounce their own late decision unjust, cruel, and impolitic? Will not some Pagan rulers rise up in judgment against them, and condemn their conduct, having themselves discovered a more uniform regard to the claims of justice? Ancient history abounds with instances. The Reader will excuse me for holding up to our Rulers two examples worthy of imitation, which are found in the Classics of our Country.

A Duke

*The Spectator and Guardian.*
A Duke of Burgundy, taking a fancy for a German, who had served him in his wars, promoted him to the government of one of his chief cities. He was not long there till the beauty of a wealthy citizen's wife, attracted his regard, but, being unable to seduce her, he commanded her husband to be arrested, under pretence of a conspiracy. She immediately presented herself before him, to implore her husband's release; when the wretch had the wickedness and cruelty to propose, as the only condition of redeeming his liberty and life, that she would sacrifice her honour to his gratification, and that before the following noon. With her husband's consent, she yielded to the hard terms; when, instead of having him safely restored to her, as she expected, she found him assassinated in the prison. She repaired privately to Court, where her person, and a certain grandeur of sorrow, negligent of forms, procured her access into the presence of the Duke her sovereign; whom she thus addressed: "Behold, O mighty Charles, a wretch weary of life, tho' it has always been spent with innocence and virtue. It is not in your power to redress my injuries, but it is to avenge them. And if the protection of the distressed, and the punishment of oppressors, is a talk worthy a Prince, I bring the Duke of Burgundy ample matter for doing honour to his own great name, and wiping infamy off mine."

Having thus spoke, she delivered a paper reciting her story. The Duke read it with all the emotions that indignation and pity could raise in a prince jealous of his honour in the behaviour of his officers, and the prosperity of his subjects. The criminal was sent for to court, and upon an appointed day confronted, in the presence of some of the Council, by the Lady. Convicted in his own mind, he proposed to marry her, should that be deemed a reparation. The ceremony was immediately solemnized. At the motion of his sovereign, he signed a gift of his whole estate to her after his decease. Having witnessed both deeds, the Duke thus addressed the Lady, "It now remains for me to put you in quiet possession of what your husband has so bountifully bequeathed on you," and so ordered his immediate execution.

The other instance is of a Persian prince, who had a complaint lodged before him by a peasant, while he lay encamped with his army, against one of his officers, who forcibly entered his house, turned him out of bed, and lay with his wife. Not being able to point out the culprit, the king wished him to return home, and should
should he make his wife another visit, to repair immediately to his tent to acquaint him with it. The criminal in two or three days renewed his visit, upon which the peasant applied himself to the imperial tent, as he was ordered. The monarch went in person, with his guards, to the poor man's house, where he arrived about midnight. He ordered the attendants to put out the lights, to enter the house, and dispatch the criminal. When the corpse was laid out on the floor, he commanded light to be brought, and having viewed the face, fell on his knees, and continued some time in a praying posture. Upon his rising up, he ordered the peasant to set before him whatever food he had in his house; whereof he ate very heartily, tho' but coarse fare. The peasant seeing him in good humour, presumed to ask an explanation of such things as appeared mysterious in his conduct. The Prince told him, That upon hearing the greatness of the offence, he concluded it must have been committed by one of his own sons, as none else in the army, he thought, would be so audacious and presuming. That he therefore gave orders to put out the lights, that his feelings might not prevent his doing justice on the criminal. That overjoyed to find it was not his son, he returned thanks to God; and that the reason of his eating so heartily of such coarse fare, was the great anxiety he felt, which prevented his taking any food from the time the complaint was made till that moment.

Let Britain copy such examples on the present occasion, while awful justice loudly claims our speedy interference. While writing this, I am happy to find it notified in the papers, that it has been resolved in a meeting of merchants concerned in the Slave Trade, to institute immediate prosecutions in the High Court of Admirality, against not only the African Captain already mentioned, but also his five associates, for piracy and murders committed on the slave-coast. Should these monsters of cruelty be made examples of justice, as they richly deserve, unless they can refute the charge, it will be of essential service to the cause of humanity, and so far serve to obliterate our national disgrace. It is however, more than probable, there would be no word of such prosecutions, had it not been for the public discussion, and to save appearances with the Nation; for their being continued in employ, after the matter was known, is a clear proof that their conduct, cruel and bloody as it was, did not offend their employers. If those who neglect to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and oppressed, shall
be condemned at the great day, as our Lord informs us in the account he gives of the procedure of the last judgment, what will become of them who travel over sea and land to enslave their fellow-creatures, and can so treat them when once in their power?

And hath a great majority of our Lawgivers decreed, That the Slave Trade shall be still continued, contenting themselves with the vague redress of voting merely a gradual abolition. Must not everyearer of his God,—every lover of his Country, and every real friend of Human kind, lament that the British Senate should be once more left to act such a part in this affair, as must be highly offensive to Him by whom kings reign, and rulers decree justice, deeply disgraceful to themselves, and, if repentance and mercy prevent not, sadly destructive of our national prosperity? Whom God means to destroy, he often inquiates. Heaven forbid it should be so in this case! Solomon remarks, “I saw under the sun the place of judgment, that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there;” and would to God there was no occasion to repeat the remark since! What he adds deserves our notice, “I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time for every purpose,—that God might manifest them, and that they might see, that they themselves are beasts.”

How dignified does Samuel appear when resigning his administration, while all the people, and God himself bear ample testimony to his integrity? “I am old, and grey-headed, and have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am, witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whom have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you. And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.” Happy for the rulers of the earth, could they quit the stage of life with an appeal so well founded. The words with which he concludes that solemn address, merits the devout attention of all ranks, and presents an example worthy the imitation of rulers: “As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly
“ceily, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.” 1 Samuel xii.

But our Rulers act from a regard to justice in sanctioning the continuance of the Slave Trade; for they only wish to punish thieves, adulterers, and the like. Allowing it were so, what a member said some time ago in debate on another question, justly applies here—"In punishing individuals for acts of injustice, the Government should take care themselves not to do any acts of injustice (this applies in many cases): The sending of convicts, under the sentence of transportation, for a stated time, to a place so distant, and under circumstances so distressing, as to make it impossible for them to return when the time of their transportation expired, was certainly an act of injustice." Our West India planters and merchants are, perhaps, ambitious of the honour of being the executioners of African justice; and therefore wish to continue the trade at all events. To secure this darling object many others join issue with them. What are the crimes which chiefly excite their patriotic zeal, and induce them to send their servants to remote coasts in order to punish them? Why, the principal of these are theft, witchcraft, and adultery, particularly the latter. How, in the name of wonder! are we grown so zealous against this crime, that we are content to go all the way to Africa to punish it? Can we suppose that deserves the forfeiture of liberty in poor ignorant Pagans, which many among us, with all our boasted knowledge and refinement, and perhaps of those very persons who engage in this traffic, would commit with impunity? Britain can furnish her Colonies annually with several ships loads of adulterers, of all ranks and descriptions, from the prince to the peasant, or poor mendicant, were they narrowly looked after; who have done much more to degrade their nature, and forfeit their freedom, than all the Slaves that ever were imported from the Guinea-coast.

