



INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

AMONG the large body of negroes held in a state of bondage, or otherwise living in a condition unfavourable to mental development, there have at various times occurred instances of intelligence far beyond what could have been expected in this unhappy and abused, or at least neglected race. In the United States of America an instance occurred during last century of a coloured man shewing a remarkable skill in mathematical science. His name was Richard Banneker, and he belonged to Maryland. He was altogether self-taught, and having directed his attention to the study of astronomy, his calculations were so thorough and exact, as to excite the approbation of such men as Pitt, Fox, Wilberforce, and other eminent persons; and an almanac which he composed was produced in the House of Commons as an argument in favour of the mental cultivation of the coloured people, and of their liberation from their wretched thralldom. Elsewhere, we have presented the history of the gallant and unfortunate Toussaint l'Ouverture, a negro of St Domingo, whose name will ever be cherished by the friends of suffering humanity; and we now lay before our readers a few sketches of the lives of coloured individuals, who, though less celebrated than Toussaint, are equally worthy of remembrance, and of being placed along with Richard Banneker. We begin with a notice of

THOMAS JENKINS.

THOMAS JENKINS was the son of an African king, and bore externally all the usual features of the negro. His father reigned over a considerable tract of country to the east of, and, we believe, including Little Cape Mount, a part of the wide coast of Guinea, which used to be much resorted to by British vessels for the purchase of slaves. The negro sovereign, whom the British sailors knew by the name of King Cock-eye, from a personal peculiarity, having observed what a superiority civilisation and learning gave to the Europeans over the Africans in their traffic, resolved to send his eldest son to Britain, in order that he might acquire all the advantages of knowledge. He accordingly bargained with a Captain Swanstone, a native of Hawick, in Scotland, who traded to the coast for ivory, gold-dust, &c. that the child should be taken by him to his own country, and returned in a few years fully educated, for which he was to receive a certain consideration in the productions of Africa. The lad recollected a little of the scene which took place on his being handed over to Swanstone. His father, an old man, came with his mother, who was much younger, and a number of sable courtiers, to a place on the side of a green eminence near the coast, and there, amidst the tears of the latter parent, he was formally consigned to the care of the British trader, who pledged himself to return his tender charge, some years afterwards, endowed with as much learning as he might be found capable of receiving. The lad was accordingly conveyed on ship-board, where the fancy of the master conferred upon him the name of Thomas Jenkins.

Swanstone brought his protégé to Hawick, and was about to take the proper means for fulfilling his bargain, when, unfortunately, he was cut off from this life. No provision having been made for such a contingency, Tom was thrown upon the wide world, not only without the means of obtaining a Christian education, but destitute of everything that was necessary to supply still more pressing wants. Mr Swanstone died in a room in the Tower Inn at Hawick, where Tom very faithfully attended him, though almost starved by the cold of a Scottish winter. After his guardian had expired, he was in a state of the greatest distress from cold, till the worthy landlady, Mrs Brown, brought him down to her huge kitchen fire, where alone, of all parts of the house, could he find a climate agreeable to his nerves. Tom was ever after very grateful to Mrs Brown for her kindness. After he had remained for some time at the inn, a farmer in Teviot-head, who was the nearest surviving relation of his guardian, agreed to take charge of him, and accordingly he was removed to the house of that individual, where he soon made himself useful in rocking the cradle, looking after the pigs and poultry, and other such humble duties. When he left the inn, he understood hardly a word of

English ; but here he speedily acquired the common dialect of the district, with all its peculiarities of accent and intonation. He lived in Mr L——'s family for several years, in the course of which he was successively advanced to the offices of cow-herd and driver of peats to Hawick for sale on his master's account, which latter duty he discharged very satisfactorily. After he had become a stout boy, Mr Laidlaw of Falnash, a gentleman of great respectability and intelligence, took a fancy for him, and readily prevailed upon his former protector to yield him into his charge. 'Black Tom,' as he was called, became at Falnash a sort of Jack-of-all-trades. He acted as cow-herd at one time, and stable-boy at another : in short, he could turn his hand to any sort of job. It was his especial duty to go upon all errands to Hawick, for which a retentive memory well qualified him. He afterwards became a regular farm-servant to Mr Laidlaw, and it was while acting in this capacity that he first discovered a taste for learning. How Tom acquired his first instructions is not known. The boy probably cherished a notion of duty upon this subject, and was anxious to fulfil, as far as his unfortunate circumstances would permit, the designs of his parent. He probably picked up a few crumbs of elementary literature at the table of Mr Laidlaw's children, or interested the servants to give him what knowledge they could.

In the course of a brief space, Mrs Laidlaw was surprised to find that Tom began to have a strange liking for candle-ends. Not one about the farmhouse could escape him. Every scrap of wick and tallow that he fell in with was secreted and taken away to his loft above the stable, and very dismal suspicions began to be entertained respecting the use he put them to. Curiosity soon incited the people about the farm to watch his proceedings after he had retired to his den ; and it was then discovered, to the astonishment of all, that the poor lad was engaged, with a book and a slate, in drawing rude imitations of the letters of the alphabet. It was found that he also kept an old fiddle beside him, which cost the poor horses below many a sleepless night. On the discovery of his literary taste, Mr Laidlaw put him to an evening school, kept by a neighbouring rustic, at which he made rapid progress—such, indeed, as to excite astonishment all over the country, for no one had ever dreamt that there was so much as a possibility of his becoming a scholar.

By and by, though daily occupied with his drudgery as a farm-servant, he began to *instruct himself in Latin and Greek*. A boy-friend, who in advanced life communicated to us most of the facts we are narrating, lent him several books necessary in these studies ; and Mr and Mrs Laidlaw did all in their power to favour his wishes, though the distance of a classical academy was a sufficient bar, if there had been no other, to prevent their giving him the means or opportunity of regular instruction. In speaking of the kind treat-

ment which he had received from these worthy individuals, his heart has often been observed to swell, and the tear to start into his honest dark eye. Besides acquainting himself tolerably well with Latin and Greek, he initiated himself in the study of mathematics.

A great era in Tom's life was his possessing himself of a Greek dictionary. Having learned that there was to be a sale of books at Hawick, he proceeded thither, in company with our informant. Tom possessed twelve shillings, saved out of his wages, and his companion vowed that if more should be required for the purchase of any particular book, he should not fail to back him in the competition—so far as eighteenpence would warrant, that being the amount of his own little stock. Tom at once pitched upon the lexicon as the grand necessary of his education, and accordingly he began to bid for it. All present stared with wonder when they saw a negro, clad in the gray cast-off surtout of a private soldier, and the number 'XCVI.' still glaring in white oil-paint on his back, competing for a book which could only be useful to a student at a considerably advanced stage. A gentleman of the name of Moncrieff, who knew Tom's companion, beckoned him forward, and inquired with eager curiosity into the seeming mystery. When it was explained, and Mr Moncrieff learned that thirteen and sixpence was the utmost extent of their joint stocks, he told his young friend to bid as far beyond that sum as he chose, and he would be answerable for the deficiency. Tom had now bidden as far as he could go, and he was turning away in despair, when his young friend, in the very nick of time, threw himself into the competition. 'What, what do you mean?' said the poor negro in great agitation; 'you know we cannot pay both that and the duty.' His friend, however, did not regard his remonstrances, and immediately he had the satisfaction of placing the precious volume in the hands which were so eager to possess it—only a shilling or so being required from Mr Moncrieff. Tom carried off his prize in triumph, and, it is needless to say, made the best use of it.

