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AN APPEAL

FROM THE

JUDGMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

RESPECTING THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

PART FIRST, CONTAINING

AN HISTORICAL OUTLINE

OF THEIR

MERITS AND WRONGS AS COLONIES;

AND

STRICURES UPON THE CAULUMNIES OF THE BRITISH WRITERS.

BY ROBERT WALSH, JR.

Quod quiscue fecit, patitur: autorem seclus
Repetis, necque premitur exemplo nocens.

SENEX.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY MITCHELL, AMES, AND WHITE.

William Brown, Printer.
1819.
SECTION IX.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF NEGRO SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES, AND OF THE BRITISH ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.

PART I. 1. I have reserved for the concluding section of this first part of my Appeal from the Judgments of Great Britain, the topic of our negro slavery, the side-on which we appear most vulnerable, and against which the reviewers have directed their fiercest attacks. With respect to their reproaches on all other grounds, enough, I think, has been adduced to show how strangely they have overlooked the lesson of the gospel—he that is without sin let him first cast the stone. They have aggravated the offence of malevolence by extreme folly, in selecting heads of accusation which may be retorted with complete success. This is as much the case in relation to the existence of domestic slavery among us, as in any other instance; and I shall not hesitate to avail myself on this occasion, as heretofore, of an error in reasoning, which springs as well from a corruption of political morals, as from an eclipse of the understanding. Of all Europeans, an Englishman is the one, who should have most cautiously abstained from venting reproaches, that brought Africa and the slave trade into view: If there is any nation upon which prudence and shame enjoined silence in regard to the negro bondage of these States, England is that nation; but it happens precisely as in all the other questions open to the most direct recrimination, that it is from her the loudest outcries and the sharpest upbraiding have come.

We experienced this particular injustice, even during our colonial dependence, while she was actively supplying us with slaves, and endeavouring by the most jealous precautions, to secure this favourite branch of her monopoly. Her writers drew invidious comparisons between the situation and prospects of the mother country and those of the continental colonies, founded upon the presence in the latter, of the multitude of blacks whose number and miseries she
was daily and forcibly augmenting. When her merchants and travellers returned from this reprobate land, they instituted similar contrasts; stigmatized the colonial slave-holders; and could not pardon the atrocity of retaining in bondage even the white convicts whom she had thrust into their hands. They spread, concerning the habitual state of the latter, as well as of the slaves, tales of horror, of the nature of which we may form some idea from the following passage, dated 1720, of the preface to Beverley's History of Virginia. "It hath been so represented to the common people of England as to make them believe, that the servants in Virginia are made to draw in cart and plow as the oxen do in England, and that the country turns all people black who go to live there; with other such prodigious phantasms." The worthy and intelligent historian, whose life had been spent in that colony, under circumstances the most favourable to extensive and accurate observation, bore a very different testimony, which may serve equally well for the present day—"I can assure with great truth that generally the slaves in Virginia, are not worked near so hard, nor so many hours in a day, as the husbandmen and day labourers in England; that no people more abhor the thoughts of cruel usage to servants than the Virginians."

Since our independence, slave holding has seemed to be fairly let loose to the Briton for the purposes of self-congratulation, and of the excretion of American existence; as if, indeed, England retained no longer a connexion with the West Indies; frequented no more the coast of Africa; and had actually "in the midst of her rottenness, torn off the manacles of slaves all over the world." The negro has invariably figured in the reports of the writers of that nation who have condescended to visit this country, as a "goblin damn’d:" he is the chief bugbear which Lord Sheffield set up, in 1784, to deter Irishmen from exchanging the blessings of their domestic condition, for the miseries of the American; which Fearon was instructed to put forward to correct that "most mischiefous evil" the emigration of English artisans; and which Birbeck has employed to draw into his own neighbourhood in the Illinois, such of his countrymen as persist in seeking these shores, in spite of Lord Castlereagh, and of the effigies of that evil "which counterbalances all the excisemen, licensers, and tax-gatherers of England."

The Edinburgh Review having, in the 60th number, in the article on Birbeck's Travels, presented views tending to en-
PART I. courage this disposition to emigrate, would seem to have dis-
covered that it had gone too far, and suddenly resolved to coun-
teract the effects of its first representations. This is the
natural explanation of the patriotic mood in which we find it
in the 61st number, where every thing in Britain is repre-
sented as inspiring confidence, and inviting contentment;
while all in America is made to wear a sinister and repulsive
aspect. The zeal of a proselyte is proverbially ardent. Hav-
ing in a rapid evolution, set itself against emigration, this
journal could, of course, "keep no measures" with negro-
slavery in America. Here was the yawning gulph of crime
and perdition, at which an Englishman should pause, as he
was blindly rushing onward from the tax-gatherer, and the
"menacing hydra (pauperism) that stalked over his native
land." Better remain where he was, safe from the demoral-
izing effects of commanding slaves, and with the consolation
at home, that he had "an inestimable parliament;" that "the
next twenty years might bring a great deal of internal im-
provement;" that "the apprentice laws had been swept
away," and "the strong fortress of bigotry rudely assailed."
Care was taken at the same time not to inform him how large
a portion of our vast country, is wholly without the institu-
tion of slavery; how small a part of our white population is indebt-
ed to the labour of slaves;—that considerably more than a
moiety of our whole population, inhabiting distinct portions of
territory, is altogether free from the reproach and the detri-
ment of commanding slaves, while a great probability obtains
that within "the next twenty years," no inconsiderable part
of the remainder will enjoy the same exemption.

Nor were these considerations, or the facts which I propose
presently to adduce, allowed to interfere with the design of a
sweeping ban against the American people, which should put
every Englishman in a better humour with the "rottenness"
of England, by exhibiting her in contradistinction, as the tute-
lary genius of freedom, and the country after which he han-
kered, as marked with fouler stains, and doubly gangrened
to the very core. I have already quoted literally the passage
of the Review, which composes the grand arraignment, and
will now repeat the several weighty allegations into which it
is resolvable. They are as follows:—The institution of slavery
is the foulest blot in the national character of America; its
existence in her bosom is an atrocious crime—the consumma-
tion of wickedness, and admits of no sort of apology from
her situation;—the American, generally, is a scourger and
murderer of slaves, and therefore below the least and lowest of
the European nations in the scale of wisdom and virtue; and, above all, he sinks, on this account, immeasurably in the comparison with England, who, become the agent of universal emancipation, may challenge the world to decide which of the two people is the most liable to censure, upon a general consideration of their demerits. These propositions imply, and may be converted into, others of this purport—that America is chiefly to blame for the establishment and continuance of her negro slavery; that she could have suppressed it either before or since her independence, even with safety and ease; that it is a system of flagellation and murder, with which she is universally chargeable; that her congress has remained indifferent to its enormities; that on her own part it is incompatible with soundness of heart or understanding, and with the love or the possession of political freedom; that no nation of Europe, not the lowest and least, presents a similar or equally revolting spectacle of servitude; that England exhibits, within the pale of her power, a clear and glorious sunshine of personal liberty and security; that she is in no wise implicated in the guilt of the American; that her dispositions have always been benign, and her hands pure, in relation to the unhappy race, whom we conspire to oppress and exterminate; or at least, that if she has not always been busy in "tearing off their manacles," and assuaging their sorrows, if she has ever been taxable with a part of their wrongs, and stained with a few drops of their blood, she has, by her subsequent temper and conduct, purged away the taint, and made ample amends to them, and to the cause of justice and freedom.

America and Britain are here put at direct issue, on points which vitally affect national character; the American is cited, officiously and triumphantly, before the world, by a British literary tribunal on the Areopagus of Edinburgh, to measure himself upon them with the Briton. For the sake of historical truth, as well as for our own honour, and the repulse of arrogant and invasive pretensions, we are bound to appear, and answer in the best way we can, towards our own vindication, and the confusion of the aggressor. There is no keenness or latitude of retaliation which will appear excessive after such provocation; and indulgence will be readily granted, for the same reason, should details of fact be reproduced, either familiar to most readers, or harrowing for the feelings of humanity.

2. I am not sorry to have an opportunity, at length, of pleading the apology of the early American colonists, on a
PART I. score left untouched in the pages which I have devoted to them in particular. What then is the first general fact which offers itself in the question? It is this—that England, who had been actively, eagerly, engaged in the slave trade since the year 1562, herself supplied her North American colonists, from the outset, with negroes whom she sought, and seized, and manacled, on the coast of Africa, and dragged and sold into this continent. The institution of negro slavery, "the great curse of America," lies, indisputably, at her door. What was her motive? The alleviation of the lot of her sons whom she had driven into the distant wilderness? No British writer has counted so far upon the simplicity of mankind as to hazard this explanation. The motive was sheer love of gain; omnivorous avarice; looking not merely to the immediate profit upon the cargo of human flesh, but to the greater, and permanent productiveness of the settlements whose staples were to be monopolized by the mother country.

Let it be conceded, that the colonists received the auxiliaries thus brought to their hands, and whom they durst not reject, without repugnance, perhaps with avidity. But, considering the nature of their respective motives and situation, does the guilt of the receiver in this case bear any proportion to that of the trader? Can the seduced be brought down, by any principle of reasoning, to the level of the seducer? If the colonists, the southern particularly, in a new climate noxious to the white labourer, but favourable to the African constitution; exposed to much physical suffering from other causes, and to so many additional influences depressing for the mind; liable to be called off from the culture of the soil by the irruptions of the savage native;—yielded to the temptation so immediate, of being relieved from the wasting labours of the field, and enabled to provide more effectually for their defence against the Indian;—if we suppose them even to have gone in quest of the negro slave, in a few instances, after the mother country had set them the example, and given them a taste of the relief which he could afford,—are they not to be considered quite as excusable as we can conceive men to be by any possibility, in any instance of the adoption of domestic servitude, or, indeed, of the commission of any wrong?

It is a contested point whether the constitution even of the native white is equal to the task of cultivating the earth successfully in our southern states, in the actual condition of its surface; but in the first century of settlement, when the forest was still to be felled, and the climate, more noxious in itself,
exercised a more fatal influence, the service of the negro was more important, and would naturally be thought indispensable by the colonists.

This plea, too, may be urged for them, that, in common with the wisest men of the age, numbers believed slavery to be strictly lawful in itself, both according to natural and revealed religion. The same plea has, indeed, been advanced in favour of the slave-dealing nation; but, though we can suppose the conscience of the colonist, with the bible in his hands, to have remained at rest upon the mere purchase, and appropriation of the negro, at his door, with the mode of whose acquisition in Africa he was unacquainted, it is impossible to imagine so entire a perversion and torpor of human reason and feeling, as is implied by the supposition that the former, while exciting intestine wars in Africa, trepanning the unwary, tearing the native from the centre of the dearest ties, exercising, in short, the most nefarious arts, and fell cruelties, to secure the African victim, could remain insensible to the criminality of the pursuit. Another bondage, the guilt of which none have had the hardihood to palm upon the colonists, I mean that of men of their own colour and nation, objects, for the most part, of the injustice and vengeance of faction and bigotry in the mother country, tended to reconcile them the more to the subjection of the negro whom she taught them, at the same time, to regard as of an inferior species. In every way did she familiarize and train them to that institution which she now charges upon their descendants as "the consummation of wickedness."

3. It has been shown, in my second section, that the colonists became dissatisfied, at an early period, with the introduction of the British convicts among them, and endeavoured, though ineffectually, both by remonstrance and edicts, to arrest the practice. They conceived, also, before the expiration of the seventeenth century, both disgust and apprehension at the importation of the negro slaves, and took, with no better success, similar measures for its repression. Some few of the merchants of the northern colonies had embarked in the trade, and a comparatively small number of the victims was held in servitude there; but only a very short time elapsed, before scruples arose among the conscientious puritans and quakers, and the whole system fell into disrepute and reprobation. Clarkson has not been able to show for Great Britain, its chief patron and agent, so early and pointed an expression of just views and feelings on the subject, from any quarter, as is
PART I. found in the following facts, which I adduce upon the authority of public records, and in the language of Dr. Belknap, the historian of New Hampshire:

"In 1645, the General Court of Massachusetts, which then exercised jurisdiction over the settlements at Pescataqua, thought proper to write to Mr. Williams, residing there, understanding that the negroes which a Captain Smyth had brought, were fraudulently and injuriously taken and brought from Guinea, by Captain Smyth's confession, and the rest of the company—that he forthwith send the negro, which he had of Captain Smyth, hither; that he may be sent home; which the Court do resolve to send back without delay. And if you have anything to allege, why you should not return him, to be disposed of by the Court, it will be expected you should forthwith make it appear, either by yourself or your agent.'"

About the same time, viz. 1645, a law was made, "prohibiting the buying and selling of slaves, except those taken in lawful war, or reduced to servitude for their crimes, by a judicial sentence; and these were to have the same privileges as were allowed by the law of Moses."

"Among the laws for punishing capital crimes, enacted in 1649, is the following—'10. If any man stealeth a man or mankind, he shall be surely put to death. Exodus, xxi. 16.'"

In 1703, the legislature of Massachusetts imposed a heavy duty on every negro imported, for the payment of which both the vessel and master were answerable. In 1767, they made a more direct attempt to effect the object of that impost. A bill was brought into the House of Representatives "to prevent the unnatural and unwarrantable custom of enslaving mankind, and the importation of slaves into the province." In its progress it was changed, in consequence of the utter improbability of the success of one of that scope, with the royal governor, into "an act for laying an impost on negroes imported." Even this was so metamorphosed and mutilated by the council, that the house refused to proceed in the business. It must have failed with the governor, had it passed both assemblies, and in whatever shape, as all the royal governors had it in express command from the British cabinet to reject all laws of that description. The original instructions, afterwards published, of the date of June 30th, 1761, to Benning J. Wentworth, Esquire, governor of New Hampshire, contained this clause—

* See the 4th vol. Massachusetts' Histor. Coll. for Dr. Belknap's account of Slavery in that province.
"You are not to give your assent to, or pass any law, imposing duties on negroes imported into New Hampshire."*  

The legislature of Massachusetts persisted, in defiance of the known policy of the British rulers; and in January, 1774, framed a bill, entitled "An act to prevent the importation of negroes, and others, as slaves into this province." It passed through all the forms in both houses, and was laid before governor Hutchinson, for his sanction. On the next day, the assembly received a harsh answer, and notice of prorogation. The negroes of the province had deputed a committee respectfully to solicit the governor's consent; he told them that his instructions forbade it. His successor, General Gage, when solicited in the same way, gave the same answer.  

The courts of justice in Massachusetts went farther than the legislature. Several blacks sued their masters for their freedom, and for wages for past service, upon the grounds, that the royal charter expressly declared all persons born or residing in the province to be as free as the king's subjects residing in Great Britain; that by the laws of England no man could be deprived of his liberty but by the judgment of his peers; that the laws of the province relating to an existing evil, and attempting to mitigate or regulate it, did not authorize it; that though the slavery of the parents should be admitted to be legal, yet no disability of the kind could descend to children. The first trial took place in 1770, and terminated in favour of the negroes. Other suits were instituted between that period and the revolution, and the juries invariably gave their verdict for the plaintiffs. The case of the negro Somerset has been the subject of unceasing boast and compliment for England. Yet, if we consider the circumstances on both sides, it must appear less creditable than the judgment of the Massachusetts court in 1770. The latter preceded the British decision by two years; it was given upon equally broad principles, in the midst of a long established practice of negro slavery; and in defiance of the system of the British colonial administration. We are told by Clarkson that, in 1768, an African slave prosecuted, in England, a person of the name of Newton, for kidnapping his wife, and sending her to the West Indies; and obtained no more, upon the conviction of the defendant, than one shilling damages, and an order for the restitution of the woman within six months; that, with respect to the doctrine of the immediate disenthralment of the African slave on his arrival in England,

* See Gordon, Hist. of Am. Rev. vol. v. letter 2.
PART I. Judge Blackstone discountenanced it when his opinion was sought by Granville Sharp; that no satisfactory answer could be obtained from the lawyers to whom this philanthropist applied; that Lord Mansfield wavered, or rather inclined to the adverse sentiment; and that, until the trial of the Somerset case, the great question had been studiously avoided.

Legislative proceedings in relation to the exclusion of slaves, similar to those of Massachusetts, are recorded in the annals of the other New England provinces. Pennsylvania and New Jersey trod in their footsteps, and early displayed a strong desire, arising from the same considerations, to plant an effectual barrier against the evil of continued importation; but their enactments were regularly overruled in England.*

The condition of the slaves, in all the provinces north of the Susquehannah, was more exempt from hardship and abjection than negro slavery had ever been known to be elsewhere, in modern times. In New England particularly, their lot was far from being severe. They were often bought by conscientious persons, for the purpose of being well instructed in the Christian religion. They had, universally, the enjoyment of the Sabbath as a day of rest or of devotion. No greater toil was exacted from them than from the white labourers, who worked in common with them. In the maritime towns, they served either in families, as domestics, or at mechanical employments; and in neither case did they fare worse than their white comrades. In the country, where they were much less numerous, altogether, and in no instance exceeded three or four in the hands of one proprietor, they lived as well as their masters, and not unfrequently sat down to the same table, as their emancipated brethren do at this day, in the interior of Pennsylvania, and the eastern states. For serious offences they were committed to the common houses of correction, to which disorderly persons of all colours were sent. To be sold to the West Indies, was the most formidable punishment, with which they could be threatened or visited.

Popular opinion early and spontaneously proscribed the slave trade; disgrace attached to the character of those who were engaged in it principally or ministerially; cases of seamen perishing by the homicidal climate of Guinea, or in contests with the natives; and of death-bed repentance at home, rendering audible and unequivocal the voice of conscience,

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* The law of Pennsylvania, of 1728, imposing a duty upon the importation of negroes, allows a drawback on re-exportation.
confirmed the public antipathy. Had there been a general readiness to engage in the traffic, the opportunity could not have been found. The British merchants, and the Royal African Company in particular, which I shall mention further by and by, were too eager for the exclusive enjoyment, to allow the provincials to share in it in a material degree. The vessels which appeared on the African coast, were regarded as interlopers, infringing a precious monopoly. The Reports of the "Proceedings in the House of Commons on the state of the African Company and of the Trade to Africa," inform us that "proofs were given by the Company of some ships trading directly from Virginia, and other parts of America, and disposing of their cargoes of tobacco and other commodities, the produce of that country, on the coast, and in return purchasing slaves and returning whence they came, under the sufferance or rather open toleration of the governors and other subordinate persons in command." This fact of the toleration of Americans was brought forward "to prove the injury the forts and governors were to the trade to Africa;" it being also in evidence that "the governors were all traders on their own account, or factors for principals in England, and endeavoured to forestall the market." In stating the value of the British exports to America, Lord Sheffield remarks, in his Observations, that there was to be added "between two and three hundred thousand pounds sterling, sent to Africa annually for the purchase of slaves which were chiefly imported by British merchants into the American provinces." But it is superfluous to adduce testimony of this kind, since no historical fact is more notorious, than that by far the greater portion of the negroes introduced into North America, was brought by British vessels, on account of British merchants, and under the special sanction of the British parliament.

4. If the government of the mother country, to favour the British trade with Africa, laboured to prevent the exclusion of negro slaves even from New Hampshire, its policy on this head would naturally be of a most determined and jealous character in reference to the southern provinces. The history of Virginia furnishes illustrations as creditable to her, as disgraceful to the British councils; and, though that history in general may never have been examined by the writers of the Edinburgh Review, they cannot be supposed to have been ignorant of the following passage of Brougham's Colonial Policy.—"Every measure proposed by the Colonial Legislatures, that did not meet the entire concurrence of the British Cabinet,
PART I. was sure to be rejected, in the last instance, by the crown. In the colonies, the direct power of the crown, backed by all the resources of the mother country, prevents any measure obnoxious to the crown from being carried into effect, even by the unanimous efforts of the colonial legislature. If examples were required, we might refer to the history of the abolition of the slave trade in Virginia. A duty on the importation of negroes had been imposed, amounting to a prohibition. One assembly, induced by a temporary peculiarity of circumstances, repealed this law by a bill which received the immediate sanction of the crown. But never afterwards could the royal assent be obtained to a renewal of the duty, although as we are told by Mr. Jefferson, all manner of expedients were tried for this purpose, by almost every subsequent assembly that met under the colonial government. The very first assembly that met under the new constitution, finally prohibited the traffic.††

I have suggested the circumstances which would greatly ex- tend any degree of eagerness, on the part of the first inhabitants of the southern provinces, in receiving the British slave ships. Whatever this may have been in Virginia, the opposite disposition certainly manifested itself in her legislature, before the expiration of the seventeenth century. The learned Judge Tucker, of that state, whose notes on the Commentaries of Blackstone are so highly and justly valued among us, furnishes a list of no less than twenty-three acts, imposing duties on slaves imported, which occur in the various compilations of Virginia laws. The first bears date in the year 1699; and the real design of all of them was, not revenue, but the repression of the importation. In general, the buyer was charged with the duty, in order to secure a better reception for the acts in England, and particularly to render them less obnoxious to the African Company. The royal assent was first obtained, not without great difficulty, to a duty of five per cent. in this shape. Requisitions for aids from the crown, on particular occasions, furnished pretexts for increasing the duty from five to ten, and finally to twenty per cent. In 1772, most of the duties previously imposed were re-enacted, and the assembly transmitted, at the same time, a petition to the throne, which speaks almost all that could be desired for the confusion of our slanderers. Judge Tucker has made the following extract from it, in his Appendix to the 1st vol. pt. 2. of Blackstone:

* Book II. Sect. i.
SLAVE TRADE.

"We are encouraged to look up to the throne, and implore your majesty's paternal assistance in averting a calamity of a most alarming nature."

"The importation of slaves into the colonies from the coast of Africa, hath long been considered as a trade of great inhumanity, and under its present encouragement, we have too much reason to fear, will endanger the very existence of your majesty's American dominions."

"We are sensible that some of your majesty's subjects of Great Britain may reap emoluments from this sort of traffic, but when we consider that it greatly retards the settlement of the colonies, with more useful inhabitants, and may in time have the most destructive influence, we presume to hope, that the interest of a few will be disregarded when placed in competition with the security and happiness of such numbers of your majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects."

"Deeply impressed with these sentiments, we most humbly beseech your majesty to remove all those restraints on your majesty's governors of this colony, which inhibit their assenting to such laws as might check so very pernicious a commerce."

The petition proved unavailing. In the first clause of the independent constitution of Virginia, "the inhuman use of the royal negative" in this matter, is enumerated among the reasons of the separation from the mother country. Mr. Burke, as we have seen in one of the quotations which I have made from his speech on the Conciliation with America, recognized her "refusal to deal any more in the inhuman traffic of the negro slaves, as one of the causes of her quarrel with Great Britain." I must claim permission to connect here with the petition, a statement subjoined to it by Judge Tucker, which shows that it did not cost the British government a moment's deliberation to sacrifice "the security and happiness of such numbers of his majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects" to "the interest of the few" in England: "I have lately been favoured with the perusal of a manuscript copy of a letter from Granville Sharp, Esq. of London, to a friend of the prime minister, dated March 25th, 1794, in which he speaks of the petition thus: "I myself was desired, by a letter from America, to inquire for an answer to this extraordinary Virginia petition. I waited on the Secretary of State, and was informed by himself that the petition was received, but that (he apprehended) no answer would be given."

That the inclination to impose the yoke of perpetual bondage on any part of their fellow creatures, if it ever existed
PART I. among the majority of the Virginia planters, soon subsided, is manifest from an act which is traced to 1662, declaring that "no Englishman, trader, or other, who should bring in any Indians as servants, and assign them over to any other, should sell them for slaves, nor for any other time than English of like age could serve by act of assembly." Thus early was the state of slavery prohibited, where it was not exacted by the higher authority: and the first opportunity was taken, after the declaration of independence, to extinguish the detestable commerce so long forced upon the province. In October, 1778, during the tumult and anxiety of revolution, the general assembly passed a law, prohibiting, under heavy penalties, the further importation of slaves, and declaring that every slave imported thereafter, should be immediately free. The example of Virginia was followed at different times before the date of the federal constitution, by most of the other states.

While the mother country withheld from the provinces the power of arresting importation, and incessantly added to the number of the blacks, the abolition of slavery itself was wholly out of the question. It was rendered impossible for the southern colonists, consistently with their own preservation; and had it seemed practicable, and been attempted by any of the colonial legislatures, the royal negative would have been still more readily and vigorously exercised than in the case of importation. Even the West India Islands endeavoured, from time to time, to limit the importation of slaves into their ports; and were counteracted by the African interest, as it was called, in England. In 1744, the legislature of Jamaica laid duties amounting nearly to prohibition; in 1774, they made a similar experiment, alleging as their motive, the apprehension excited in the island by the numbers of the negroes imported; the merchants of England engaged in the trade, took the alarm on their side, petitioned against the duties, and obtained a royal order to the governor of Jamaica to discontinue the levy.

In the history of the relations of Great Britain with the American colonies in general, there is no circumstance more abundantly evidenced, than her steady determination to maintain her slave trade in the greatest activity and extent, whatever might be their feelings of disgust or apprehension; and however gloomy the aspect which the continuation of it gave to their destinies. Their permanent welfare, their immediate comfort, weighed as nothing in the balance with the prosperity of the Royal African Company, and the plenty of American products.
All that the English writers now pour forth about the intrinsic horrors and miseries of negro slavery; its obvious and certain destructiveness to the morals of the masters; and its equally manifest and inevitable tendency to quench the spirit of liberty, and banish social order and domestic peace; all, if we admit it to be true, recoils upon Great Britain, who, having these things before her eyes, yet, from the thirst of gain,—in order that her commerce and revenue should receive every possible increase—opened this even worse than Pandora's box, upon the race of her offspring in this hemisphere, and remorselessly continued to replenish it, in spite of their remonstrances and terrors, as long as they remained subject to her control.

The act which dissolved the indentures of servants enlisting in his majesty's service in America, is the only one in the records of the British parliament, that looked to the "tearing off manacles" here. Not a single step was ever taken by the British government, towards the suppression or mitigation, of any form of bondage in the North American provinces.

5. From the facts which I have adduced, we may confidently infer, that the North American provinces would, but for the oppressive and avaricious opposition of the mother country, have put a stop to the importation of negroes at a much earlier period than the era of their independence. We may even believe, that, with their general dispositions and views, they would have gone further; since the multiplication of the slaves presented, next to the will of the British government, the most serious obstacle to abolition. We have scarcely room to doubt of the course which New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, in particular, would have pursued, in their more favourable domestic situation, and under the influence of their more rigorous principles, had they been free to act as these must have prompted. As little doubt can be entertained, that, if their colonial connexion with Great Britain had continued, they would have been compelled to submit to the continuance of the evils in question.

The voice of religion and humanity crying out against the traffic in human flesh, was heard at an earlier period, and more distinctly, from the bosom of these colonies, than from any other part of the British dominions. Clarkson has narrated at large, in his History of the Abolition, the systematic efforts towards that end, of benevolent individuals on this side of the Atlantic. He was unacquainted with the pamphlet of George Keith, written before the end of the seventeenth century; but
PART I. he has celebrated the labours of Lay, Sandford, Woolman, Benezet, and Rush. The Scottish critics might have learned from him, that the writings which gave the first impulse, and exerted the widest influence, in the cause which they have united with him in exalting to the skies, issued from this quarter;* that a numerous society devoted to that cause, and composed of men of all religious denominations, was organized here twelve years before any association for the same purpose had existed in England. There, a multitude of writers and speakers have contended for the justice, humanity, and evangelical character of the slave trade: here, we have had no instance of a formal vindication of it, in any shape. I have never heard of an American speech or pamphlet on the subject, that did not acknowledge its atrocity.

England renounced the slave trade on the 25th of March, 1807, by a law which enacted, that no vessel should clear out for slaves from any port within the British dominions after the 1st of May, 1807, and that no slave should be landed in the colonies after the 1st of March, 1808. She has claimed the merit of having set the example of this renunciation to the world. Lord Castlereagh boasted, in the House of Commons, on the 9th of February, 1818, that, on the subject of making the slave traffic punishable as a crime, Great Britain had led the way. Virginia was, however, a sovereign and independent state, when she abolished the traffic in 1778. Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, had the same character, when they prohibited it to their citizens, in whatever degree or form, and under the severest penalties, in the years 1780, 1787, 1788. On the 16th of March, 1792, Denmark promulgated a law on the subject of the slave trade, which provided for its total cessation on the part or in behalf of Danish subjects, at the beginning of the year 1803; and which prescribed that all importations of slaves into the Danish dominions should cease at the same period. This law was carried into complete execution, according to the letter, and has been faithfully observed. It established, besides, some very salutary regulations for the improvement of the mind, morals, and general condition of the blacks in the Danish Islands.

The American continental Congress, so called, passed a resolution against the purchase of slaves imported from Africa; and published an exhortation to the colonies to abandon the

* Scarcely any suggestion on the subject, of real importance, has been made in England, which is not to be found in Anthony Benezet's work, entitled "Some Historical Account of Guinea."
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trade altogether. The third Congress of the United States, SECT. IX.
under the present federal constitution, prohibited the carrying
on of the slave trade from our ports. But in order to show
more fully, the grounds upon which the American govern-
ment may contest the merit both of priority and zeal with
the British, I will transcribe from the general index to the
laws of the former, the abstract of what it had done in this
respect, before the date of the British prohibition.