Do the planters and their partisans merit the protection of the nation by deeds which disgrace the very people that protects them, and will entail an indelible odium on the British character, even to latest posterity, if not timely wiped off? Are they not exerting every nerve to perpetuate practices, from a regard to their own private gain, which have already dreadfully accumulated our national guilt, and will, in all probability, bring upon us national judgments?

* Sir Charles Bunbury.
But in all this, they would effect to be thought actuated by a laudable zeal for the public good, and a remote regard to the punishment and suppression of certain vices. In this they verify the old proverb, *Satan reproving, and chastising, fin.* Like that destroyer and murderer, these mighty hunters of African delinquents go to and fro in the earth, and encompass sea and land to enslave their fellow-men, and sacrifice them to their ruling passion.

We would advise the West Indian planters and merchants, as they tender their own continued safety, and the security of their possessions, not to insist on the continuance of the Slave Trade. Have they forgotten the destruction of the chief town in Jamaica in 1693, by an earthquake? I recollect to have read, in the account of that awful event, how the Clergyman of the town was frequently led to admonish and warn the inhabitants of approaching judgments, on account of their abounding iniquities; all which they disregarded, till these in fact overtook them. In the hour of impending danger, such as escaped the fatal effects of the first violent shock, flocked about him with terror and distraction in their looks, earnestly soliciting his prayers in their behalf. To such a degree was the earth agitated under him, even between the shocks, that he was obliged to be supported on his knees by two men during the time he spent in prayer. Similar or worse sins still abound, and the Most High hath repeatedly been pleading a controversy with them.

Have we forgotten the dreadful Hurricanes wherewith the West India islands were visited, I think about twelve years ago, and which proved so awful and destructive? Such was their violence, that we were told in the papers, a heavy piece of artillery, with its carriage, was borne from one of the ramparts to a considerable distance. Lately his Majesty’s packet, the Sandwich, hath brought us intelligence, that, on the 17th and 31st of December last, two very severe shocks of an earthquake were felt in Kingstown, and other places in Jamaica; the influence of which, every house there in some measure felt, tho’ happily without damage. Here God hath been speaking to us out of the whirlwind, and in the concussión of the earth, and let us learn to acknowledge and revere his voice; for who can say to what such solemn premonitions may prove a prelude? “The lion hath roared, who will not fear? The Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophecy?” Amos iii. 8. If these judgments have been heavier on other nations than on us, what can we...
we infer thence, but that these too have provoked the wrath of Heaven; and that we are warned to avoid their sinful courses, lest God, however reluctant, make us sharers in their plagues? Instead therefore of attempting to fortify our minds by vain reasonings against the moral influence of such dispensations, let us study to see God's uplifted hand in them, and so humble ourselves under it, that he may, in due time, exalt us in his favour. Upon the most transient survey of our national character, and prevailing vices, must we not own that God may address us with at least as much propriety as he did the Jews of old; "Shall I not visit for these things, "faith the Lord? And shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" Jer. v. 29. Should he proceed to plead against us, till he hath fully avenged himself upon us, may not every one tremble for his own fate, and the fate of his country? Oh! that we could say with the ancient church, "Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee! Isa. xxvi. 8. But instead of this, all ranks seem to have forgotten him, and set his judgments at defiance. With too much justice may we view God as expressing himself with regard to us, as he did once with respect to the Jewish nation: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: "for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, "my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden "with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters: "they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy One, "of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should "ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but "wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isa. i. How expressive of our moral state and character; and what may we then expect?

But with regard to that decision which gave occasion to the foregoing reflections, some of the members of the House of Commons openly regretted it as a disgrace to that House, and an insult to the nation. Duly weighing it in its nature and consequences, one need not hesitate to pronounce it fraught with treason against the tranquillity and safety of the State; for, when the minds of a nation come
come to be irritated by repeated repulses and provocations, who can say to the consequences, hitherto shall ye come, and no farther, and here shall all your violence be stayed, but that God who stills the raging waves of the sea, and the threatening tumults of the people? It implies treason against the majesty of the people, whose happiness is the great and ultimate end of government, and whose united will ought to be a law to their Representatives, who have no legislative power but what they derive from them, agreeable to the Constitution. Nay more—it includes rebellion and treason against the Eternal Majesty of the Universe, who is now demanding justice and redress for myriads of his creatures and subjects, by his vicegerent, conscience; for, in this respect, the native, unrestrained voice of conscience, speaking in and by the people, is in fact the voice of God. When the rulers of a nation can persist, in the face of the remonstrances of their constituents, in measures that evidently tend to accumulate our national guilt, and accelerate our national destruction, after sufficient evidence of the enormous criminality of such measures hath been laid before them, may they not be justly viewed as in effect the very worst enemies of their country, whose conduct tends more to its ruin than all the hostile attempts of foreign enemies? Since those who, in such circumstances, patronize the continuance of slavery, discover themselves destitute of humane feelings, as well as of all proper regard to justice in the intercourse of mankind, or act in direct opposition to them; would it be either harsh or unjust to wish they might be reduced in Providence to exchange condition with the slaves, till such time as they are taught by experience to feel for them? This is but the law of retaliation, than which none is more just; for as they wish to make and keep others slaves, is it not equitable that they themselves should be made so? Indeed, such a decision originates too much from the characteristic dispositions of a slave; for to be able to vote the continuance of such a traffic, with their eyes open on all its horrid enormities, is quite incompatible with a rational love of liberty, or with any proper sense of honour and justice, be their pretensions to these ever so loud and clamorous.