It may now be asked—what was the personal character of this extraordinary specimen of African intellect? We answer at once—the best possible. Tom was a mild, unassuming creature, free from every kind of vice, and possessing a kindliness of manner which made him the favourite of all who knew him. In fact, he was one of the most popular characters in the whole district of Upper Teviotdale. His employers respected him for the faithful and zealous manner in which he discharged his humble duties, and everybody was interested in his singular efforts to obtain knowledge. Having retained no trace of his native language, he resembled, in every respect except his skin, an ordinary peasant of the south of Scotland: only he was much more learned than the most of them, and spent his time somewhat more abstractedly. His mind was deeply impressed with the truths of the Christian faith, and he was a regular

attender upon every kind of religious ordinances. Altogether, Tom was a person of the most worthy and respectable properties, and, even without considering his meritorious struggles for knowledge, would have been beloved and esteemed wherever he was known.

When Tom was about twenty years of age, a vacancy occurred in the school of Teviot-head, which was an appendage to the parish school, for the use of the scattered inhabitants of a very wild pastoral territory. A committee of the presbytery of Jedburgh was appointed to sit on a particular day at Hawick, in order to examine the candidates for this humble charge, and report the result to their constituents. Among three or four competitors appeared the black farm-servant of Falnash, with a heap of books under his arm, and the everlasting soldier's greatcoat, with the staring 'XCVI.' upon his back. The committee was surprised; but they could not refuse to read his testimonials of character, and put him through the usual forms of examination. More than this, his exhibition was so decidedly superior to the rest, that they could not avoid reporting him as the best fitted for the situation. Tom retired triumphant from the field, enjoying the delightful reflection, that now he would be placed in a situation much more agreeable to him than any other he had ever known, and where he would enjoy infinitely better opportunities of acquiring instruction.

For a time this prospect was dashed. On the report coming before the presbytery, a majority of the members were alarmed at the strange idea of placing a negro and born pagan in such a situation, and poor Tom was accordingly voted out of all the benefits of the competition. The poor fellow appeared to suffer dreadfully from this sentence, which made him feel keenly the misfortune of his skin, and the awkwardness of his situation in the world. But fortunately, the people most interested in the matter felt as indignant at the treatment which he had received, as he could possibly feel depressed. The heritors, among whom the late Duke of Buccleuch was the chief, took up the case so warmly, that it was immediately resolved to set up Tom in opposition to the teacher appointed by the presbytery, and to give him an exact duplicate of the salary which they already paid to that person. An old *smiddy* (blacksmith's shop) was hastily fitted up for his reception, and Tom was immediately installed in office, with the universal approbation of both parents and children. It followed, as a matter of course, that the other school was completely deserted; and Tom, who had come to this country to learn, soon found himself fully engaged in teaching, and in the receipt of an income more than adequate to his wants.

To the gratification of all his friends, and some little confusion of face to the presbytery, he turned out an excellent teacher. He had a way of communicating knowledge that proved in the highest degree successful, and as he contrived to carry on the usual exercises without the use of any severities, he was as much beloved by his

pupils as he was respected by those who employed him. Five days every week he spent in the school. On the Saturdays, he was accustomed to walk to Hawick (eight miles distant), in order to make an exhibition of what he had himself acquired during the week, to the master of the academy there; thus keeping up, it will be observed, his own gradual advance in knowledge. It further shews his untiring zeal for religious instruction, that he always returned to Hawick next day—of course an equal extent of travel—in order to attend the church.

After he had conducted the school for one or two years, finding himself in possession of about twenty pounds, he bethought him of spending a winter at college. The esteem in which he was held rendered it an easy matter to demit his duties to an assistant for the winter; and this matter being settled, he waited upon his good friend, Mr Moncrieff (the gentleman who had enabled him to get the lexicon, and who had since done him many other good offices), in order to consult about other matters concerning the step he was about to take. Mr Moncrieff, though accustomed to regard Tom as a wonder, was nevertheless truly surprised at this new project. He asked, above all things, the amount of his stock of cash. On being told that twenty pounds was all, and, furthermore, that Tom contemplated attending the Latin, Greek, and mathematical classes, he informed him that this would never do: the money would hardly pay his fees. Tom was much disconcerted at this; but his generous friend soon relieved him, by placing in his hands an order upon a merchant in Edinburgh for whatever might be further required to support him for a winter at college.

Tom now pursued his way to Edinburgh with his twenty pounds. On applying to the Professor of Humanity (Latin) for a ticket to his class, that gentleman looked at him for a moment in silent wonder, and asked if he had acquired any rudimental knowledge of the language. Mr Jenkins, as he ought now to be called, said modestly that he had studied Latin for a considerable time, and was anxious to complete his acquaintance with it. Mr P——, finding that he only spoke the truth, presented the applicant with a ticket, for which he generously refused to take the usual fee. Of the other two professors to whom he applied, both stared as much as the former, and only one took the fee. He was thus enabled to spend the winter in a most valuable course of instruction, without requiring to trench much upon Mr Moncrieff's generous order; and next spring he returned to Teviot-head, and resumed his professional duties.

The end of this strange history is hardly such as could have been wished. It is obvious, we think, that Mr Jenkins should have been returned by some benevolent society to his native country, where he might have been expected to do wonders in civilising and instructing his father's, or his own subjects. Unfortunately, about thirty years ago, a gentleman of the neighbourhood, animated by the best intentions,

recommended him to the Christian Knowledge Society, as a proper person to be a missionary among the colonial slaves ; and he was induced to go out as a teacher to the Mauritius—a scene entirely unworthy of his exertions. There he attained great eminence as a teacher.

PHILLIS WHEATLEY.

In the year 1761, Mrs John Wheatley, of Boston, in North America, went to the slave-market, to select, from the crowd of unfortunates there offered for sale, a negro girl, whom she might train, by gentle usage, to serve as an affectionate attendant during her old age. Amongst a group of more robust and healthy children, the lady observed one, slenderly formed, and suffering apparently from change of climate and the miseries of the voyage. The interesting countenance and humble modesty of the poor little stranger induced Mrs Wheatley to overlook the disadvantage of a weak state of health, and Phillis, as the young slave was subsequently named, was purchased in preference to her healthier companions, and taken home to the abode of her mistress. The child was in a state almost of perfect nakedness, her only covering being a strip of dirty carpet. These things were soon remedied by the attention of the kind lady into whose hands the young African had been thrown, and in a short time, the effects of comfortable clothing and food were visible in her returning health. Phillis was, at the time of her purchase, between seven and eight years old, and the intention of Mrs Wheatley was to train her up to the common occupations of a menial servant. But the marks of extraordinary intelligence which Phillis soon evinced, induced her mistress's daughter to teach her to read ; and such was the rapidity with which this was effected, that, in sixteen months from the time of her arrival in the family, the African child had so mastered the English language, to which she was an utter stranger before, as to read with ease the most difficult parts of sacred writ. This uncommon docility altered the intentions of the family regarding Phillis, and in future she was kept constantly about the person of her mistress, whose affections she entirely won by her amiable disposition and propriety of demeanour.

At this period, neither in the mother-country nor in the colonies was much attention bestowed on the education of the labouring-classes of the whites themselves, and much less, it may be supposed, was expended on the mental cultivation of the slave population. Hence, when little Phillis, to her acquirements in reading, added, by her own exertions and industry, the power of writing, she became an object of very general attention. It is scarcely possible to suppose that any care should have been expended on her young mind before her abduction from her native land, and indeed her tender years almost precluded the possibility even of such culture as Africa

could afford. Of her infancy, spent in that unhappy land, Phillis had but one solitary recollection, but that is an interesting one. She remembered that, every morning, *her mother poured out water before the rising sun*—a religious rite, doubtless, of the district from which the child was carried away. Thus every morning, when the day broke over the land and the home which fate had bestowed on her, was Phillis reminded of the tender mother who had watched over her infancy, but had been unable to protect her from the hand of the merciless breakers-up of all domestic and social ties. The young negro girl, however, regarded her abduction with no feelings of regret, but with thankfulness, as having been the means of bringing her to a land where a light, unknown in her far-off home, shone as a guide to the feet and a lamp to the path.