1. No citizens or others to build or fit out vessels, &c. to carry on the
slave trade to or between foreign countries, &c.—Vessels fitted out,
&c. to carry on the slave trade, to be forfeited, &c. (22d March, 1794.)
2. Two thousand dollars forfeit for persons fitting out vessels, or aid-
ing, &c.
3. Owners, &c. of foreign vessels, suspected of intention to trade in
slaves, &c. to give bond, &c.
4. Forfeit of two hundred dollars by citizens, for every person received
on board for the purpose of being sold slave, &c. A moiety to the
person suing, &c.
5. The importation of slaves into the Mississippi territory from foreign
parts prohibited, under penalty of three hundred dollars for each
one; and slaves imported entitled to freedom. (7th April, 1798.)
6. Citizens or residents prohibited from holding any right or property
in vessels employed in transporting slaves from one foreign country
to another, on pain of forfeiting their right of property, and also
double the value of that right in money, and likewise double the value
of the interest in the slaves.
7. Citizens or residents not to serve on board vessels of the United States
employed in the transportation of slaves from one foreign country
to another, &c. on pain of fine and imprisonment, &c. (10th May, 1800.)
8. Citizens voluntarily serving on board foreign ships employed in the
slave trade, liable to disabilities, penalties, &c.
9. Commissioned vessels of the United States may seize vessels employ-
ed contrary to this act, &c.
10. Vessels seized for trading in slaves, contrary to this act, together
with tackle, guns, goods on board, &c. except slaves, forfeited, &c.
11. Commanders of commissioned vessels to take officers and crews of
vessels employed contrary to this act, &c. into custody, &c.
12. District and circuit courts to have cognizance of offences against the
prohibitions of this act.
13. Nothing in this act to authorize the bringing into any place prohibit-
ed persons.
14. A moiety of forfeitures to informers, except where the prosecution
is first instituted on behalf of the United States.
15. After the 1st of April, 1803, masters of vessels not to bring into any
port, where the laws of a state prohibit the importation, any negro,
mulatto, &c. not a native, a citizen, registered seaman, &c. under the
penalty of one thousand dollars. (28th Feb. 1803.)
16. The persons sued under this act, may be held to special bail.
17. Nothing in this act to prohibit the admission of Indians.
18. Vessels arriving with negroes, mulattoes, or other prohibited per-
sons on board, not to be admitted to entry, &c.
19. If any negro, &c. be landed in any prohibited port or place, &c.
the vessel, &c. to be forfeited: A moiety of the forfeiture to the in-
former.
20. The officers of the customs to notice and be governed by, the laws
of states prohibiting the admission of negroes, &c. and vigilantly to
carry them into effect, &c.

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21. The importation of slaves prohibited after the 1st of January, 1808. (2d March, 1807.)
22. Vessels fitted out or sailing, after the 1st of January, 1808; for the purpose of transporting slaves to any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, may be seized, condemned, &c. in any of the circuit or district courts, for the districts where the vessels may be found or seized.
23. Persons fitting out vessels, &c. to be employed in the slave trade, after the 1st of January, 1808, or aiding or abetting, &c. to forfeit severally, twenty thousand dollars.—A moiety of the forfeiture to the person prosecuting.
24. Five thousand dollars forfeit for taking on board from any of the coasts or kingdoms of Africa, after the 1st of January, 1808, any negro, mulatto, &c. for the purpose of selling them as slaves within the jurisdiction of the United States, &c.—A moiety of the forfeiture to the person prosecuting, &c.
25. Vessels in which negroes, &c. have been transported, their tackle, apparel, &c. to be forfeited, &c.
26. Neither the importer, nor persons claiming under him, to hold any right to any negro, &c. bought within the United States, &c. in violation of this law, but such negro, &c. to remain subject to the regulations of the legislatures of the several states, &c.
27. Citizens or resident taking on board, after the 1st of January, 1808, from the coasts or kingdoms of Africa, &c. any negro, mulatto, &c. and transporting and selling them within the jurisdiction of the United States, as slaves, &c. to suffer imprisonment from five to ten years, and pay a fine, from one to ten thousand dollars.
28. Forfeit of eight hundred dollars for selling any negro, &c. imported from any foreign kingdom, &c. after the 31st of December, 1807, &c. A moiety of the forfeiture to the person prosecuting, &c.—The forfeiture not to extend to the seller or purchaser of any negro, &c. disposed of by virtue of any regulations of the legislatures of the several states, in pursuance of this act and the constitution of the United States.
29. Vessels found, after the 1st of January, 1808, in any river, port, bay, &c. within the jurisdictional limits of the United States, &c. having on board any negro, &c. for the purpose of selling them as slaves, &c. to be forfeited, together with their tackle, goods on board, &c.
30. The president may employ armed vessels to cruise on any part of the coast where he may judge attempts will be made to violate this act, and instruct commanders of armed vessels to seize and bring in vessels found on the high seas contravening the provisions of this law, &c.—Masters of vessels seized, &c. liable to prosecution, and to a fine, not exceeding ten thousand dollars, and to imprisonment from two to four years.—The proceeds of vessels, &c. seized, prosecuted, and condemned, to be divided equally between the United States and the officers and men, &c. whether of the navy or revenue cutters, and distributed as in the case of prizes, &c. The officers and men thus entitled are to safe keep every negro, mulatto, &c. and deliver them to persons appointed to receive them, &c.
31. Masters of vessels of less than forty tons burden, not to take on board, after the 1st of January, 1808, nor transport, any negro, &c. to any port or place whatever, for the purpose of disposing of him as a slave, on penalty of forfeiting eight hundred dollars.—A moiety of the forfeiture to the person prosecuting, &c.—But nothing in this section to prohibit the transporting, on any river or inland bay of the sea, within the jurisdiction of the United States, any negro, &c. not imported contrary to the provisions of this act, in any vessel or species of craft whatever.
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33. Masters of vessels of the burden of forty tons or more, after the 1st Sect. IX.
of January, 1808, sailing coastwise, &c. and having on board any negro, &c. to be transported and sold as slaves, &c. to make out and subscribe duplicate manifests of every negro, &c. and deliver the manifests to the collector or surveyor, &c. The master, owner, &c. to swear that the persons were not imported after the 1st of January, 1808, &c.
—The collector or surveyor to certify, &c. grant a permit to proceed, &c.

34. Vessels departing without the master's having made out and subscribed duplicate manifests of every negro, &c. on board, &c. or taking on board any other negro, &c. than those specified in the manifests, to be forfeited, together with tackle, apparel, &c.

35. The master, &c. to forfeit one thousand dollars for every negro, &c. transported, &c. contrary to this act.—A moiety of the forfeiture to the person prosecuting, &c.

36. The master, &c. of every vessel of forty tons or more, sailing coastwise after the 1st of January, 1808, and having on board any negro, &c. to sell, &c. arriving in one port of the United States from another, to deliver the certified manifest, &c. and swear to the truth of it, &c.
—If the collector, &c. is satisfied, &c. he is to grant a permit for the landing of the negro, &c.

It is seen by the foregoing abstract, that federal America interdicted the trade from her ports, thirteen years before Great Britain; that she made “it punishable as a crime,” seven years before; that she fixed, four years sooner, the period for non-importation—which period was earlier than that determined upon by Great Britain for her colonies. We ought not to overlook the circumstance, that these measures were taken, by a legislature composed in considerable part, of the representatives of slave-holding states; slave-holders themselves, in whom, of course, according to the doctrine of the Edinburgh Review, conscience had “suspended its functions,” and “justice, gentleness, and pity” were extinguished. What are we to think of the British parliament, which suffered itself to be outstripped thus by such men? and when would it have abolished the trade, had it contained an equal proportion of slave-holders from the West Indies?*

In truth, the representatives from our southern states have been foremost in testifying their abhorrence of the traffic; an abhorrence springing from a deep sense not merely of its iniquity, but of the magnitude of the evil which it has entailed upon their country. It was only at the last session of the

* Mr. Pitt said (1792) that the “Parliament being now fully convinced of the cruelty and injustice of the slave trade, it was their duty to put an end to it. Were the West India planters to be consulted they might think differently,” &c. (Parliamentary History.)
PART I. American Congress (March 1st, 1819) that a member from Virginia proposed the following regulation, to which the House of Representatives agreed without a division.—"Every person who shall import into the United States, or knowingly aid or abet the importation into the United States, of any African negro, or other person, with intent to sell or use such negro or other person, as a slave, or shall purchase any such slave, knowing him or her to be thus imported, shall, on conviction thereof, in any circuit court of the United States, be punished with death." The rarity of capital punishment in the penal code of the United States, and the extreme aversion from a recourse to it, universally prevailing, make this instance a potent proof, of the sincerity of the dispositions, which we profess respecting the slave trade. Additional evidence not less striking, is afforded by the act which passed and became a law at the same time, and of which the printed abstract is as follows:

1. An act in addition to the acts prohibiting the slave trade. (3d March, 1819.)

"The president may employ the armed vessels of the United States to cruise on the American coast, or coast of Africa, to enforce the acts of congress prohibiting the slave trade. Vessels employed, contrary to law, in the traffic of slaves, may be seized by the armed vessels, and brought into port. The proceeds to be equally divided between the United States and the captors, whether by an armed vessel or revenue cutter. The captors to safe keep and deliver the negroes, &c. to the marshal, &c. transmitting a descriptive list to the president; and the commanders are to apprehend every person found on board the offending vessels, being officers and crew, and deliver them over to the civil authority. The president to make regulations for the safe keeping, support, and removal out of the United States, of the negroes, &c. delivered and brought within their jurisdiction, and may appoint agents on the coast of Africa, to receive negroes, &c. A bounty of twenty-five dollars to the officers and crews of commissioned vessels and revenue cutters, for every negro, &c. delivered to the marshal, &c. Prosecution, by information, against persons holding negroes, &c. unlawfully introduced. Fifty dollars to informant for each negro, &c. thus delivered to the marshal from the unlawful holder, by judgment of the court, besides the usual penalties."

6. If there be any two pieces of history which Great Britain should wish to see extinguished, in particular, they are the accounts of the African slave trade itself, and of her abo-
tion of that trade. Clarkson's relation of the Abolition is a memorial which, though it has left nothing that is any way creditable in the progress of the affair, unembazoned, and magnifies inordinately the lustre and utility of the result, still presents a balance of infamy, which, in my opinion, renders it desirable that the whole were expunged, for the honour of human nature. The enormity of the system of crime and cruelty which he lays open; the hardened depravity of the sea-ports which he visited; the pusillanimity and prevarication of witnesses; the effrontery and security of culprits; the mean and wicked arts practised by the highest and the lowest of the kingdom, to defeat his purpose; the long resistance of parliament, after the fullest proof of the facts; the tenor of the speeches delivered there by some of the members in opposition; and many other similar traits salient in his book, are far from being redeemed by the act of abolition, especially when attention is given to some of the grounds upon which it was obtained, and to the sequel, which I propose to notice in due time. We Americans would trust it to the bitterest en- my of these States, to deduce a narrative of their abolition of the traffic; challenge him to lay on what colours he pleased; and, provided he would take the facts as his ground work, re- main assured that while the world possessed Clarkson's work, we could but rise in its estimation.

As a general proposition, it is undeniable, that the nation which wrested the African from his home, and sold him into perpetual bondage, is as criminal at least, as those by whom he was purchased, and who may have retained him in that state: It is no less evident, that after having thrown millions of negroes into one quarter of the world, and reaped the profits of the horrible traffic, it is not for her to upbraid the purchasers for using their bargain, and to summon them, in the name of justice, humanity, and natural rights, to relinquish at once their hold, at whatever loss and risk to themselves. Yet this is what is done towards the Americans, by the writers of the Edinburgh Review, in their character of Britons, and upon the foundation of the British abolition of the slave trade. It is therefore fair to pass in review the facts which go to show, that they have no such privilege, but are obnoxious to the maxims which I have just stated.

The English embarked in the slave trade in the year 1562. In that year they carried slaves to Hispaniola; and the first cargo was obtained with circumstances of abominable fraud.*

* See the History of Hawkins's Voyage in Hakluyt's Collection, or in the 4th Book, c. ii. of Edwards's History of the West Indies.
It proved lucrative, and immediately, associations were formed in England, among the most opulent and distinguished men of the country, to follow up the adventure. Soon, the object began to be considered as of national importance, and so early as the 16th of James I., a royal charter was granted to a number of eminent citizens of London, as a joint stock company, to carry on a trade to Africa, with an exclusive privilege. The private merchants, envious of the harvest which seemed to await the company, interloped upon the African coast, and so embarrassed the trade that the charter was abandoned. Another company was created by Charles I.; but it shared the same fate, from the same cause,—the cupidity and misconduct of the unlicensed adventurers. "On the accession of Charles II." says Davenant, * "a representation being soon made to him, that the British plantations in America were, by degrees, advancing to such a condition as necessarily required a greater yearly supply of servants and labourers than could well be spared from England, without the danger of depopulating his majesty's native dominions, his majesty did (upon account of supplying these plantations with negroes) publicly invite all his subjects to the subscription of a new joint stock, for recovering and carrying on the trade to Africa."

His majesty's subjects obeyed the call with alacrity; and some of the most imposing names of the kingdom appear at the head of the ample subscription list. But poachers swarmed again, and pleaded their natural right, and parliament found it expedient, in 1697, to lay open the trade for a term of years. The recrimination between the privileged and the interloping traders, unfolds abuses and enormities committed before the commencement of the 18th century, similar to those which were proved to parliament, when the question of abolition was agitated. It would be needless for me to detail the progress of the African trade to the highest consideration and favour with the government; the contest maintained with the commercial nations of the continent for the monopoly of that

*kins was afterwards knighted by Queen Elizabeth, and made Treasurer of the Navy. "The success which attended the first expedition to Guinea," says Edwards, "appears to have attracted the notice and excited the avarice of the British government. We find Hawkins in the following year, appointed to the command of one of the queen's ships, the Jesus, of 700 tons, and with the Solomon, the Tiger, and the Swallow, sent a second time on the same trading expedition. In regard to Hawkins, he was, I admit, a Murderer and a Robber. His avowed purpose in sailing to Guinea was to seize by stratagem, or force, and carry away the unsuspecting natives, in the view of selling them as slaves, &c."

trade, and the successful advances made to this “consummation of wickedness.” Factories were formed on the African coast; forts built; grants of money obtained from parliament; and in the year 1792, twenty-six acts of that body, encouraging and sanctioning the trade, could be enumerated by its friends.

In the year 1689, England made a regular convention with Spain, for supplying the Spanish West Indies with negro slaves from the island of Jamaica. The twelfth article of the treaty of Utrecht (1713) "grants to her Britannic majesty and to the company of her subjects appointed for that purpose (the South Sea Company)—as well the subjects of Spain as all others being excluded—the contract for introducing negroes into several parts of the dominions of his Catholic majesty in America (commonly called El pacto de el assiento de negros) at the rate of 4,800 negroes yearly, for the space of thirty years successively."

To this compact there have been two pointed references of late in the British parliament, which I will repeat here in further explanation of its character. "By the treaty of Utrecht," said Mr. Brougham (16th June, 1812) "which the execrations of ages have left inadequately censured, Great Britain was content to obtain, as the whole price of Ramillies and Blenheim, an additional share of the accursed slave trade."

Mr. C. Grant, jun. said (Feb. 9th, 1818) "that in the beginning of the last century, we deemed it a great advantage to obtain by the Assiento contract, the right of supplying with slaves the possessions of that very power which we were now paying for abolishing the trade. During the negotiations which preceded the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, we biggled for four years longer of this exclusive trade; and in the treaty of Madrid, we clung to the last remains of the Assiento contract."

By degrees the English merchants engrossed permanently two-thirds of the whole African exportation, and became the carriers for the European world. They either supplied the French Islands directly, or served as the factors of the French trader on the coast of Africa. They occasionally freighted their ships to France, to be manned and equipped in the French ports. They stocked Trinidad, and the province of Caraccas, by contract with the Spanish government; and, in the years 1786 and 1788, the Havannah. The Philippine

* From 1739 to 1744, it annually voted to the African company 10,000l. sterling, to pay their debts; in 1744, the grant was doubled by reason of the war with France and Spain.
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Company of Spain, when invested with the privilege of importing slaves into South America, employed, by contract, British vessels, manned by British seamen. The re-exportation from the British West Indies, for double profit, was so far encouraged, that by the West India free port act of 1766, foreign vessels were allowed to carry from the free ports, negroes imported in British ships. England established a higher reputation than any other power for skill in the management of the trade, and in the choice and preparation of the articles of barter. Among her chief exports to Africa were British spirits, rum and brandy, guns, cutlasses, and ammunition. Of three millions of pounds of gunpowder, which she exported in one year, one half was sent to the West Coast alone; and, as I have already had occasion to remark, several thousand persons were exclusively employed in Birmingham, in manufacturing guns for that market. In a Report of the Board of Trade dated 1775, stress is laid upon the necessity of encouraging the trade of fire-arms to Africa.

England employed from one hundred and fifty to two hundred ships in the slave trade, and carried off, on the average, forty thousand negroes annually; at times one half more, in the year. In 1768, the number which she took from the coast between Cape Blanco and the Rio Congo, reached 59,400, more than double the share that fell to all the other traders. Mr. Pitt said, in 1792, that Jamaica had imported one hundred and fifty thousand negroes in the course of twenty years, and that this was admitted to be only one tenth of the traffic. Mr. Dundas said, on the same occasion, that, "in 1791, the whole British importation consisted of 74,000, not less than 34,000 of which were exported for the service of foreign nations."

The Parliamentary Report of 1789, on the slave trade, states, that the whole number of negroes brought to Jamaica from the year 1655 to 1787, amounted to 676,276, of whom 31,181 died in the harbour, from the noxious quality of the drugs employed in making them up for sale. The Edinburgh Review made the following statements in the years 1805 and 1806.

"Before the American war, the Dutch used to carry, in their own bottoms, from Africa to Guiana, ten thousand negroes annually; and it is proved, by papers laid before parliament, but which, we believe, have not yet been printed, that this importation was greatly increased during the last war, when those possessions were in the hands of Great Britain. It is certainly not over-rating its present amount, t
estimate the yearly supply of negroes carried to our conquered colonies at fifteen thousand,—about one half the supply of our own islands, which is the subject of the abolition question.**

"The 38,000 slaves exported annually from Africa in British vessels, are only in a small proportion destined for the use of the colonies; above 22,000 are stated by the friends of the trade to be intended for the foreign settlements. To this must be added a large number of slaves carried by British vessels under cover of a neutral flag. From certain documents which we have had an opportunity of consulting, we cannot estimate these at less than 8000; and the supply of the conquered colonies considerably exceeds 10,000 annually."†

Authority is to be found for much higher estimates than these. I take the following from Anthony Benezet's Historical Account of the Slave Trade.

"In a book printed in Liverpool, called, The Liverpool Memorandum, which contains, amongst other things, an account of the trade of that port, there is an exact list of the vessels employed in the Guinea trade, and of the number of slaves imported in each vessel; by which it appears, that in the year 1753, the number imported to America by one hundred and one vessels belonging to that port, amounted to upwards of thirty thousand, and from the number of vessels employed by the African company, in London and Bristol, we may, with some degree of certainty, conclude, there are one hundred thousand negroes purchased and brought on board our ships yearly from the coast of Africa. This is confirmed in Anderson's History of Trade and Commerce, lately printed; where it is said, "that England supplies her American colonies with negro slaves, amounting in number to above one hundred thousand every year." When the vessels are full freighted with slaves, they sail for our plantations in America, and may be two or three months in the voyage, during which time, from the filth and stench that is among them, distempers frequently break out, which carry off commonly a fifth, a fourth, yea sometimes a third or more of them: so that taking all the slaves together, that are brought on board our ships yearly, one may reasonably suppose that at least ten thousand of them die on the voyage. And in a printed account of the state of the negroes, in our plantations, it is supposed that a fourth part more or less die at the different islands, in what is
called the seasoning. Hence it may be presumed, that at a moderate computation of slaves who are purchased by our African merchants in a year, near thirty thousand die upon the voyage and in the seasoning. Add to this, the prodigious number who are killed in the incursions and intestine wars, by which negroes procure the number of slaves wanted to load the vessels."

The Edinburgh Review has declared that England is the nation which "had most extensively pursued and most solemnly authorized the slave trade;" that she had been "principally instrumental in barring out from benighted Africa the blessings of christianity and the comforts of civilization;" that it is she who had "checked or rather blasted in its bud the improvement of the African continent." The same strain is familiar in the speeches of Fox and Wilberforce. The latter reminded his countrymen, in 1814, in parliament, that they had enjoyed the largest share of the guilty profits of the slave trade. Mr. Pitt declared in 1792, that parliament ought to consider themselves as the authors of it. His more emphatical language of the year preceding is recorded by Clarkson—"The truth is, there is no nation in Europe which has plunged so deeply into this guilt as Britain. We stopped the natural progress of civilization in Africa. We cut her off from the opportunity of improvement. We kept her down in a state of darkness, bondage, ignorance, and bloodshed. We have there subverted the whole order of nature; we have aggravated every natural barbarity, and furnished to every man motives for committing under the name of trade, acts of perpetual hostility and perfidy against his neighbour. Thus had the perversion of British commerce carried misery instead of happiness to one whole quarter of the globe. False to the very principles of trade, unmindful of our duty, what almost irreparable mischief had we done to that continent! We had obtained as yet only so much knowledge of its productions as to show, that there was a capacity for trade, which we checked." That capacity was, indeed, checked, not incidentally alone, but directly; for, in order to obviate all obstruction to the slave trade, pains were taken to prevent the Africans from cultivating with success, the staples of their soil,—cotton, tobacco, sugar, and indigo. In this point, the English were, as in all others, pre-eminently culpable, since the number of forts which they possessed along the coast, with districts round each of them, afforded them better means, than any other European nation possessed, of giving the natives a taste for agriculture and the true objects of commerce.
7. The general character of the British slave trade has been so portrayed by the highest and ablest men of the British nation, that in describing it, I am supplied, in their language, with the strongest which I could wish to employ. The sufficiency of the following testimony will hardly be questioned. In the Debate on the Abolition in the year 1792, Mr. Wilberforce said, "that of all the trades that disgraced human beings, this was the very worst. In others, however infamous, there were traits of something like humanity, but in this there was a total absence of them. It was a scene of uniform, unadulterated, unsophisticated wickedness; never was there a system so big with wickedness and cruelty." In the same debate, Mr. Beaufoy said—

"Who does not recollect, that, by the evidence which the slave merchants themselves have given at your bar, it appears, that such, on board an African vessel, is the rate of mortality, that if the march of death were the same in the world at large, the whole human race would be extinguished in fourteen years, and the earth itself be converted into one vast charnel house. Show me a crime of any sort, and in the slave trade I will show you that crime in a state of tenfold aggravation. Give me an instance of guilt atrocious and abhorred, and the slave trade will exhibit instances of that guilt, more inveterate, more strongly rooted in all, diffusing a more malignant poison, and spreading a deeper horror. All other injustice, all other modes of desolating nature, of blasting the happiness of man, and defeating the purposes of God, lose, in comparison with this, their very name and character of evil. Their taint is too mild to disgust, their deformity is too slight to offend. The shrieks of solitary murder; what are they, when compared with the sounds of horror that daily and nightly ascend from the hatchway of the slave ship! I have heard of the cruelties of the Inquisitions of Portugal and Spain; but what is their scanty account of blood, when compared with that sweep of death, that boundless desolation which accompanies the negro traffic! Superstition has been called man's chief destroyer; but superstition herself is less obdurate, less persevering, less steadfast in her cruelty, than this cool, reflecting, deliberate, remorseless commerce."

In the debate of 1807, Sir Samuel Romilly said, "The cruelty and injustice of the slave trade had been established beyond a doubt. It had been shown to be carried on by rapine and robbery and murder; by fomenting and encouraging wars; by false accusations and imaginary crimes. The unhappy victims were torn away not only in the time of war,
PART I. but of profound peace. They were then carried across the Atlantic in a manner too horrible to describe, and afterwards subjected to perpetual slavery."

Lord Henry Petty said, "The slave trade produced in Africa, fraud and violence, robbery, and murder. It gave birth to false accusations and a mockery of justice. It was the parent of every crime that could at once degrade and afflict the human race. After spreading vice and misery all over a continent, it doomed its unhappy victims to hardships and cruelties which were worse than death. Cruelty begat cruelty; the system, wicked in its beginning, was equally so in its progress," &c.

The tone of the Edinburgh Reviewers has been in unison with that of the eloquent members of parliament. They have described the trade as "one long continuous crime involving every possible definition of evil; combining the wildest physical suffering with the most atrocious moral depravity," as one "which condemned a whole quarter of the world to unceasing and ferocious warfare; which annually exterminated more than fell during the bloodiest campaigns of European hostility; which regularly transported every six months, in circumstances of unparalleled affliction, more innocent persons than suffer in a century from the oppression of all the tyrannies in the world." In the 24th number of the Review, a picture was presented so hideous and so faithful, that the recollection of it would seem sufficient to have stayed any hand from hazarding, in the same frame, a comparison between the humanity of England and that of any other nation, in reference to the sons of Africa.

"The history of the slave trade is the history of a war of more than two centuries, waged by men against human nature; a war too, carried on, not by ignorance and barbarism against knowledge and civilization; not by half famished multitudes against a race blessed with all the arts of life, and softened and effeminated by luxury; but, as some strange non-descript in iniquity, waged by unprovoked strength against uninjuring helplessness, and with all the powers which long periods of security and equal law had enabled the assailants to develop,—in order to make barbarism more barbarous, and to add to the want of political freedom the most dreadful and debasing personal suffering. Thus all the effects and influences of freedom were employed to enslave; the gifts of knowledge to prevent the possibility of illumination; and powers, which could not have existed but in consequence of morality and religion, to perpetuate the sensual vices, and to
ward off the emancipating blow of Christianity; and, as if this were not enough, positive laws were added by the best and freest nation of christendom, and powers entrusted to the basest part of its population, for purposes which would almost necessarily make the best men become the worst."

8. However strong these general representations, they are more than confirmed, by the details of which the world had the fullest proof. It was remarked with great truth by Mr. William Smith in the debate of 1792, in the House of Commons, that numberless facts had been related by eye witnesses, to Parliament, so dreadfully atrocious, that the very magnitude of the crimes rendered them incredible to others. I will select some of the particular features in the character of the trade, and a few of the single incidents, as they were related in Parliament, upon such evidence as no longer to admit of contradiction. Mr. Wilberforce said, "it was well known that it was customary to set fire to whole villages in Africa, for the purpose of throwing the inhabitants into confusion, and taking them as they fled from the flames. Every possible fraud was put in practice to deceive the ignorance of the natives, by false weights and measures, adulterated commodities, and other impositions of the sort."

"On the windward coast an agent was sent to establish a settlement in the interior country, and to send down to the ships such slaves as he might be able to obtain; the orders he received from his captain were a very model of conciseness and perspicuity; 'he was to encourage the chieftains, by brandy and gunpowder, to go to war, and make slaves.' He punctually performed his part, the chieftains were not backward on theirs; the neighbouring villages were ransacked, being surrounded and set on fire in the night; their inhabitants were seized when making their escape, and being brought to the agent, were by him forwarded, men, women, and children, to his principal on the coast. Mr. How, a botanist, who, in the service of government, visited that country with captain Thomson, gave in evidence, that being at one of the subordinate settlements on the Gold Coast, on the arrival of an order for slaves from Cape Coast Castle, the native chief immediately sent forth his armed parties, who, in the night, brought in a supply of all descriptions, and the necessary assortment was next day sent off, according to the order. The wide extent of the African coast furnished but one uniform detail of similar instances of barbarity."

"The exciting of wars," added the same speaker, "between neighbouring states, is almost the slightest of the evils
PART I. Africa is doomed to suffer from this trade. Still more intolerable are those acts of outrage which we are continually stimulating the kings to commit on their own subjects. A chieftain, to procure the articles for the gratification of appetites which we have diligently and too successfully taught them to indulge, being too weak or too timid to attack his neighbours, sends a party of soldiers by night to one of his own defenceless villages; they set fire to it, and hurry the inhabitants to the ships of the traders, who, hovering like vultures over these scenes of carnage, are ever ready for their prey. We are perpetually told of villages half consumed, and bearing every mark of recent destruction. Whithersoever a man goes, be it to the watering place or to the field, he is not safe. He can never quit his house without fear of being carried off by fraud or by force. When the chieftains are going up the country to make war in order to procure slaves, they are supplied with muskets and cutlasses by the traders."

Mr. Pitt said on the same occasion—"Can we hesitate in deciding whether the wars in Africa are their wars or ours. It was our arms in the river Cameroon put into the hands of the negro trader, that furnished him with the means of using his trade, and I have no more doubt they are British arms put into the hands of Africans, which promote universal war and desolation, than I can doubt of their having done so, in that individual instance."