Some would alleviate what appears blame-worthy in such a decision, by telling us that the Public at large are not competent judges of the expediency of continuing or discontinuing the Slave Trade. The Editor of a certain periodical paper*, who upon the whole

* The Bee.
whole seems no friend to slavery; supposes that the House of Commons might be induced to disregard the petitions lately presented for the abolition, as coming from people, many of whom, according to him, are undoubtedly incapable of judging, as to the political expediency of the measure they condemn. Certainly many respectable characters have appeared on this occasion of whom this cannot be said; so far as political expediency implies any thing virtuous, justifiable, and praiseworthy; and let politicians have all the merit of what it may include of a different nature. There is more true political wisdom contained in one single sentence of Scripture, however much overlooked by the politicians of the world, and discarded from their political creed, than in all the arcana and chicanery of Cabinets: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Prov. xiv. 34. It is no disparagement to the understanding of a subject, that he does not, nor cannot enter into the views of Statesmen in their measures; for these have too often manifested themselves to have been such depths of Satan as no good man would choose to have any concern in. But there is a principle within the breast of the poorest peasant, or meanest mechanic, which puts it in his power to judge as decisively on many points, and these the most interesting to human happiness, as the greatest politician. Does it require any uncommon stretch of understanding, to know whether kidnapping, rapine, robbery, oppression, murder, and the like, are to be tolerated by a Christian nation or not? to know whether a state is most likely to prosper by pursuing measures, against which the wrath of God is denounced in his word, and hath been often revealed from heaven in the course of his providence: or by adopting and pursuing such as are sanctioned by his express approbation? Cursed be that policy which involves the violation of the laws of the Almighty, let it appear ever so expedient to the sons of earth. And, doubtless, his curse shall overtake the patrons and abettors of every system that sets itself in opposition to him, if they repent not, tho' it should acquire the character of wisdom among men. Will the arguments of political expediency, so often urged in this case, be sustained at the bar of God, where every man shall be rewarded according to his works; and those concerned in this trade, according to the deeds committed in it, if the guilt contracted by them be not now forgiven.

My fellow-subjects, learn your own weight and interest in the Constitution, and hold fast the privileges which it secures you, as you
you would wish that neither you nor your children should be brought under a yoke of bondage, which our forefathers would by no means bear, whatever we may incline to do. If we tamely yield this important point, allowing this involved no guilt, our acquiescence in the late decision, by our silence, will teach those in power to treat our just wishes in future with contempt. The acts of the Legislature are to be viewed as the acts of the nation at large, till they constitutionally express their desire of their repeal, and persist while there is hope of obtaining it. Even the edicts of a despot, whose arbitrary will supplies the place of law, may involve a people in guilt, should they obey, through fear, at the expense of that duty they owe to God. How much more then will the laws enacted by the representatives of a free people, if in any instance they run counter to the law of God, devolve guilt on the community, if they excite no constitutional endeavour for relief? As the oppression of the Israelites in Egypt became more severe and cruel, after Moses applied for their release; so we may expect, that during the period the Slave Trade is continued, the late application for its abolition, and the prospect of this in a given time, will occasion greater cruelties in the prosecution of it than ever; what is said of Satan applies here, "Woe to the inhabitors of the earth, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 12.

Let every Briton, worthy of the name, contend earnestly for the extension of that liberty, with which we are favoured, to those who at present groan under the galling yoke of oppression. We have a right to petition the Legislature and the Throne, and ought to do it with a firmness becoming the magnitude and importance of the cause in which we have embarked. If need be, let our Rulers know, that they are servants of the public at large, bound to rule for their good, and, in their legislative capacity, to conform to their wishes when duly made known. Where the people are despised, and denied their due weight in any state, the fault is their own. They are never deprived of their essential rights, till by their tameness and servility, which never fail to produce corruption and venality, they justly merit such a fate. In religious matters, too many are content to be the dupes of time-serving priests, who would lord it over their brethren, and in political concerns not a few are disposed to copy the same example. Had our ancestors possessed such a spirit, we would be still under the oppressive yoke of despotism, and fettered
tered with the degrading chains of superflition. Let us quit our-
selves like men, for the cause of justice and humanity is the cause
of God, and will triumph over the illiberal efforts of men. Let us not grow weary in so good a cause, for in due season we
shall reap if we faint not; lest God should punish our remissness by
commanding deliverance and enlargement for our African brethren
from another quarter, and that to our shame and confusion.

Should a majority of our Rulers, however, be disposed to deny
to our just petitions all effectual redress in the mean time, content-
ting themselves with promising this at a distant period, their conduct
will, doubtless, merit the severest animadversion, and forfeit the
important station they now hold in the Community. Are they
not, my countrymen and fellow-subjects, your representatives, and
official servants, and you their constituents? Mark then their con-
duct on the present occasion, and say if those who have voted in di-
rect opposition to the express prayer of your petitions in such a
cause are worthy of the trust reposed in them, and merit the con-
uinance of your favour and support? If they are determined, from
a regard to the supposed interest of individuals, to walk contrary
to you, what can they in reason expect but that you should walk
contrary to them? If they persist in courses which may accelerate
national calamities, already, alas! too well merited, not only they,
but you also must bear the consequences; and therefore a regard
to your own safety, and the safety of your families and country re-
quire you should not remain silent, and neglect to exert the power
or privilege which the Constitution hath lodged in your hands.

Every thing that ought to be dear to us as men and Christians calls
for the most steady and vigorous exertions in a cause of such vast
magnitude, and extensive influence. Those who wish the traffic in
question to be continued without limitation, and such as triumph in
the late decision as affording sufficient redress, may reproach those
who differ from them on that head, and misrepresent their active
and laudable efforts: but dread not the censure of such; for there
are whose praise is infamy, and whose censure is praise. Cease not
then to embrace every opportunity of praying for the immediate and
entire abolition of this infamous, impolitic, and criminal commerce
till it is obtained; persuaded the longer this just and necessary
measure is delayed, the more will our national guilt be increased,
and the heavier will our national judgments prove, and the sooner
will they overtake us. All this is the more necessary with regard
to
to all invested with the rights of citizens, as they would refute the degrading insinuation, not seldom thrown out, that, instead of you being the constituents of your Representatives, they are your purchasers, who have acquired a right, in consequence of your mercenary servility, to dispose of you at discretion, as may best serve their own private interest. United in exertions becoming Christians, and loyal subjects, to assert the unalienable rights of man, you will form a phalanx that shall make the friends of slavery and oppression tremble.—How far the British Legislature act in character in tolerating, for any given period, a traffic which they have expressly and judicially condemned, and attempting to compromise between right and wrong,—between the claims of justice, humanity, and religion on the one hand, and the pleas urged to screen a system replete with injustice, rapine, oppression, cruelty, and bloodshed on the other, let every Britain worthy of the name, and the world at large judge. But that decree is audited in Heaven, and will be reviewed.

As the highest authority in the kingdom hath once more decreed, that this traffic shall be continued, so long at least, I cannot but embrace the opportunity, before I have done, of beseeching and intreating all my fellow-christians, in these lands, to refrain from the use of West India Sugar and Rum, till these can be obtained on innocent and honourable terms, as you would not be accessory to the guilt of others, and to the misery and wretchedness of myriads of God's intelligent creatures, and your own brethren. Say, on the matter, if such be the conduct of the ungodly, and the native tendency of continuing the detested traffic in slaves, and using the productions to the acquisition of which its necessity is pleaded, our souls come not into their secret, into their assembly, our honour be not thou united with them. If the Reader thinks I have insisted too long on this subject, and expressed myself, perhaps, with rather much warmth and freedom, it is hoped he will have the candour and charity to attribute this to a felt concern for the continued prosperity of our Country, and the happiness of the human race; to which, I trust, may be added some zeal for the glory of God, and the honour and success of our common Christianity, which are doubtless much concerned in the matter.