As Phillis grew up to womanhood, her progress and attainments did not belie the promise of her earlier years. She attracted the notice of the literary characters of the day and the place, who supplied her with books, and encouraged by their approbation the ripening of her intellectual powers. This was greatly assisted by the kind conduct of her mistress, who treated her in every respect like a child of the family—admitted her to her own table—and introduced her as an equal into the best society of Boston. Notwithstanding these honours, Phillis never for a moment departed from the humble and unassuming deportment which distinguished her when she stood, a little trembling alien, to be sold, like a beast of the field, in the slave-market. Never did she presume upon the indulgence of those benevolent friends who regarded only her worth and her genius, and overlooked in her favour all the disadvantages of caste and of colour. So far was Phillis from repining at, or resenting the prejudices which the long usages of society had implanted, too deeply to be easily eradicated, in the minds even of the most humane of a more favoured race, that she uniformly respected them, and, on being invited to the tables of the great and the wealthy, chose always a place apart for herself, that none might be offended at a thing so unusual as sitting at the same board with a woman of colour—a child of a long-degraded race.

Such was the modest and amiable disposition of Phillis Wheatley: her literary talents and acquirements accorded well with the intrinsic worth of her character. At the early age of fourteen, she appears first to have attempted literary composition; and between this period and the age of nineteen, the whole of her poems which were given to the world seem to have been written. Her favourite author was Pope, and her favourite work the translation of the *Iliad*. It is not of course surprising that her pieces should present many features of resemblance to those of her cherished author and model. She began also the study of the Latin tongue, and if we may judge from a translation of one of Ovid's tales, appears to have made no inconsiderable progress in it.

INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

A great number of Phillis Wheatley's pieces were written to commemorate the deaths of the friends who had been kind to her. The following little piece is on the death of a young gentleman of great promise :

' Who taught thee conflict with the powers of night,
 To vanquish Satan in the fields of fight ?
 Who strung thy feeble arms with might unknown ?
 How great thy conquest, and how bright thy crown !
 War with each principedom, throne, and power is o'er ;
 The scene is ended, to return no more.
 Oh, could my muse thy seat on high behold,
 How decked with laurel, and enriched with gold !
 Oh, could she hear what praise thy harp employs,
 How sweet thine anthems, how divine thy joys,
 What heavenly grandeur should exalt her strain !
 What holy raptures in her numbers reign !
 To soothe the troubles of the mind to peace,
 To still the tumult of life's tossing seas,
 To ease the anguish of the parent's heart,
 What shall my sympathising verse impart ?
 Where is the balm to heal so deep a wound ?
 Where shall a sovereign remedy be found ?
 Look, gracious Spirit ! from thy heavenly bower,
 And thy full joys into their bosoms pour :
 The raging tempest of their griefs control,
 And spread the dawn of glory through the soul,
 To eye the path the saint departed trod,
 And trace him to the bosom of his God.'

The following passage on sleep, from a poem of some length, *On the Providence of God*, shews a very considerable reach of thought, and no mean powers of expression :

' As reason's powers by day our God disclose,
 So may we trace Him in the night's repose.
 Say, what is sleep ? and dreams, how passing strange !
 When action ceases and ideas range
 Licentious and unbounded o'er the plains,
 Where fancy's queen in giddy triumph reigns.
 Hear in soft strains the dreaming lover sigh
 To a kind fair, and rave in jealousy ;
 On pleasure now, and now on vengeance bent,
 The labouring passions struggle for a vent.
 What power, O man ! thy reason then restores,
 So long suspended in nocturnal hours ?
 What secret hand returns* the mental train,
 And gives improved thine active powers again ?
 From thee, O man ! what gratitude should rise !

* *Returns*, a common colloquial error for *restores*.

INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

And when from balmy sleep thou op'st thine eyes,
Let thy first thoughts be praises to the skies.
How merciful our God, who thus imparts
O'erflowing tides of joy to human hearts,
When wants and woes might be our righteous lot,
Our God forgetting, by our God forgot !

We have no hesitation in stating our opinion, and we believe that many will concur in it, that these lines, written by an African slave-girl at the age of fifteen or sixteen, are quite equal to a great number of the verses that appear in all standard collections of English poetry, under the names of Halifax, Dorset, and others of 'the mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease.' Phillis Wheatley's lines are, if anything, superior in harmony, and are not inferior in depth of thought; the faults are those which characterise the models she copied from; for it must be recollected that, sixty years ago, the older authors of England were almost unknown; and till the return to nature and truth in the works of Cowper, the only popular writers were those who followed the artificial, though polished style introduced with the second Charles from the continent of Europe. This accounts fully for the elaborate versification of the negro girl's poetry; since it required minds such as those of Cowper and Wordsworth to throw off the trammels of this artificial style, and to revive the native vigour and simplicity of their country's earlier verse.

Phillis Wheatley felt a deep interest in everything affecting the liberty of her fellow-creatures, of whatever condition, race, or colour. She expresses herself with much feeling in an address to the Earl of Dartmouth, secretary of state for North America, on the occasion of some relaxation of the system of haughty severity which the home government then pursued towards the colonies, and which ultimately caused their separation and independence.

'Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
Wonder from whence my love of freedom sprung;
Whence flow those wishes for the common good,
By feeling hearts alone best understood—
I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate,
Was snatched from Afric's fancied happy seat.
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parents' breast!
Steeled was that soul, and by no misery moved,
That from a father seized his babe beloved;
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?'

A slight and rather curious defect of Phillis's intellectual powers might, under ordinary circumstances, have prevented her compositions from being ever placed on paper. This was the weakness of

INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

her memory, which, though it did not prevent her from acquiring the Latin tongue, or benefiting by her reading, yet disabled her from retaining on her mind, for any length of time, her own cogitations. Her kind mistress provided a remedy for this, by ordering a fire to be kept constantly in Phillis's room, so that she might have an opportunity of recording any thoughts that occurred to her mind, by night as well as by day, without endangering her health from exposure to cold.

The constitution of Phillis was naturally delicate, and her health always wavering and uncertain. At the age of nineteen, her condition became such as to alarm her friends. A sea voyage was recommended by the physicians, and it was arranged that Phillis should take a voyage to England in company with a son of Mrs Wheatley, who was proceeding thither on commercial business. The amiable negro girl had hitherto never been parted from the side of her benefactress since the hour of her adoption into the family; and though the necessity of the separation was acknowledged, it was equally painful to both.

'Susannah mourns, nor can I bear
To see the crystal shower,
Or mark the tender falling tear
At sad departure's hour;
Not unregarding can I see
Her soul with grief oppress,
But let no sighs, no groans for me
Steal from her pensive breast.

* * *

Lo! Health appears, celestial dame,
Complacent and serene,
With Hebé's mantle o'er her frame,
With soul-delighting mien.'

Phillis was received and admired in the first circles of English society; and it was here that her poems were given to the world, with a likeness of the authoress attached to them. From this likeness, the countenance of Phillis appears to have been pleasing, and the form of her head highly intellectual. On this engraving being transmitted to Mrs Wheatley in America, that lady placed it in a conspicuous part of her room, and called the attention of her visitors to it, exclaiming: 'See! look at my Phillis; does she not seem as if she would speak to me?' But the health of this good and humane lady declined rapidly, and she soon found that the beloved original of the portrait was necessary to her comfort and happiness. On the first notice of her benefactress's desire to see her once more, Phillis, whose modest humility was unshaken by the severe trial of flattery and attention from the great, re-embarked immediately for the land

of her true home. Within a short time after her arrival, she discharged the melancholy duty of closing the eyes of her mistress, mother, and friend, whose husband and daughter soon sunk also into the grave. The son had married and settled in England, and Phillis Wheatley found herself alone in the world.