Mr. Wilberforce related that in the year 1789, in the neighbourhood of the river Cameroon, the master of a Liverpool ship of the name of Bibby, fraudulently carried off thirty-two relations of one of the chiefs of the country, who had been put on board as pledges for goods: and to illustrate the familiarity of the practice, he quoted the following anecdote. "When General Rookié commanded in his majesty's settlement at Goree, some of the subjects of a neighbouring king, with whom he was on terms of amity, came to pay him a friendly visit; there were from 100 to 150 of them, men, women, and children; all was gaiety and merriment, it was a scene to gladden the saddest, and to soften the hardest heart: but a slave captain, ever faithful to the interest of his employers, is not so soon thrown off his guard; with what astonishment would the House hear, that in the midst of this festivity, it was proposed to general Rooké to seize the whole of this unsuspecting multitude, hurry them on board the ships, and carry them off to the West Indies. It was not merely one man, but three, who were bold enough to venture on such a
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proposal. Three English slave captains preferred it as their joint request, alleging the precedent of a former governor, who in a similar case, had consented?" &c.

One more of the numberless authenticated occurrences of this nature, will suffice. "Mr. Wilberforce said that these enormities were increasing; for, no longer ago than last August, (1791) when that House was debating on the subject of this very trade, six British vessels had anchored off the town of Calabar, in Africa, a town which seemed devoted to misfortune. It appeared, from the report, that the natives had raised the price of slaves. The captains consulting together, agreed to fire on the town, to compel them to lower the price of their countrymen. To heighten, if possible, the shame of this proceeding, they were prevented for some time, from effecting their purpose, by the presence of a French captain, who refused to join in their measures, and purchased at the high price which had been put upon the slaves."

"However, in the morning they commenced a fire which lasted for three hours. During the consternation, the wretched inhabitants were seen making their escape in every direction. In the evening, the attack was renewed, which continued until they agreed to sell their slaves at the price stipulated by the captains. In this attack upwards of twenty persons were destroyed."

The situation of the slaves on board ship, or what is commonly called the middle passage, even surpassed in horror the depravity and cruelty exhibited in the original acquisition. Lord Grenville declared in 1806, in the House of Lords, "that in the transportation of the negroes, there was a greater portion of misery condensed within a smaller space, than had ever existed in the known world. This he had said on a former occasion, and would repeat." Mr. Fox observed, in the House of Commons, that "the acts of barbarity, proved upon the slave captains in the course of the voyages, were so extravagant that they had been attributed to insanity." The single instance of the British ship Zong, in 1781, from which the captain threw into the sea one hundred and thirty-two slaves, alive, in order to defraud the underwriters in England, gives a truly demoniac character to the temper and conduct of the commanders of the slave ships. The assertion of Lord Grenville, just quoted, would seem to be warranted by the facts which were in undeniable evidence before the committees of Parliament. With respect to the middle passage—apart from the administration of the ship's officers, still more barbarous, than the situation was deplorable,—the principal features of
PART I. it are these, according to the testimony of witnesses produced on the side of the trade.

Every slave, whatever his size might be, had only five feet six inches in length, and sixteen inches in breadth, to lie in. The floor was covered with bodies stowed or packed according to this allowance. But between the floor and the deck or ceiling were platforms, or broad shelves, in the midway, which were covered with bodies also. The height from the floor to the ceiling, within which space the bodies on the floor and those on the platforms lay, seldom exceeded five feet two inches, and in some cases it did not exceed four feet.

The men were chained, two and two together, by their hands and feet, and were chained also by means of ring-bolts, which were fastened to the deck. They were confined in this manner at least all the time they remained upon the coast, which was from six weeks to six months, as it might happen. Their allowance consisted of one pint of water a day to each person, and they were fed twice a day with yams and horsebeans. Instruments were kept on board to force them to eat, when sulky.

After meals, they jumped up in their irons for exercise. This was so necessary for their health that they were whipped if they refused to do it, and often danced thus under the lash. They were usually fifteen or sixteen hours below deck out of twenty-four. In rainy weather they could not be brought up for two or three days together. If the ship was full, their situation was then inexpressibly distressing. They drew their breath with anxious and laborious efforts. Thus crammed together, some died of suffocation, and the filth and noisomeness occasioned putrid and fatal disorders; so that the officers who inspected them in the morning, had occasionally to pick dead slaves out of their rows, and to unchain their carcasses from the bodies of their fellow-sufferers, to whom they were fastened.

The scenes and practices in the next stage of the sacrifice,—the sale in the West India port,—rivalled those of the transportation. The slaves who survived the passage, frequently arrived in a sickly and disordered state, and then they were made up for the market, by the means of astringents, washes, mercurial ointments, and repelling drugs, so that their wounds and diseases might be hid. Many people in the islands, in Jamaica particularly, were accustomed to speculate in the purchase of those who were left after the first day's sale. They then carried them out into the country, and retailed them there. A most respectable witness declared that
he had seen these landed in a very wretched state, sometimes in the agonies of death, and sold as low as a dollar, and that he had known several to expire in the piazzas of the vendue-master.

9. In the list of the evils and atrocities accompanying this trade, one of the most certain and shocking, was the extensive mortality, independent of that inseparable from the wars and devastations in Africa, to which it gave rise. We read in Macpherson's Annals, that the whole number of negroes delivered, fell short of the number shipped, twenty or thirty per cent; that in Jamaica, if fifteen out of twenty new negroes bought, were alive at the end of three years, the purchaser was thought very lucky. We are told by the Edinburgh Review (No. 8) that upon an average no less than seventeen in an hundred died before they were landed, and that there was a further loss of thirty-three in the seasoning, arising chiefly from diseases contracted during the voyage. "Of the Africans," says Dr. Dickson, in his Mitigation of Slavery, "above one-fourth perished on the voyage to the West Indies; and 44 per cent. more, being nearly the annual mortality of London, died on an average, in the fortnight intervening between the day of entry and sale. To close this awful triumph of the king of terrors, between one-third and one-half, or about two in five were lost in "the seasoning," within the three first years." The representations of Mr. Wilberforce on this head were never invalidated, and are as follows. "It would be found," he said, "upon an average of all the ships, upon which evidence had been given, that, exclusively of such as perished before they sailed from Africa, not less than twelve and a half per cent. died on their passage; besides these, the Jamaica report stated, that four and a half per cent. died while in the harbours, or on shore, before the day of sale, which was only about the space of twelve or fourteen days after their arrival there, and one-third more died in the seasoning, and this in a climate exactly similar to their own, in which they were acknowledged to be healthy. Thus out of every lot of one hundred shipped from Africa, seventeen died in about nine weeks, and not more than fifty lived to become effective labourers in our islands."

Mr. Wilberforce adduced, on another occasion, upon the authority of indisputable evidence, some cases of particular mortality, of which I will transcribe his relation, because it brings into view additional attributes of the trade.

"It was no longer ago than in the year 1788, that Mr. Vol. I.—U u
PART I. Isaac Wilson, whose intelligent and candid manner of giving his evidence, could not but impress the committee with a high opinion of him, was doomed to witness scenes as deeply distressing as almost ever occurred in the annals of the slave trade."

"His ship was a vessel of three hundred and seventy tons, and she had on board six hundred and two slaves, a number greater than we at present allow, but rather less, I think, than what was asserted by the slave merchants to be necessary, in order to carry on their trade to any tolerable profit. Out of these six hundred and two she lost one hundred and fifty-five. I will mention the mortality also of three or four more vessels, which were in company with her, and belonged to the same owner. One of them brought four hundred and fifty, and buried two hundred; another brought four hundred and sixty-six, and buried seventy-three; another brought five hundred and forty-six, and buried one hundred and eighty-eight: besides one hundred and fifty-five from his own ship, his number being six hundred and two; and from the whole four, after the landing of their cargoes, there died two hundred and twenty. He fell in with another vessel, which lost three hundred and sixty-two: the number she had brought was not specified. To these actual deaths, during and immediately after the voyage, and the subsequent loss in what is called the seasoning, I consider that this loss would be greater than ordinary in cargoes landed in so sickly a state. Why, sir, were such a mortality general, it would, in a few months, depopulate the earth. We asked the surgeon the causes of these excessive losses, particularly on board his own ship, where he had it in his power to ascertain them. The substance of his reply was, that most of the slaves appeared to labour under a fixed dejection and melancholy, interrupted now and then by lamentations and plaintive songs, expressive of their concern for the loss of their relations and friends and native country. So powerfully did this operate, that many attempted various ways of destroying themselves; some endeavoured to drown themselves, and three actually effected it; others obstinately refused to take sustenance, and when the whip and other violent means were used to compel them to eat, they looked up in the face of the officer, who unwillingly executed this painful task, and said, in their own language, 'Presently we shall be no more.' Their state of mind produced a general state of languor and debility, which were increased, in many instances, by an unconquerable abstinence from food, arising partly from sickness, partly, to use the language of
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slaves, captives, from 'sulkiness.' These causes naturally produced the dysentery; the contagion spread, numbers were daily carried off, and the disorder, aided by so many powerful auxiliaries, resisted all the force of medicine.

"The ship in which Mr. Claxton, the surgeon, sailed, since the regulating act, afforded a repetition of all the same horrid circumstances I have before alluded to. Suicide, various ways, was attempted and effected, and the same barbarous expedients were resorted to, in order to compel them to continue an existence too painful to be endured: the mortality also was as great."

10. Bryan Edwards, in his History of the West Indies,* computes the total import of negroes, in British vessels, into all the British colonies of America and the West Indies, from 1680 to 1786, at 2,130,000, being on an average of the whole, 20,095 annually. He acknowledges that this estimate "is much less than is commonly supposed," and that he had not "sufficient materials to enable him to furnish an accurate statement." There can be no doubt that he is far short of the real number. It is calculated, as we have seen, by Anderson, that the annual British export from Africa was one hundred thousand, and the annual mortality twenty thousand. Mr. Long confesses, in his History of Jamaica, that twenty-seven thousand were imported into that island in two years and an half; and Mr. Edwards puts down the Jamaica importation at one-third of the whole. The Dutch colonies of Demerara, Guiana, and Berbice fell into the hands of Great Britain in 1797; and immediately called for a great number of negroes, having been prevented from supplying themselves during the war. It is averred in the Edinburgh Review (No. 24) that the British slave trade then rose to fifty-seven thousand, and continued at that standard for eight years; that is, until 1805, when the importation into the Dutch colonies was terminated by an order in council, to appease the jealousies and clamours in the old islands.

Taking the data which the statements quoted in the preceding pages afford, I should not certainly transcend the mark, if I added ten thousand to the average of Edwards. If we state it, in round numbers, at thirty thousand, we shall have, for the one hundred and six years, three millions one hundred and eighteen thousand negroes imported into the British possessions alone. But to have the whole number which Great Britain obtained

* B. IV. c. 2.
PART I. From Africa, we must bring into the account those whom she procured antecedent to the year 1680, and after the year 1786; those whom she imported directly into the foreign possessions, under her contracts, and otherwise; and also, those who perished on her hands on the coast of Africa, and in the transportation. The aggregate of her immediate prey must have exceeded six millions, and we may rate the direct mortality for which she is answerable, at two millions, for the century of the trade preceding the abolition.* If we call to mind, besides, the general physical suffering undergone by the survivors, before they reached their ultimate, most calamitous lot; the mental agony implied in their divulsion from their native soil and the bonds of kindred and friendship; we must stand aghast at the account of crime which remained open against the British nation at the time of the abolition. In addition to the items mentioned, those are of no small moment which are suggested in Mr. Pitt’s apostrophe to the House of Commons. “Do you think nothing of the ruin and the miseries in which so many other individuals, still remaining in Africa, are involved, in consequence of carrying off so many myriads of people? Do you think nothing of their families which are left behind; of the connexions which are broken; of the friendships, attachments, and relationships that are burst asunder? Do you think nothing of the miseries, in consequence, that are felt from generation to generation, of the privation of that happiness which might be communicated to them by the introduction of civilization, and of mental and moral improvement?”

From the foregoing exposition, it may be asserted, with confidence, that the British slave trade caused immediately, during the two centuries of its legal prosecution, the destruction of more negroes than have existed, altogether, in North America, since the first settlement. The leaders of the abolition, the Pitts, the Foxes, the Horsleys, did not hesitate to bestow upon that destruction the most fearful of epithets. “What is it,” exclaimed Lord Grenville, “but murder to

* This is much below the calculations of her own writers. “The number,” says one of these, “of slaves which the ships profess to take is not an exact criterion of the number actually taken. The public number does not include the quota, allowed to the respective officers of the ship; nor do the owners confine themselves to any exact number, if, on the arrival of the ship in Africa, the commodity is cheaper than they expected.” For obvious reasons, the mortality of the negroes in the transportation would not be disclosed in all its extent. The number smuggled by the British into the Spanish possessions, while they enjoyed the assent, was not inconsiderable.
pursue a practice which produced annually untimely death to thousands of innocent and helpless beings!" Now, I would ask, which it is, the Briton or the American, that can, with most propriety, be stigmatized, nationally, as "a murderer of slaves."

If we admitted as true all that the British writers have related of the condition and treatment of the slaves in this country, we could yet defy them to make out an amount of injustice, and suffering, and cruelty, in any way equal to that which they have charged and proved upon their African trade. In portentous individual instances of inhuman conduct, whether as to enormity or multitude, that trade far outstrips the North American negro slavery; the history of which presents, indeed, no authenticated case of barbarity which does not appear almost venial, in the comparison with the monstrous proceedings consigned in the parliamentary minutes of evidence.

11. The thirst of gain and the ambition of commercial supremacy; which engaged and animated the British people and government in this detestable traffic, inspired them with the aim of monopolizing every market for human flesh. The cargo of negroes was carried with equal readiness to Caraccas or to Jamaica, to Pennsylvania or to Guiana. No discrimination was made as to the character of the masters to whose absolute will they were to be consigned, or to the nature of the climate or the soil, which they were to undergo. The French and the Spaniards had, like ourselves, their full share of obloquy from the English traveller, on account of the severity of their rule over the very slaves whom the English trader had sold to them; and the French and Spanish character stood degraded, on the same account, in elaborate contrasts with the British, when the French and Spanish ports were crowded with British slave ships, and the British ministers struggling for the prolongation of the Assiento-contract.

Doubtless, Great Britain was answerable for the fate of the whole number of beings whom she delivered over to perpetual bondage in this hemisphere; knowing the temper and habits of the Spanish and French planters, she partook in the guilt of their excesses of cruelty towards the slaves whom they had received from her ships. In the case of the slavery in her own islands she was more than an accessory; and it could not be surpassed in hardship and inhumanity. That in the Spanish and French, or even the Dutch possessions, was not worse; and in the American provinces universally acknowledged to be much more mild. While every where in
PART I. the latter, there was an excess of births over deaths among the negroes, and in some, a rapidity of increase; in the British West Indies, the whole stock required renewal in less than fifteen years.*

I had intended to copy from the parliamentary statements some of the facts illustrative of this additional waste of the human species, and of the condition and treatment of the negroes, under British dominion; but I have already dealt in details of this nature, as much as is compatible with my limits, and the tenderness due to the feelings of my readers. It is enough to refer to the debates in the British parliament on the abolition, and on the slave registry bills. The tone of the British writers has often been such on these subjects, as if they considered the conscience of England clear with respect to the slave trade and to slavery, because these were unknown in her own immediate territory. This miserable casuistry was noticed in Parliament in the year 1792, in the following pointed and just remarks.

"Mr. Robert Thornton said,—the people of England were called a humane set of people. Liberty was the boast of our island; and it was said, that no African was landed on our soil, who did not instantly become free. They were guilty, however, of a contradiction, as long as they sent those miserable wretches elsewhere into slavery; they were governed by a selfish principle; they could send these wretches out of their sight to be vilified, and disgraced, and scourged, but they did not themselves, like to witness their cries, their tears, and all their degradation. He recollected an old motto, 'Qui facit per alium, facit per se.'"

Neither the Parliament nor nation could, at any time, plead ignorance of the character of the trade, and of West India slavery. The collections of early voyages; the reports of tra-

* "According to Sir Isaac Newton," says Dr. Dickson, "mankind die off, and are renewed every thirty-three or thirty-four years. But the slaves collectively, bought and bred, die off, and are renewed, in about fifteen years; and therefore more than twice as fast as the rest of the species; and the bought alone more than four or five times as fast." When the whole number of slaves in the British West India Islands was computed at 265,666, the annual consumption of them was estimated at 23,743. Mr. Malthus remarks in the Appendix to his Essay on Population, that if the slaves in the West Indies had been only in a tolerable condition; if their civil condition and moral habits had been made only to approach to those which prevail among the mass of the human race in the worst governed countries in the world, it is contrary to the general laws of nature to suppose, that they would not have been able by procreation fully to supply the effective demand for labour.
vellers; the mutual, printed accusations of the Royal African Company, and the private adventurers; the inevitable notoriety of facts where considerable cities were almost entirely devoted to the traffic; the constant intercourse with the West Indies, through all ranks of life; the solemn admonitions of the writers whom Clarkson has cited; the insurance cases which were brought into the courts of justice;—preclude the charitable supposition that mercy, and justice, and honour were unconsciously trampled upon in the race of commercial competition. Mr. Wilberforce, after displaying, in his speech of 1792, the enormities of which I have mentioned a small part, added, “nor do we learn these transactions only from our own witnesses; they are proved by the testimony of slave-factors themselves, whose works were written and published long before the present enquiry.”

I have observed that, until the year 1786, no society was formed among any description of persons in England, which had for its object the abolition of the trade. The callousness of the government too is almost inconceivable. Clarkson relates that Granville Sharp communicated all the facts of the hideous case of captain Zong, with a copy of the trial to the Lords of the Admiralty, as the guardians of justice upon the seas, and to the duke of Portland, as principal minister of state; but that no notice was taken by any of them, of the information thus imparted. When the Quakers presented, in 1783, their petition to Parliament against the slave trade,—the first of that purport ever presented,—Lord North admitted, in the House of Commons, the grievousness of the evil, and only “regretted that the trade against which the petition was so justly directed, was, in a commercial view become necessary to almost every nation in Europe.” In 1776, the estimable David Hartley, after exposing to the House of Commons, the abominations of the slave trade, and laying on the table of the House some of the fetters and other instruments of torture employed on board of the slave ships, made a motion “that the slave trade was contrary to the laws of God and the rights of man.” This motion was seconded by the patriot and philanthropist, Sir George Saville, who lives so brilliantly in the splendid eulogy of Burke; and yet it failed utterly. The proceedings of the Commons the year following (1777) on the state of the African Company, are remarkable on account of the tone which prevailed in the discussion. It was such, as if the trade were not only unimpeachable, but unimpeachable. Nothing betrayed the business to be considered in any other light than as an ordinary one, except,
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perhaps, the following remarks of Mr. Temple Luttrell, who had the charge of unfolding the case of the Company and the interests of the trade. "Some gentlemen may, indeed, object to the slave trade as inhuman and impious, but, hard as the case of a negro slave may appear to a free born Briton at first view, I conceive him to be far less an object of commiseration, (his native state and local birthright being taken into the comparison,) than a poor impressed sailor within this island," &c. Another extract from the speech of Mr. Luttrell, which passed without animadversion, will show the prevailing temper and policy on the subject;—how coolly and nicely the comparative value of human flesh was calculated in an assembly of "free born Britons."

"In the slave trade also, there might be prodigious improvements; but the attention of the Board of Trade and plantations in this matter has been too much limited; the negroes from the gold coast suit our West India islands remarkably well; they are laborious, bold, hardy, and live upon little besides salt fish and roots, which they meet with in Jamaica. The negroes from Congo, Angola, and the lower Guinea, are of a more soft, voluptuous, and effeminate nature, and their women chiefly till the ground; so that upon being transplanted to the hardships of our sugar colonies, they commit suicide rather than endure them: hence it is that one Gold Coast negro is worth, for sugar plantations, two of the others; but in North America, where they meet with food and entertainment, and usage better adapted to their habits, they do perfectly well."

12. At length, in 1787, through the indefatigable exertions of a few humane individuals in the middle ranks of life, the enormities of the slave system, in all its stages, were forced upon the attention of the government and nation. A member of parliament of great personal consideration, took up the subject of abolition with the zeal of an apostle, and the resolution of a martyr. He announced his intention to summon the government to the performance of its duty; and at once a din of protestation and fierce defiance arose from every quarter. The slave trade, says Clarkson, appeared, like the furious hydra, to have a hundred heads; the merchant, the planter, the mortgagee, the manufacturer, the politician, the legislator, the cabinet minister, lifted up their voices against annihilation." The humanity and patriotism of Mr. Pitt, Fox, and of some other distinguished orators of parliament were, however, enlisted with Wilberforce; and no inconsiderable number of auxiliaries had been gained throughout...
country, by the diffusion of the tracts of Benezet, Sharp, and Sect. IX. Clarkson; of pathetic songs, and moving pictures, and what-

ever could vivify public feeling and excite national shame. Among the higher classes, little real progress would seem to have been made; since, according to Clarkson, most of the persons of rank and fortune in the west end of the metropolis, were converts to a pamphlet from the pen of a Liverpool champion, entitled, "Scriptural Researches on the Licitness of the Slave Trade," in which the holiness of the trade was stoutly maintained.

In 1788, when a sufficiently marked excitement had been produced in the country, and the imposing shape of evidence before the privy council given to facts, a bill was brought into the House of Commons for the mere regulation of the trade, so as to diminish the miseries of the middle passage. At this day, it is scarcely credible what resistance was made, both in doors and out, to this bill, which common humanity seemed to exact; what dilution it underwent in its progress; and how narrowly it escaped extinction, notwithstanding the earnest support of the minister, and a phalanx of the ablest rhetoricians who have ever existed. It was bandied several times in new forms, between the two houses, and at length passed the Lords, through an ordeal, says Clarkson, as it were of fire. He adds, that it was "the first bill which ever put fetters upon the destructive monster—the slave trade;" but the fact soon transpired, that it missed its aim, and was interpreted by the slave merchants into an additional charter, or recognition of their pursuit as a lawful branch of commerce.

In 1789, Mr. Wilberforce ventured to lay upon the table of the House of Commons, as subjects for future discussion, twelve historical propositions founded upon the evidence in the case of the slave trade, reported by the privy council. Matters were not ripe for the proposal of abolition to parliament, until 1791, when Mr. Wilberforce made his first grand motion to that effect. After a vehement and protracted debate, in which the leaders of the cause exerted their utmost ability, it was lost by a considerable majority. For the opinion to be entertained of this result, I need only refer to the language of Mr. Fox and the Edinburgh Review. Mr. Fox said, in the debate, that "the trade was defensible upon no other ground than that of a highwayman; and that if the house, knowing as they did by the evidence, what it was, did not by their vote mark to all mankind their abhorrence of a practice so savage, so enormous, so repugnant to all laws human and divine, they would consign their character to eternal infamy." The Edinburgh Vol. I.—Xx
PART I. Review has told us, that "the question of the slave trade was always one in which interest, or an apprehension of interest, stood more daringly and nakedly opposed to humanity and justice, than any other on record." Certainly, never was a question of such awful import, so treated as this was, by the numerous advocates of the slave trade in Parliament. On the occasion just mentioned, Mr. Grosvenor said, "that gentlemen had exhibited a great deal of eloquence in exhibiting in horrid colours, the traffic in slaves. He acknowledged it was not an amiable trade; but neither was the trade of a butcher an amiable trade; and yet a mutton chop was, nevertheless, a good thing."*

Another and equally strenuous effort was made, the ensuing year, in the House of Commons, by the abolitionists. The house rejected the proposition of Mr. Wilberforce, but manifested a disposition to vote a gradual abolition. So much, after the admissions extorted by the testimony, from the leaders of the majority, and with the prospect of an effervescence of public sentiment from the cogent arguments and eloquent pictures of the speakers in the affirmative, could not, in decency or policy, be refused. Mr. Pitt, who, on this occasion, put forth all the energies and beauties of his unrivalled oratory, afterwards expressed himself in his place, in these terms: "I feel the infamy of the trade so heavily, and see the impolicy of it so clearly, that I am ashamed I have not been able to convince the house to abandon it altogether at an instant—to pronounce with one voice the immediate and total abolition. There is no excuse for us, seeing this infernal traffic as we do. It is the very death of justice to utter a syllable in support of it."

Mr. Dundas, one of the antagonists of immediate abolition, in a short time, brought in a bill for a gradual one, with some singular additions. He proposed that, for the future, none but young persons should be allowed to be taken from Africa, and that a bounty should be given upon the importation of young negresses into the West Indies. On this latter point, Mr. Fox, in his overwhelming answer to Mr. Dundas, bore with particular severity. "A right honourable gentleman proposes a bounty on the importation of females, or, in other

* In the final debate in the House of Lords, in 1807, Earl St. Vincent said, "He was surprised at the proposition of abolition before the house, and considering the high character and intelligence of the noble proposer, Lord Grenville, he declared he could account in no other way for his having brought it forward, but by supposing that some Obi man had cast his spell upon him!" (A laugh.)
words, he proposes to make up the deficiency in the proportion of sexes, by offering a premium to any crew of unprincipled and savage ruffians, who will attack and carry off any of the females of Africa! a bounty from the parliament of Great Britain, that shall make the fortune of any man, or set of men, who shall kidnap or steal any unfortunate females from that continent! who shall bring them over as slaves, in order that they may be, used for breeding slaves!” In the course of the debate, Mr. Dundas declared that these United States would, if Great Britain abandoned the slave trade, purvey for the West Indies; and he added—“Is it to be imagined that the Americans are so favourably disposed towards this country, as to resist the temptation of forming so valuable a connexion with our colonies? A connexion once begun by supplying them with negroes would not end there; and we might lose the West Indies without accomplishing our object.”

Mr. Fox replied, that he was not so much alarmed by the possibility of the British Islands getting into habits of intimacy with foreigners. Though the apprehension of Mr. Dundas concerning our assumption of the British slave trade has, no doubt, vanished from the minds of his successors in office, we may suspect, that the alarm at the possible consequences of an intimacy between these States and the West Indies, is one of the motives of the present rigorous system of commercial exclusion.

The Commons voted a gradual abolition, and the Lords refused to concur. The next year, 1793, the former refused to renew their vote, and rejected a motion of Mr. Wilberforce, to abolish that part of the British trade, by which the British merchants supplied foreigners with slaves. This motion, however, being revived in 1794, was finally carried in a very thin house; but lost with the Feers by a majority of forty-five to four. I need not recite the annual and fruitless attempts of the abolitionists between this period and the year 1807, when they finally succeeded. The degree of merit for the interval, to which the Parliament and nation are entitled, may be collected from the following passage of the Edinburgh Review.*

“... The vast and general sensation produced by the first development of the horrible traffic in human flesh, speedily gave place to a much more sober and partial sentiment of reprobation; no small difficulty was experienced in attracting the attention of the public to the discussion for many years; it was pretty uniformly debated among empty benches, in those august assemblies, whose walls can scarce contain their crowds,

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* No. 47.
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The degree of success obtained at any time with the public, and the final triumph of the question, were owing in no small measure to considerations of expediency. It was found important to give quite as extensive a circulation to Clarkson’s Essay on the Impolicy of the Slave Trade, as to the pamphlets on its criminality, and the abstracts of the evidence respecting its unparalleled barbarities. In Parliament, the abolitionists laboured mainly to prove, that instead of being advantageous to Great Britain, it was most destructive to her interests; was the ruin of her seamen; prevented the extension of her manufactures; was no longer necessary for the maintenance of the due number of labourers in the West Indies; that a much more lucrative intercourse with Africa might be substituted for it; that the other powers of the world would either relinquish it, or be unable to carry it on, so that all would remain upon a footing, &c. Mr. Wilberforce, in his first speech, admitting, for argument’s sake, that “the rivals of Britain, the French” might take it up, asked “Would they not then be obliged to come to us, in consequence of the cheapness of our manufactures, for what they wanted for the African market?” We find the Edinburgh Reviewers rebuking the great abolitionist, in their 47th number, for talking, in his printed letter to M. Talleyrand, of the great sacrifice which England had made in the abolition, after he and all his coadjutors had uniformly, and so efficaciously, pleaded the mischievousness of the traffic to her, whether as a nursery for seamen, or a channel for the employment of capital.