A copy of the Letter which accompanied the Abstract, referred to page 10.


d S a

* A copy of the Abstract with this letter hath been sent to Clergymen of every denomination. What a pity some, instead of imparting, as requested,
SIR,

WE take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject, to which we suppose you cannot be altogether indifferent, not only as being highly interesting in itself, but as it has become a subject of Parliamentary investigation; we mean the AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

That this most horrid commerce, should so long have stained the annals of this country, is a deplorable proof that the love of gain is capable of producing the same baneful effects, upon nations, as individuals, a total disregard to the sacred principle of justice, substituting in its room, as a governing motive, personal or political advantage.

To possess ourselves by violence, or by fraud, of the persons of men who never injured us, and tearing them from the enjoyment of all that can render life a blessing, compel them to labour for us as beasts of the field, who, that considers in a moral light, will presume to defend?

We are, therefore, persuaded, that to promote a general abhorrence of this oppression of our national character, and an earnest application to the Legislature from all quarters of the kingdom, for its abolition, it is only necessary to direct the public attention, to a sober consideration of the nature of this Trade, not as exhibited by men of strong feeling and warm imagination, but as it is described by persons, who, in their examination before the House of Commons, relate facts, in which they were in general parties, or of which they were spectators.

We have the honour now to present you with a faithful Abstract of the Evidence we allude to, of which we beg in the first place, your own most attentive perusal, and afterwards, that you will circulate it within the sphere of your acquaintance, lending it for a limited ed, the contents to any of their people, should carefully conceal them! To what can this be owing? Is it that they are inured to despotic and oppressive measures in their own spheres? or, that they are so dependent on the State, that they cannot be prevailed with to support any measure, be it ever so interesting to the happiness of mankind, and ever so agreeable to the will of God, till once they know it meets the ideas of ministry, who may have it in their power to befund them on another occasion? In so doing, do they exemplify the many fine things, they say about the beauty of virtue, the innate goodness of the human heart—the charms of benevolence, charity, compassion, and the like. A respectable part of their brethren, however, have discovered true magnanimity, and a laudable good-will to men in rising superior to such temptations, and acting in direct opposition to such examples.—May they yet be induced to tread in the same steps!
limited time to each, and entreating the same diligent attention to
the contents: The result, we are convinced, must be, a firm perfor-
mation in every unbiased mind, that the African Slave Trade is as
impolitic, as it is criminal: And that, hence, it will appear the duty
of every individual, to express an earnest desire for its abolition.
Let us not, however, be misunderstood in the use of this expression;
we mean only an Abolition of the Trade in Slaves, between Afri-
ca and the British Colonies, and not an emancipation of these now
in the West India islands, which is not the object of the present
Parliamentary inquiry. To this distinction, between an Abolition
of the Trade, and an emancipation of the Negroes, we request, in
order to prevent mistakes, that you will carefully attend.

As men possessing human feelings, as Britons boastful of their
love of liberty, but above all, as Christians, who own subjection to
the law of Universal Benevolence, we are each of us bound, to use
our best endeavour to deliver our afflicted African brethren, from
the unspeakable miserries to which European avarice has so long
subjected them, and to save our country, by a timely renunciation,
from the ignominy attached to a commerce, which sinks us to a le-
vel with the most barbarous people, known in the history of ancient or
modern times.

When you shall have perused the evidence now transmitted, and
communicated the same to the persons in your neighbourhood,
whom you think best qualified to derive benefit from its perusal, we
earnestly request your sentiments on the subject.

EDINBURGH, Dec. 1. 1791.
WM FORBES.
D. Chairman.

HERE the Reader is presented, as promised in a preceding
part of this work, with a few specimens of the Resolutions respect-
ing the Slave Trade, lately published in the papers, with a Copy
of the Petition of a certain famed University for its Abolition, &c.

— March 2. 1792.

A number of inhabitants of ——, and places adjacent, in conse-
quence of the public attention being called to the consideration of
the African Slave Trade, having consulted together on the subject,
unanimously agree in declaring:—

A a 2

That
That as the Slave Trade has ever appeared to them, so far as they have had opportunity to be acquainted with its nature, to be highly unjust, inhuman, and peculiarly incompatible with that improved civilization, and those principles of liberty in which Britons glory, as well as with the spirit and laws of that religion which we profess, so the inquiries which have been lately made into the subject, in consequence of the generous attempt to procure the Abolition of that trade, in proportion to the additional information obtained, have tended farther to confirm them in these views, to increase greatly their abhorrence and indignation at it, and to convince them of the necessity, as well as of the expediency and good policy of the speedy and total abolition of a species of traffic, or rather of lawless rapine, violence, and murder, the most infamous of any in the history of nations, civilized or barbarous; and they suppose, that, among the impartial and disinterested, there can be but one sentiment, and the same feelings prevailing upon this subject, of which the British representatives in Parliament can have no reason to entertain a doubt.

Secondly. They heartily approve of the vigorous efforts of those, whether societies or individuals, who have taken a decided part in opposition to this abominable system, and who are still persevering in their endeavours to have it abolished, notwithstanding the powerful opposition against which they have been obliged to contend. At the same time, they cannot but express their surprise and grief at the unexpected issue of the question, when lately before the House of Commons, and at the wound which humanity, justice, religion, and national honour have received, by the vote of a majority giving sanction to the illicit trade, whereby some degree of the infamy and guilt attached to such a decision must be reflected on the whole British people, until they have, in some public and explicit manner, disavowed the same. It is hoped, however, that the clamours of jealous interest, and a sordid thirst for gain, (which, in this case is, in a commercial view, at best precarious; and, in a moral view, execrable, as being the price of souls, and the fruit, as well as the earnest of a complication of crimes) will not always, not long prevail against the irresistible force of evidence and argument, and the united voice of a free people, eager to wipe away the stain.