The happiness of the African poetess was now clouded for ever. Little is known of the latter years of her life, but all that has been ascertained is of a melancholy character. Shortly after the death of her friends, she received an offer of marriage from a respectable coloured man of the name of Peters. In her desolate condition, it would have been hard to have blamed Phillis for accepting any offer of protection of an honourable kind; yet it is pleasing to think that, though the man whose wife she now became rendered her after-life miserable by his misconduct, our opinion of her is not lowered by the circumstances of her marriage. At the time it took place, Peters not only bore a good character, but was every way a remarkable specimen of his race; being a fluent writer, a ready speaker, and altogether an intelligent and well-educated man. But he was indolent, and too proud for his business, which was that of a grocer, and in which he failed soon after his marriage.

The war of independence began soon after this, and scarcity and distress visited the cities and villages of North America. In the course of three years of suffering, Phillis became the mother of three infants, for whom and for herself, through the neglect of her husband, she had often not a morsel of bread. No reproach, however, was ever heard to issue from the lips of the meek and uncomplaining woman, who had been nursed in the lap of affluence and comfort, and to whom all had been once as kind as she herself was deserving. It would be needless to dwell on her career of misery, further than the closing scene. For a long time nothing had been known of her. A relative of her lamented mistress at length discovered her in a state of absolute want, bereft of two of her infants, and with the third dying by a dying mother's side. Her husband was still with her, but his heart must have been one of flint, otherwise indolence, which was his chief vice, must have fled at such a spectacle. Phillis Wheatley and her infant were soon after laid in one humble grave.

Thus perished a woman who, by a fortunate accident, was rescued from the degraded condition to which those of her race who are brought to the slave-market are too often condemned, as if for the purpose of shewing to the world what care and education could effect in elevating the character of the benighted African. The example is sufficient to impress us with the conviction, that, out of the countless millions to whom no similar opportunities have ever been presented, many might be found fitted by the endowments of nature, and wanting only the blessings of education, to make them ornaments, like Phillis Wheatley, not only to their race, but to humanity.

LOTT CARY.

This self-taught African genius was born a slave in Charles City county, about thirty miles below Richmond, Virginia, on the estate of Mr William A. Christian. He was the only child of parents who were themselves slaves, but, it appears, of a pious turn of mind; and though he had no instruction from books, it may be supposed that the admonitions of his father and mother may have laid the foundations of his future usefulness. In the year 1804, the young slave was sent to Richmond, and hired out by the year as a common labourer, at a warehouse in the place. While in this employment, he happened to hear a sermon, which implanted in his uncultivated mind a strong desire to be able to read, chiefly with a view of becoming acquainted with the nature of certain transactions recorded in the New Testament. Having somehow procured a copy of this work, he commenced learning his letters, by trying to read the chapter he had heard illustrated in the sermon, and by dint of perseverance, and the kind assistance of young gentlemen who called at the warehouse, he was in a little time able to read, which gave him great satisfaction. This acquisition immediately created in him a desire to be able to write; an accomplishment he soon also mastered. He now became more useful to his employers, by being able to check and superintend the shipping of tobacco; and having, in the course of time, saved the sum of 850 dollars, or nearly £170 sterling, he purchased his own freedom and that of two children left him on the death of his first wife. 'Of the real value of his services while in this employment,' says the author of the American publication from whence these facts are extracted, 'it has been remarked that no one but a dealer in tobacco can form an idea. Notwithstanding the hundreds of hogsheads which were committed to his charge, he could produce any one the moment it was called for; and the shipments were made with a promptness and correctness such as no person, white or coloured, has equalled in the same situation. The last year in which he remained in the warehouse, his salary was 800 dollars. For his ability in his work he was highly esteemed, and frequently rewarded by the merchant with a five-dollar bank-note. He was also allowed to sell, for his own benefit, many small parcels of damaged tobacco. It was by saving the little sums obtained in this way, with the aid of subscriptions by the merchants, to whose interests he had been attentive, that he was enabled to purchase the freedom of his family. When the colonists were fitted out for Africa, he was enabled to bear a considerable part of his own expenses. He also purchased a house and some land in Richmond. It is said that, while employed at the warehouse, he often devoted his leisure time to reading, and that a gentleman, on one occasion, taking up a book

which he had left for a few moments, found it to be Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.'

As early as the year 1815, this intelligent emancipated slave began to feel special interest in the cause of African missions, and contributed, probably more than any other person, in giving origin and character to the African Missionary Society, established during that year in Richmond. His benevolence was practical, and whenever and wherever good objects were to be effected, he was ready to lend his aid. Mr Cary was among the earliest emigrants to Africa. Here he saw before him a wide and interesting field, demanding various and powerful talents, and the most devoted piety. His intellectual ability, firmness of purpose, unbending integrity, correct judgment, and disinterested benevolence, soon placed him in a conspicuous station, and gave him wide and commanding influence. Though naturally diffident and retiring, his worth was too evident to allow of his remaining in obscurity. The difficulties which were encountered in founding a settlement at Cape Montserado were appalling, and it was proposed on one occasion that the emigrants should remove to Sierra Leone, whose climate is of the most destructive character; but the resolution of Lott Cary to remain was not shaken, and his decision had no small effect towards inducing others to imitate his example. In the event, they suffered severely. More than eight hundred natives attacked them in November 1822, but were repulsed; and a few weeks later, a body of fifteen hundred attacked them again at daybreak. Several of the colonists were killed and wounded; but with no more than thirty-seven effective men and boys, and the aid of a small piece of artillery, they again achieved a victory over the natives. In these scenes the intrepid Cary necessarily bore a conspicuous part. In one of his letters, he remarks that, like the Jews in rebuilding their city, they had to toil with their arms beside them, and rest upon them every night; but he declared after this, in the most emphatic terms, that 'there never had been an hour or a minute, no, not even when the balls were flying round his head, when he could wish himself back in America again.'

The peculiar exposure of the early emigrants, the scantiness of their supplies, and the want of adequate medical attention, subjected them to severe and complicated sufferings. To relieve, if possible, these sufferings, Mr Cary obtained all the information in his power concerning the diseases of the climate, and the proper remedies. He made liberal sacrifices of his property in behalf of the poor and distressed, and devoted his time almost exclusively to the relief of the destitute, the sick, and the afflicted. His services as a physician to the colony were invaluable, and were for a long time rendered without hope of reward. But amid his multiplied cares and efforts for the colony, he never forgot or neglected to promote the joint cause of civilisation and Christianity among the natives.

In 1806 Mr Cary was elected vice-agent of the colony, and he

INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

discharged the duties of that important office till his death, which occurred in 1828 in the most melancholy manner. One evening, while he and several others were engaged in making cartridges in the old agency house at Monrovia—the chief town in the settlement—in preparation to defend the rights of the colony against a slave-trader, a candle appears to have been accidentally overturned, which ignited some loose powder, and almost instantaneously reached the entire ammunition, producing an explosion which resulted in the death of eight persons. Mr Cary survived for two days. Such was the unfortunate death of this active coloured apostle of civilisation on the coast of Africa, where his memory will continue long to be cherished. The career which he pursued, and the intelligence which marked his character, might prove, to the satisfaction of all impartial thinkers, that the miserable race of blacks is not destitute of moral worth and innate genius, and that their culture would liberally produce an abundant harvest of the best principles and their results which dignify human nature.

PAUL CUFFEE.