In the final debate of 1807, on the abolition, Mr. Whitbread, one of its most zealous advocates, said “It was complained that too much feeling and too much passion had been carried into this discussion. He complained on the contrary, that it had been made too little a question of feeling, and that it had been made almost entirely a matter of cold calculations of profit and loss between English money and African blood.” Lord Castlereagh, indeed, did, in his first interview with the emperor of Russia, on the subject of general abolition, expatiate upon what the British parliament had done in spite of the suggestions of national interest;* but, in the general conferences on the same subject, at Vienna, “Lord Castlereagh,” says the protocol of the sitting of 20th January, 1815, “communi-

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* See Letter of Lord Castlereagh to Earl Bathurst, dated Vienna, January 2d, 1815, among the papers laid before Parliament, April, 1815.
cated authentic documents to prove that in the affair in question, the interest of the powers of Europe went hand in hand with their duty; that the abolition was particularly for the real advantage, and even indispensable for the security, of the colonial countries,” &c.*

On all hands, there must be an immediate concurrence in the general allegation of the Edinburgh Review, that “for the long space of twenty years, Mr. Pitt could persuade about three-fourths of the members of Parliament to adopt any scheme of finance, or of external policy which he chose to countenance, but did never once prevail against the slave traders and consignees of sugar in Bristol and Liverpool.”† The Reviewers have made this failure, considered in connexion with the prompt success of the Fox administration, the ground of a most atrocious charge against the memory of Mr. Pitt—that he was not sincere in the cause of abolition, as a minister, although he might have been as a man. The distinction would not save him, if this were true, from being regarded as the vilest of hypocrites, nor the genius of the British government from appearing as the most entirely artificial and selfish ever known. The strain of Mr. Pitt’s speeches absolves him, however; and Clarkson has borne the strongest testimony to his good faith. His colleagues in the ministry, particularly the lord chancellor, Thurlow, exerted themselves indefatigably, in opposition to the measure, and weakened the impression of his station. The stigma does not attach to him, but to the Parliament, if he could make a majority in such a case; if he could bring them to act properly on a question the most important for humanity, and the reputation of the British name, only by using his influence as minister; that is, as the head of a party, and the dispenser of place and patronage. There is another question which neither Mr. Pitt nor Mr. Fox could have carried through both houses of Parliament, even as ministers—that of catholic emancipation; and the reader will remark that it is alone on two points of this description, in which the freedom of millions was involved, ministerial influence has been found ineffectual in the British legislature.

In the course of the present parliamentary session, (1819,) Mr. William Smith of Norwich—to whom the cause of abolition is as much indebted as to any other parliamentary advocate, except Mr. Wilberforce—stated to the House of Commons, that even at last in 1807, after the twenty years discus-

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* Pièces Officielles de Schoell. vol. vii.
† No. 24.
sion, it required all the efforts of almost every member of that house, who had any title to the character of an orator or a statesman, to carry the act through the Parliament. In fact, in the final debates, the justice and humanity of the trade were maintained as boldly as they ever had been; arguments of counsel were heard at the bar, and petitions received, against the abolition; Lord Castlereagh, Lord Sidmouth, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Eldon, Lord Westmoreland, Mr. Rose, Mr. Bathurst, spoke in opposition. These were the men who, immediately after the abolition became a law, took the place of its patrons in the government. Clarkson remarks, that though the bill had now passed both houses, "there was an awful fear lest it should not receive the royal assent, before the Grenville ministry was dissolved." This awful fear was founded upon the conviction that, with a ministry adverse to the measure, no parliament could be found to adopt it at the instigation of a member out of office. There is nothing, therefore, forced, or illiberal, in the conclusion, that it was a general party movement; an act of subserviency in the old routine to the will of an administration firmly united and inextricably entangled in the object; that, had that ministry been dissolved before the royal assent was given, the slave traffic would be at this day a lawful branch of British commerce.* As the case was, seventeen years had elapsed since superabundant, irrefrangible evidence of the history and character of the traffic was officially before Parliament: within that interval it had been allowed to flourish on an enlarged scale. Sir Samuel Romilly told the House of Commons, in 1806, that "since the year 1796, no less than three hundred and sixty thousand Africans had been torn away, under the continued sanction of Parliament, from their native land." This estimate is certainly too low, for the annual exportation of the British, according to the Edinburgh Review, rose to 57,000, after the acquisition of the Dutch colonies in 1797. The Report of the African Institution for the present year

* The following extract from the debate of the House of Commons of June 27th, 1814, will shew that I am not alone in this conjecture.

"Mr. Philips said—

"I cannot forget that the public voice had been raised even more loudly against the slave trade before the administration of Mr. Fox, than during its brief existence; and to such a degree do I think the gratitude of the friends of justice and humanity due to that short-lived, and much misrepresented administration, that I do in my conscience believe, but for them, the British slave trade would at this moment have been continued to the disgrace of the country, to the outrage of public feeling, and in violation of every principle of policy, justice, and humanity."
(1819) states the average at 55,000, and admits that the num-
ber taken from Africa in 1806 and 1807, in the prospect of
the approaching abolition of the trade, was very considerable.
From the period when Mr. Pitt declared to Parliament that
they had examined sufficiently into the nature of the trade to
enable them to decide, and must be now convinced of its
cruelty and injustice, until the date of the cessation of im-
portation into the British colonies, the number of negroes car-
rried into slavery by the British merchants with the authority
of the nation, could not have been less than one-third of the
whole number now existing in the United States.

13. My readers may already understand, that the British
abolition is not quite so abundantly creditable, as to render it
an adequate foundation for invidious reflections on the United
States. But I will suppose that the motives were altogether pure
and magnanimous; that it was the immediate fruit of Chris-
tian conviction;—a national act of contrition and atonement.
The questions then arise,—was it in itself a sufficient repara-
tion for the wrongs done to Africa? and if not, has Great
Britain performed her utmost to make full amends? The ad-
vocates of the abolition admitted universally, what all must
perceive, that by it she had merely stopped the increase of
her vast debt to that continent and to humanity; that she was
bound to go further; to rectify the condition of the negroes
within her dominions, and, if possible, to withdraw all the
other nations from the slave trade. Every one saw that unless
her example were imitated by the slave-dealing powers of
Europe, her proceeding, however useful to her own commerce
and character, would be productive, comparatively, of little
advantage to Africa, and followed by an extensive clandestine
trade in her own dependencies.

Reviewing the statements of those who brought about the
abolition, respecting the immensity of the crime she had com-
mitted, and the misery and mischief she had caused; and on the
other hand, the estimates made by the anti-abolitionists, of the
vast emolument and general advantages which she had gained,
in the prosecution of the trade, closet-moralists thought it in-
cumbent upon her, to interpose her whole strength in favour of
the region she had so long desolated, and of the portion of its
offspring within the limits of her empire, in any way that might
be found necessary to give efficacy to her intervention, and at
any risk. For the sake of an addition to her revenue, she had
hazarded and incurred the loss of thirteen flourishing colonies;
for the acquisition of slips of territory in America, and of sugar
islands filled with black slaves,—for points of honour and maritime prerogative; for security from possible dangers,—she had waged long and destructive wars. She might, then, to make her atonement for the enormity and havoc of the slave trade, in some degree commensurate with her guilt—to prevent the continuance of a system subversive of the law of nations, and of the principles of Christianity; superlatively baneful and immoral,—she might, if no other means would suffice, unsheathe her sword, and be assured in so doing of the favour of the God of battles, and of all the friends of humanity and justice on earth. On such an occasion it became her, when convinced of the futility of every other expedient, to exert her maritime superiority, regardless of all forms and obstacles—a course of proceeding not without precedent in her history.

At the period of her abolition, France and Spain being at war with her, had long been cut off from the trade. The only power engaged in the prosecution of it, was Portugal, whose government depended upon her for its existence. Scarcely a year elapsed, when Spain returned to a state of amity with her, under such circumstances, as rendered it impossible she should be refused any boon she might be pleased to ask. But I will leave it to an English writer to explain the nature of the conjuncture, and to state the result. I find the following exposition in a remarkable work published the last year (1818) in London, and entitled, "A View of the present Increase of the Slave Trade, by Robert Thorpe, L. L. D. late Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, and Judge of the Vice Admiralty Court in that Colony."

"At the moment England abolished the slave trade, all Europe was most favourably circumstanced to ensure an universal abolition. The royal family of Spain threw themselves into the arms of France, and were handed to a prison. The royal family of Portugal sought the protection of England, and were safely conveyed to their Brasil dominions. We only wanted the co-operation of these powers to establish a perfect abolition; we upheld them as kingdoms; we had a right to insist on their abolishing the slave trade; every principle of justice and humanity called for such a demand, while the policy and professions of this nation should have made compliance necessary. Such a requisition could not have been considered as interfering with the independence of those governments, nor with the rights of their subjects. Independence is not comprised in a power to enslave, nor do the lawful rights of any people consist in their ability to invade the natural rights of man. While England was exhausting her blood and treasure
in defence of the liberty of Spain and Portugal, she was not warrantable in diminishing the resources of her wealth, to extend the cruelty of their commerce; but the most fortunate coincidence was criminally neglected."

Nothing can be more just than all this representation. Every one acquainted with the history of the era of Bonaparte's invasion of the Peninsula, must be convinced, that it was in the power of England, to extort from Portugal and Spain the abolition of their slave trade. "It would have been," said Mr. Canning, palliating the omission in the House of Commons, "unwise to have taken a high tone with them in the day of their distress; a strong remonstrance on this subject would have gone with too much of authority, and have appeared insulting."† So fastidious a delicacy, where the object was, according to the British theory, of immeasurable importance to the repose of the national conscience, and to humanity! The day of the absolute dependence of those powers upon England, was the only day, in which there was any likelihood of the accomplishment of that object with them; and a strong remonstrance against the prosecution of a system so exorbitantly wicked and pernicious, could not in itself have worn the air of insult, but would rather have appeared an act of noble friendship and resolute philanthropy. With the lives and happiness of millions of Africans, and all the other momentous considerations attached to the extingishment of the slave trade, at stake, the opportunity was to be improved determinately, though at a greater cost than a little violence done to perverted feelings, and the excitement of an impotent discontent. If Spain and Portugal could be induced to comply at once, then, as no lawful trade in slaves would exist during the war, Great Britain ruling the seas and exercising the belligerent right of search, might repress all illicit trade, and take much more effectual precautions against its revival in any shape. In this point of view, the opportunity seemed doubly precious, and irretrievable.

The coincidence was, to repeat the language of Dr. Thorpe, "criminally neglected." The British abolition took the character of a division of the British share of the trade between foreign powers, and a number of British subjects upon whom the act of Parliament would not serve as a restraint. The anti-abolitionists predicted this, and contributed to the fulfilment of the prediction. Portugal was left at liberty to supply not only her own dependencies, but those of Spain; and to the

* Page 24.
† Debate on the Treaty of 1814.
PART I. Latter, cargoes were incessantly carried under the Portuguese flag, until at length the British cruisers were authorized to bring in for adjudication, such Portuguese ships as might be found carrying slaves, to places not subject to the crown of Portugal. It was discovered, within the year after the termination by law of the British exportation, that the trade itself had not suffered the least abatement; but, on the contrary, was plied with greater activity, to a greater extent, and with aggravated barbarity, under the Spanish, Swedish, and Portuguese flags. "The slave trade," says the Report, dated 1810, of the commissioners of African inquiry, "is at present carried on to a vast extent. By the autumn of 1809, the coast of Africa swarmed with contraband vessels; and it was not until the arrival of a small squadron of his majesty's vessels, early the next year (1810!) that any interruption could be given to their proceedings." In 1810, Great Britain concluded a treaty with Portugal, by which she secured to herself great commercial advantages, and consented that Portugal should carry on the trade in slaves from the African dominions (claimed or in possession) of the Portuguese crown, precisely the great marts of the trade—Portugal announcing, at the same time, with what sincerity will soon be seen, her resolution to co-operate with his Britannic majesty in the cause of humanity and justice, &c.

To display the efficacy of the British abolition for the first years, I will here make a few extracts from the Reports of the London African Institution—a society which boasts of the most illustrious names, and is the centre of information respecting African affairs.

"Circumstances," says the Report of 1809, "have come to the knowledge of the directors of this institution, which leave them no room to doubt that means are at this moment employed by persons formerly engaged in the slave trade, for eluding the salutary provisions of the abolition act, and perpetuating the guilt and misery of that traffic."

"No foreign states," says the Report of 1810, "have hitherto followed the example set them by the legislatures of Great Britain and the United States of America. The flags of Spain and of Sweden have of late been extensively employed in covering and protecting a trade in slaves. Nor is this all. It has been discovered that, in defiance of all the penalties imposed by act of Parliament, vessels under foreign flags have been fitted out in the ports of Liverpool and London, for the purpose of carrying slaves from the coast of Africa to the Spanish and Portuguese settlements in America. Some car-
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goes from that coast have been landed at St. Bartholomews, SECT.IX.
and smuggled thence into English islands. The discovery of
one transaction has likewise discovered to the directors facts,
which tend to implicate persons of some consideration in so-
ciety in the guilt of these and similar practices."

"On the coast of Africa," says the Report of 1811, "the
same melancholy scene has been exhibited during the last
year, which the directors had the pain of describing in their
former report. The coast has swarmed with slave ships,
chiefly under Portuguese and Spanish colours, &c. Suffice it
to say, that accounts from various quarters concur with certain
judicial proceedings which have taken place in this country,
to prove, that a very considerable trade in slaves has been car-
ried on of late, and a large portion of it by means of the capi-
tal and credit of British subjects.***After the length to which
the report has already run, the directors are unwilling to enter
into minute details, with regard to the means which have been
practised in the West Indies, to elude the laws prohibiting the
importation of slaves. Suffice it to say, that they have re-
ceived information which satisfies them that those laws have
been grossly, and in some instances openly, violated, by the
importation of slaves, to a considerable extent, into our own
West India colonies."

"There is a large class of contraband slave ships fitted out
chiefly from London or Liverpool, destined in fact to the coast
of Africa," &c.

"The representations," says the Report of 1812, "which
the directors made in their last report, of the extent to which
the slave trade had revived on the coast of Africa, appear to
have fallen short of the truth. The result of the intelligence
which they have since received is, that, during the year 1810,
no less than from 70 to 80,000 Africans were transported as
slaves from the western coast of Africa to the opposite shores
of the Atlantic. The greatest proportion is either a British
or an American trade, conducted under the flags of Spain and
Portugal.

"What," says the Report of 1813, "has been represented
as a bona fide Spanish or Portuguese slave trade, has turned
out, upon strict examination, to be, in many instances, a trade
in slaves, illegally carried on by British capital and British
subjects, and in some instances by American subjects."

"The directors have to bring before the general meeting a
new species of slave trade, carried on, it should seem, between
Egypt and the island of Malta. They have received informa-
tion on which they are disposed to rely, stating that several
slaves have been brought from Alexandria to that island, and there sold to Englishmen, as well as to Maltese inhabitants. These poor creatures consist principally of negro children, brought from countries bordering on the upper Nile," &c.

"It is with extreme regret that the directors are again obliged to state the want of success which has attended their repeated, earnest, and urgent representations to government respecting the slave trade, carried on by means of the Portuguese island of Bissao," &c.

"The condition of the slaves, in the new British conquests, the Isles of France and Bourbon, is wretched in the extreme. It is with feelings of deep regret that the directors, in proceeding to advert to the condition of slaves in the West Indies, express their belief that most flagrant abuses continue to exist in the administration of the law, as far as regards those unhappy beings, if, indeed, they can be said to be under the protection of any law."

"The directors cannot close their observations on the state of Africa, without adverting to the exportation of arms and gunpowder to that continent. It is well known that before the passing of the act for the abolition of the slave trade, these were exported thither in very large quantities. Letters received from persons in Africa, whose veracity is unquestionable, assert the fact, that the slave traders are supplied with these necessary implements of their traffic, solely from this country, and that, indeed, they were to be obtained no where else."

"A very considerable slave trade," says the Report of 1814, "is still carried on to the islands of France and Bourbon."

"There is too much reason to believe that a considerable traffic of slaves still exists on the north coast of Africa."

"The board have still to lament the continuance of flagrant abuses in several of the West India islands," &c.

14. On the triumph of the allied arms over the power of Bonaparte, in the spring of 1814, another crisis seemed to present itself, propitious to the object of universal abolition. Great Britain had the chief share of the glory and profit of that event; it was to her, in the language of all her subjects, that Europe owed its deliverance; she had rescued Portugal and Spain; restored Ferdinand to his throne, and reinstated the house of Bourbon in France. Hence, it would be impossible for the governments of those countries to resist her solicitations in favour of Africa; or, at all events, to brave her power, in case she manifested a determination to interpose
it as a shield between that continent and their ruthless cupidity. The African Institution, in the Report which I have last quoted, did not overlook the new turn of affairs. "The directors," said the Report, "have long been persuaded, that all that can be effected, in inducing particular states to renounce the traffic in slaves, however important in itself, will produce but a very partial benefit to Africa, unless, on the conclusion of a general peace, the renunciation should become general, and be adopted as a part of the standing policy of the great commonwealth of Europe. While the war continues, it is a matter of no moment whether the slave trade is abolished in France; but it is obvious, that, if a general peace should leave the merchants of that country at liberty to renew their former traffic in their fellow-creatures, little comparatively will have been achieved for Africa by all the generous efforts of this country. The present moment having appeared to the directors to be peculiarly favourable to the hope of obtaining a recognition of the great principles of the abolition, and even the entire and unqualified renunciation of this nefarious traffic by all the great powers of Europe, they have endeavoured to impress upon the minds of his majesty’s ministers, the unspeakable importance of establishing a general convention among the European powers, for that purpose."

To aid the British negotiators at Paris, the two houses of Parliament voted unanimously on the 2d of May, addresses to the Prince Regent, representing the importance of a general abolition, and their conviction, that unless it took place, the practical result of the restoration of peace would be "to open the sea to swarms of piratical adventurers who would renew and extend, on the shores of Africa, the scenes of carnage and rapine in a great measure suspended by maritime hostilities; to kindle a thousand ferocious wars," &c. In supporting the address of the House of Commons, Mr. Wilberforce truly remarked, that "with regard to France, the war had practically abolished the trade, and therefore, if carried on by her, it would be creating it anew."

On the 30th May, 1814, the treaty between Great Britain and France was signed at Paris; and lo! France was allowed a term of five years in which to pursue the traffic in human flesh, and his Britannic Majesty restored to his most Christian Majesty all the colonies, factories, and establishments, of whatever kind, which France possessed the 1st of January, 1792, in the seas and upon the continents of America, Africa, and Asia, with the exception of the islands of Tobago and St. Lucia, and of the Isle of France and its dependencies. This
PART I. was an electric shock for the abolitionists upon principle, and
the signal for a vigorous party assault upon the ministry.

It seemed impossible to doubt that France would have
yielded, had the immediate and total prohibition of the trade
been made the sine qua non of the restitution of her colonies;
or had she been tempted with the Mauritius. Her utter ina-
bility to renew the war, and the certainty that the allies would
not have passed over to her side to enforce her pretensions to
the slave trade, were points on which even the most credu-
lous could not be deceived.

The African Institution passed resolutions of reprobation;
petitions without number were got up throughout the country;
motions made in Parliament; and the stir had on the whole
an imposing character. The following is part of the repre-
sentations of the African Institution on the occasion. "A
provision is contained in the recent treaty of peace with
France, the consequence of which must be the revival of the
slave trade on a large scale, and to an indefinite extent. This
revival is attended with circumstances of peculiar aggravation.
Great and populous colonies, in which, during the last seven
years, the importation of slaves has been strictly prohibited,
have been freely ceded to France, not only without any stipu-
lation for the continuance of that prohibition, but with the
declared purpose on the part of that country, of commencing
a new slave trade for their supply."

The apprehensions of the Institution did not receive much
relief on the appearance of the French slave trade ordinance.
By a circular letter from the administration of the customs,
dated 29th August, the merchants of France were apprized,
that "the traffic was restored in all its privileges, and might
be carried on from every port having a public bonding ware-
house:—That all the goods, foreign as well as domestic, in-
cluding arms and ammunition, required for this trade, might be
shipped for the coast of Africa, duty free: That the same pro-
vision extended to the ship's provisions, both for the crew and
negroes: That the cargoes or provisions were not to be em-
ployed, except in the purchase and conveyance of negroes:
That French ships only could engage in the trade; and, that
they might import into all the French colonies, of which the
government should recover possession, as well as those ceded
by the treaty."

The language held in Parliament was no less emphatical
than that of the African Institution. As a specimen, I will
offer some extracts from the speech of Lord Grenville.

"That the immediate and total abolition of the slave trade
might, in this treaty, if pursued with zeal, have been with cer-
tainty obtained, is, unless I am greatly misinformed, the gen-
eral sentiment of all who are conversant in foreign negotiation;
the concurrent and decided judgment of enlightened statesmen
in every country in Europe."

"What credulity will acquiesce in the pretence, that to extort
from France the surrender of her conquest, was easy; to dis-
suade her from the revival of the slave trade impracticable?"

"This treaty has secured to our country commercial profits,
and colonial acquisitions, at the expense of France; inconsider-
able in value, I admit it, but still sufficient to brand our na-
tional character with the dishonour of interested guilt. To
France the renewal of the slave trade is conceded; into her
hands we deliver up the wretched inhabitants of Africa; and
from her in return we receive back those advantages; the con-
tract is reciprocal; the transactions simultaneous; included in
the same treaty, never will they be separated in the opinion of
mankind."

"We have consented to revive and guarantee the slave trade,
not because we feared war, but because we thirsted for more
extended possessions. Such will be the just judgment, both of
the present time, and of posterity; the opinion of impartial men
in all ages. If, they will tell us, you could not otherwise refuse
yourselves to a dishonourable contract for guilt, you might
have proffered in exchange for it the abandonment of these ac-
quisions; an exchange which France most certainly would
 gladly have accepted."

"You are fully sensible also, how difficult it will be to pre-
vent the application of British capital to this wickedness when
authorized by France. How large a portion of this trade will
really be carried on in her name by your own subjects; how
much of it will be diverted to the supply of your own colonies,
under a pretended destination to those with which they are so
closely intermixed in the West Indian seas."

The subject was taken up officially in the Edinburgh Re-
view, and treated with as little reserve. The Reviewers
cried out against "the vile mockery of an abolition in rever-
sion, expectant upon a five years term of unstinted, nay en-
couraged slave trade." "England," they added, "has no
manner of difficulty in obtaining Malta, Tobago, St. Lucia,
the Isle of France, (not to mention the Cape); in short, any
thing which may serve her interests; she surrenders Guada-
loupe, that her islands may be supplied by smuggling."

Lord Castlereagh defended the treaty, upon the grounds
of "the strong objection" of the French rulers to immediate
abolition, because they would appear to submit to English dic-
PART I. tation! of the importance of ending the negotiation in mutual
respect and confidence; of the danger of prolonging the war by
insisting upon a concession which France felt to be dishonour-
able to her character as a nation, &c. He was "ready to
admit, that Guadalupe and Martinique being permitted to be
points of depot, did, to a certain degree, increase the probabi-
licity of an illicit trade being carried on from those islands with
the British colonies. But if France had even consented to
abolish the trade, the number of depots which would have
otherwise existed, was sufficiently numerous for the illegal
introduction of slaves into the islands belonging to Great Bri-
tain. From the Havanna and Porto Rico, the possessions of
Spain, slaves might very easily find their way into the British
colonies." His lordship remarked, too, a point of delicacy as
to pressing the abolition: "However disposed he and the Bri-
tish nation might be to make sacrifices for it, he could assure
the house that such was not the impression in France, and
that even among the better classes of people there, the British
government did not get full credit for their motives of acting.
The motives were not there thought to arise from benevolence,
but from a wish to impose fetters on French colonies and injure
their commerce."

This misgiving of the French was of no fresh date, and
could not have been altogether unknown to Parliament. In
1807, Lord Lauderdale, whom Mr. Fox sent to negotiate with
Bonaparte the preceding year, made the following statement
in the House of Lords. "On my urging to the French minis-
ters the abolition of the slave trade, I was answered, that it
could not be expected that the French government, irritated
as it had been by the negroes in St. Domingo, would readily
agree to the abolition of the trade. I answered that the abo-
lation would have been the only effectual means of preventing
the horrors which had occurred in that island. Then the
truth came out. I was told that England, with her colonies
well stocked with negroes, and affording a larger produce,
might abolish the trade without inconvenience; but that
France, with colonies ill-stocked, and deficient in produce,
could not abolish it without conceding to us the greatest ad-
vantages, and sustaining a proportionate loss."*

The transactions in England; and the fundamental policy
in the case, prompted the British ministry to renew their in-
stances with the French government. An island, or if pre-
ferable, a pecuniary indemnity to the French planters, was
offered for the immediate abandonment of the trade, or the

abridgment of the term stipulated by the treaty. It was pro-
posed to France to establish a system of license, so as to pre-
vent the importation into her colonies of more negroes than 
would be necessary for the existing plantations, and to preclude 
the cultivation of new lands. Lord Wellington discovered 
that there was no disposition among the French statesmen to 
relinquish the trade at once; but, finally, after a negotiation, 
the particulars of which are not a little curious, means were 
found by England to persuade the French government to put 
restrictions upon it; particularly that of confining it to the south 
of Cape Formosa.

The first attempts upon the Spanish government bear date 
in 1814; but Ferdinand was upon his throne, and Spain 
clear of the French. The Spanish monarch consented to 
forbid his subjects to carry slaves to foreign possessions; no-
thing more could then be obtained, in the way and upon the 
terms which suited the views of England.

Lord Castlereagh made his main effort, within the limits 
prescribed, at the Congress of Vienna. He succeeded, not-
withstanding the opposition of the Spanish and Portuguese 
plenipotentiaries, in rendering the eight principal powers, par-
ties to the settlement of the question. Four sittings were 
specially assigned to its discussion. The fruit of the first, 
the only fruit of the whole arrangement, was the celebrated 
declaration of the 8th of February, 1815, in which all the 
powers proclaimed their detestation of the character, and their 
desire to accomplish the abolition, of the slave trade; at the 
same time that they acknowledged the right of each to take 
its own time for the total relinquishment on its own part. 
Talleyrand would not consent to abridge the term granted to 
France; Spain would make no acceptable concession: Por-
tugal professed her readiness to limit the duration of her trade 
to eight years, provided his Britannic majesty would on his 
side acquiesce in certain material changes in the commercial 
relations between her and Great Britain. Some of the general 
observations made by the Spanish and Portuguese plenipo-
tentiaries, in reply to Lord Castlereagh, are worth repeating. 
The first, Count Labrador, said, "if the Spanish colonies of 
America were, as to the supply of negroes, in the same state 
as the English colonies, his Catholic majesty would not hesi-
tate a moment in decreeing an immediate abolition: But, 
the question having been before the British parliament from 
1788 to 1807, the English traders and planters had full time 
to make extraordinary purchases of slaves; and, in fact, they 
did so. This was proved by the case of Jamaica, which,
in 1787, had only two hundred and fifty thousand slaves, whereas, at the period of the abolition, in 1807, she possessed four hundred thousand. During the long war with England, Spain had been deprived of the faculty of procuring negroes for herself. Jamaica had ten blacks to one white; in the island of Cuba, the best provided with slaves of all the Spanish colonies, there were two hundred and seventy-four thousand whites, and only two hundred and twelve thousand slaves."

The representative of Portugal alleged that "the position of Brasil was particularly delicate in this matter; it was an immense country, which was far from possessing the number of hands necessary for its cultivation; that a sudden stoppage in the importation of negroes would be of incalculable mischief, as well for Brasil as for the Portuguese establishments on the coast of Africa; that the treatment of the slaves in Brasil was notoriously mild; and that these considerations made the case of Portugal an exception; at all events she might be excused if she proceeded leisurely and cautiously in the affair, since, in the instance of England, so long an interval had occurred between the proposal and the adoption of the measure."

The primary object of Lord Castlereagh was to secure from the intrusion of foreign slave vessels, that part of the African coast, which England had marked out for her general trade. In the interval between the first and second general conference, (21st and 22d of January, 1815,) he signed two conventions with the plenipotentiary of Portugal, by which Great Britain released the balance due upon an old English loan to Portugal, and allotted three hundred thousand pounds sterling as a fund of indemnity for the owners of the Portuguese slave ships which her cruisers had captured before the 1st of June, 1814, on the ground of their being engaged in the trade illegally: She agreed at the same time to the abrogation of the treaty of 1810: Portugal, on her part, covenanted to prohibit her subjects from carrying on the slave trade, in any way, to the north of the equator, it being understood that they were to pursue it unmolested to the south of the line, as long as it should be at all permitted by the Portuguese laws.

In a secret and confidential letter of Lord Castlereagh to the duke of Wellington, at Paris, of August, 1814,* his lordship stated, that it was become necessary to consider how far certain Powers might be brought to do their duty in the matter.

* See the Pièces Officielles de Schoell, vol. vii. p. 90.
of abolition, by a sense of interest; or, in other words, how Sect. IX. they might be deprived of the undue advantage which they enjoyed over the states who, by a feeling of moral obligation, renounced the trade. Nothing, he suggested, appeared more likely to work the effect, than a concert among those states to exclude from their dominions the colonial produce of the refractory powers. Duke Wellington was instructed to sound the prince of Benevento on the subject. The true motives of this plan did not, we may presume, escape the penetration of the latter. Lord Castlereagh proposed it anew at Vienna to the emperor of Russia, in his formal interview with that monarch, on the subject of the slave trade. The abolition states could not, he urged, do less than adopt it: Unless they gave a preference to such colonial products as were not raised by slaves newly introduced, they would be partakers in the scandal and crime accompanying the growth of such as were! The British negotiator was indiscreet enough to submit the project for adoption, at the conferences of the plenipotentiaries; with the modification that the products of the colonies in which the trade was forbidden, should be alone received, or those of the vast regions of the globe furnishing the same articles by the labour of their own native inhabitants, meaning, says Schoell,† the British possessions in the East Indies. The ministers of Spain and Portugal protested against this expedient of coercion, and threatened that their courts would exclude in turn the most valuable export of the countries by which it should be adopted.