Thirdly. Tho' it may be reckoned too delicate for them to touch on the emancipation of the slaves in the British plantations, and tho' the difficulties in the way of this may be such as forbid them to hope
hope for its sudden accomplishment; yet they are not satisfied that
this desirable object should be altogether relinquished, or excluded
from the views of those who are contending for the abolition of the
trade, upon the general and immutable principles of humanity, e-
quity, and religion. When they consider that much of the mis-
chief and misery resulting from it is realized in the plantations;—
that the power assumed and exercised over the slaves there, is foun-
ded on no principle of right or legitimate compact, and that it can-
not be maintained, but on such pretexts of policy or interest as are
employed for vindicating the continuance of the reprobated Afri-
can trade,—they are of opinion, that the condemnation and con-
fuent abolition of the perpetual and hereditary slavery of the tran-
sported Africans are necessarily connected with the consistent main-
tainance of the great principles on which the petitions for abolishing
the trade proceed, and on which alone they can be effectually
prosecuted; and that not only regard to the welfare of a large por-
tion of our fellow-men, but also to the morals, jurisprudence, and
real prosperity of the British settlements, and of the empire at large,
requires, not merely that some regulations should be adopted for
their further protection and comfort, but that measures should be
concerted for converting their brutal slavery into a reasonable
human service, founded on the basis of equity and voluntar-
ry compact. They indulge the hope, as well as wish, that the
combined wisdom and authority of the Legislature, stimulated by
public zeal, and aided by modern ingenuity, and the inventive en-
terprising spirit of industry, might gradually surmount the obvious
difficulties, and in the event evince, that the idea of emancipation
and a different plan of future cultivation, are not so chimerical, im-
politic, or hazardous as some would represent them. Were the ne-
groes allowed to taste the sweets of property, and of domestic rela-
tions, and to enjoy the fruits of personal labour, and the common
advantages of social order—were their minds habituated to moral
discipline, and especially brought under the influence of religious
instruction, (an object that certainly deserves far greater attention
than seems yet to have been bestowed upon it;) and were they, at
the same time, kept under the eye of public justice, and the restraint
of laws, who will say that the despotick authority of so many private
tyants might not then, without great danger or detrement, be en-
tirely annulled? Were even a compensation reckoned to be due to the
the planters, for any supposed loss they might sustain, might not some other mode of indemnification be devised, rather than they should be left to exact it with unrelenting injustice and barbarity from their wretched slaves, so as to deprive them and their posterity for ever of all hope of release? In fine, they are disposed to adopt the words of a philosophical historian, "Let us break the bonds of so many victims to our mercenary principles, should we even be obliged to discard a commerce which is founded only on injustice, and whose object is luxury." But even this is not necessary. The productions of these colonies may be cultivated by the hands of free men, and then be reaped without remorse.

*Fourthly,* They are ready to concur in petitions to Parliament, not inconstant with the above sentiments.

Resolved, That such is the injustice of our enervating our unoffending fellow-creatures, and so great the horror which it naturally occasions, that they are sorry to think there should be a single instance of it upon the face of the earth, much more that any class of British subjects, or any part of the British dominions, should be stained and disgraced by such a nefarious practice, than which nothing can be more contrary to the character of an honest and of a generous people.

Resolved, That the African Slave Trade in particular, is repugnant to every principle of the law of nature; and not only so, but, from the manner in which it has been carried on, it appears to be one continued scene of the most shocking cruelty, and therefore ought to be reprobated with the highest indignation by every lover of right, and friend of mankind.

Resolved, That it is not a little surprising, that this iniquitous and inhuman Trade should continue to receive the countenance of a Legislature so abhorrent of injustice and tyranny at home, as if its ravages were less heinous, because they are committed at a distance, or the calamities which it produces less grievous, because the groans of its wretched victims are often as fruitlessly spent amidst their unfeeling oppressors, as if they were uttered to the winds and waves.

Resolved, That the enormous load of guilt which this disgraceful Trade is daily accumulating, in connection with the West India barbarity which is supported by it, affords an awful consideration, in a religious view. The cries of the oppressed will rise up to Heaven,

*Raynal's Hist. B. xi.*
ven, and, if a timely stop is not put to their oppressions, there is reason to conclude, that such a finished system of iniquity cannot long escape the righteous judgment of God.

Nota. The above Resolutions were adopted by nine incorporated Trades, and twenty-one societies in one of our populous manufacturing towns.

Being well pleased with the following sentiments of a body of men whose judgment should have weight with the Public, I persuade myself, the Reader will think himself obliged by allowing them a place here*.

1. All men are born free, and equal in their rights. The first object of government is, to secure to all the right which all derive from nature to civil liberty. The object of political liberty is, to prevent the abuse of power in government. Slavery, therefore, if political, must be contrary to the cause, if civil, to the end of government: And in both cases, it is a violation of the first and most sacred right of man.

2. The laws of war afford no just origin to slavery. They authorize death only in cases of necessity; but where any enemy has been made a slave, there was evidently no previous necessity to murder him. After victory, all that can be justly demanded is, reparation for past wrongs, and securities from future injuries. When an enemy is made a slave, he does not cease to be an enemy; and when power and opportunity are given him, he may listen to the voice of nature.

3. Neither does the consent of the slave confer a just right on the master—when a man bargains away his freedom, he may fairly be suspected of insanity. No contract is just unless the engagements be reciprocal; but there can be no reciprocal obligations between master and slave, for even a slave's rights are his master's.

4. No violation of the social order in the parent can justify the slavery of the children. And those criminal laws must be unjust which indiscriminately condemn to perpetual slavery.

5. A traffic in slaves must in every instance be criminal, because the seller, having no right in the slave, can transfer only his criminal

* The Resolutions of the Medical Society of Edinburgh, respecting the African Slave Trade.
nal possession to the purchaser. But the Slave Trade to the coast of Africa involves in it other circumstances which violate every principle of equity.

The wars among Africans are only piracies and devastations of a merciless banditti, but occasioned by a tyrant to procure the miserable and innocent victims of his ferocity. That justice must be shamefully perverted which can furnish an annual offering of thousands to avarice. Private treachery, too frequent to be denied, requires no comment. Yet these are the modes of obtaining slaves from Africa. We trust, if there be an avenging God, the day of retribution will arrive!

6. But the Slave Trade is not more contrary to the eternal principles of justice, than destructive to the progress of civilization in Africa. The artifices and luxuries of Europeans, support a constant warfare among its inhabitants, and destroy confidence between man and man; extinguish the principles of morality; and have nearly degraded the African into a brute.

7. Ignorance, debauchery, perfidy, and cowardice, are the vices natural to slaves. A haughty imbecility of mind is the fate which the Deity in his wrath hath decreed to despots. Circumstances may have hitherto operated to prevent these consequences in our colonies; but the laws of the moral world will in time have their effect, if slavery be not speedily abolished.

The following is a copy of the petition of a certain famous University, which was presented to the House of Commons by Mr Wilberforce. It exhibits an example worthy of the imitation of every Seminary of Learning, tho' some have not had the philanthropy to follow it.

To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament Assembled.

We the Vice-Chancellor, Principal and Professors of the University of G—w, met in Senate, understanding that a motion is soon to be made in your Honourable House for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, beg leave humbly to represent our ardent wishes in favour of a measure so truly beneficent.