From the foregoing instances of intelligent negroes, we now turn to Paul Cuffee, who presents us with an example of great energy of mind in the more common affairs of life, as Cary and Wheatley exhibited the finer and higher degrees of intellectual endowment. The father of Paul was a native of Africa, from which country he was brought as a slave to Boston, in North America. Here he remained in slavery for a considerable portion of his life; but finally, by industry and economy, he amassed a sum which enabled him to purchase his personal liberty. About the same period he married a woman of Indian descent, and continuing his habits of industry and frugality, he soon found himself rich enough to purchase a farm of a hundred acres at Westport, in Massachusetts. Here a family of ten children was born to him, four sons and six daughters, all of whom received a little education, and were ultimately established in respectable situations in life. Paul, the fourth son, was born in the year 1759. When he was about fourteen years of age, his father died, leaving a considerable property in land, but which, being at that time comparatively unproductive, afforded only a very moderate provision for the large family which depended on it for subsistence. After assisting his brothers for a time in the management of this property, Paul began to see that commerce then held out higher prospects to industry than agriculture, and being conscious, perhaps, that he possessed qualities which, under proper culture, would enable him to pursue commercial employments with success, he resolved to betake himself to the sea. A whaling voyage was his first adventure in the capacity of a mariner, and on his return from this, he

made a trip to the West Indies, acting on both occasions as a 'common man at the mast.' His third voyage occurred in the year 1776, at which period Britain was at war with America. Paul and his companions were taken prisoners by the British, and detained for about three months at New York. On being liberated, Paul returned to Westport, where he resided for several succeeding years, assisting his brothers in their agricultural pursuits.

We have now to mention a circumstance most honourable to Paul Cuffee. The free negro population of Massachusetts was at that period excluded from all participation in the rights of citizenship, though bearing a full share of every state burden. Paul, though not yet twenty years of age, felt deeply the injustice done to himself and his race, and resolved to make an effort to obtain for them the rights which were their due. Assisted by his brothers, he drew up and presented a respectful petition on the subject to the state legislature. In spite of the prejudices of the times, the propriety and justice of the petition were perceived by a majority of the legislative body, and an act was passed, granting to the free negroes all the privileges of white citizens. This enactment was not only important as far as regarded the state of Massachusetts; the example was followed at different periods by others of the united provinces, and thus did the exertions of Paul Cuffee and his brothers influence permanently the welfare of the whole coloured population of North America.

After accomplishing this great work, our hero's enterprising spirit directed itself to objects of a more personal character. In his twentieth year, he laid before his brother David a plan for opening a commercial intercourse with the state of Connecticut. His brother was pleased with the scheme: an open boat, which was all that their means could accomplish, was built, and the adventurers proceeded to sea. Here David Cuffee found himself for the first time exposed to the perils of the ocean, and the hazard of the predatory warfare which was carried on by the private refugees on the coast. His courage sank ere he had proceeded many leagues, and he resolved to return. This was a bitter disappointment to the intrepid Paul; but he was affectionate, and gave up the enterprise at his elder brother's desire. After labouring diligently for some time afterwards in the fields, at the family farm, Paul collected sufficient means to try the scheme again on his own account. He went to sea, and lost all the little treasure which by the sweat of his brow he had gathered. Not discouraged by this misfortune, he returned to his farm labours, only to revolve his plans anew. As he could not now purchase what he wanted, he set to work, and with his own hands constructed a boat, complete from keel to gunwale. This vessel was without a deck, but his whaling experience had made him an adept in the management of such a bark. Having launched it into the ocean, he steered for the Elizabeth Isles, with the view of consulting one of his brothers, who resided there, upon his future plans. Alas,

poor Paul! he was met by a party of pirates, who deprived him of his boat and all its contents. He returned once more to Westport in a penniless condition.

Ardent indeed must the spirit have been which such repeated calamities did not shake. Again did our young adventurer prevail on his brother David to assist him in building a boat. This being accomplished, the respectability of Paul Cuffee's character, and his reputation for unflinching energy, procured him sufficient credit to enable him to purchase a small cargo. With this he went to sea, and after a narrow escape from the refugee pirates, disposed of his cargo at the island of Nantucket, and returned to Westport in safety. A second voyage to the same quarter was less fortunate; he fell into the hands of the pirates, who deprived him of everything but his boat. Paul's inflexible firmness of mind did not yet desert him: he undertook another voyage in his open boat, with a small cargo, and was successful in reaching Nantucket. He there disposed of his goods to advantage, and returned in safety to Westport.

Hitherto we have not alluded to the condition of Paul Cuffee as far as regarded mental culture. In truth, up almost to manhood he can scarcely be said to have received any education whatever beyond the acquirement of the English alphabet. Ere he was twenty-five years of age, however, he had obviated this disadvantage by his assiduity, and had taught himself writing and arithmetic. He had also applied to the study of navigation, and had mastered it so far as to render himself capable of engaging in nautical and commercial undertakings to any extent.

The profits of the voyage already alluded to put Paul in possession of a covered boat, of about twelve tons burden, with which he made many voyages to the Connecticut coasts. In these he was so successful, that he thought himself justified in undertaking the cares of a family, and married a female descendant of the same tribe of Indians to which his mother belonged. For some years after this event, he attended chiefly to agricultural concerns, but the increase of his family induced him to embark anew in commercial plans. He arranged his affairs for a new expedition, and hired a small house on Westport River, to which he removed with his wife and children. Here, with a boat of eighteen tons, he engaged in the cod-fishing, and was so successful that he was enabled in a short time to build a vessel of forty-two tons, which he navigated with the assistance of his nephews, several of whom had devoted themselves to the sea-service.

Paul Cuffee was now the most influential person in a thriving fishing community, which depended chiefly on his enterprise and voyages for employment and support. How deeply he interested himself in the welfare of those around him, may be estimated from the following circumstance. Having felt in his own person the want

of a proper education, he called the inhabitants of his village to a meeting, and proposed to them the establishment of a school. Finding some disputes and delays to start up in the way, Paul took the matter into his own hands, built a school-house on his own ground at his own expense, and threw it open to the public. This enlightened and philanthropic conduct on the part of a coloured person, the offspring of a slave, may serve as a lesson to rulers and legislators of far higher pretensions. Though the range of his influence was limited, the intention of the act was not less meritorious than if it had extended over an empire.

About this time, Paul proceeded on a whaling voyage to the Straits of Belleisle, where he found four other vessels much better equipped than his own. For this reason the masters of these vessels withdrew from the customary practice on such occasions, and refused to mate with Paul's crew, which consisted of only ten hands. This disagreement was afterwards made up; but it had the effect of rousing the ardour of Cuffee and his men to such a pitch, that out of seven whales killed in that season, two fell by Paul's own hands, and four by those of his crew. Returning home heavily freighted with oil and bone, our hero then went to Philadelphia to dispose of his cargo, and with the proceeds purchased materials for building a schooner of sixty or seventy tons. In 1795, when he was about thirty-six years of age, Paul had the pleasure of seeing his new vessel launched at Westport. The *Ranger* was the name given to the schooner, which was of sixty-nine tons burden. By selling his two other boats, Paul was enabled to put a cargo worth two thousand dollars on board of the *Ranger*; and having heard that a load of Indian corn might be procured at a low rate on the eastern shore of Maryland, he accordingly directed his course thither. It may give some idea of the low estimation in which the African race was held, and of the energy required to rise above the crushing weight of prejudice, when we inform the reader that, on the arrival of Paul at Vienna, in Nantichoke Bay, the inhabitants were filled with astonishment, and even alarm; a vessel owned and commanded by a black man, and manned with a crew of the same colour, was unprecedented and surprising. The fear of a revolt on the part of their slaves was excited among the inhabitants of Vienna, and an attempt was made to prevent Paul from entering the harbour. The prudence and firmness of the negro captain overcame this difficulty, and converted dislike into kindness and esteem. He sold his cargo, received in lieu of it three thousand bushels of Indian corn, which he conveyed to Westport, where it was in great demand, and yielded our hero a clear profit of a thousand dollars. He made many subsequent voyages to the same quarter, and always with similar success.

Paul Cuffee was now one of the wealthiest and most respectable men of the district in which he lived, and all his relations partook

of his good-fortune. He had purchased some valuable landed property in the neighbourhood where his family had been brought up, and placed it under the care of one of his brothers. He built a brig likewise of a hundred and sixty-two tons, which was put under the command of a nephew. As may be supposed, he had in the meantime fitted himself also with a vessel suited to his increasing means. In 1806, the brig *Traveller*, of a hundred and nine tons, and the ship *Alpha*, of two hundred and sixty-eight tons, were built at Westport, and of these he was the principal owner. He commanded the *Alpha* himself, and the others also were engaged in the extensive business which he carried on at Westport.