What England could not persuade the Bourbons to do in 1814, Bonaparte did spontaneously on his return from the Island of Elba. He interdicted the French slave trade at once, from motives of personal interest which few were at a loss to detect. When Louis was replaced on his throne, nothing remained for him but to submit, apparently, to the will of the British minister who escorted him into Paris, and who required him not at least to retract the only favour granted by the arch-tyrant to humanity. Accordingly, on the 30th of July, 1815, Talleyrand announced to Lord Castlereagh that the slave trade was thenceforward, forever, and universally, forbidden to all the subjects of his most Christian majesty. The tenor of the correspondence on the subject between the two viziers is among the curiosities of that day.

In 1816, England resumed her negotiation with Spain,

† Histoire abrégée des Traités de Paix, vol. xi.
and, finally, availing herself of the necessities of the latter,
effect the treaty of Madrid of the 23d Sept. 1817. By
this treaty, Spain, for a sum of four hundred thousand pounds
sterling, stipulated to renounce the slave trade at once to
the north of the line, and to prohibit it entirely, in all her do-
minions, from the 30th May, 1820. The sum of four hun-
dred thousand pounds bore a small proportion, indeed, to the
wealth which Britain had drawn from the traffic in human
flesh; or to that which she expected to derive from the ac-
complishment of her views on Africa.* But the new sacri-
ifice was emblazoned in Parliament, and the rescue of the
northern part of that continent declared to be consummated.

"We have now," said Lord Castlereagh, "arrived at the
last stage of our difficulties, and the last stage of our exertions.
One great portion of the world was rescued from the horrors
of the traffic. The approval of the grant amounted to this,
whether the slave trade should be abolished or not."

Lord Castlereagh announced, on the same occasion, the
conclusion of a treaty with the Portuguese ambassador in Lon-
don; for the final suppression of the Portuguese slave trade;
and the certainty of its ratification: But his lordship's assu-
rance was premature. The court of Brasil could not be drawn
into any further retrenchment, than was stipulated in the
treaty of Vienna to which I have adverted. Sweden, who
had never authorized the trade, readily consented to prohibit
it, on receiving Guadaloupe in 1813, in deposit. The king
of the Netherlands accepted of the condition of a total renun-
ciation, attached to the restitution of the Dutch colonies in
1814.

15. Before I proceed to exhibit the actual, and what—it is to be feared from late British statements, which I shall
produce,—may be considered as the final result of all these
boasted triumphs for Africa, I wish to illustrate further the
English sins of commission. We have seen that the
African Institution acknowledges the participation of Bri-

* In the debate in the House of Commons, (Feb. 9th, 1818,) Mr.
Wilberforce said, "He could not but think that the grant to Spain
would be more than repaid to Great Britain in commercial advantages,
by the opening of a great continent to British industry; an object
which would be entirely defeated, if the slave trade was to be carried
on by the Spanish nation. Our commercial connexion with Africa will
do much more than repay us for any pecuniary sacrifices of this kind.
He himself would see Great Britain deriving the greatest advantages
from its intercourse with Africa." Hansard's Parl. Deb.
tish subjects in the trade, to a great extent. The same admission has been made repeatedly in Parliament, by the highest authority. Before the establishment of the peace of 1814, Mr. Whitbread stated in the House of Commons, that "there were, to his knowledge, persons in England base enough to wish for the return of peace, on account of the facilities it would afford for carrying on the slave traffic under another flag."* On the 18th April, 1815, Mr. Barham alleged in the same place, "that it was a well known fact that a large British capital was employed in British ships, in the slave trade." And on the 9th of February, 1818, Lord Castlereagh held this language to Parliament. "It would be a great error to believe that the reproach of carrying on the slave trade illegally, belonged only to other countries. In numberless instances, he was sorry to say, it had come to his knowledge, that British subjects were indirectly and largely engaged."

With respect to the British West India islands, it is of notoriety that they have been replenished with negroes since the British abolition. In the quotations which I have made from the Reports of the African Institution, the contraband trade of those islands is formally denounced. The Report of that Society for 1815, is more pointed and circumstantial in its declarations on the same head, in relation to all of them. It gives us to understand that twenty thousand negroes had been yearly smuggled into them, and avers that "all of the settlements were confident of having the means of providing themselves still with slaves in the proportion of their actual demand;" that "insular laws, whose policy plainly depended on the permanence of the slave trade, remained un repealed;" that "the assemblies still looked to Africa for the supply of their wasting population." The Edinburgh Review, in expressing some incredulity with respect to the amount of the illicit importation, intimated in the Report, remarks, however, that "to question the fact of clandestine importation would prove extreme ignorance of West Indian morals, and of the state to which the administration of the law is of necessity reduced, where nine persons in ten of the inhabitants are incompetent witnesses, and are, moreover, the property of the remaining tenth."†

The same Report denies that the slaves, in any one island, had, in regard to their legal condition, then derived the least benefit from the abolition acts. It represents them, also, as suffering the same miseries; as equally cut off from all

* Debate of May 2d, 1814.
† No. 50.
PART I. means of mental and religious improvement. In their article upon this Report, the Edinburgh Reviewers ratify its exposition, and speak thus of their "sugar planting brethren:"—"They not only have taken no steps to encourage religious instruction, but have again and again attempted to prevent the black population from receiving it, in the only form in which it ever can reach them, as things are at present constituted, namely, by missionary preachers. The zeal of pious men was beginning to carry the blessings of the gospel into the settlements, not sectaries merely, but Church-of-England missions. The wisdom of colonial legislation took the alarm; acts were regularly and in all the forms, passed, to stop, by main force, all such attempts at illuminating the hundreds of thousands of their Pagan subjects. The royal assent has been refused, but they are of sufficient efficacy in the interval, and as often as one is annulled, another is passed. In some of the colonies, the impediments to manumission are enormous. The tax imposed by the policy of the law in those enlightened latitudes, for ever closes the door to emancipation. In Jamaica, the negroes are prohibited from being taught," &c.

The work of Dickson and Steele, entitled Mitigation of Slavery, of which I have already availed myself, is one of great and deserved authority on these subjects. It was published in London, in 1814, and the writers, who had long resided in the West Indies in high stations, go even beyond the African Institution in their representations of the nature of the slavery, and of the futility of the abolition acts, in that quarter. "The abolition," says Dr. Dickson, "of what is called the African slave trade, was, in itself, an object every way worthy of the long and arduous struggle which effect ed it. But its relative value, as a corrective of West Indian abuses, hath been greatly overrated. The reader of this volume will see distinctly that, as many of the worst evils of the West Indian slavery were owing to other causes than the African slave trade, those evils could not possibly be remedied by the abolition of that trade. This important position, so solidly established in the first part of the following collection, hath been deplorably exemplified, since the date of the abolition act, in the accounts of respectable individuals; and in the correspondence of the secretary of state with the West Indian governors. The facts alluded to, though but a mere specimen of the West Indian slavery, clearly show, that they flowed from a source inherent in that slavery itself. An additional proof is, that, notwithstanding the abolition of the slave trade, the low price of produce, and the exorbitant price of slaves, (all strong
SLAVE TRADE.

motives for economizing their lives,) the deaths among the slaves of one island, in 1810, exceeded the births by above ten thousand. No cause of any extraordinary mortality is alleged; but that surplus of deaths appears to have happened in the common course of business. On the whole, we may safely affirm, that the general treatment of the slaves, in the old sugar islands, has not received any material improvement for a century and a half. The new islands have but copied the old; with the difference, that the hardships inseparable from the clearing of fresh lands have, in all cases, deplorably aggravated the mortality."

"Facts leave not a doubt in the mind, that the harshness of the slave laws is but little softened by the leniency of the general practice in any of the sugar islands. Bad is the best treatment which the negroes experience in the West India colonies. They all perform their labour under the whip. Mr. Mathison, that sensible and candid planter, states broadly, in 1811, the general practice of under-feeding from one end of Jamaica to the other. He also believes that excessive labour is one of the prevailing causes of depopulation among the slaves on that island."

The registry system for the West Indies, is grounded upon the inefficacy of the abolition there; and, so far as appears by the facts disclosed in the House of Commons, the one has been found as nugatory as the other.* We may take an instance from the mouth of Mr. Wilberforce, of the state of things in Barbadoes, where, according to Dr. Dickson,† slavery is not near so bad as in most of the other islands.

"Mr. Wilberforce said, (April 22d, 1818,) that the situation of the slaves in Barbadoes was most wretched. Lord Seaforth, when governor of the island, endeavoured to improve it by procuring a law to render the murder of a slave capital. The island was at first enraged with the governor for proposing such a measure. When it was consented to, and the friends of humanity in this country were led to believe that the condition of the slaves in that island was much bettered, what was their surprise and disappointment, to find in two years after, when this law was laid upon the table of the house, that it was rendered entirely nugatory by a condition annexed to it; for it was provided, that the murder to be capital must be unprovoked."

* See, on this head, the Twelfth Report of the African Institution, p. 42.
† Mitigation of Slavery, p. 512.
"There were cases," Mr. Wilberforce continued, "in which a negro had purchased his freedom, and the freedom of his children, and trained them up with the most exemplary care, yet his offspring had afterwards been seized on by the creditors of his deceased master, because he had died an insolvent, and had been thus transported even to the mines of Mexico."*

With such testimony as we have seen, notoriously extant, concerning the importation of negroes into the British West Indies, and their general condition, after the abolition act, the British minister, Lord Castlereagh, ventured, in his correspondence with the foreign powers in the year 1814,† to make the following representation. "The experience of eight years which have elapsed since the total abolition of the slave trade, as far as that depended on Great Britain, by the Parliament of the United Kingdom, has furnished complete proof that the settlements in the West Indies have not suffered by the want of fresh supplies of African labourers. These colonies continue to be in a flourishing condition, and since there has been no new importation of slaves, the treatment of those already possessed has improved, and the lights of religion and civilization have been diffused among them."

Another striking case of ministerial hardihood is furnished in the following extract from a speech of Mr. Goulbourn, on the production of the Registry returns to the House of Commons, on the 9th June, 1819. "The apparent increase of negro population had not arisen from any illegal importation of slaves into our colonies, but was attributable to other causes. It might appear extraordinary that in one island the colonial slaves had increased, in the course of two years, upwards of five thousand. Some of these might be the produce of certain captures;‡ but he was perfectly convinced that the augmentation was not attributable to any illegal traffic!"

Representations of this sort, in the face of those of the African Institution, in defiance of all fact and reason, belong to the old system which is exemplified in the following passage of Mills' History of British India.

"When the opinions which Lord Cornwallis expressed of the different departments of the Indian government, at the time when he undertook his reforms, (1790,) are attended to, it will not be easy to conceive a people suffering more intensely

* Hansard's Parliamentary Debates.
† Official letter to the British minister at Madrid, 15th July, 1814.
‡ That is to say, of foreign slave ships, whose cargoes have been sold in the British islands.
by the vices of government. The administration of justice — through all its departments in a state the most pernicious and depraved; the public revenue levied upon principles incompatible with the existence of private property; the people sunk in poverty and wretchedness; such is the picture on the one hand: — Pictures of an unexampled state of prosperity were, neverthe- less, the pictures held forth at this very moment, by speeches in parliament, to the parliament and the nation,—and the flattering pictures, as they were the pictures of the minister, governed the belief of parliament, and through parliament that of the nation.”

16. The strain of the communications of the British government, respecting the slave trade, to the foreign powers, down to the conclusion of the treaty with Spain, in 1817, implied that every thing would be accomplished for the portion of Africa north of the line, when the abolition was universal with regard to that portion. At every new arrangement, a descant was chaunted in Parliament, to the triumphant and generous zeal of the ministry, who, by the progressive decapi- tation of “the hydra,” had nearly crowned all the generous sacrifices of Britain with the expected reward, in the security of Africa and the reformation of Europe. But there was reason to suspect that Louis XVIII. would not so easily have made a virtue of necessity in 1815; nor Ferdinand,—urgent as were his pecuniary wants, and comparatively unimportant as the acquisition of negroes had become to Spain from the revolt of her colonies,—have prescribed so near a term to the legal slave trade of his subjects; had not these monarchs been assured of an abundant and ready supply where it should be wanted, whatever anathemas and engagements might be ex- torted from them by the ascendant position and plausible re- clamations of Great Britain. All that circumstances made it natural to suspect, and rendered, indeed, obviously certain, has been realized, and is now at length proclaimed by the British government itself. As the political scheme has reach- ed a crisis when a full and vivid disclosure of the truth is ne- cessary for progression and complete success, it is acknow- ledged outright, and vehemently bewailed, that nothing has as yet been accomplished for Africa, practically; that the slave trade has been constantly increasing, and that no limits can be descried to its duration or its depredations. Such is the purport of the thirteenth Report, dated 24th March, 1819, of the African Institution; a report which bears intrinsically the
PART I. character of a government-manifesto; and which furnishes materials to complete a skeleton of the history of the abolition. I will use it freely in detailing the result of the British management as respects France, Spain, and Portugal, severally, and the main ostensible object of retribution to Africa.

And first, with regard to France. In the Appendix to the Report, there is an eloquent address on the subject of the slave trade, to the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, which is said to have been distributed there by Mr. Clarkson, during the sittings in November, 1818. This address is evidently the work of the African Institution, under the direction of the British ministry; and the distribution of it an expedient of both for their joint and several purposes. It contains the following statement as to the French trade.

"No sooner was peace proclaimed, than the traders in human blood hastened from various quarters to the African shores, and, with a cupidity sharpened by past restraint, renewed their former crimes."

"Among the rest, the slave merchants of France, who had been excluded for upwards of twenty years, from any direct participation in this murderous traffic, now eagerly resumed it; and to this very hour, they continue openly to carry it on, notwithstanding the solemn renunciation of it by their own government, in 1815, and the prohibitory French laws which have since been passed to restrain them."

"The revival and progress of the French slave trade have, in one respect, been peculiarly opprobrious, and attended with aggravated cruelty and mischief."

"During the ten years which preceded the restoration of Senegal and Goree to France, no part of the African coast, Sierra Leone excepted, had enjoyed so entire an exemption from the miseries produced by the slave trade as those settlements, and the country in their vicinage."

"The suppression of the traffic was there nearly complete; and, in consequence, a striking increase of population and of agriculture in the surrounding districts, with a proportionate improvement in other respects, gave a dawn of rising prosperity and happiness, highly exhilarating to every benevolent mind."

"It was in the month of January, 1817, that these interesting settlements were restored to France; and melancholy, indeed, had been the effects: no sooner was the transfer completed, than, in defiance of the declarations by which the king of France had prohibited the slave trade to his subjects, that trade was instantly renewed, and extended in all directions."
The ordinary excitements to the native chiefs, have produced more than the ordinary horrors. In the short space of a single year, after the change of flags, the adjoining countries, though previously flourishing in peace and abundance, exhibited but one frightful spectacle of misery and devastation."

"Now, let it here be recollected, that France had profess-ed, in the face of the civilized world, her abhorrence of this guilty commerce. In the definitive treaty of the 30th of November, 1815, she had pledged herself 'to the entire and effectual abolition of a traffic so odious in itself, and so highly repugnant to the laws of religion and nature.' As early as the 30th of July, 1815, she had informed the ambassadors of the allied powers, that directions had actually been issued, 'in order that on the part of France the traffic in slaves might cease from that time, every where and for ever.' She had, even previously to this, assured the British government, that the settlements of Senegal and Goree, restored to her by treaty, should not be made subservient to the revival of the slave trade. Yet, notwithstanding all this, no sooner do these settlements revert to her dominion, than the work of rapine, and carnage, and desolation commence; every opening prospect of improvement is crushed; thousands of miserable captives, of every age and sex, are crowded into the pestilential holds of slave ships, and subjected to the well known horrors of the middle passage, in order to be transported to the French colonies in the West Indies. There, such of them as may survive, are doomed to pass their lives in severe and unremitting labour, exacted from them by the merciless lash of the cart-whip in the hands of a driver. It would admit of proof, that probably at no period of the existence of this opprobrious traffic, has Africa suffered more intensely from its ravages than during a part of the time which has elapsed since the re-establishment of the peace of the civilized world."

In another part of the Appendix, it is averred, and sufficiently proved to the date of September, 1818, that the French authorities in Africa allow the slave trade to be carried on to any extent, under their command; that in Senegal and Goree, they themselves are interested in carrying it on; and that the French vessels of war connive at the departure of slave ships. In the body of the Report, positive information to the same effect, is announced in this language—"The subscribers to the Institution will no doubt recollect the painful task which devolved upon the directors last year, in detailing the state of the slave trade on the coast of Africa, and more particularly that part of it which lies in the neighbourhood of the French
settlements of Senegal and Goree. Of the statements then made, ample confirmation has since been received, accompanied by additional information of a similarly distressing nature. A considerable slave trade appears also to have been carried on by French subjects at Allredrà, and other places in the river Gambia. The information, indeed, which the directors have received subsequently to their last Report, confirms the statement therein contained, of the existence, to a great extent, of this traffic in the French settlements on the coast of Africa, &c.

So much for the unconditional restoration of the French possessions, and the five years charter for organized kidnapping and murder!

In the debate in the House of Commons, of February 9th, 1818, which I have already mentioned, some curious particulars were disclosed respecting the French slave trade, that deserve to be known, in addition to the above. I will report them as they were stated by Sir James Mackintosh. "It being discovered that the trade was still carried on by France with great vigour, application was made by Sir Charles Stewart, the British ambassador, in January, 1817, for copies of 'Laws, Ordinances, Instructions, and other public acts, for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.' The Duc de Richelieu had nothing to communicate but a mere colonial regulation passed eight days before, prohibiting the importation of slaves into the French colonies. Notwithstanding the assertion of Prince Talleyrand's letter, in spite of the more solemn affirmation of the treaty, it appears that France had taken no legal measure for the abolition, during eighteen months, after she professed she had adopted it. What she did at that time was imperfect, and it did not appear that she had done anything since." So little had she done, indeed, that Sir William Scott found himself obliged to release, in 1817, a French slave ship detained by a British cruiser, on the ground that there was no sufficient proof that the French vessel, in carrying on the slave trade, had violated the laws of France.

Let us now see how the case stands with respect to Spain and Portugal, whom it would have been so easy to subdue to the purpose of abolition, ten years ago, and the mischiefs of whose legal appearance in the trade, might, therefore, have been averted. The Appendix to the Report contains a series of queries, dated December, 1816, addressed by Lord Castlereagh to the Institution, respecting the state of the trade during the preceding twenty-five years. Part of the information communicated in reply is as follows: "The number of slaves
withdrawn from western Africa during the last twenty-five years, is necessarily involved in much uncertainty. There is reason to believe that the export of the Portuguese was much more considerable than the amount supposed, 15,000. Previous to the British abolition, the Portuguese had confined their trade almost entirely to the Bight of Benin, and the coast to the southward of it, but in consequence of the reduction in the price of slaves on the Windward and Gold Coasts, they were gradually drawn thither. The whole of the slave trade, whether legal or contraband, passes, with very few exceptions, under the Spanish and Portuguese flags. The Spanish flag is a mere disguise, and covers the property of unlawful traders, whether English, American, or others."

"Since the Portuguese have been restricted by treaty from trading for slaves on certain parts of the African coast, they have resorted to similar expedients for protecting their slave trade expeditions to places within the prohibited district. And at the present moment, there is little doubt, that a considerable part of the apparently Spanish slave trade, which is carrying on to the north of the equator, where the Portuguese are forbidden to buy slaves, is really a Portuguese trade."

"A farther use is now found for the Spanish flag, in protecting the French slave traders; and it is affirmed, that the French ships fitted out in France, for the slave trade, call at Corunna for the purpose of effecting a nominal transfer of the property engaged in the illegal voyage, to some Spanish house, and thus obtaining the requisite evidence of Spanish ownership."

"In consequence of these uses to which the Spanish flag has been applied, a great increase of the apparently Spanish slave trade has taken place of late. And as the flag of that nation is permitted to range over the whole extent of the African coast, it seems to keep alive the slave trade in places from which it would otherwise have been shut out; and it has of late revived that trade in situations where it had been previously almost wholly extinguished."

"The Portuguese flag is now chiefly seen to the south of the equator, although sometimes the Portuguese traders do not hesitate still to resort to the rivers between Whydaer and the equator, even without a Spanish disguise. The only two cruisers which have recently visited that part of the coast, found several ships under the Portuguese flag openly trading for slaves, in Sago and the Bight of Benin."

"The slave trade has certainly been carried on during the last two years, to a great extent north of the equator... The
native chiefs and traders who began to believe at length that the abolition was likely to be permanently maintained, have learnt from recent events to distrust all such assurances. Notwithstanding all that has been said and done, they now see the slave traders again sweeping the whole coast without molestation. It would be difficult fully to appreciate the deep and lasting injury inflicted on northern Africa, by the transactions of the last two or three years. An abolition on the part of Spain would at once deliver the whole of northern Africa from the slave trade, provided effectual measures were taken to seize and punish illicit traders. By the prolongation of the Spanish slave trade, on the contrary, not only is the whole of northern Africa, which would otherwise be exempt, given up to the ravages of that traffic, and the progress already made in improvement sacrificed, but facilities are afforded of smuggling into every island of the West Indies; which could not otherwise exist, and which, while slave ships may lawfully pass from Africa to Cuba, it would, perhaps, be impossible to prevent."

This was the state of things, according to the Institution, at the end of 1816. We will now see what it was at the beginning of the present year, notwithstanding the conventions signed with Spain and Portugal in the interval. "The African slave trade," says the Report itself, "is still unhappily carried on to an enormous extent under the foreign flags, with aggravated horrors. The directors have to lament the enormous extent, not of the French slave trade only; that of Spain and Portugal appears also to have greatly increased. Notwithstanding the great pecuniary sacrifices made by Great Britain to these nations, their subjects are stated by the governor of Sierra Leone to be now deeper in blood than ever." The Report mentions the fact, that at the distance of more than a year from the date of the Spanish and Portuguese conventions, the British naval commander in chief on the African coast had received no instructions as to the measures to be taken in pursuance of them, nor as yet had any commission been established, as they prescribed.

The estimate which the directors make in the Appendix to the Report, of the number of negroes transported of late years from Africa under the Spanish and Portuguese flags, falls greatly short of the real amount. Dr. Thorpe, whose testimony, on this head, is certainly entitled to weight, has made some statements which agree better with the direct knowledge which we have in this country, of the importation into the Spanish islands and into Brasil. He alleges that the
commissioners appointed by the British government to survey the West Coast of Africa, three years after it had abolished the trade, reported eighty thousand as the number of negroes annually carried away, and divided equally between the Portuguese and Spaniards. He computes, himself, from returns made by persons residing in the Havanna, in the Brasils, and on the coast of Africa, that the Spaniards carried from the West Coast, in 1817, one hundred thousand; and the Portuguese not less. He adds forty thousand as the number taken by other nations, and from other parts of that quarter of the globe. There is something almost overpowering for a real philanthropist in the observations with which this writer concludes his calculations. "As it appears that in 1807, about sixty thousand inhabitants of Africa were annually enslaved, and in 1817 two hundred and forty thousand, we may judge of her present deplorable condition, when the very cause of her barbarous and degraded state has increased four-fold; we should recollect the unshaken testimony presented to Parliament, which established her miserable condition before 1807; and we cannot but lament that all the professions for her happiness, and promises for her civilization, reiterated since that time, have been perfectly delusive."*

Dr. Thorpe asserts, also, that at the time Great Britain had the right of search, nineteen out of twenty of the contraband slave vessels escaped. One cannot but think that their success would not have been quite so great, had her cruisers exercised the same zeal and vigilance in pursuing them, as they did in hunting down the commerce of the United States, under the Orders in Council.

In the first negotiations respecting the trade, which Lord Castlereagh opened with the French cabinet after the treaty of 1814, he suggested, as a desirable arrangement, the concession of a mutual right of search and capture in certain latitudes, between France and Great Britain, in order to prevent an illicit exportation from the coast of Africa. The Duke of Wellington made the proposition to the Prince of Benevento, but soon discovered that it was "too disagreeable to the French government and nation, to admit of a hope of its being urged with success."† I do not find from the history of the conferences at Vienna in 1815, that it was more than hinted in those conferences. Spain and Portugal, however, in their mock renunciation of the trade north of the equinoc-

* P. 13. View of the Increase of the Slave Trade.
† See his letter to Lord Castlereagh of the 5th Nov. 1814.
tial line, acceded to a stipulation of like tenor. Great satisfaction was expressed in Parliament with the arrangement, when the Spanish treaty came under discussion. "The introduction of the right of search and bringing in for condemnation in time of peace," was declared to be "a precedent of the utmost importance." Of this precedent the British minister resolved to avail himself at once. There is a quasi official exposition of his proceedings in the thirteenth Report of the African Institution, of which I will abstract as much as may convey a sufficient idea of the new turn given to the question of abolition.

The ministers of the great powers were assembled in London to confer on the subject: all attended readily except the representative of Portugal, who consented to appear only on condition of a perfect freedom of action being left to his sovereign. At a meeting held in February, 1818, Lord Castlereagh produced a note, which alleged, among other things, That, since the peace, a considerable revival of the slave trade had taken place, especially north of the line, and that the traffic was principally of the illicit description:—That, as early as July, 1816, a circular intimation had been given to all British cruisers, that the right of search (being a belligerent right) had ceased with the war:—That it was proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, that unless the right to visit vessels engaged in the slave trade should be established by mutual concessions on the part of the maritime states, the illicit traffic must not only continue to subsist, but increase: That even if the traffic were universally abolished, and a single state should refuse to submit its flag to the visitation of vessels of other states, nothing effectual would have been done: That the plenipotentiaries should, therefore, enter into an engagement to concede mutually the right of search, ad hoc, to their ships of war, &c. They did not deem themselves authorised to proceed so far, but undertook to transmit the proposition to their respective courts.

It does not appear that the American minister was invited to be a party to these conferences. To him, however, Lord Castlereagh addressed a special letter in the month of June, 1818, enclosing copies of the treaties made with Spain and Portugal, and inviting the government of the United States to enter into the plan digested in those treaties, for the repression of the slave trade, which must, otherwise, prove irreducible. The answer of the American government, communicated at the end of December by the American ambassador, is detailed in the Report of the Institution. It asserts the deep and
unfeigned solicitude of the United States, for the universal extirpation of the slave trade; but, with all due comity, declines the proposed arrangements, as being of a character "not adapted to the circumstances or institutions of the United States." Truly, the United States had sufficiently proved the British right of search in time of war, to be careful not to create one for the season of peace.

No answer had been received from the courts whose ministers attended the conferences in London, when the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle furnished the British government with the fairest opportunity of pushing the adoption of its whole project. Thither, on the heels of Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Clarkson repaired with the memorial, which I have already cited. It stated to the assembled sovereigns—That, "in point of fact, little or no progress had been made in practically abolishing the slave trade:" That "all the declarations and engagements of the European powers as to abolition, must prove perfectly unavailing, unless new means were adopted:" That the only means left were—the universal concession of the mutual right of search and detention; and the solemn proscription of the slave trade, as Piracy under the law of nations.

Lord Castlereagh's official representations were of the same purport, and were answered in separate notes from the pleni-potentaries of Russia, France, Austria, and Prussia. The respondents profess their readiness to make a combined address to the court of Brasil, in order to engage it to accelerate, as much as the circumstances and necessities of its situation may permit, the entire abolition of the trade; but all reject the proposition of a mutual right of search, that new sine qua non of the salvation of Africa. France, whose concurrence, according to Lord Castlereagh, was, "above all others, important," gave the most peremptory refusal; and suggested, on her side, a plan of common police for the trade, which would enable the several powers to know the transactions of each other, and would keep each government well apprized of all abuses within its jurisdiction. Upon the emperor Alexander, both Lord Castlereagh and the directors of the African Institution had counted, as a sure and irresistible auxiliary. The "unkindest cut," however, would seem to have come from his Russian Majesty. The answer of his pleni-potentiary was fitted to produce a double disconcentration; and might be suspected of a little malice in the design. Besides alleging that it appeared to the Russian cabinet, beyond a doubt, that there were some states which no consideration would induce to submit their navigation to a principle of such high importance
PART I. "as the right of visit," he proposed an expedient to effect the common purpose, which went to deprive England of her sway, and unembarrassed action, on the west coast of Africa. This expedient consisted in "an institution, the seat of which should be a central point on that coast, and in the formation of which all the Christian states should take a part." It is thus particularly described in the Russian note: "Declared for every neutral, to be estranged from all political and local interests, like the fraternal and Christian alliance, of which it would be a practical manifestation, this institution would pursue the single object of strictly maintaining the execution of the law. It would consist of a maritime force, composed of a sufficient number of ships of war, appropriated to the service assigned to them; of a judicial power, which should judge all crimes relating to the trade, according to a legislation established upon the subject, by the common wisdom; of a supreme council, in which would reside the authority of the institution,—which would regulate the operations of the maritime force—would revise the sentences of the tribunals—would put them in execution—would inspect all the details, and would render an account of its administration to the future European conferences. The right of visit and detention would be granted to this institution, as the means of fulfilling its end; and perhaps no maritime nation would refuse to submit its flag to this police, exercised in a limited and clearly defined manner, and by a power too feeble to allow of vexations; too disinterested on all maritime and commercial questions, and, above all, too widely combined in its elements, not to observe a severe, but impartial justice towards all."