Both in our individual capacity, and as members of a public Seminary whose duty it is to set a laudable example to the youth under their care, we think ourselves called upon, at this juncture, to express our disapprobation of the African Slave Trade, and humbly
bly to pray for its abolition, as an existing evil of infinite magnitude; as an evil which comprehends in it the most obvious violation of the feelings of nature, of the precepts of morality, and of those doctrines and duties, inculcated in the Gospel, which form the basis of our most holy religion.

Deeply penetrated by the cries of justice and mercy, we turn our eyes to the wisdom, to the magnanimity, to the charities, which have so much distinguished the British Legislature. On their interposition we rest the hopes of seeing banished from the face of the earth an infamous traffic, which, by a horrible spirit of desolation, can subsist only in the fulness of misery, in the ruin of the helpless and forlorn, and in the daily and wide extended triumphs of rapine and murder.

Subscribed, **February 18, 1792.** in name, and by appointment of the Senate of the University of G—w, by ——

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**Resolutions of the Committee of the London Society.**

**Resolved,** That the thanks of this committee be given to W. Wilberforce, Esq; for his motion for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and to the Right Honourable William Pitt, the Right Honourable Charles-James Fox, and the other members of the honourable House of Commons who coincided with him, and so nobly supported his exertions immediately to abolish that unjust and cruel traffic.

**Resolved,** That a gradual abolition of the Slave Trade is not an adequate remedy from its injustice and cruelty; neither can it be deemed a compliance with the general wishes of the people, expressed in their numerous and urgent petitions to Parliament.

**Resolved,** That the interval in which the Slave Trade shall be permitted to continue, affords a prospect of redoubled cruelties and ravages on the coasts of Africa; and that there is, therefore, an additional obligation on every friend of our great cause, to use all constitutional means to obtain the immediate abolition of that unjust, inhuman, and destructive traffic.
THE Committee of the Edinburgh Society, after voting their thanks as above,

Resolved, That the House of Commons have, by their late decision, not only declared their sentiments of the nature of the Slave Trade, but have decidedly fixed its fate, and determined that it ought to be abolished.

Resolved, That this Committee do wait the further decision of the House of Commons upon the Bill which is intended to be brought in for the abolition of the Slave Trade, in full confidence that the Representatives of this Nation will determine upon the total abolition; and fix the very shortest possible term for the existence of a trade detestable in its nature, odious to every Member of the House, and disgraceful to the British name.

Resolved, That the fresh cruelties stated in the course of the late debate in the House of Commons, which even a parliamentary discussion of the subject has not restrained, are such as call aloud for condign punishment on the perpetrators, unless they shall be able to exculpate themselves from the charges made against them. And this Committee trusts they will be forthwith brought to a speedy trial.

The following Extracts are made from the Resolutions of the Newcastle and Glasgow Societies, respecting the late decision.

Resolved, That the House of Commons, by their vote on the 2d of April, have expressed their decided opinion, that the Slave Trade ought to be abolished.

Resolved, That an attempt to procure a gradual abolition of the Slave Trade, by the concurrence of the Legislatures of the West India Colonies, must prove abortive. The opposition which the members of these colonies have hitherto made to every proposition for abolishing this trade, gives good ground to believe, that they will employ every expedient to retard or prevent such a measure; at the same time that any interference on the part of Great Britain, with the internal government of those countries, will be productive of endless disputes, and of inextricable difficulties.

Resolved, That the merciless cruelty, and the flagrant injustice committed by the commanders of Slave-ships, even after this subject came to be agitated in Parliament, which were lately brought under the view of the House of Commons, afford convincing evidence
dence, that all regulations of this trade, proceeding from the traders themselves, are mere pretences, in order to evade the exertions, and to drown the loud and ardent voice of the nation for a total abolition of this traffic.

Resolved, That it is the duty of every friend of humanity and justice, to guard against every attempt for misleading the people by false appearances of gratifying their wishes, and to use all constitutional means for procuring the real, speedy, and effectual abolition of a trade, which now stands condemned by the decision of our National Representatives—a decision so strongly supported by the voice of the people, that we can have no doubt but it must be carried into immediate execution.

Resolved, That the proposal of a gradual abolition is by no means a compliance with the general wishes of the people, so strongly declared in their numerous petitions to Parliament; and that reason can be assigned why a trade, which the House, by voting abolition, hath, in effect, declared to be cruel and unjust, should be explicitly allowed, protected, and encouraged by the Legislature for a given time, under any regulations which can be adopted.

That this Society does entirely concur with the London Committee in their apprehension of "redoubled cruelties and ravages on the Coast of Africa," during the interval, in which the Slave Trade shall thus be suffered to continue; since persons are naturally disposed to prosecute any undertaking which they conceive to be lucrative, with an eagerness proportioned to the shortness of the time limited for its continuance. Of this the public has an affecting specimen in the late conduct of Slave Dealers, as related by the honourable mover, in his opening speech. And it cannot be expected, that, while the trade continues, any effectual method can be devised of preventing these enormities.

That this Society will continue its exertions, in concert with the London and other Societies, till the ultimate object be obtained: and its members respectfully invite the concurrence and support of all the friends of this great cause.

Captain Kimber who was charged with exercising such cruelties on the Middle Passage, confessed, in his examination, the fact of having beat the Female Slaves, as announced to the public in the papers, in order to make them eat; but pleaded in excuse, the frequent necessity of such conduct in the trade, which must give
a strange idea of the happiness which the Slave Traders assert, that the Negroes enjoy; and indeed argues, in the strongest light, the moral necessity of an entire and speedy abolition. We are told, that the advocates for the continuation of slavery are recovering their spirits—that they begin to see through the nature of a gradual abolition, and will go on for another year, or so long as Parliament in their clemency may indulge them, proving that Slavery is in itself a blessing, and that a daily flogging, to create an appetite for one’s dinner, is the height of human happiness!

A form of a Petition adapted to the object of this publication.

TO the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain in Parliament assembled, the Petition of the Magistrates, Ministers, Burgesses, and other inhabitants of —— in ——, respectfully sheweth

That, impelled by a sense of duty, we cordially concur with the virtuous and humane part of our fellow-subjects, in declaring our abhorrence of the Trade to Africa, carried on by British subjects, hitherto under the sanction of Parliament, for the purpose of enslaving the unoffending natives.

Sensible as we are of the blessings of liberty, we cannot but strongly feel for those who are deprived of this natural right, and exposed to accumulated unmerited sufferings; and we are deeply conscious of the national disgrace and guilt incurred by sanctioning this traffic, which is no less repugnant to the spirit of our free Constitution, than subversive of every principle of moral and religious obligation.