The scheme of forming colonies of free blacks, from America and other quarters, on the coast of their native Africa, excited the deepest interest in Paul Cuffee, whose heart had always grieved for the degraded state of his race. Anxious to contribute to the success of this great purpose, he resolved to visit in person the African coast, and satisfy himself respecting the state of the country, and other points. This he accomplished in 1811, in the brig *Traveller*, with which he reached Sierra Leone after a two months' passage. While he was there, the British African Institution, hearing of his benevolent designs, applied for and obtained a license, which induced Paul to come to Britain with a cargo of African produce. He left his nephew, however, behind him at Sierra Leone, to prosecute his disinterested views, and brought away a native youth, in order to educate him, and render him fit to educate others, on being restored to the place of his birth.

On arriving at Liverpool with his brig, navigated by eight men of colour and a boy, Paul Cuffee soon gained the esteem of all with whom he held intercourse. He visited London twice, the second visit being made at the request of the members of the African Institution, who were desirous of consulting with him as to the best means of carrying their benevolent views respecting Africa into effect. This excellent and enterprising man shortly after returned to America, to pass the remainder of his days in the bosom of his family, and to do good to all around him, with the ample means which his industry had acquired.

The following description is appended to a notice of him which appeared in the *Liverpool Mercury* at the time of his visit to Britain, and to which we have been indebted for the materials of the present article: 'A sound understanding, united with indomitable energy and perseverance, are the prominent features of Paul Cuffee's character. Born under peculiar disadvantages, deprived of the benefits of early education, and his meridian spent in toil and vicissitudes, he has struggled under disadvantages which have seldom occurred in the career of any individual. Yet, under the pressure of these difficulties, he seems to have fostered dispositions of mind which qualify him for any station of life to which he may

be introduced. His person is tall, well formed, and athletic; his deportment conciliating, yet dignified and serious. His prudence, strengthened by parental care and example, no doubt guarded him in his youth, when exposed to the dissolute company which unavoidably attends a seafaring life; whilst religion, influencing his mind by its secret guidance in silent reflection, has, in advancing manhood, added to the brightness of his character, and instituted or confirmed his disposition to practical good. Latterly, he made application, and was received into membership with the respectable Society of Friends.'

THE AMISTAD CAPTIVES.

The case of the 'Amistad Captives,' as they were termed, created considerable sensation in the United States; and as little or nothing was known respecting them in England at the time we write, we offer the following account, which we have collected from materials in the work of Mr Sturge.

During the month of August 1839, public attention was excited by several reports, stating that a vessel of suspicious and piratical character had been seen near the coast of the United States, in the vicinity of New York. This vessel was represented as a long, low, black schooner, and manned by blacks. Government interfered, and the steamer *Fulton* and several revenue-cutters were despatched after her, and notice was given to the collectors at various seaports.

The suspicious-looking schooner proved to be the *Amistad*, and it was eventually captured off Culloden Point by Lieutenant Gedney, of the brig *Washington*. On being taken possession of, it was found that the schooner was a Spanish vessel, in the hands of about forty Africans,* one of whom, named Cinque, acted as commander. They described themselves, with truth and consistency, to be persons who had been originally carried off from their own country as slaves, and taken to Havana to be sold; bought there by two Spaniards, Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montez, who shipped them on board the *Amistad*, to be conveyed to a distant part of Cuba, at which was Ruiz's estate; and that, when at sea, they overpowered their oppressors, killing the captain and part of the crew in the effort to regain their liberty, and now wished to navigate the vessel homeward to Africa. Ruiz and Montez they had not injured, but only placed in confinement till an opportunity occurred for liberating them. Lieutenant Gedney at once secured the whole as prisoners, and sent them to Newhaven county jail, where they were detained by Ruiz and Montez, who claimed them as their property, and caused them to be

* The exact number is not clearly stated by Mr Sturge: he speaks first of forty-four, and afterwards of thirty-five: as it appears there were several children, perhaps thirty-five was the number of individuals who took a share in the fray.

indicted for piracy and murder. This was almost immediately disposed of, on the ground that the charges, if true, were not cognisable in the American courts; the alleged offences having been perpetrated on board a Spanish vessel. The whole were, however, still kept in confinement; the question remaining to be determined, whether they should be handed over to the Spanish authorities of Cuba, who loudly demanded them, or transmitted to the coast of Africa?

It may be supposed that these proceedings excited a lively sensation among all the friends of the blacks in America, and every proper means was adopted to procure the liberation of the unhappy Africans. The American government finally came to the resolution of delivering them up either as property or assassins; and Van Buren, the president, issued an order, January 7, 1840, to that effect. But, after all, the order did not avail. The district judge, contrary to all anticipations of the executive, decided that the negroes were freemen; that they had been kidnapped in Africa, and were fully entitled to their liberty. They were accordingly set free, and allowed to go where they pleased. This event gave great satisfaction to the anti-slavery societies throughout the States; and many persons kindly volunteered to assist the late captives in their homeless and utterly penniless condition. Lewis Tappan, a member of a committee of benevolent individuals, took a warm interest in their fate, and was deputed by his brethren to make an excursion with some of the Africans to different towns, in order to raise funds. In this he was aided by Mr Deming and one or two others; and by their united efforts, several highly interesting public exhibitions were accomplished, and some money collected. The Africans, it appears, were natives of Mendi, and possessed no small degree of intelligence. Ten were selected from among the number as being considered the best singers, and most able to address an audience in English. These were named Cinque, Banna, Si-si, Su-ma, Fuli, Ya-bo-i, So-ko-ma, Kinna, Kali, and Mar-gru. Taken to Boston, they made a deep impression on the large audiences which came to hear them sing and tell the story of their capture. In a narrative written by Mr Tappan, we find the following account of what occurred at one of these exhibitions. After some preliminary statements, 'three of the best readers were called upon to read a passage in the New Testament. One of the Africans next related in 'Merica language' their condition in their own country, their being kidnapped, the sufferings of the middle passage, their stay at Havana, the transactions on board the *Amistad*, &c. The story was intelligible to the audience, with occasional explanations. They were next requested to sing two or three of their native songs. This performance afforded great delight to the audience. As a pleasing contrast, however, they sang immediately after one of the songs of Zion. This produced a deep impression upon the audience; and while these late pagans were singing so correctly and impressively a hymn in a

Christian church, many weeping eyes bore testimony that the act and its associations touched a chord that vibrated in many hearts. Cinque was then introduced to the audience, and addressed them in his native tongue. It is impossible to describe the novel and deeply interesting manner in which he acquitted himself. The subject of his speech was similar to that of his countrymen who had addressed the audience in English; but he related more minutely and graphically the occurrences on board the *Amistad*. The easy manner of Cinque, his natural, graceful, and energetic action, the rapidity of his utterance, and the remarkable and various expressions of his countenance, excited the admiration and applause of the audience. He was pronounced a powerful natural orator, and one born to sway the minds of his fellow-men.