Neither the French plan of surveillance, nor the Amphyctonic Institution of his Imperial Majesty, suited the views of Lord Castlereagh, who could not be persuaded of the practicability of either. His lordship finally proposed to qualify the desired right of search, by limiting its duration to a certain number of years; and by this and other modifications, "he flatters himself," says the thirteenth Report of the African Institution, "that he has made a considerable impression in removing the strong repugnance which was at first felt to the measure." But the directors themselves do not appear to be so sanguine, if we may judge from the following passage of the Report: "Thus ended the conferences, and proceedings at Aix-la-Chapelle, respecting the more effectual abolition of the African slave trade, and thus have the directors been disappointed in the hopes which they had entertained, of seeing the
noble principles, announced to the world by the congress at sect. IX. Vienna, carried into complete effect, by the sovereigns and plenipotentiaries assembled in the course of the last autumn. Whether such another opportunity of bringing those principles into action, may ever again occur, cannot be foreseen; but the directors must be allowed to express their unfeigned regret, that so very favourable a combination of circumstances has led to such unimportant results."

The plan of England to obtain from the congress a sentence of piracy upon the slave trade, appeared to the sovereigns rather wanting in courtesy towards their royal brother of the Brasils, while he persisted in authorizing his subjects to prosecute it indefinitely as to number. It was evident, said the emperor of Russia, that the general promulgation of such a law could not take place, until Portugal had totally renounced the trade. At the same time, the congress might not have been able to discern the consistency, of proclaiming that a capital crime in the subjects of one nation, which those of another might do with impunity, under the sanction of recent treaties. It was certainly an awkward duty for an English ministry, to solicit the denunciation of piracy against the slave trade, which the English nation had, for two centuries, struggled to monopolize. The reflection upon all the generations of that whole tract of time, was rather too strong, in the use of such language as this—"Slave-trading always involves man-stealing and murder. Even on the passage its murders are numerous,"§ &c. The Lord Chancellor Eldon could not have thought so, when, opposing the British abolition in 1807, "he entered into a review of the measures adopted by England, respecting the trade, which, he contended, had been sanctioned by Parliaments in which sat the wisest lawyers, the most learned divines, and the most excellent statesmen."† Nor could Lord Hawkesbury, when he moved that the words "inconsistent with the principles of justice and humanity," should be struck out of the preamble of the British abolition bill.‡ Nor could Lord Sidmough, when he said, "to the measure itself he had no objection, if it could be accomplished without detriment to the West India islands."§ Nor the Earl of Westmoreland, in declaring that "though he should see the presbyterian and the prelate, the methodist and field preacher, the jacobin and murderer, unite in

* The Memorial. † Hansard's Debates, vol. viii. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid.
favour of the measure of abolition, he would raise his voice against it in Parliament."

Throughout the conferences and negotiations above mentioned, we find the continental powers betraying a rooted distrust of the motives of the British government. The vehemence of its execrations upon the trade; the intensity of its present zeal for the welfare of Africa, contributed to excite suspicion, when compared with the language I have just cited, and with the toleration of the Spanish and Portuguese traffic before the peace;—with the treaty of 1814, by which England, having secured for herself, in the general distribution of spoil, some favourite objects of interest, delivered over to the miseries now so pathetically described, whole provinces which she boasted of having entirely relieved—with the free export of fire-arms and ammunition from the British ports to the coast of Africa; and with the existence of slavery in its worst form, in all the British settlements, including those of Asia Minor and the East Indies. It was remarked that, as soon as it was seen in England, in 1806, that her trade would be abolished, Parliament petitioned the king to negotiate with foreign powers for the abolition of theirs; but that nothing was vigorously attempted in this way,—all had been languor and connivance,—until the conclusion of peace, when the restitution took place, of considerable colonies, which, being stocked regularly and cheaply with slaves, while those retained by England received only a precarious and dear supply, might speedily outgrow the latter, and supplant them in the markets of the world; and when on other grounds avowed and pressed in Parliament, the commercial interests of England evidently required, if not universal abolition, at least the restriction to the south of the equator.

France knew that it was with British capital and shipping that her merchants had embarked in the trade, immediately after the peace; Spain and Portugal, that the greater part of the trade carried on under their flags was on British account; and they were somewhat incredulous, when they were told of the British negotiators being "the organs of a people unanimous in its condemnation; apprized of all its horrors; impressed with all its guilt; foremost in removing its pollution from themselves, and waiting with confident, but impatient hope, the glad tidings of its universal abolition." None of the powers had ever found those organs disposed to make a sacrifice for this object, beyond an island.

* Ibid.
a subsidy, or a largess; which might be considered as offered with a view to ample compensation in lucre; for Mr. Wilberforce was implicitly to be believed, when he said, in the House of Commons, in addition to what I have already quoted from him of a like tenor, that, "in a commercial point of view, it was of incalculable advantage to have the supply of that large tract of country, from the Senegal down to the Niger, an extent of more than 7500 miles, with the necessaries and gratifications which British manufactures and commerce afford."* Parliament still contained several of the hitherto inflexible anti-abolitionists, who had harangued without end to prove the justice and humanity of the trade at large; its very unanimity, therefore, where that of foreign powers was concerned, had the effect of lessening confidence abroad. Such a phenomenon as the union of General Gascoyne with Mr. Wilberforce, of Lord Westmoreland with Lord Grenville, in proclaiming the unequalled guilt and inhumanity of the slave traffic, could be viewed by the Talleyrands and the Nesselrodes only as indicating a universal sense, of the great importance of the end in view, to the commercial ascendency of Great Britain.

It is easily seen, from the strain of the diplomatic notes addressed to Lord Castlereagh at Aix la-Chapelle, that the congress had a common jealousy of the designs of England upon the African coast, and acted in concert in disappointing the hopes, and alarming the policy, of her plenipotentiary. To maintain a fleet upon that coast would obviously be in the power of none but England, so that the idea of reciprocity in the right of search was illusive; and it was not contrary to the entire analogy of British maritime administration, to suppose, that, in this case, it might be perverted to the ends of rapacity, oppression, or monopoly.

The invidiousness of the proceedings of the English statesmen, and the incredulity which they have rendered inveterate in the foreign cabinets, as to their professions, in this matter of the slave trade, make it doubtful whether the cause of real, universal abolition has not suffered by the intervention of England. Had the appeal to the justice, humanity, magnanimity, and true interests of France, Spain, or Portugal, come from a quarter where no selfish or hostile views could be suspected to lurk; had it been urged with steady effort, with the directness of conscious benevolence, and with only a part of that eloquence and sagacity which Great Britain has dis-

* February 11, 1818.
played in the *argument*, it might, in the end, have effectually reclaimed those powers, or have raised against them such a combination of influence as would have led to the same happy result. But, in dealing with Great Britain, the calculation with them has been, how to avoid a suspected snare; to counteract an insidious rival policy; to preserve the interests which they ostensibly sacrificed in compliance with the particular necessities of their situation. Hence a more eager and obstinate purpose of filling their colonies with negroes in every practicable mode; a greater callousness to the shame and criminality of the traffic—hence on the part of other powers, giving the same construction to the instances of England, little disposition to adopt any system that should cut off their supplies, or second her aims. Hence, too, the unmeaning engagements about abolition after a certain period of enjoyment, which only serve to stimulate the exertions of the slave trader, and aggravate the immediate desolation of Africa; "the vows of future amendment coupled with present perseverance in guilt;" sacrifices promised to be made, with a determination to prove faithless; solemn assurances of future rectitude, for whose accomplishment we are to wait until commercial jealousy shall cease, avarice be satiated, or the sword drawn to enforce performance.

More of cant, hypocrisy, and inconsistency, has never disgraced any occasion, than this of the abolition of the slave trade. While it is admitted universally, and solemnly proclaimed by the potentates, to be the opprobrium of Christendom, and the bane of Africa; "repugnant to the principles of humanity and essential morality,"* they enter into compacts among themselves for guaranteeing to one or the other, the unmolested prosecution of it, during such a term as the convenience of the party may require; and in no case is there an intention of observing the limitation prescribed. France demands, to use the language of Lord Grenville, five years of injustice and rapine, of murder and violence, laying waste a whole quarter of the globe, that she may recruit her colonial vigour, and particularly that she may have the facility of repeopling St. Domingo with slaves, in case of the reduction of that island; England, the tutelary genius of Africa, specially ratifies this demand: Portugal and Spain must have eight years of the same horrible career, and will not agree to desist even then, unless their commercial relations with England

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* See the Declaration of the Congress of Vienna, 8th Feb. 1815.
shall undergo a particular change: they acknowledge the teeming wickedness of the traffic; but, unluckily, they have the prosperity of their dominions to promote: England disclaims all idea of giving the law on the subject, or pushing matters to an extremity.* Russia, Austria, and Prussia, cannot undertake to coerce any power, either as to time or space; and decide that each is to be left to consult "the prejudices, habits, and interests of its subjects, and the circumstances of its situation." All pledge themselves, in the last place, to make every possible effort to accelerate the triumph of the magnificent cause of universal abolition!

The only governments, in fact, which have acted sincerely and independently, in relation to it, are those of Denmark and the United States. I am free to confess that no small share of the illicit trade has been carried on by Americans, or by persons assuming the character; and that no inconsiderable number of negroes has been clandestinely imported into the most southern parts of our territory. Perhaps the Federal Government has not exerted all the vigilance in repressing these abuses, which their enormity required; but the heartiest detestation of them is common to it and to the majority of the nation. The least participation in the slave traffic is certainly a deep stain, and a heinous guilt. The violence which this traffic does, in its very conception, to the rights and obligations of human nature; its effect in brutalizing those who pursue it; the flagitious and ferocious practices with which it is attended; the ineffable, accumulated woes which it inflicts upon its defenceless victims; the immeasurable evils of every kind with which it overspreads the continent of Africa, and threatens that of America—conspire to invest it with a character of greater deformity, scandal, depravity, and perniciousness, than belongs to any other general crime of the civilized world. I have been the more liberal of details concerning the horrors of the British trade, in order to attract a more earnest attention to our own late offences of the sort, about which we have been too supine; and against which the voice of every good citizen and moral man, as well as the voice and the arm of the government, should be perpetually raised.

17. Widely different, under the circumstances in which we find ourselves, is the case of retaining the wretched race of Africa in bondage. The most zealous of the English philan-

* See the Protocol of the third conference at Vienna, Feb. 4th, 1815.
thropists have not carried their aims so far, with respect to West India slavery, as its immediate or speedy abolition. I have quoted, in my seventh section, the protest entered by the Edinburgh Review, against the imputation of such a design, either to the Reviewers or any of the adversaries of the slave trade. That journal has returned several times to the topic; in the eighth number, for instance, in the following language:—"It is scarcely necessary to premise, that the advocates for the abolition of the slave trade most cordially reprobate all idea of emancipating the slaves that are already in our plantations. Such a scheme indeed is sufficiently answered by the story of the galley slaves in Don Quixote, and we are persuaded, never had any place in the minds of those enlightened and judicious persons, who have contended in this cause."

So late as 1817, Lord Holland, one of the most devoted among the associates of Mr. Wilberforce, moved, in the House of Peers, a petition to the Prince Regent, praying that the idea of emancipating the West India slaves might be disowned by royal proclamation throughout the islands; which was done accordingly. Their unfitness for freedom, no less than the danger to the white inhabitants, has been alleged as the motive for discarding all projects implying their liberation. This has always been treated in England as a question of practicability, not of strict justice. To give a specimen of the mode of reasoning on the subject, I will extract a passage from a speech of Mr. W. Grant in the House of Commons.

"Mr. W. Grant said, he had ever conceived that the end of legislation was to do good, and to consider justice in our means of doing it. Now, there were some occasions on which it was impossible to do so; and there the greatest good must be the object even in violation of strict justice. He would illustrate his meaning by an instance. Let them suppose a case of emancipation. Wherever slavery existed, there necessarily existed oppression, and the continuance of slavery was consequently a continuance of oppression. If he had professed to do justice, and a slave were to ask him, how could he account for the use he had in view in making him a slave; if he meant to do justice, he should not continue him a slave? he should answer, that his means were circumscribed, and that it was true philanthropy to effect the greatest good, which the nature of the case would admit. If he forbore to do an act, abstractly an act of humanity, but which would produce a different consequence, he surely acted rightly;
were he to act otherwise, he should not satisfy his con-
science, because he should not diminish the misery he wish-
ed to relieve."

Expediency is thus justified, and allowed on all hands to
prevail, touching the existence of slavery in the West Indies.
That the British government possesses the power to suppress
it, no one ventures to deny. The Edinburgh Review has
scouted the supposition of armed resistance on the part of the
islands, to any exertion of the supreme authority of the
mother country. "If," says the 50th number, "a threat of
following the example of America, that is, of rebelling, be
held out, then the answer is, that what was boldness in the
one case, would be impudence in the other, and England
must be reduced very low, indeed, before she can feel greatly
alarmed at this threat from a Caribbee island." She is,
therefore, responsible for the existence of slavery in the West
Indies, as much as if it existed within her own bosom, and we
might retort upon her the phrase of the Edinburgh Review
directed against us,—"That slavery should exist among men
who know the value of liberty, and profess to understand its
principles, is the consummation of wickedness."

Were the question of the abolition of West India slavery to
be treated as one of strict justice, England could have no
escape from its fullest pressure. The circumstance of her
having created and fostered the slavery itself; of her having
been chiefly instrumental in making it the fate of so many
millions of the race of its victims there, would give every
possible degree of force and solemnity to the abstract obliga-
tion in the case. While, therefore, slavery continues to ex-
ist undisturbed in the West Indies, the Briton who approves
of the policy of maintaining it, cannot deny to the United
States, the benefit of the plea of expediency in regard to the
emancipation of their blacks. To avert a personal danger
from her planters, and to maintain her lucrative connexion
with the islands, England abstains from "tearing off the
manacles," —the most galling that ever were imposed—from
nearly a million of that race; she even abstains, upon consi-
derations of possible disadvantage, as the postponement of the
Registry Bill shows, from measures adapted merely to the
amelioration of their condition.

I have, I think, proved in the first pages of this sec-
tion, that but a slight degree of blame attaches to the co-
lonists, respecting the existence of slavery in this country;
and that their descendants were in no measure culpable, as
far down as the declaration of our independence. They

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PART I. were no more so, than they would have been, for an hereditary gout or leprosy, ascribable in its origin to the vices of the parent state, and which the authors of it should have studiously prevented them from curing. The continuation of the system of slavery among us, during the Revolution, was as much a matter of necessity, as it ever had been before. It was not the time for the southern states, to make the experiment of a fundamental alteration in the whole economy of their existence, when they were contending with a ruthless foe who sought to array the whole body of negroes against the whites, and who would have availed himself of the greater freedom of action which emancipation must have afforded the latter, to accomplish his diabolical purpose.

But the northern and middle states, more auspiciously circumstanced, began the work of extirpating the evil from their own bosom, even before the termination of the revolutionary struggle. In 1780, Pennsylvania decreed a gradual abolition; in the same year an immediate one was virtually effected in Massachusetts; the example of Pennsylvania was followed throughout New England at the distance of a few years; all that portion of the Union, north of the state of Delaware, has since pursued the same course.

It was more than a practical moralist could expect or exact, that the southern states, retaining sovereign governments of their own, should trust the federal councils with the determination of such a question, as the emancipation of their slaves, on which their highest interests of property and safety were immediately dependent. No power to decide for them on this question could be communicated, according to the drift and nature of our union, either to the Revolutionary Confederation, or to the actual government. The power of legislating in all respects for the territory belonging to the United States, accrued necessarily, however, to both; and it was exercised in relation to slavery, by the first, in a manner to evince the rectitude of the general spirit on the subject, rendered impotent in the south by the strongest of impulses, if not the first of duties—self-preservation. The ordinance enacted by the Congress of the United States, in 1787, for the government of the territory north west of the river Ohio, contains the following article—‘‘There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.’’ This vast region was thus scrupulously preserved from the evil; and the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois formed out of it, make an integral part of that consi-
SLAVE TRADE.

derable and most prosperous division of our empire, into SECT. IX. which, happily, an Englishman may emigrate without "exposing his own character or the character of his children to the demoralizing effect of commanding slaves."

16. The question of the existence of slavery is not, as I have intimated, — could not be, — put within the jurisdiction of the present government of the United States. The condition of things assuring, for a long time, to the part of the country exempt or soon to be exempt from the evil, a numerical majority in the federal legislature, this domestic interest of the southern members of the Union, vital and pre-eminently delicate in its nature, would have been placed at the mercy of men incapable, like the Edinburgh Reviewers, of understanding it thoroughly; liable to an undue bias resulting from the action of good principles; and who, whatever their general spirit of forbearance, considerateness of character, and warmth of political friendship, might, from ignorance and prejudice combined, through a mistaken patriotism and philanthropy, or in obedience to a sentimental clamor of their constituents, seconded by a generous zeal in their own breasts, hastily take a step which would sooner or later involve both master and slave, in the south, in one common ruin.

As regards, then, the existence of slavery within the limits of the Union, the federal government has no responsibility such as that of the British parliament, in its omnipotence, with respect to the whole internal economy of the British possessions. The eleven of these American states, in which slavery is now abolished, are not implicated in the demerits of the question. To break loose from the confederation, and thus to risk their own political independence, because the other members do not perform that which is impracticable; because these happen, without their own fault, to be afflicted with the curse of negro slavery; or to attempt to enforce by arms, an abolition; is what no sane person will consider as incumbent upon them, and what would hardly be advised by England, who neither coerces nor discards the West Indies; and who would not "give the law" to Spain, Portugal, or France, with respect to the slave trade—infinitely the more detestable crime and destructive evil—when those powers were at her beck.

The eastern and middle states have not been backward in discharging any duty in the way of exhortation and aid, which their political and other ties with the slave-holding countries might seem to create. Their doctrine as to human rights is as
PART I. broad, as sincerely adopted, and as loudly proclaimed, as that of England; abolition societies abound in them, who do not yield in point of zeal to the African Institution, and have no compromise to make with any government. The citizens of those states, in emigrating to the west, as they do constantly in great numbers, manifest the soundness of their feelings and principles on this subject, by settling in preference, in the parts from which negro slavery is excluded. Hence the astonishing growth of the states of Ohio and Indiana, the first of which has outstripped, in advances of every kind, whatever the world had seen in the spontaneous formation of communities.

But, those members of the Union, of which I am now speaking, while they have inculcated without reserve, in the national councils, every truth, either abstract or practical, appertaining to the question of our negro slavery, have not been blind to the just sentiments of their southern associates, who alone are accountable; nor have they overlooked, though they may not have always fully measured, the difficulties inherent in the situation of the latter. They, who have better opportunities of understanding it than the British reviewers, are far from thinking that it “affords no apology for the existence of slavery.” They see it in the same light, in this respect, as they see that of the West Indies, which the Reviewers have declared a complete justification: for, though the negroes in our slave-holding states are not near so numerous in the proportion to the whites, as in the West Indies; and though, from the superiority of their condition, they are better prepared for freedom, yet they are in sufficient number to assure, in the event of insurrection, the most horrible disasters, before they could be subdued, with the earliest possible aid from the other states; and, they are still, from inevitable causes, far from the point of being prepared to exist here, out of the bonds of slavery, with advantage to themselves, or safety to the whites.

19. Before the American revolution, the British policy of multiplying their numbers by importations from Africa, closed the door against an attempt to qualify them, by moral and political instruction, for that state. Such an attempt would appear to have been equally impracticable, in the course of the revolutionary war, if we look only to the engrossing avoca-

* See the writings of Dr. Thorpe for an explanation of this inueno. He roundly charges Mr. Wilberforce and the Institution, with playing into the hands of the ministry.
tions of the struggle, and to the belligerent system of the moth-
her country. But it was so then, and has been ever since,
from other causes; more obviously, as the numbers of the
blacks increased. An effectual training of the kind is incom-
patible with their very being as slaves, and with the nature of
the toil incident to their situation. It presupposes their eman-
cipation, or such a modification of their existence as would
be equivalent, in reference to their value as property, or to
the danger threatened by their exemption from restraint. The
doctrine so long popular and pursued in England, and main-
tained openly by some of her most distinguished statesmen,*
that the labouring classes should not be enlightened, lest they
might become unwilling to perform the necessary drudgery of
their station in life, and prone to rise against the monarchical
scheme of social order, was not, perhaps, in her case, alto-
gether without foundation as to the latter topic of apprehension.
Now, though the very reverse is the soundest policy for us,
with our institutions, as respects the whites, that doctrine, if
the right of the southern American to consult his own safety
and the ultimate happiness of his slaves, be admitted, is un-
questionably just in relation to the body of the southern ne-
groes. You could not attempt to improve and fashion their
minds upon a general system, so far as to make them capable
of freedom in the mass and apart, without exposing yourself,
even in the process, or in proportion as they began to under-
stand and value their rights, to feel the abjection of their
position and employment, calculate their strength, and be fit
for intelligent concert—to formidable combinations among
them, for extricating themselves from their grovelling and se-
vere labours at once, and for gaining, not merely an equality
in the state, but an ascendancy in all respects. The difference
of race and colour would render such aspirations in them,
much more certain, prompt, and active, than in the case of a
body of villeins of the same colour and blood with yourselves,
whom you might undertake to prepare for self-government.
The Duke of Wellington, in the late debate on Catholic
emancipation in the British House of Peers, expressed his
belief that the Catholics of Ireland, if relieved from their
disabilities, would endeavour to put down the reformed reli-
gion, and this because of the feelings which must accompany
the recollection, that that religion had been established in their
country by the sword. What consequences, then, might we
not expect in the case of our slaves, from the sense of recent

* See page 69, Sect. ii.
suffering and degradation, and from the feelings incident to
the estrangement and insulation growing out of the indelible
distinctions of nature?

I know of but one mode of correcting those feelings and
preventing alienation, hostility, and civil war; of making the
experiment of general instruction and emancipation with any
degree of safety. We must assure the blacks of a perfect
equality in all points with ourselves; we must labour to in-
corporate them with us, so that we shall become of one flesh
and blood, and of one political family! It is doubtful even
whether we could succeed in this point, so gregarious are they
in their habits, and so strong in their national sympathy. No
sublime philanthropist of Europe has, however, as yet, in his
reveries of the impiety of political distinctions founded upon
the colour of the body, or in his lamentations over our injustice
to the blacks, exacted from us openly this hopeful amalgama-
tion. It would, no doubt, suit admirably the views of our
friends in England, who would then have full scope for plea-
sant comparisons between the American and English intellect,
and the American and English complexion.*

I could suggest another consideration, alone sufficient to
have deterred our southern states from hazarding, since our
revolution, the measure of a general abolition of negro slavery,
accompanied with the continuance of the negroes within their
limits. It would have put those states especially, and this
federal union, at the mercy of Great Britain. The facility
of tampering with the blacks, and of exciting them to insur-
rection, would have been increased for her, incalculably, in
their new condition, in time of war. Let her conduct on this
head during the revolutionary struggle, and in our late contest,
in relation both to the Indians and negroes, determine the
point whether she would not have availed herself of the op-
portunity.

On the subject of the abolition of the negro slavery of the
south, Judge Tucker, whom I have already cited, has made
some remarks which cannot fail to have great weight with
every dispassionate and candid mind.

"It is unjust," he says, "to censure the present generation
for the existence of slavery in this country, for I think it un-
questionably true, that a very large proportion of our fellow-
citizens lament that as a misfortune, which is imputed to them

* See the Quarterly Review of May, 1819, on the point of com-
plexion. "The white men, women, and children, are all sallow in
America," &c.
as a reproach; it being evident that, antecedent to the revolution, no exertion to abolish, or even to check the progress of slavery, could have received the smallest countenance from the crown, without whose assent the united wishes and exertions of every individual here, would have been wholly fruitless and ineffectual: it is, perhaps, also demonstrable, that at no period since the revolution, could the abolition of slavery in the southern states have been safely undertaken, until the foundations of our newly established governments had been found capable of supporting the fabric itself, under any shock, which so arduous an attempt might have produced."

"The acrimony of the censures cast upon us must abate, at least in the breasts of the candid, when they consider the difficulties attendant on any plan for the abolition of slavery, in a country where so large a proportion of the inhabitants are slaves, and where a still larger proportion of the cultivators of the earth are of that description. The extirpation of slavery from the United States is a task equally momentous and arduous. Human prudence forbids that we should precipitately engage in a work of such hazard as a general and simultaneous emancipation. The mind of man is in some measure to be formed for his future condition. The early impressions of obedience and submission, which slaves have received among us, and the no less habitual arrogance and assumption of superiority among the whites, contribute equally to unfit the former for freedom, and the latter for equality. To expel them all at once from the United States would, in fact, be to devote them only to a lingering death, by famine, by disease, and other accumulated miseries. To retain them among us, would be nothing more than to throw so many of the human race upon the earth, without the means of subsistence; they would soon become idle, profligate, and miserable. They would be unfit for their new condition, and unwilling to return to their former laborious course."

These observations were published in 1803; but they are equally applicable to the succeeding period. Our foreign relations were always such in the interval between the commencement of the late war with England and the year just mentioned, as to give an aspect of extreme danger to immediate abolition; and there was no room for the question during the continuance of the war. The difficulties of the case increased, indeed, with the great increase of the negroes, independently of our general political embarrassments, both internal and external, sufficient to absorb our care and faculties.
It was by gradual, voluntary enfranchisement, not by legislative abolition, that an end was put to the villeinage of England, a bondage as complete and degrading as that of our negroes, and which lasted until the reign of Elizabeth. But the villein, when emancipated, being of the same race, colour, and general character with the master, was assimilated and conciliated at once; intermarriage neither debased the blood, nor destroyed the identity, of the nation; but added to its strength and security. The gradual emancipation of the negroes of our southern states, if we supposed them to remain, would, in the end, produce the same inadmissible condition of things as the immediate,—a two-fold, or a motley nation; a perpetual, wasting strife, or a degeneracy from the European standard of excellence, both as to body and mind. As far as it has been tried, it has inspired no confidence, whether as regards the happiness of the blacks, or the security of the whites. Virginia took advantage of her independence to authorize manumission, which the policy of the mother country discountenanced. Judge Tucker calculates that upwards of ten thousand obtained freedom in Virginia in this way, in the interval between 1782, when she passed her law, and the year 1791. In 1810, according to the census, the number of her free negroes amounted to thirty thousand five hundred and seventy. In Maryland, there were forty thousand; the increase having been near twenty-six thousand since 1790. In the states south of Virginia, this class was not so numerous, but yet not considerable. We find, by Dr. Scybert's tables, that the free negroes and mulattoes increased 185.05 per centum, from 1790 to 1800; and from 1790 to 1810, 313.45. This extraordinary increase he ascribes to emancipations of slaves by their masters. Thus the experiment has been ample; and now let us see what is the result in the slave-holding states. It is fully given in the following representations which come from the pen of a politician well known, and most deservedly and highly respected, in Europe.

"You may manumit a slave, but you cannot make him a white man. He still remains a negro or a mulatto. The mark and the recollection of his origin and former state still adhere to him; the feelings produced by that condition, in his own mind and in the minds of the whites, still exist; he is associated by his colour, and by these recollections and feelings, with the class of slaves; and a barrier is thus raised between him and the whites, that is, between him and the free class, which he can never hope to transcend. The authority of the master being removed, and its place not being supplied
by moral restraints or incitements, he lives in idleness, and sect. IX. probably in vice, and obtains a precarious support by begging or theft. If he should avoid those extremes, and follow some regular course of industry, still the habits of thoughtless improvidence which he contracted while a slave himself, or has caught from the slaves among whom he is forced to live, who of necessity are his companions and associates, prevent him from making any permanent provision for his support, by prudent foresight and economy; and in case of sickness, or of bodily disability from any other cause, send him to live as a pauper, at the expense of the community."

"But it is not in themselves merely that the free people of colour are a nuisance and burden. They contribute greatly to the corruption of the slaves, and to aggravate the evils of their condition, by rendering them idle, discontented, and disobedient. This also arises from the necessity under which the free blacks are, of remaining incorporated with the slaves, of associating habitually with them, and forming part of the same class in society. The slave seeing his free companion live in idleness, or subsist, however scantily or precariously, by occasional and desultory employment, is apt to grow discontented with his own condition, and to regard as tyranny and injustice the authority which compels him to labour. Hence he is strongly incited to elude this authority by neglecting his work as much as possible; to withdraw himself from it altogether by flight, and sometimes to attempt direct resistance. This provokes or impels the master to a severity which would not otherwise be thought necessary; and that severity, by rendering the slave still more discontented with his condition, and more hostile toward his master, by adding the sentiments of resentment and revenge to his original dissatisfaction, often renders him more idle and worthless, and thus induces the real or supposed necessity of still greater harshness on the part of the master. Such is the tendency of that comparison which the slave cannot easily avoid making, between his own situation and that of the free people of his own colour, who are his companions, and in every thing except exemption from the authority of a master, his equals: whose condition, though often much worse than his own, naturally appears better to him; and being continually under his observation, and in close contact with his feelings, is apt to chafe, goad, and irritate him incessantly. This effect indeed is not always produced, but such is the tendency of this state of things; and it operates more extensively, and with greater force, than is commonly supposed."