We pretend not indeed to have examined the political arguments so often urged in defence and support of this odious traffic; our sentiments respecting it rest on an immovable basis;—believing that a wise and benevolent Providence governs the world, and that righteousness alone exalteth a nation, we are convinced, that no commerce can be ultimately beneficial which is unjust, and that no nation can long prosper which does not regulate its measures by the dictates of unerring truth, and the standard of immutable rectitude.

We deplore the desolating ravages which this horrid trade hath now for a long time occasioned over a large Continent, and deeply regret its fatal effects on the naval strength of Britain, in a degree unexampled in any other commerce. When we reflect that the statute of George II. so often pleaded in vindication of it, contains a clause which inflicts a penalty of 100/ upon every person who, by
by fraud, force, violence, or any other indirect means, procures, or carries away any negro from the coast of Africa, we cannot but consider the pretended right of carrying it on, in consequence of that or any the like statute, as null and void; and indeed were that clause enforced, it would have been given up long ago.

As men, therefore, feeling for the unmerited sufferings of our fellow-men, divested of privileges to which they have as good a natural right as we,—as British subjects anxious for the stability of the Throne, and the continued prosperity of our Country, as also jealous of the honour of both,—and as Christians concerned for the glory of God, the maintenance of his authority, and the success and advancement of our holy religion in the world, we find ourselves constrained to pray that the Legislature would instantly and entirely abolish the said infamous commerce, which, in our opinion, opposes all these; and likewise, that they would, in their wisdom, adopt such measures as may most effectually ascertain the emancipation of our present slaves within a limited period; and we mean to insist on this our petition, by every constitutional means in our power, till the desirable object is happily obtained; at the same time solemnly declaring, that no school-boys have here exhibited their names.

As the continuation of the Slave Trade till the first of January 1796, hath been carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 19, a decision, which, in effect signs, as Mr Fox justly observed, the death-warrant of perhaps a hundred thousand of our fellow-creatures, or more, and dooms an unknown number to perpetual slavery, with their seed, and extends misery to a still greater number of their relatives in Africa, who may be left to mourn their parents or children, husbands or wives, torn from them by a merciless banditti, to satiate the unbounded cravings of British avarice, as such are the probable consequences of that decision: Let not the friends of justice, and the lovers of mankind, in these lands, cease their laudable efforts to obtain an abridgement of the period of our national disgrace and guilt in this respect. Those concerned in the trade will, doubtless, be disposed to proportion the vigour of their exertions to the time allowed them to prosecute this infernal traffic; and if these panders of slavery, and tools of the kingdom of darkness, are so active and indefatigable in the service of their dung-hill deity Mammon, can the servants and children of the God of peace and love look on with indifference, much less, bid
bid them good speed? This is a cause which admits not of neutrality. Not content with importing from Africa a supply for our own plantations, we have been induced, by the love and prospect of gain, to perform the same office for some of the neighbouring kingdoms. Knowing that the time and opportunity of making such gain is now fixed, there is reason to fear this will occasion redoubled exertions to procure as many of the natives as possible. We have been told, that "Secretary Dundas presented a petition " for a Mr Dawson of Liverpool, stating, That he had eighteen " vessels in the Slave Trade for the service of Spain; and that the " whole of the property embarked altogether in it, was, five hun- " dred and nine thousand pounds, and upwards." A large capital indeed, but, like Jonah's gourd gnawed by a worm at the root, it has the principle of its consumption in itself, whence it cannot conduce to the real happiness of the possessor, or his connections. The above shews on what a large scale Britain has carried on this infamous traffic, which, by the example the hath set, and the extensive hand she has had in it, makes us, in a manner, accessory to all the guilt and misery occasioned by it.

As the nation will, alas! be once more at least called upon to petition the Legislature to repeal the above shameful and wicked decision, and grant an immediate and entire abolition of the reprobated traffic, let every description of men embrace the earliest opportunity of applying to Parliament for that purpose, as they would acquit themselves of the guilt that may be farther contracted in it, and avoid the consequences. It was a weighty remark of Mr Pitt in the late debate, That for every year we continued this trade, we added a load of guilt for which it was impossible to atone. That a majority in the House should hold this traffic so tenaciously, with their eyes open on its guilt and enormity, and refuse to let it go, gives, alas! too much reason to fear that God intends to claim satisfaction more immediately by himself, and to avenge with his own hand the injuries done to so many myriads of his intelligent creatures. How terrible is he in his works! thro' the greatness of his power shall his enemies be constrained at least to feign submission. Let such come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men. He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves, Psal. lxvi.
Can these champions of slavery ward off the deserved blow, and bind up the hands of Omnipotence? They may well forward the fate of their country, but they are not the men for whose sake the Almighty will suspend the merited vengeance, or sheath the brandished sword of his justice. Contrasting the former decision of the House, which condemned, by a great majority, the trade at large, as quite unfit to be tolerated, with the last which sanctions it, in all its increasing rigours, for so long a space, must we not be struck with the glaring inconsistency? It says on the matter, Let us do evil that good may come, which justly merits damnation, God being Judge, and his verdict admitted. It is in fact saying, We will continue to be unjust for yet more than four years and a half. We shall prolong our injustice as a nation, at least to the end of this period, and carry on a traffic which we ourselves have reprobated, and judicially condemned, and declared to be inhuman, cruel, and infamous—replete with fraud, violence, rapine, bloodshed, and murder!!!—After this, we are ripe for anything.

Did they believe the solemn truth to which the Chancellor directed their attention, the House would not be disgraced, nor the nation once more insulted and grieved by such a decision:—when he called upon gentlemen to make a solemn appeal to their own hearts, as if before that great tribunal where they must all at last account for their actions, and then say, whether there had been any arguments used that ought to induce them, from motives of interest, policy, or expediency, to continue longer so horrid, barbarous, and inhuman a traffic.

It gives great pleasure to the humane part of the Community, to reflect that such a goodly number of the members have done themselves much honour on this occasion, by supporting the great cause of humanity with so much laudable zeal, and with such force of argument and manly eloquence. Indeed, the whole Minority merit the cordial thanks of their country; for to their noble struggles in the cause, are we indebted that the above period, which is to entail indelible disgrace on our Senate and Nation, was not protracted to much longer space, or rather left quite indeterminate.

Mr Pitt has not only effaced every ground of suspecting a collusion with the Secretary in that debate, but also done honour to his great talents, and to his love of justice and humanity. These Members who had the fortitude and candour to own their change of
of sentiment, and to vote with the Minority, in opposition to their
own late decision, cannot be too much applauded for their candid
and consistent conduct. It is hoped others may open their eyes
before another Session, and be induced to follow their example; for
all have not hearts and heads of flint like the Planters, whose base
avarice steels their minds against conviction, or leads them to act in
direct opposition to it.

MOSES' SONG PARAPHRASED,

OR THE

Triumph of the rescued Captives over their incorrigible
Oppressors *.