‘The amount of the statements made by Kinna, Fuli, and Cinque, and the facts in the case, are as follow: These Mendians belong to six different tribes, although their dialects are not so dissimilar as to prevent them from conversing together very readily. Most of them belong to a country which they call Mendi, but which is known to geographers and travellers as Kos-sa, and lies south-east of Sierra Leone, as we suppose, from sixty to one hundred and twenty miles. With one or two exceptions, these Mendians are not related to each other; nor did they know each other until they met at the slave factory of Pedro Blanco, the wholesale trafficker in men, at Lomboko, on the coast of Africa. They were stolen separately, many of them by black men, some of whom were accompanied by Spaniards, as they were going from one village to another, or were at a distance from their abodes. The whole came to Havana in the same ship, a Portuguese vessel named *Tecora*, except the four children, whom they saw for the first time on board the *Amistad*. It seems that they remained at Lomboko several weeks, until six or seven hundred were collected, when they were put in irons, and placed in the hold of a ship, which soon put to sea. Being chased by a British cruiser, she returned, landed the cargo of human beings, and the vessel was seized and taken to Sierra Leone for adjudication. After some time the Africans were put on board the *Tecora*. After suffering the horrors of the middle passage, they arrived at Havana. Here they were put into a barracoon for ten days—one of the oblong enclosures without a roof, where human beings are kept, as they keep sheep and oxen near the cattle-markets in the vicinity of our large cities, until purchasers are found—when they were sold to Jose Ruiz, and shipped on board the *Amistad*, together with the three girls, and a little boy who came on board with Pedro Montez. The *Amistad* was a coaster, bound to Principe in Cuba, distant some two or three hundred miles.

‘The Africans were kept in chains and fetters, and were supplied with but a small quantity of food or water. A single banana, they say, was served out as food for a day or two, and only a small cup

of water for each daily. When any of them took a little water from the cask, they were severely flogged. The Spaniards took Antonio, the cabin-boy, and slave to Captain Ferrer, and stamped him on the shoulder with a hot iron, then put powder, palm-oil, &c. upon the wound, so that they "could know him for their slave." The cook, a coloured Spaniard, told them that, on their arrival at Principe, in three days they would have their throats cut, be chopped in pieces, and salted down for meat for the Spaniards. He pointed to some barrels of beef on the deck, then to an empty barrel, and by significant gestures—as the Mendians say, by "talking with his fingers"—he made them understand that they were to be slain, &c. At four o'clock that day, when they were called on deck to eat, Cinque found a nail, which he secreted under his arm. In the night they held a council as to what was best to be done. "We feel bad," said Kinna, "and we ask Cinque what we had best do. Cinque say: 'Me think, and by and by I tell you.' He then said: 'If we do nothing, we be killed. We may as well die in trying to be free, as to be killed and eaten.'" Cinque afterwards told them what he would do. With the aid of the nail, and the assistance of another, he freed himself from the irons on his wrists and ankles, and from the chain on his neck. He then, with his own hands, wrested the irons from the limbs and necks of his countrymen.

'It is not in my power to give an adequate description of Cinque when he shewed how he did this, and led his comrades to the conflict, and achieved their freedom. In my younger years I saw Kemble and Siddons, and the representation of *Othello*, at Covent Garden; but no acting that I ever witnessed came near that to which I allude. When delivered from their irons, the Mendians, with the exception of the children, who were asleep, about four or five o'clock in the morning, armed with cane-knives, some boxes of which they found in the hold, leaped upon the deck. Cinque killed the cook. The captain fought desperately. He inflicted wounds on two of the Africans, who soon after died, and cut severely one or two of those who now survive. Two sailors leaped over the side of the vessel. The Mendians say: "They could not catch land—they must have swum to the bottom of the sea;" but Ruiz and Montez supposed they reached the island in a boat. Cinque now took command of the vessel, placed Si-si at the rudder, and gave his people plenty to eat and drink. Ruiz and Montez had fled to the hold. They were dragged out, and Cinque ordered them to be put in irons. They cried, and begged not to be put in chains; but Cinque replied: "You say fetters good for negro; if good for negro, good for Spanish man too; you try them two days, and see how you feel." The Spaniards asked for water, and it was dealt out to them in the same little cup with which they had dealt it out to the Africans. They complained bitterly of being thirsty. Cinque said: "You say little water enough for nigger; if little water do for him, a little do

for you too." Cinque said the Spaniards cried a great deal; he felt very sorry; only meant to let them see how good it was to be treated like the poor slaves. In two days the irons were removed, and then, said Cinque, we gave them plenty water and food, and treat them very well. Kinna stated, that as the water fell short, Cinque would not drink any, nor allow any of the rest to drink anything but salt water, but dealt out daily a little to each of the four children, and the same quantity to each of the two Spaniards! In a day or two Ruiz and Montez wrote a letter, and told Cinque that, when they spoke a vessel, if he would give it to them, the people would take them to Sierra Leone. Cinque took the letter, and said: "Very well;" but afterwards told his brethren: "We have no letter in Mendi. I don't know what is in the letter—there may be death in it. So we will take some iron and a string, bind them about the letter, and send it to the bottom of the sea."

'At the conclusion of the meeting, some linen and cotton tablecloths and napkins, manufactured by the Africans, were exhibited, and eagerly purchased of them by persons present, at liberal prices. They are in the habit of purchasing linen and cotton at the shops, unravelling the edges about six to ten inches, and making with their fingers net fringes, in imitation, they say, of 'Mendi fashion.' Large numbers of the audience advanced and took Cinque and the rest by the hand. The transactions of this meeting have thus been stated at length, and the account will serve to shew how the subsequent meetings were conducted, as the services in other places were similar.

'These Africans, while in prison (which was the greater part of the time they have been in this country), learned but little comparatively; but since they have been liberated, they are anxious to learn, as they said "it would be good for us in our own country." Many of them write well, read, spell, and sing well, and have attended to arithmetic. The younger ones have made great progress in study. Most of them have much fondness for arithmetic. They have also cultivated, as a garden, fifteen acres of land, and have raised a large quantity of corn, potatoes, onions, beets, &c. which will be useful to them at sea. In some places we visited, the audience were astonished at the performance of Kali, who is only eleven years of age. He could not only spell any word in either of the Gospels, but spell sentences, without any mistake; such sentences as, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," naming each letter and syllable, and recapitulating as he went along, until he pronounced the whole sentence. Two hundred and seven dollars were received at this meeting.'

Mr Tappan concludes as follows: 'On Wednesday, there is to be a large farewell meeting at Farmington; and in a few days the Mendians will embark from New York. May the Lord preserve them, and carry them safely to their native land, to their kindred

and homes! Su-ma, the eldest, has a wife and five children; Cinque has a wife and three children. They all have parents or wives, or brothers and sisters. What a meeting it will be with these relations and friends when they are descried on the hills of Mendi! We were invited to visit other places, but time did not allow of longer absence. I must not forget to mention, that the whole band of these Mendians are teetotalers. At a tavern where we stopped, Banna took me aside, and with a sorrowful countenance said: "This bad house—bar house—no good." But the steam-boat is at the wharf, and I must close. The collections in money, on this excursion of twelve days, are about a thousand dollars, after deducting travelling expenses. More money is needed to defray the expenses of the Mendians to their native land, and to sustain their religious teachers.'

Being unanimous in the desire to return to their native country, the Mendian negroes, thirty-five in number, embarked from New York for Sierra Leone, November 27, 1841, on board the barque *Gentleman*, Captain Morris, accompanied by five missionaries and teachers; their stay in the United States, as Mr Sturge observes, having been of immense service to the anti-slavery cause; and there was reason to hope that, under their auspices, Christianity and civilisation may be introduced into their native country.

IGNATIUS SANCHO.