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PART I. "But this effect, injurious as it must be to the character and conduct of the slaves, and consequently to their comfort and happiness, is far from being the worst that is produced by the existence of free blacks among us; a majority of the free blacks, as we have seen, are, and must be an idle, worthless, and thievish race. It is with this part of them that the slaves will necessarily associate, the most frequently and the most intimately. Free blacks of the better class, who gain a comfortable subsistence by regular industry, keep as much as possible aloof from the slaves, to whom in general they regard themselves as in some degree superior. Their association is confined, as much as possible, to the better and more respectable class of slaves. But the idle and disorderly free blacks naturally seek the society of such slaves as are disposed to be idle and disorderly too; whom they encourage to be more and more so, by their example, their conversation, and the shelter and means which they furnish. They encourage the slaves to theft, because they partake in its fruits. They receive, secrete, and dispose of the stolen goods; a part, and probably much the largest part, of which they often receive, as a reward for their services. They furnish places of meeting and hiding places in their houses, for the idle and the vicious slaves; whose idleness and vice are thus increased and rendered more contagious. These hiding places and places of meeting are so many traps and snares, for the young and thoughtless slaves, who have not yet become vicious; so many schools in which they are taught, by precept and example, idleness, lying, debauchery, drunkenness, and theft. The consequence of all this is very easily seen, and I am sure is severely felt in all places, where free people of colour exist in considerable numbers."

The experience of the states north and east of the Susquehannah, with regard to this class of persons, is not, on the whole, much more encouraging. The number of respectable individuals is considerably greater indeed, but the character of the mass nearly the same. Nor can it be urged that they are debased here, access to the ordinary means of moral and intellectual regeneration. On the contrary, schools are established for them; they are aided in procuring the conveniences for religious instruction and divine worship; they are united in societies adapted to produce self-respect, and mental activity; exemplary attention is paid, in numerous in-
stances, to the regulation of their habits and principles. They have every facility which is enjoyed by the labouring classes among the whites, of acquiring a plain education, and a comfortable subsistence, and of making provision for their children. They have the same legal security in person and property, and generally, the same political rights as the rest of the community.

In the slave-holding states, they do, indeed, labour under civil incapacities; and the policy of denying them the higher privileges of citizenship, is imperative. We have felt the inconvenience of naturalized Europeans exercising those privileges in distinct bodies, collected and animated by national feeling; the risk of the African race voting and legislating with the esprit de corps, is too serious to be incurred, even where all of the race might be free, provided they should be at all numerous; and to incur it would be madness, where a considerable number of them should, as slaves, remain to be irritated and goaded to revolt, by the invidiousness of the example, and the inevitable conspiracy of the others for the universal release of their brethren. If we suppose that the multitude of free blacks whom Virginia, for instance, has now in her bosom, would exercise the privileges of citizenship, were these granted to them; and if we then assume the natural consequences, the elevation of some of their number to the legislature, and a concert of views and action among the whole, we must see that she would have to prepare herself at once for the alternative of a general extinction of her negro slavery, whatever might be the catastrophe; or of the establishment of a restraining code and police which, if it proved effectual to prevent that danger, must aggravate the condition of the slave, and defer the period at which his emancipation might otherwise take place. "The experiment, so far as it has been already made among us," says Judge Tucker, "proves that the emancipated blacks are not ambitious of civil rights. To prevent the generation of such an ambition, appears necessary; for if it should ever rear its head, its partizans, as well as its opponents, will be enlisted by nature herself, and always ranged against each other."

20. The complaints which the British travellers and reviewers have made of the unjust disfranchisement of the free blacks, have then no foundation in fact, as regards the eastern states; nor in sound speculation, in reference to the southern. The disfranchisement which exists in the latter, cannot be said to be unjust, if injustice in the business of life,
PART I. be not a mere abstraction, and have any thing to do with the consideration of self-preservation, and the welfare of the majority. All qualifications of property in the matter of election and legislation would be unjust, and the doctrine of universal suffrage, which the Edinburgh Review has so stoutly combated, the only true one, if the above mentioned complaints were admissible.

With what an ill grace does reproach on the subject of disfranchisement, come from an Englishman! One-fourth of the whole united kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland—four-fifths of the population of Ireland separately—are incapable of sitting in Parliament, and of holding various civil and military stations. The motive for continuing this system of exclusion is avowed to be expediency. A large portion of the most intelligent politicians of Great Britain deny the fact of the alleged expediency; and surely, in the case of the Catholics of England, a small body, confessedly qualified in point of understanding, morals, property, tried loyalty; there could be no practical inconvenience, as there is not even pretended to be the least direct danger; in admitting them to all the benefits of the British constitution; except only that their admission might render the Catholics of Ireland more earnest and importunate in seeking the same level. The case of the latter even, which wears a more plausible air as to expediency, is, in this respect, in no degree so strong as that of the negroes in our southern states, and infinitely beyond it in point of practical hardship and moral deformity.* England disfranchises, not a race of men of a different complexion from her own, and of inveterate heterogeneity; degraded, in the general estimation of the European race, and who had been forced upon her hands by another country; insensible to the value of political rights, and incompetent to exercise them beneficially; but a people in whose favour all the natural sympathies, and most endearing natural affinities plead to her heart; whom she and all the civilized world acknowledge to be their equals in the choicest endowments of mind and body; whose country she invaded and whose independence she crushed; among whom she established by the sword that reformed religion, the dissent from which is the pretext for their disfranchisement; to whom she owes a boundless retribution for ages of acknowledged misgovernment and oppression, and gratitude for the most important services and aids rendered to her in every branch of her public business.

* See Note V.
21. Nothing can be more false than the representations of sect. IX. the English travellers concerning the treatment of the free blacks by the whites in the middle and eastern states. It is not true that they are "excluded from the places of public worship frequented by the whites;" that "the most degraded white will not walk or eat with a negro;" or that they are "practically slaves."* Their situation as hired domestics, mechanics, or general labourers, is the same in all respects as that of the whites of the same description; they are fed and paid as well; equally exempt from personal violence, and free to change their occupation or their employer. They approach us as familiarly as persons of the correspondent class in England approach their superiors in rank and wealth; and, in general, betray much less servility in their tone and carriage. They do not make part of our society, indeed; they are not invited to our tables; they do not marry into our families; nor would they, were they of our own colour, with no higher claims than they possess, on the score of calling, education, intelligence, and wealth. I confess that whatever claims they might possess in these or other respects, those are advantages from which they would be excluded; there must remain, in any case, a broad line of demarcation, not viewed as an inconvenience by them, but indispensable for our feelings and interests. Nature and accident combine to make it impassable. Their colour is a perpetual memento of their servile origin, and a double disgust is thus created. We will not, and ought not, expose ourselves to lose our identity as it were; to be stained in our blood, and disparaged in our relation of being towards the stock of our forefathers in Europe. This may be called prejudice; but it is one which no reasoning can overcome, and which we cannot wish to see extinguished. We are sure that it would prevail in an equal degree with any nation of Europe who might be circumstanced like ourselves; we do not find it so gross in itself, or so hurtful and unjust in its operation, as those of an analogous cast which we see prevailing in England. "Men of true speculation," says Mr. Burke, "instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and leave nothing but the naked reason."

* These are the allegations of Fecor; worthy of notice only so far as they have been employed as texts by the Reviewers. See Note W.
PART I. 22. The unfortunate condition and character of the free blacks generally, are not imputable to the whites; but to the existence itself of negro slavery among us, and to the circumstance of a distinctive colour. The first is the work of England; the other of nature. As the case is, we need not be surprised, nor can we much lament, that some of the southern states have passed laws to discourage manumission. The enactment of such laws proves that the practice prevailed, or was likely to prevail, notwithstanding the injuriousness of the effects. We know that many thousands of the planters of the old states in the south, are restrained, not by the laws, but by a tenderness and sense of duty to the negroes themselves, and to the commonwealth. There are few Americans capable of reasoning calmly and from experience, on this subject, who do not concur, in reference to the southern states at least, in the following sentiments of the enlightened and benevolent enquirer, whose accurate representation of the condition of the free blacks I have quoted above.

"The considerations stated in the first part of this letter, have long since produced a thorough conviction in my mind, that the existence of a class of free people of colour in this country is highly injurious, to the whites, the slaves, and the free people of colour themselves: consequently, that all emancipation, to however small an extent, which permits the persons emancipated to remain in this country, is an evil, which must increase with the increase of the operation, and would become altogether intolerable, if extended to the whole, or even to a very large part, of the black population. I am, therefore, strongly opposed to emancipation, in every shape and degree, unless accompanied by colonization."

Colonization is, in fact, the only reliance in this great question. Without it, no plan of abolition can be effectual for the security of the whites, or the good of the blacks; since the permanence of the latter, free or enslaved, within the abode, or the neighbourhood, of the former, is the main danger. Colonization is, no doubt, itself attended with appalling difficulties. The aspect of these difficulties prevented the legislature of Virginia from adopting, at an early period, a bill, prepared by a committee, for gradual emancipation in that state. It was thought, and not without reason, that to plant a nation of negroes in the American territory, would be to lay the foundation of intestine wars which could terminate only in their extirpation or final expulsion; that to assign them a country beyond the settlements of the whites, would be to put them on a forlorn hope against the Indians. The expense of
their transportation and establishment presented itself, also, as an obstacle little short of insurmountable.*

The expedient of transplanting the free blacks to the coast of Africa; of opening there a receptacle for our black population at large; occurred to the Virginia legislature in the beginning of the present century. At the solicitation of that body, the federal government endeavoured, in 1802, through Mr. King, the American minister in London, to negotiate with the Sierra Leone Company, for the admission of the American blacks into their colony. But the application did not succeed; and the same fate attended a similar attempt, which was made with Portugal, to obtain an establishment for them within her South American dominions.

While the British slave trade continued, no hope could be entertained of the prosperity of such an establishment on the coast of Africa. "To account," said the Edinburgh Review, in 1805, "for the failure of the Sierra Leone plan, it is quite sufficient to reflect, that it was undertaken in 1791, on the supposition then so natural, of the slave trade being about to cease;—that, instead of this expectation being realized, the traffic in question increased daily and hourly in growth; that the company in vain besought Parliament to check the trade, at least in the narrow district where the colony was planted." In sending our negroes thither, we should only have been furnishing aliment for that insatiable passion which occasioned the introduction of the race into our own country. Constantly expecting a rupture with Great Britain, or actually engaged in hostilities with her, from the period of her abolition of the slave trade, it is only of late that we could again look to the coast of Africa. The project of making a settlement in that quarter, for the purpose of gradually restoring our black population to their native region, and thus extirpating the slavery which we detest, and fear, has been revived. As soon after the conclusion of the peace in 1815, as our political circumstances would permit, a society, styled the American Colonization Society, was formed in the south, on the most liberal plan, and under the most distinguished auspices. It enjoys the particular patronage of the legislature of Virginia; has the countenance and aid of the federal government; and appears to be viewed with an eye of favour by the slave-holding states. Auxiliary societies have been organized in different parts of the country, and will, probably, multiply fast, and excite every where an interest in the important object, which

* Tucker's Notes on Blackstone.
PART I. will greatly facilitate its success. The principal society has already caused the western coast of Africa to be explored, and is sanguine as to the practicability of the plan of settlement in some district of that coast. I must confess that I have no hope of its success. The British government, whatever may be its professions, will not allow any establishment to thrive and be perpetuated, which may interfere with its particular views in that direction. As long, moreover, as the slave trade is prosecuted in its present frightful extent, or, indeed, until it shall be contracted within very narrow limits, no colony which we may form, can be prevented from becoming, either its prey, or one of its factories. The acting attorney-general of Sierra Leone declared in 1819, on the trial of certain persons for an infraction of the British abolition laws, that the town itself, Sierra Leone, was "the heart from which all the arteries and veins of the slave-trading system had for years been animated and supplied." The directors of the African Institution, in their answers to the queries of Lord Castlereagh, already cited, hold the following language. "Sierra Leone, and its immediate neighbourhood, may be considered as the only part of the African coast where plans of improvement can be pursued without immediately encountering the malignant influence of the slave trade. It is almost necessary, therefore, to confine within that sphere, at least for the present, any direct efforts made for the civilization and improvement of Africa. Even the establishment formed in the Rio Pongas, for the instruction of the natives, it is feared, must be withdrawn, in consequence of the revival of the slave trade."

Though, from the commercial jealousy of Great Britain, the prevalence of the slave trade, or our liability to be involved in wars with the European nations, which would interrupt our communication with Africa, we should be obliged to withdraw our aims from that continent, the plan of colonization may, I think, still be pursued on our own, with equal convenience and less risk of final miscarriage. I will not undertake to point out the spot for its execution; this does not belong to my subject; but there cannot be wanting a spot within our reach, free from all invincible objections. The object is of infinite importance; it calls for the earnest attention of the whole nation, and the unanimous agency of the federal

* See Dr. Thorpe's View of the present increase of the Slave Trade, p. 71.
23. In defiance of the lessons of history and of the true philosophy of the human mind, the British writers have insisted, that freedom must be altogether an empty name in the country where domestic slavery is established. Their doctrine would deprive Greece and Rome of the distinction, upon which the admiration of mankind for those republics has been chiefly built. Freedom would be just born, as it were, in the world. "In every age and country," says Hallam, in his History of the Middle Ages, "until times comparatively recent, personal servitude appears to have been the lot of a large, perhaps the greater portion of our species. We lose a good deal of our sympathy with the spirit of freedom in Greece and Rome, when the importunate recollection occurs to us, of the tasks which might be enjoined, and the punishments which might be inflicted, without control either of law or opinion, by the keenest patriot of the Comitia, or the Council of Five Thousand. A similar, though less powerful feeling, will often force itself on the mind, when we read the history of the middle ages."

The institution of slavery in the ancient republics was attended with every circumstance which might appear incompatible with the prevalence of true liberty, or of the moral and political virtues of the highest class.† But who can deny to Greece and Rome an ample share of those honours? "We feel," says Ferguson, in his Essay on the History of Civil

* Letter to the American Colonization Society.

† "In the ancient states," says the Scottish philosopher, Millar, in his Origin of Ranks, "so celebrated upon account of their free government, the bulk of their mechanics and labouring people were denied the common privileges of men, and treated upon the footing of inferior animals. In proportion to the opulence and refinement of those nations, the number of their slaves was increased, and the grievances to which they were subjected became the more intolerable."

"Allowing five persons to each family, the Athenian slaves exceeded the freemen in the proportion of between two and three to one. In the most flourishing periods of Rome, when luxury was carried to so amazing a pitch, the proportion of the inhabitants reduced into servitude was in all probability greater."
PART I. Society, "the injustice of the institution of slavery at Sparta. We suffer for the helot; but we think only of the superior order of men in this state, when we attend to that elevation and magnanimity of spirit, for which danger had no terror, interest no means to corrupt; when we consider them as friends or as citizens, we are apt to forget, like themselves, that slaves have a title to be treated like men."

Hallam, in the work which I have quoted above, has contended for the freedom of the English constitution during the days of English villeinage, and ascribed to the commons of those days a proud sense and tenaciousness of equality in civil rights. In what manner the villeins were treated, and in what light viewed, will be understood from the following passage of this author.

"By a very harsh statute in the reign of Richard II. no servant or labourer could depart, even at the expiration of his service, from the hundred in which he lived, without permission under the king’s seal; nor might any one who had been bred to husbandry, till twelve years old, exercise any other calling. A few years afterwards, the commons petitioned that villeins might not put their children to school, in order to advance them by the church; 'and this for the honour of all the freemen of the kingdom.' In the same parliament they complained, that villeins fly to cities and boroughs where their masters cannot recover them, and prayed that the lords might seize their villeins in such places, without regard to the franchises thereof.'*

If the traits which I have cited in the second section of this volume, from the early political history of the southern states, were not enough to convince the mother country of the compatibility of the love and possession of the broadest civil liberty, with the institution of domestic servitude, the part which they took as colonies in asserting and maintaining the rights of America against her scheme of usurpation, ought to have dispelled all her doubts on the subject. One of her statesmen, at least, an adept in the science of human nature, did not remain in error; but placed the question before her in the just and full light, as an admonition against perseverance in her perilous career. It is strange that it should be necessary to repeat, for the instruction of some of her most witted writers of the present day, the following passage of Burke’s speech on the conciliation with America.

"There is a circumstance attending these southern Ameri-

* Vol. ii. c. viii.
can colonies, which makes the spirit of liberty still more high and haughty there than in those to the northward. It is that, in Virginia and the Carolinas, they have a vast multitude of slaves. Where this is the case in any part of the world, those who are free, are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment, but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there, that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing, and as broad and general as the air, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks, amongst them, like something that is more noble and liberal. I do not mean to commend the superior morality of this sentiment, which has at least as much pride as virtue in it; but I cannot alter the nature of man. The fact is so; and these people of the southern colonies are much more strongly, and with a higher and more stubborn spirit, attached to liberty than those of the northward. Such were all the ancient commonwealths; such were our Gothic ancestors; such in our days were the Poles; and such will be all masters of slaves, who are not slaves themselves. In such a people the haughtiness of domination combines with the spirit of freedom, fortifies it, and renders it invincible."

All our experience in America, since the revolution, confirms the opinion of the orator; or, at least, assures us, that the citizens of the slave-holding states understand quite as well, and cherish as fondly, the principles of republicanism, as those of the other members of our union. Bryan Edwards has indicated in the character and demeanour of the West Indians, what we find universal among our south and southwestern brethren. "Of the character," says this author, "common to the white residents of the West Indies, it appears to me that the leading feature is an independent spirit, and a display of conscious equality, throughout all ranks and conditions. The poorest white person seems to consider himself nearly on a level with the richest, and, emboldened by this idea, approaches his employer with extended hand, and a freedom which, in the countries of Europe, is seldom displayed by men in the lower orders of life towards their superiors. It is not difficult to trace the origin of this principle. It arises, without doubt, from the pre-eminence and distinction which are necessarily attached even to the complexion of a white man, in a country where the complexion, generally speaking, distinguishes freedom from slavery."
I may apply in the same way the following representations which Edwards makes in continuation. "Possibly too, the climate itself, by increasing sensibility, contributes to create an impatience of subordination. But, whatever may be the cause of this consciousness of self-importance in the West Indian character, the consequences resulting from it are, on the whole, beneficial. If it sometimes produces an ostentatious pride, and a ridiculous affectation of splendour, it more frequently awakens the laudable propensities of our nature—frankness, sociability, benevolence, and generosity. In no part of the globe is the virtue of hospitality more generally prevalent, than in the British sugar islands. The gates of the planter are always open to the reception of his guests. To be a stranger is of itself a sufficient introduction."

24. There is some plausibility in the theory of the Edinburgh Review concerning the effects of commanding slaves upon the heart and the morals. But it is not established by our experience, as true in the general. The native citizen of the slave-holding state displays, specifically, as much sensibility, justice, and steadfastness, in all the domestic and social relations, as the European, of whatever country. He is as strongly influenced by the ties of kindred and friendship; as open to the impressions which temper and refine our nature. He has had a large share in the formation and administration of our institutions and laws; in all the executive offices, civil and military; and we have never discovered in him any particular proneness to tyranny or inhumanity; a torpid conscience, or an imperfect sense of equity. In none of the nobler virtues and qualities has he ever proved deficient, in the comparison with the individual born and fashioned among freemen alone. If there be any thing contradistinguishing in his manners and disposition, it is certainly not ferocity or even harshness. The planter of our old southern states has always been rather remarkable for his urbanity and facility, as well as for the dignity and liberality of his sentiments. Morals, it is said, are more loose in the slave-holding states. If we admitted this to be the case, it would by no means follow that the institution of slavery is the principal cause of the relaxation. An original difference of religious institutions, and maxims of conduct; of soil and climate; of modes of livelihood and materials of traffic; of circumstances attending the connexion with the mother country; might give the same result. Domestic slavery continues in Germany and the northern parts of Europe; it has disappeared from the southern; but the dissoluteness of
these is notoriously greater. Hungary is more in the odour of sanctity than the kingdom of Naples. The institution in question is to be abhorred, on account of the violence which it offers to human rights, and the abjection to which it reduces human nature: a priori it would seem to exert a fatal influence on the character of the master; but our experience at least, I repeat it, would not justify us in adopting the theory.

When we investigate the dispositions and morals of the European nations, it is not with the "lowest and least" of them alone, but with the highest and greatest that we venture to compare the white population of our slave-holding states. It is not unknown to us, that in Russia the number of slaves held as property, and subject to absolute will, is sextuple that of our negroes:* That, in the other parts of Europe, where the institution of slavery does not exist, there are other institutions generating an hundred fold more vice, misery, and debasement, than we have ever witnessed in the same compass in America.

25. The laws of the slave-holding states do not furnish a criterion for the character of their present white population, or the condition of the slaves. Those laws were enacted, for the most part, in seasons of particular alarm, produced by attempts at insurrection; or when the black inhabitants were doubly formidable by reason of the greater proportion which they bore to the whites, in number, and of the savage state and unhappy mood in which they arrived from Africa. The real measure of danger was not understood but after long experience; and in the interval, the precautions taken, were naturally of the most jealous and rigorous aspect. That these have not been all repealed, or that some of them should be still enforced, is not inconsistent with an improved spirit of legislation; since the evils against which they were intended to guard are yet the subject of just apprehension. England inundated South Carolina, for instance, with barbarians, and now reproaches her with the measures which she took for her security against their brute force.

There is no Code Noir which surpasses in atrocity that

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* See the Appendix to Storch's Course of Political Economy, St. Petersburg, 1815. This writer states, that in 1782, the number of male peasants, or serfs, of the crown, amounted to 4,675,000; that they could be hired out, sold, given away, &c.; and the number of male slaves, the property of subjects, he estimates at 6,678,000; equally at the disposal of the masters.
part of the British statute book relating to Roman Catholics. What Englishman will allow us to make this, as it stood before Sir George Savile’s act, or even as it now stands, the index to British humanity and justice? Acts of proscription are still suffered to remain in terrenm, ready for a barely possible emergence. “The laws against the Catholics,” said the Bishop of Worcester, in the House of Lords, (May 19th, 1819,) “had hitherto been administered tenderly and sparingly; they would, doubtless, continue to be so administered, unless some event should occur to render their strict enforcement necessary.”

Since the revolution, most of the southern codes have been softened in regard to the slave police; and the murder of a negro is now capital throughout our union, except in one state. I have already quoted the assertion of Dr. Dickson, that “the harshness of the slave laws is but little softened by the lenity of the general practice in the British sugar islands.” The reverse of this is notoriously true of the American states. The patrol laws, for example, of South Carolina, which contain the most oppressive of her regulations, are rarely put in execution. In Virginia, the interdict laid, at the time of what is called Gabriel’s insurrection, upon the assemblage of negroes,—a “seditious meetings bill,” like that passed by the British parliament in 1817,—is wholly neglected. No restraint in this respect is imposed upon them by their masters, except such as may be necessary for purposes of domestic order and labour.

Before our revolution, the negro slavery of this country was, as we have seen, acknowledged to be universally less severe than that of any other part of the world. It has undergone, since that event, a great and striking amelioration. To this fact, all who have witnessed and compared the former and present lot of the slaves of our southern states, bear the most confident testimony. What was once deemed a moderate treatment, would now be a rigid one; and the tolerated rigour

* “Laws,” says Mr. Burke, in his speech at Bristol, previous to the election, “were made in this kingdom against Papiats as bloody as any of those which had been enacted by the Popish princes and states; and where those laws were not bloody, they were worse; as they were slow, cruel, outrageous on our nature, and kept men alive, only to insult in their persons every one of the rights and feelings of humanity.”

† By the standing Riot Act of England, not more than twelve persons are allowed to continue together, after it has been read by the magistrate. Lord Castlereagh said in Parliament in 1817, that “there was not on the statute book a law which had been more beneficial to the country.”
of the first period could find no countenance at the present. SECT. IX.
The negro has gained nearly as much by our separation from Great Britain as the white. The causes of this undeniable fact are various and obvious.

With the importation of the Africans, ceased much of the dread, which the slave population inspired, while it was continually receiving large accessions of strangers. At this time by far the greater part of the slaves of the old states, have been born and brought up by the side of the whites. In proportion as the indigenous character predominated, the propensity on the one hand to shake off the yoke, and the mistrust on the other, which occasioned its aggravation, regularly diminished. Another circumstance tended to render the slaves in a much less degree objects of terror, and to make room for the kindlier dispositions of our nature to operate; the whites came soon to exceed them considerably in number, from emigration added to natural increase. Brougham has speculated in his Colonial Policy, in conformity to the facts in our case. "There can be little doubt," he says, "that the fatal disproportion of the two classes, the great proportion of the imported negroes, and the cruel treatment of the slaves in general, would be all materially altered by any revolution that should separate the colonies from the parent state, while the more rigorous administration of an independent community, would lessen the danger arising from such a mixture of negroes, or such abuses of the slave system as might still remain."

Not only does the proportion which the slaves bear to the free part of the community, contribute to determine their condition, but, in general, the greater or smaller numbers in which they belong to individuals. The abolition of entail and the rule of primogeniture, together with the evaporation of those old prejudices which fettered parental affection in the testamentary distribution of estates, have, since the establishment of our independence, led to the subdivision of every kind of property, in the southern communities. The negroes, being more widely apportioned, exist in smaller bands, and are of course more under the immediate care and inspection of the masters, in whose eyes they must at the same time have, singly, more value. The interest of the master in the welfare of the slave is not to be urged as a full security against ill usage; but it cannot fail to have a considerable influence; and it has been constantly increasing from the enhancement of the price of negroes, occasioned by the demand for their labour in the new states, and the insufficiency of the supplies
which the illicit importation from Africa can furnish. The more abundant production of food, the increase of wealth with the planters, and more strictness of principle and regularity of habits, (for these too can be proved to be among the effects of the revolution,) have redounded likewise to the advantage of the slaves.

It is not to be doubted, but that the political discussions, which preceded our revolution, the spirit of the institutions which grew out of it, and the diffusion of education, excited a greater sensibility to human rights; a quicker sympathy with human sufferings; a more general liberality of sentiment; and a higher pride of character, in the slave-holding part of our population. Hence a new public opinion sprung up, requiring a system of lenity and generosity in the government and sustentation of the slaves; and repressive, not only of barbarity, but of habitual severity in any marked degree, and of what may be equivalent in its effects, habitual indifference and estrangement. These abuses have become disreputable; they expose the man who is guilty of them to the disdain and reprobation of his neighbours; and in this way are more efficaciously checked than they could be by any legislative enactments. The master who should deprive his negro of his peculium,—the produce of his poultry house or his little garden; who should force him to work on holidays or at night; who should deny him the common recreations, or leave him without shelter or provision in his old age, would incur the aversion of the community, and raise obstacles to the advancement of his own interests and external aims.

26. The American negro slavery is almost wholly free from two of the grievances which characterize that of the West Indies—under-feeding and over-working. With regard to the great article of food, the American negroes are, assuredly, better supplied than the free labourers of most parts of Europe. Flesh meat is not attainable for the latter in the same quantity which is commonly given to the first; it would seem, (on this head I refer to the quotations which I have made from the Quarterly Review,* ) not to be attainable at all for the poorer classes of Great Britain and Ireland. In respect to clothing and lodging, the comparison would give nearly the same result. On the score of fuel, the want of which occasions so much suffering in particular counties of Great Britain, and, as to the point of labour, the advantage is greatly

* See page 228.
on the side of the American negroes in general. I cannot, sect. ix. here, enter into the details of the system, upon which they are worked on the southern plantations; but I can say of it, that it involves nothing like the same intensity, duration, or continuity of exertion, which would appear to be indispensable in Great Britain, in almost all the lower walks of mechanical industry, for the mere support of animal life. The average number of hours of daily toil exceeds there by nearly one half that which is exacted under the system just mentioned. A few extracts from recent debates of Parliament will determine the validity of this assertion.

In the House of Commons, (April 29th, 1818,) "Mr. Peel said, in Manchester alone, 11,600 children were employed in the cotton factories, and the average time of labour thirteen hours a day. Most of these poor children, after the thirteen hours of labour, were obliged to go to school to learn to write."

"Sir Robert Peel said, it was proved that in Lancashire, children were employed fifteen hours a day, and after any stoppage, from five in the morning until ten in the evening, seventeen hours, and this often for three weeks at a time. On Sunday they were employed from six in the morning until twelve in cleaning the machinery."

"Mr. Peter Moore said, (May 13th, 1819,) in the town which he had the honour to represent, (Coventry,) there were five classes of manufacturers, each working ninety-six hours in the week, or sixteen hours in the day. The first of these classes gain, in return for their labour, ten shillings a week, or two pence halfpenny an hour, which is but a very trifling share of what they were formerly in the habit of acquiring. The second class gained 5s. 6d. a week. The third 2s. 9d., which is labouring four hours for five farthings. The two remaining classes receive 2s. and 1s. 6d. a week, which is working at the rate of seven and nine hours for a single halfpenny."