NOW from tyrannic Pharaoh's cruel yoke,
Hath our all-gracious God our freedom wrought,
Our galling chains are quite afunder broke;
For he himself against our foes hath fought.

Shall we not then extol his mighty name?
His praises due rehearse in grateful song?
His wondrous works each day, each night proclaim,
To whom alone Salvation doth belong?

These works divine, of pow'r, of love, and grace,
Which to his chosen Isra'el he did show,
Shall be extoll'd by each succeeding race,
While days and years in quick succession flow.

When

* This sublime Anthem was originally sung, by a very large Assembly,
upon occasion of the signal overthrow of tyranny and oppression, Exod. xv.
1,—21. That God who then triumphed gloriously in behalf of the ensla-
v ed Hebrews, is still the same; and tho' he may not now appear so visibly
to plead the cause of an oppressed people, and avenge their wrongs on their
haughty oppressors, yet he does it as effectually: for his hand is not short-
ened that it cannot save, nor is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. Let the
whole tribe of oppressors, from the sceptered despot to the petty tyrant of
the whip, behold the vindictive displays of his almighty power, and trem-
ble at the prospect which their crimes present. God will not be mocked,
for as they now sow, shall they hereafter reap.
When the Redeem'd commence the heav'nly song,
Transferred to the cliques of bliss above,—
That song which endless ages shall prolong,
Their joyous triumphs will eternal prove.

Thy praise we'll sing, O mighty Lord of host,
Whose signal trophies beyond bound excel
What all the haughty kings on earth can boast,
Tho' their ambitious hearts too proudly swell.

The spacious deep, o'er which our God presides,
Performs at once what he in wrath would have,
On foes recoils in awful, rolling tides,
To horse and rider proves an instant grave.

His pow'rful arm, the Tyrant there o'erthrew,
With all his chariots and his vaunting hoists,
Amidst the floods their bodies he did strew—
Let not his proudest foes presume to boast.

Jehovah is our strength, our boast, and song,
Our safeguard, portion, and Almighty God,
To whom all honours do of right belong,
Grateful, let us prepare him an abode.

Our father's God is he, to whom we owe
Our praise, our service, and our ardent love;
From hearts devoted, let our praise then flow
To Him, who timely own'd us from above.

A man of war, the Great Jehovah is,
His glorious works declare him to be so;—
The God-like works which he achieves for his,
Against the proud, combin'd, insulting foe.

How hath he bury'd, in the swelling deep,
The Tyrant's martial cavalry and host,—
Bury'd as with an overwhelming sweep,
In the Red-sea, lo, they at once are lost!
There, there the bravest of his troops all fell,
His chozen leaders sink as pond'rous lead,
Amidst the waves enjoin'd o'er them to swell,
And lay them low among the prostrate dead.

The floods, let loose, do all at once o'erspread
The cruel, haughty, now-pursuing foe;
The billows, bursting, meet just o'er their head,
And soon accomplish their dread overthrow.

What can, Almighty Lord of hosts, withstand
Thy strong right-hand, unparallel'd in might,
Which does such wonders both by sea and land,
And glorious is become in dreadful fight?

Thy mighty arm soon crush'd the stubborn foe,
Whose earned stroke assail'd him on the strand;
By which thou didst to all the nations show
The peerless pow'r of thy uplifted hand.

Those who have madly dair'd thee to oppose,
Thou, in thy greatness, quite subdued haft;
Thy vengeful wrath consumed hath thy foes,
As flames intense dry thorns or stubble waste.

Lo, at thy sacred nostrils dreadful blast,
The trembling, swelled stood: collected were
And into walls on either side were cast,
Which rear'd their tow'ring spacious front in air.

Lo, while our late oppressors vainly boast,
We'll them pursu'e, and in a trice o'ertake;
The spoil divide 'mong our victorious host,
And, without fail, themselves our captives make;—

Our heart's desire we soon shall fully see,
Upon the Hebrew, servile, vanquish'd race,
Our sword and shafts with blood shall satiate be,
Their flight our hand shall stop, and them replace;—

Thou
Thou gav'st command to thy strong winds to blow;
The floods return, with horrid noise and speed,
And round th' astonish'd host in torrents flow—
Among the sullen waves they sank as lead.

The waves victorious prove their silent tomb;
Nor spare the victims, either branch or root,
Enjoin'd to execute deserved doom—
Behold, of sin, the direful, bitter fruit!

The formidable, proud, Egyptian host,
That daird, O Lord, thy chosen tribes pursue,
Were in the great, devouring deep all lost—
Thy powerful arm in justice them o'erthrew.

Among the idol-gods, who may once vie
With Is'ra'el's Mighty and Eternal Lord,
Who rules supreme o'er earth, o'er sea and sky,
While nature all obeys his potent word?

For matchless holiness we Thee revere;
Thy praises due, what beings can proclaim?
All girt with pow'r, Thou glory bright dost wear,
And deeds perform'd of ever wondrous fame.

Thou hast, in mercy, brought thy tribes from thrall;
By might them guided to thy holy place:
Well may we own Thee as our all in all,
And daily celebrate thy pow'r and grace.

This heard, surrounding nations stand in awe,
Their war-like sons thro' terror melt away;
In dread array 'gainst us, what tho' they draw,
Sure all our own is each decisive day.

Our Guardian God shall reign for evermore,
Who his Redeem'd hath sav'd at the Red sea:
While our foes perish'd, and strewed all the shore;
Let the whole praise to Him ascribed be.

—Beware
—Beware, O Britain, of stern Pharaoh's port,
    While Heaven demands that you poor slaves release;
Obey his voice, nor with men's rights once sport;
    He can them rescue, and crush you with ease.

In this proud despot, view th' oppressor's fate,
    Whom God will bring to meet his fearful doom;
For woes unceasing on all such await—
    Not seldom hurry'd to an early tomb.

Britain, be wise, cease in his steps to tread,
    The Lord of all is still the mighty name;
Obey his will, deserved vengeance dread,
    Left in your plagues he magnify his name.

Can nations prosper having God their foe,
    Their courses mark'd with his denounced ire?
Ye Britons, view Mizraim's tenfold wo,
    Whole wealth and sons consum'd He as with fire.

If you can spurn his yoke, contemn his laws,
    And still his grace and patience not improve;
Be sure He will not fail to plead his cause—
    A jealous God is the great Pow'r above.

O Thou, by whom our king and rulers reign,
    Who haft their hearts at pleasure in thy hand;
To Freedom's cause their will, all cheerful, gain,
    Save from such measures as may doom our land!

Avert, in mercy, Britain's earned fate,
    In ruin's paths permit us not to tread—
Our island blest, prolong our prosperous state,
    Nor let, in vain, oppression's cry be heard!

THE END.