"Mr. Mansfield said, (March 25th, 1819,) that he had attended a committee that day, before whom a case was proved of a great number of labourers, who, by working fifteen or sixteen hours a day, could not earn above seven shillings per week."

The physical condition of the American negro is, on the whole, not comparatively alone, but positively good, and he is exempt from those racking anxieties—the exacerbations of despair, to which the English manufacturer and peasant are
subject in the pursuit of their pittance.* The old age of the negro, in Virginia and the Carolinas particularly, is by no means one of cheerlessness or destitution. He is not tasked beyond his strength; he is sure of nutriment; he remains in the midst of his comrades; and, in most cases, has a family about him with the feelings and attractions of legitimacy; for, the polygamy, and promiscuous intercourse between the sexes, which crown the abominations of West India slavery, are not common features in the North American.

We have it upon the authority of the Quarterly Review, that the great body of the British people "work with the prospect of want and pauperism before their eyes as what must be their destiny at last;" that "in the road in which the English labourer must travel, the poor house is the last stage on the way to the grave."† If we are entitled to form an opinion from the Parliamentary Reports,—no mean authority,—this final stage of the English labourer is worse than any stage in the career of the American negro. The "victim of American barbarity" finds in his "quarter" comforts which the tenant of the British poor house might envy, and can never hope to enjoy.

From the minutes of evidence before the parliamentary committee on the state of the poor, it would appear, that the treatment experienced in the receptacles provided for them, is wretched and barbarous almost beyond credibility. By way of example, the witnesses stated that in one room 28 feet long by 15 wide, there were two and twenty persons sleeping; that

* I appeal to the petitions presented to Parliament by bodies of ten and twenty thousand agriculturists and manufacturers at a time. The following representation, made by Mr. Brougham in the House of Commons, may be taken as a specimen of their condition.

"Mr. Brougham observed that the weavers, in consequence of the reduction of their wages, were compelled first, to part for their sustenance with all their trifling property by piece-meal, from the little furniture of their cottages to the very bedding and clothes that used to cover them from the weather. They struggled on with hunger, and went to sleep at night-fall, upon the calculation that if they worked an hour or two later, they might indeed earn three halfpence more, one of which must be paid for a candle, but then the clear gain of a penny would be too dearly bought, and leave them less able to work the next day. To such a frightful nicety of reckoning are human beings reduced, treating themselves like mere machines, and balancing the produce against the tear and wear, so as to obtain the maximum that their physical powers can be made to yield! At length, however, they must succumb: the workhouse closes their dismal prospect; or, with a reluctance that makes their lot a thousand times more pitiable, they submit to take parish relief; and, to sustain life, part with the independent spirit, the best birthright of an English peasant."

† See page 287.
idiots lived promiscuously with the other paupers; that the fowls and chickens were kept in the pantries where the food for the poor was kept; that they were in general extremely ill clothed, &c. The parishes contracted with individuals for keeping their poor at so much a head, and made them thus victims of avaricious speculation. It was shown that one individual farmed the poor of no less than forty parishes, receiving six shillings a week for each pauper; and spending of course as little as possible of this stipend for the accommodation of his guests. London had eighteen thousand poor in the different workhouses in England. I refer to the Report of the House of Commons on Mendicity, for a general picture of the condition of the paupers in those work-houses.

"Your committee," says the Report, "cannot hesitate to suggest that there are not in the country a set of beings more immediately requiring the protection of the legislature than the persons in a state of lunacy and mendicity, a very large proportion of whom are entirely neglected by their friends and relations. If the treatment of those in the middling or in the lower classes of life, shut up in hospitals, private mad-houses, or parish work-houses, is looked at, your committee are persuaded that a case cannot be found, where the necessity for a remedy is more urgent."

The details of the Report recall to mind, but with features of tenfold patheticalness, the touching lament of the poet Crabbe:

"Then too I own, it grieves me to behold
Those ever virtuous, helpless now and old,
By all for care and industry approv'd,
For truth respected, and for temper lov'd;
And who, by sickness and misfortune try'd,
Gave Want its worth and Poverty its pride:
I own it grieves me to behold them sent
From their old home; 'tis pain, 'tis punishment,
To leave each scene familiar, every face,
For a new people and a stranger race;
For those who, sunk in sloth and dead to shame,
From scenes of guilt with daring spirit came;
Men, just as guileless, at such manners start,
And bless their God that time has fenc'd their heart,
Confirm'd their virtue and expell'd the fear
Of vice in minds so simple and sincere.
Here the good pauper, losing all the praise
By worthy deeds acquire'd in better days,
Breathes a few months, then to his chamber led,
Expires while strangers prattle around his bed."

27. The religious instruction of the slaves cannot be said to be an object of immediate care with the majority, or any

* See Note X.
great proportion, of the American masters; but they are far from refusing them access to it, in any form. It is left at the option of the negroes to frequent the churches and meeting houses, which, in the country, have universally a compartment for their occupation. The old, or infirm, or those whose conduct has been exemplary, are indulged with horses to ride to sermons. They have, in numerous instances, houses of worship for their separate use, where individuals of their own number, empowered by the white elders, preach, and discharge the other functions of the ministry. Itinerant missionaries of the gospel have formed congregations of them in almost every district; and though the Christian lecture cannot be otherwise than rare, and the attendance upon it loose, yet enough is done to leave a salutary impression, and to make it utterly inconsistent with the truth to say of them, what the Quarterly Review says, no doubt with great truth, of two-thirds of the lower order of people in all the large cities and towns of England, and of "the greatest part of her manufacturing populace, and her miners and colliers,"—that they live as utterly ignorant of the doctrines and duties of Christianity, and are as errant and unconverted Pagans, as if they had existed in the wildest part of Africa."

South Carolina has had a great share of the obloqui of the British travellers, on this subject. Their outcry will not be silenced, but the friends of justice and humanity will be gratified, by the following facts which I extract from an official Report, dated the 14th June, 1819, of a committee of the Board of Managers of the Bible Society of Charleston, respecting the progress and present state of Religion in South Carolina. "From the best information the committee have been able to obtain, they find that the Gospel is now preached to about six hundred and thirteen congregations of Protestant Christians; that there are about two hundred and ninety-two ordained clergymen who labour amongst them, besides a considerable number of domestic missionaries, devoted and supported by each denomination, who dispense their labours to such of the people as remain destitute of an established ministry. From actual returns, and cautious estimates where such returns have not been obtained, it appears that in the state there are about 46,000 Protestants who receive the holy communion of the Lord’s supper. In the city of Charleston, upwards of one-fourth of the communicants are slaves or free people of colour: and it is supposed that in the other parts of the state, the

* See page 288.
proportion of such communicants may be estimated at about one-eighth. In every church they are freely admitted to attend on Divine service—in most of the churches distinct accommodations are provided for them, and the clergy in general make it a part of their pastoral care to devote frequent and stated seasons for the religious instruction of catechumen from amongst the black population."

This train of affairs in South Carolina is somewhat more creditable than that in the British West Indies, where scarcely any thing has been done for the conversion of the negroes. If we did not see by the statements of the Quarterly Review and the parliamentary papers, to what a deplorable extent the initiation of the people of England into Christianity has been neglected,* we should find it difficult to believe that her established church had, in the course of nearly two centuries, attempted nothing towards the regeneration of the millions of heathens who have been held in bondage in her islands. To this effect, however, is the testimony of all the best authorities concerning the affairs of those islands. Moravian missionaries alone had sought to introduce the light of the Gospel among a population requiring its lessons and consolation, more, perhaps, than any other on earth. At length the late Bishop Porteus founded a "Society for the conversion of negro slaves," which has been nearly inoperative. With respect to the British planters themselves, it is asserted in a recent work entitled to full credit, that "there is not, and never was, either worship or instruction of any kind provided by them for their numerous slaves."† The number of negroes in the British West Indies, baptized and endocrinated, bears no assignable proportion to those in the United States.

28. The British philanthropists, in making their appeal in favour of the former, have seemed to consider every thing as gained, if only "the humblest and coarsest necessaries of life, the protection of law, and the assistance of labouring cattle, could be secured to them."‡ It is long since so much and more has been secured to the great majority of the North American negroes; and the irresistible proof offers itself in the increase of their numbers. The Edinburgh Reviewers would, with all their ingenuity, find it difficult to reconcile the aspersions

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* See Note Y.
† Letters on the West Indies, by James Walker, London, 1818. Letter VI.
‡ Dickson’s Mitigation of Slavery. Preface.
PART I. which they cast upon the American as the murderer and scourge of slaves, with the fact that, according to the rate of increase from 1790 to 1810, the number of years required for the duplication of our slave population is only 25.99. The allowance to be made on account of importations, would not extend this term to twenty-eight at the utmost, for the natural increase. The population of Great Britain, as appears by authentic documents, does not double in less than eighty years.* Even in the most unhealthy districts of South Carolina, where rice is cultivated, and the labour of the negroes comparatively severe, they do not diminish in numbers. A benevolent practice prevails among some of the rice planters, of paying to the overseers, in addition to their regular emoluments, a certain sum per head (usually ten dollars) for the annual increase; and it has proved no insignificant source of revenue to the latter.

"The increase of the American slaves and people of colour," says the Quarterly Review of May, 1819, "appears to have been in a much greater proportion than that of the white population, and it is not improbable, that in a few generations, the negro race will exceed the whites in all except the eastern states. The number of slaves in the United States, is now above two millions, and including the free negroes, the black population of America constitutes more than one-fourth part of the whole." If all this were accurate, it would refute at once the tales which the orthodox journal has so often repeated con amore, respecting the treatment of that black population. It is marked, however, by the usual ignorance, or spirit of exaggeration, where America is in question. Our census of 1810 teaches, that, according to the ratio of increase for the twenty years preceding, the number of years required for the duplication of the whites was 22.48; and that required for the slaves, as I have mentioned, 25.99. The whites increased from 1790 to 1810, 85.26 per cent.; the slaves 70.75. The mere natural increase is not, however, shown exactly by this calculation. We should deduct the annual addition made to the numbers of both from without, which would probably leave the proportion the same. The whole number of slaves in 1810, was 1,191,364: and of free people of colour, 186,466. Together they did not equal one-fourth of

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* "It appears by Mr. Pickman's tables," says the Quarterly Review, "that the population of England and Wales has nearly doubled in the last hundred years." —a term nearly four times longer than that required for the duplication of the American negroes.
the white population, which was 5,862,092; nor make but little more than one-sixth of the whole. At present, the proportion must be still less, as the ratio of increase for the white population is undoubtedly greater.* In 1810, the white population of the nine slave-holding states of that period, amounted to 2,153,455; that of the coloured, free and enslaved, to 1,242,862. The census of 1820 will give three millions at least of white population in the slave-holding countries of the union; and not more than 1,700,000 of black, allowing for the addition made to the number of the last by illicit importation. Should we admit the ratio of increase to be the same for both, the political arithmetician of the Quarterly Review would find it difficult to solve the problem, in how many generations "the negro race will exceed the whites," especially if he be confined to his own limitation—"in all except the eastern states," under which denomination he could not mean to include Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois; containing nearly a million of whites, without the alloy of a slave.

29. The removal of considerable numbers of the slaves from the old slave-holding states, to the south and south-west, tends materially to increase the relative majority of the whites in those states, and is likely to continue, so as greatly to lessen the danger to which they may be held to be exposed. The slaves emigrate either with their original owners, or with persons of the same or an adjoining state, to whom they are sold, and who purchase them for their own use; or with the negro traders as they are called. The greater number go with the two first descriptions of persons, to a more fruitful soil; to a climate equally or more favourable to their constitutions; altogether they suffer but little, if at all, by the change of position. They are not, in general, committed to a new master, who is unknown; or who does not possess the best testimonials as to his views, and the respectability of his character. It had been long the practice to sell the intractable slaves, and such as were guilty of crimes, to the traders, who disposed of them to the planters of South Carolina and Georgia. This disposition even of culprits may scandalize the writers of the Quarterly Review; but it is not quite so harsh as that of selling them to

* The operation of it may be understood from the following statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>For every 100 Free Persons, There Were</th>
<th>Slaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1790</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>22.13 do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>20.29 do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>ditto</td>
<td>19.69 do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PART I.

the Bey of Tripoli* would have been; nor worse than the transportation of the British convicts to Botany Bay, according to the description of it which I have already given in the language of members of Parliament;† or to the character of it which is implied in the following extract from the volume of Parliamentary Debates for the year 1792. "Mr. Fox noticed the mention that had been made of the transportation of convicts to Botany Bay, and said, that the hardships of the passage would appear less extraordinary, when it was known, that the transportation was undertaken by slave merchants, and slave captains, and that a part of the misery of the convicts was the effect of slave fetters being used instead of those employed in general for convicts."

The proportion of slaves of good character, whom the traders obtain, is small comparatively: The severance or dispersion of families is by no means so common as might be supposed from the tales of the English travellers. This evil is produced in England in a hundred instances to one that occurs among our negroes, and with tenfold affliction, by the extensive emigration which the public burdens occasion, and

* The Report of the Parliamentary proceedings of April, 1819, furnishes the following.

"Mr. Bennet said (House of Commons) he had no high opinion of the tender sympathies of ministers on these subjects. He had in his recollection what passed on the subject of convicts in the year 1789, when they were first sent out; when (the house would scarcely believe it) it was proposed and discussed in the Privy Council, whether the convicts at that time should not be sold to the Bey of Tripoli as slaves! This proposition (the proposition of, as we understood, Lord Auckland) was considered, though of course rejected; though it showed how little disposed the government were at that time to attend to the situation of the convicts. At the same time, a ship that was sent out with them had not any settled destination; and the sentences of some of the convicts had expired before they reached the colony to which they were at length consigned."

† See page 304.

‡ "From the year 1785 to 1801, of 3833 convicts embarked, 385 died on board the transports, being nearly one in ten." O'Hará's History of N. S. Wales.

"The difficulties, which for a long course of years attended the plan for sending our convicts to New South Wales, gave rise to the convict establishments at Woolwick, Sheerness, and Portsmouth: where great numbers of criminals were crowded together to await the hour of their deportation, under circumstances of the most afflicting nature: many, who have been sentenced to transportation, having passed the whole period of their punishment in a state of wretched and useless imprisonment at home. Such was then the condition of these establishments, that they were pronounced in the House of Commons, by one of the best and greatest men that ever entered its walls, to be a hot bed of vice and wickedness." Roscoe, Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, 1819.
the operation of the poor laws; to say nothing of the cases so common in time of war, of seamen impressed when returning from distant voyages, and that even without being allowed the comfort of seeing their families.

Kidnapping is frequent; but the states have universally subjected it to the severest penalties; some of them to that of death. As great an abhorrence for it pervades the whole country, as any crime can be supposed to excite among a moral people. The flagellation of the slaves for misdemeanors, or from the impulses of anger, or churlishness in the masters, is, no doubt, too common; but it would be every way unjust to judge of the conduct of the Americans in this respect, by what passes in the West Indies. In the use of the lash the discipline of the southern plantations is contradistinguished from that of the West Indian, as much as in the degree of labour and the supply of food. Public opinion, and all the other causes of reformation which I have noticed, operate equally in this matter. But it is not for an Englishman to complain of the use of the lash among foreigners. The hysterical indignation of the British Reviewers and travellers on this head, appears even ludicrous, when we advert to the fact, that no nation employs the scourge more severely or generally than the British. Education with her is conducted with the birch; whipping is almost her sum of discipline in the army and navy; the seaman is flogged from ship to ship; the soldier, tied up to the halberds and exposed in the most shameful and ignominious manner, dies under the stripes of the drummer, or is withdrawn only when the surgeon who watches his ebbing pulse, declares that nature can bear no more. The number of apprentices in Great Britain is, probably, little less than that of our negroes; corporal punishment is as familiarly inflicted upon them, and as frequently to a brutal excess: I attest the Old Bailey calendar, when I assert, that they are oftener maimed and murdered by the hand of the masters. So horrid and multiplied were the enormities of this kind, which accident or private feeling brought to light, that the legislature was compelled to interfere; but with how little effect the records of the Assizes and the tenor of the late Parliamentary Reports, will show. In short, there is no form of human suffering which an Englishman is so much accustomed to witness, to hear and to read of, in his own country, as flagellation in all its varieties and degrees. I do not wish to pursue this odious topic, on which reprisals might have no end, further than to quote a passage of some significance from

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a late and excellent work of Mr. Roscoe of Liverpool.

"It has frequently been observed, with some degree of exultation, that torture is not permitted in this country. If by torture be meant the subjecting a person to the rack, for the purpose of compelling him to give evidence, or to confess an imputed crime, this country is certainly not chargeable with so diabolical a practice. But, if the lacerating and scourging the person of an individual, as a punishment for his offences, be torture, it is a proceeding not only well known to our laws, but of frequent occurrence. There are, in fact, few mutilations or sufferings to which the human frame can be subjected, that have not, in this country, at one time or another, been resorted to, as a punishment for offenders; nor does there appear to be any obstruction, other than such as arises from the more improved and humanized spirit of the times, to similar punishments being again inflicted; but independent of these barbarities, the use of the whip is general throughout the prisons of the kingdom, where prisoners, for small offences, are whipped and discharged."

Those advertisements for the recovery of runaways, which are copied into the English Reviews, and books of Travels, with exclamations of such horror and reproof, as though English newspapers contained nothing to chase the feelings of humanity, and rouse the spirit of freedom; are incident to the existence itself of negro slavery; and I think I have shown that this is an evil which could neither be avoided nor removed by America. Negroes cannot be held as property, without being subject to alienation. A mortmain would be impracticable, and if it could be established, mischievous to all parties. The proclamation of the intention to sell, while it gives effect to the necessary and useful right of alienation, affords the subject of it a better chance of being transferred into good hands. At all events, it is an inevitable incident of an inevitable institution. Slaves who abscond from the master must be reclaimed, or there would be an end to all slavery in the most mischievous of all forms of abolition. Without the aid of the public, the master would be unable to recover the fugitive. And it is to be presumed that the latter is, quite as often, a delinquent seeking independence for the sake of licentiousness, or from a refractory disposition, as a victim escaping the exactions of avarice, or the lash of tyranny. Unfortunately, the character of the negro race with us, and indeed the character which is produced in all cases of bondage, might warrant

* Observations on Penal Jurisprudence, 1819.
a presumption more unfavourable to the slave. His flight is, Sect. ix.
in a general point of view, a violation of the order of society,
which it is the interest, and, abstractedly, the duty, of every
citizen to repress and correct.

The Quarterly Review of May, 1819, after transcribing
from Fearon's Travels a couple of plain advertisements of
negroes for sale or hire, which that missionary had extracted
from a New York paper, proceeds thus—"What, subjoins
Mr. Fearon with an amiable warmth, should we say, if in
England we saw such advertisements in the Times newspaper?
Should we not conclude that freedom existed only in words?
Such would, indeed, be a legitimate conclusion."—Alas, then,
for the freedom of England herself, as late as the year 1772,
notwithstanding the boasts of the Britons of that day! Clark-
son and Granville Sharp have kept a record which, upon the
principles of Mr. Fearon and the Quarterly Review, invalid-
dates all their pretensions. Clarkson, having mentioned the
opinion given in 1729, by the great law officers of the crown
—that a slave coming from the West Indies into Great Britain
did not become free, and that the master might legally compel
him to return again to the plantations,—makes the following
statement:

"The cruel and illegal opinion was delivered in the year
1729. The planters, merchants, and others, gave it of course
all the publicity in their power. And the consequences were
as might easily have been apprehended. In a little time slaves
absconding were advertised in the London papers as runaways,
and rewards offered for the apprehension of them, in the same
brutal manner as we find them advertised in the land of sla-
very. They were advertised also, in the same papers, to be
sold by auction, sometimes by themselves, and at others with
horses, chaises, and harness. They were seized also by their
masters, or by persons employed by them, in the very streets,
and dragged from thence to the ships; and so unprotected now
were these poor slaves, that persons in no wise concerned with
them began to institute a trade in their persons, making agree-
ments with captains of ships going to the West Indies to put
them on board at a certain price."

Granville Sharp, unmindful, like the British Reviewers,
that the domestic slavery which Britain had planted in our
soil, and so assiduously cultivated, could not be excised,
nor divested of its essential properties, also suffered him-
selves to be fired by some New York advertisements. When
he has recited them, in his "Representation of the Injus-
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"But hold! perhaps the Americans may be able, with too much justice, to retort this severe reflection, and may refer us to newspapers published even in the free city of London, which contain advertisements, not less dishonourable than their own. See the following advertisement in the Public Ledger of 31st December, 1761.

"FOR SALE,

"A healthy Negro Girl, aged about 15 years; speaks good English, works at her needle, washes well, does household work, and has had the small pox. By J. W. &c."

Another advertisement, not long ago, offered a reward for stopping a female slave who had left her mistress in Hatton Garden. And in the Gazetteer of 18th April, 1769, appeared a very extraordinary advertisement, with the following title.

"HORSES, TIM WHISKEY, AND BLACK BOY."

"To be sold, at the Bull and Gate Inn, Holborn, a very good Tim Whiskey, little the worse for wear, &c." Afterwards, "A chesnut Gelding."—Then, "A very good grey Mare."—And last of all, (as if of the least consequence) "A well made good tempered Black Boy; he has lately had the small pox, and will be sold to any gentleman. Enquire as above."

Another advertisement in the same paper, contains a very particular description of a negro man, called Jeremiah ——, and concludes as follows:—"Whoever delivers him to captain M——y, on board the Elizabeth, at Prince's stairs, Rotherhithe, on or before the 31st instant, shall receive thirty guineas reward, or ten guineas for such intelligence as shall enable the captain or his master, effectually to secure him."

"A creole Black Boy is also offered to sale in the Daily Advertiser of the same date."

"Besides these instances, the Americans may perhaps taunt us with the shameful treatment of a poor negro servant, who not long ago was put up to sale by public auction, together with the effects of his bankrupt master.—Also, that the

* London, 1769.
prisons of this free city have been frequently prostituted of sect. ix. late by the tyrannical and dangerous practice of confining negroes, under the pretence of slavery, though there has been no warrant whatsoever for their commitment."

It may be said that these practices were arrested in England. They were indeed, and so have they been wherever this could be done, in the United States. But they were more wanton and malignant in that country, since they did not spring out of a general and long established system of slavery; and they show how the people of England would have acted, if the old law had not proved to be, upon labo-
rarious investigation, peremptory upon the subject. The Bri-
tish merchant, however, continued to fit out his ship at Liver-
pool, or London, for the coast of Africa; the British factory supplied him with troops of kidnapped negroes; his captain transported them, with every refinement of cruelty, to the British West Indies, and there advertised and sold them, un-
der the sanction of the British government, in the name of his owner, a great stickler, perhaps, for liberty and universal emancipation; who railed each day against American inconsis-
tistency and barbarity in holding and advertising slaves, and repeated complacently the well known verses of Cowper, "slaves cannot breathe in England," &c.

30. We do not deny, in America, that great abuses and evils accompany our negro slavery. The plurality of the leading men of the southern states, are so well aware of its pestilent genius, that they would be glad to see it abolished, if this were feasible with benefit to the slaves, and without inflicting on the country, injury of such magnitude, as no community has ever voluntarily incurred. While a really practicable plan of abolition remains undiscovered, or undetermined; and while the general conduct of the Americans is such only as neces-
sarily results from their situation, they are not to be arraigned for this institution. If,—as I have no doubt is the case,—it produces here much less misery and vice, than it produces in the other countries which are cursed with it, it furnishes occasion rather for praise than blame. The native Americans claim the distinction of abusing less the dangerous power with which it invests the slave holder; of consulting more the comfort and general welfare of its victims; than the foreigners, Britons not excepted, who so readily participate in that power on associating themselves to this nation. We are
told by an English writer, Ramsay,* who is supported in the
assertion by Edwards, that, with respect to the West India sla-
very, "adventurers from Europe are universally more cruel
and morose towards the slaves than the creoles or native West
Indians." The analogy is perfect in our case, and of notoriety.
It is a matter of old experience in Virginia and the Carolinas;
and the American planter appears to like advantage at present
in Louisiana, in the contrast, on this head, with the French and
Spanish, who have pursued, but who are gradually abandon-
ing under the salutary influence of our political and social
spirit, an hereditary system of rigour.

In admitting the deformity and evil of our negro slavery,
we are far from acknowledging, that any nation of Europe is
entitled, upon a general comparison between our situation as
it is thus unlucky modified, and her own, with all appen-
dages and ingredients, to assign to herself the pre-eminence
in felicity, virtue, or wisdom. On the contrary, we know of
none with which we would make a general exchange of "in-
titutions," and are assured that there is none, whose mode of
being on the whole, is not much more unfavourable than ours,
to the attainment of the great ends of society. Who can
say that the negro slavery of these states, combined even with
every other spring of ill, existing among us, occasions, propor-
tionably, as much of suffering, immorality and vileness, as the
unequal distribution of wealth and the distinctions of rank, the
manufacturing system, the penal code, the taxes, the tythes,
the poor rates, the impressment, in England? Are there not
as many of her inhabitants, as the whole number of our blacks,
as effectually "disfranchised;" as entirely uninstructed; in
the last stage of penury and distress; whose physical con-
dition universally, is hardly better than that of the most lowly
plantation slave, and who are heart-struck and broken-spirit-
ed, if not hardened and enraged?

Let us examine for a moment how the case stands with the
people of England, as to one of the worst of the effects, with
which our, and all other domestic slavery, is properly re-
proached,—the abasement of the human character. Lord
Sheffield is a witness who will never be suspected of a dispo-
sition to disparage his country. In 1818, he published a
pamphlet, entitled Observations on the Poor Laws; which
contains the following, among other striking representations:

"There is much truth in the remark that a small additional
increase of the assessments would, in many instances, render

* Essay on the treatment and conversion of slaves, &c.
the land productive of no rent at all. The very aggravated situation of our little farmers is deplorable; it is ruinous.”

“In many parishes, three-fourths, sometimes four-fifths of the parish, actually receive relief: the greatest part of the population have become beggars, and often insolently insist upon relief depending rather upon their clamorous demands than on their industry, foresight, or economy.”

“The prevailing abuses have brought the country to such a pass, and have so demoralized and vitiated a great proportion of the people, that, notwithstanding the ruinous expense incurred by the poor rates, the misery of the lower ranks is so far from being alleviated, that it is virtually created and extended by it.”

In the House of Commons, March 3d, 1818, Mr. Curwen said, that “the inadequacy of wages and the practice of supplying the deficiency of them from the parish funds, had destroyed the spirit of independence among the poor.” In the month of March of the year preceding, Lord Castlereagh remarked to the house, that “it must be aware that a great proportion of the wages of the country was paid out of the poor rates.” On the 19th May, 1819, Lord J. Russell said, in the same place, “he must refer to the conduct of the ministry on the important subject of the poor laws, the discussion of which subject not one of his majesty’s ministers had attended. A lamented friend of his, whose loss was felt every day more and more—he meant Mr. Horner—had observed that by the present poor laws, the people were returning fast to a state of villeinage. The observation was true; they were returning to a state of villeinage, and to a state of villeinage that was incalculably more dangerous than that which existed six centuries ago in an age of darkness and superstition. Sorry was he to say that the once manly peasantry of this country, were now becoming lazy and riotous, and disrespectful to their superiors, and that they were beginning to look up to the laws with no other view than that of obtaining by them a temporary subsistence.”

We have the curious confession of Lord Sidmouth, made in the House of Peers, on the 3d June, 1818, that “it was notorious the dread of transportation had almost subsided, and perhaps had been succeeded by the desire to emigrate to New South Wales.” This desire, which indicates so clearly the state of things at home, would not appear, however, to have been always indulged. Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, in her evidence before the committee of the House of Commons on the state of the prisons, mentioned that “several persons,
husbands in anxiety to follow their wives, and vice versa, were induced to commit crimes. She instanced one woman who lately suffered death, viz. Charlotte Newman, actuated by a desire to follow her husband to Botany Bay, who had committed the same offence; but it was thought proper to make an example of her, and she was executed.

I could produce lamentations without end, uttered in Parliament and in the British pamphlets on domestic affairs, respecting this prostration of character among the body of the English people. It is one view of the state of society in Great Britain, which excites grief and commiseration; but there are numberless others which fill the mind with horror, and bring unequally disgrace upon human nature. The extent and variety of the disorder, corruption, oppression, and barbarity; in short, of every species of guilt, misery, and degradation, which we find unveiled in the late Parliamentary Reports concerning the poor laws; the state of the prisons; the lunatic asylums, and work houses; the charitable trusts; the mendicity and vagrancy, particularly of London; the ignorance of the lower orders; the administration of the penal code,—could not be believed, if they were not so authenticated; and can as yet scarcely be conceived to exist in a community professing to be well governed, and styling itself the "best and most enlightened" in the world. America will be content to admit all that the British travellers have written of her negro slavery; to "hold each strange tale devoutly true," and then to stand the comparison with Great Britain, provided the disclosures of these Reports, the practice of impressment, the system of discipline in the army and navy, the proceedings during the suspension of the habeas corpus act, the excise, and the hulks, be kept in view by the umpire.

* See Note Z.