When the subject of slavery was much agitated towards the end of the last century, one of the most effective advocates for its abolition was a free black living in London in the capacity of valet or butler to a family of distinction. This individual had been born in a slave vessel bound for Carthage, in South America, his father and mother being destined for the slave-market there. Shortly after their arrival his mother died, and his father committed suicide in despair. The little slave child was carried to England by his master, and made a present of to a family of three maiden sisters residing at Greenwich. Being of a droll and humorous disposition, he earned for himself the nickname of Sancho, after Don Quixote's squire; and ever afterwards he called himself Ignatius Sancho. The Duke of Montague, who was a frequent visitor at the house of Sancho's mistresses, took an interest in him, lent him books, and advised his mistresses to have him educated. At length, on their death, he entered the service of the Duchess of Montague in the capacity of butler; and on the death of the duchess, he was left an annuity of thirty pounds. This, added to seventy pounds which he had saved during the period of his service, might have enabled him to establish himself respectably in life; but for a while Sancho preferred the dissipated life of a wit about town, indulging in pleasures

beyond his means, and hanging on about the green-rooms of theatres. On one occasion he spent his last shilling at Drury Lane to see Garrick act; and it is said that Garrick was very fond of his negro admirer. Such was Sancho's theatrical enthusiasm, that he proposed at one time to act negro parts on the stage; but as his articulation was imperfect, this scheme had to be given up. After an interval of idleness and dissipation, Sancho's habits became more regular, and he married an interesting West India girl, by whom he had a large family. At this period of his life Sancho devoted himself earnestly to the cause of negro freedom. His reputation as a wit and humorist still continued; and his acquaintances were of no mean sort. After his death, two volumes of his letters were published, with a fine portrait of the author; and in these letters his style is said to resemble that of Sterne. As a specimen, we subjoin a letter of his to Sterne, with Sterne's reply.

'REVEREND SIR—It would be an insult on your humanity (or perhaps look like it) to apologise for the liberty I am taking. I am one of those people whom the vulgar and illiberal call negroes. The first part of my life was rather unlucky, as I was placed in a family who judged ignorance the best, and only security for obedience. A little reading and writing I got by unwearied application. The latter part of my life has been, through God's blessing, truly fortunate, having spent it in the service of one of the best and greatest families in the kingdom; my chief pleasure has been books: philanthropy I adore. How very much, good sir, am I (amongst millions) indebted to you for the character of your amiable Uncle Toby! I declare I would walk ten miles in the dog-days to shake hands with the honest corporal. Your sermons have touched me to the heart, and I hope have amended it, which brings me to the point. In your tenth discourse, page seventy-eight, in the second volume, is this very affecting passage. "Consider how great a part of our species in all ages down to this have been trod under the feet of cruel and capricious tyrants, who would neither hear their cries nor pity their distresses. Consider slavery, what it is, how bitter a draught, and how many millions are made to drink of it." Of all my favourite authors, not one has drawn a tear in favour of my miserable black brethren excepting yourself and the humane author of *Sir George Ellison*. I think you will forgive me; I am sure you will applaud me for beseeching you to give one half-hour's attention to slavery, as it is at this day practised in our West Indies. That subject, handled in your striking manner, would ease the yoke perhaps of many; but if only of one—gracious God! what a feast to a benevolent heart! and sure I am you are an epicurean in acts of charity. You who are universally read, and as universally admired—you could not fail. Dear sir, think in me you behold the uplifted hands of thousands of my brother Moors. Grief, you pathetically

observe, is eloquent : figure to yourself their attitudes ; hear their supplicating addresses ! Alas ! you cannot refuse. Humanity must comply ; in which hope I beg permission to subscribe myself, reverend sir, &c.

IGNATIUS SANCHO.'

STERNE'S REPLY.

'COXWOULD, July 27, 1767.

'There is a strange coincidence, Sancho, in the little events (as well as in the great ones) of this world ; for I had been writing a tender tale of the sorrows of a friendless poor negro girl, and my eyes had scarce done smarting with it, when your letter of recommendation in behalf of so many of her brethren and sisters came to me. But why *her brethren*, or yours, Sancho, any more than mine ? It is by the finest tints and most insensible gradations that nature descends from the fairest face about St James's to the sootiest complexion in Africa. At which tint of these is it, that the ties of blood are to cease ? and how many shades must we descend lower still in the scale, ere mercy is to vanish with them ? But 'tis no uncommon thing, my good Sancho, for one half of the world to use the other half of it like brutes, and then endeavour to make 'em so. For my own part, I never look westward (when I am in a pensive mood at least), but I think of the burthens which our brothers and sisters are there carrying, and could I ease their shoulders from one ounce of them, I declare I would set out this hour upon a pilgrimage to Mecca for their sakes—which, by the by, Sancho, exceeds your walk of ten miles in about the same proportion that a visit of humanity should one of mere form. However, if you meant my Uncle Toby more, he is your debtor. If I can weave the tale I have wrote into the work I am about, 'tis at the service of the afflicted, and a much greater matter ; for in serious truth it casts a sad shade upon the world, that so great a part of it are, and have been, so long bound in chains of darkness and in chains of misery ; and I cannot but both respect and felicitate you, that by so much laudable diligence you have broke the one, and that, by falling into the hands of so good and merciful a family, Providence has rescued you from the other.

'And so, good-hearted Sancho, adieu ! and believe me I will not forget your letter. Yours,

L. STERNE.'

ZHINGA—A NEGRO QUEEN.

The history of Zhingá, the famous negro queen of Angola, on the western coast of Africa, exhibits the power of negro character, even when untutored and left half savage. She was born in 1582, a time when the Portuguese were planting trading settlements on the African coast, and making encroachments on the possessions of the native

princes. When Zhingá was forty years of age, and while her brother reigned over Angola, she was sent as ambassadress to Loanda, to treat of peace with the Portuguese viceroy at that place. 'A palace was prepared for her reception, and she was received with the honours due to her rank. On entering the audience-chamber, she perceived that a magnificent chair of state was prepared for the Portuguese viceroy, while in front of it a rich carpet and velvet cushions, embroidered with gold, were arranged on the floor for her use. The haughty princess observed this in silent displeasure. She gave a signal with her eyes, and immediately one of her women knelt on the carpet, supporting her weight on her hands. Zhingá gravely seated herself on the woman's back, and awaited the entrance of the viceroy. The spirit and dignity with which she fulfilled her mission excited the admiration of the whole court. When an alliance was offered upon the condition of an annual tribute to the king of Portugal, she proudly refused it; but finally concluded a treaty on the single condition of restoring all the Portuguese prisoners. When the audience was ended, the viceroy, as he conducted her from the room, remarked that the attendant on whose back she had been seated still remained in the same posture. Zhingá replied: "It is not fit that the ambassadress of a great king should be twice served with the same seat. I have no farther use for the woman!"*

During her stay at Loanda she embraced Christianity, or pretended to embrace it; was baptised, and in other respects conformed to European customs. Shortly after her return to Angola, her brother died, and she ascended the throne, making sure of it by strangling her nephew. On her accession to the throne, she was involved in a war with the Portuguese; and, assisted by the Dutch, and by some native chiefs, she carried on the contest with great vigour. At length, however, the Portuguese were completely victorious, and as she refused the offer which they made of re-establishing her on the throne, on condition that she should pay an annual tribute, another sovereign was appointed, and Zhingá was obliged to flee. Exasperated at this treatment, she renounced Christianity, as being the religion of the Portuguese; and, placing herself at the head of a faithful band of negroes, she harassed the Portuguese for eighteen years, demanding the restoration of her kingdom, and listening to no other terms. At length, softened by the influence of advancing age, and by the death of a sister to whom she was much attached, she began to be haunted with feelings of remorse on account of her apostasy from the Christian faith. The captive Portuguese priests, whom she now treated with kindness and respect, prevailed on her to declare herself again a convert. She was then reinstated in her dominions, and distinguished herself by her zeal in propagating her new religion among her pagan subjects, not a few of whom were martyred for their obstinacy by her orders.

* Mrs Child's *Appeal*.

INTELLIGENT NEGROES.

Among other laws, she passed one prohibiting polygamy, till then common in her kingdom; and as this gave great offence, she set an example to her subjects by marrying one of her courtiers, although she was then in her seventy-sixth year. She also abolished the custom of human sacrifices. She strictly observed her treaties with the Portuguese; and in 1657, one of her tributaries having violated the terms of peace, she marched against him, and having defeated him, cut off his head, and sent it to the Portuguese viceroy. Nothing, however, not even the influence of the priests, could prevail on her to become a vassal of the Portuguese king. One of her last acts was to send an embassy to the pope, 'requesting more missionaries among her people. The pontiff's answer was publicly read in church, where Zhingá appeared with a numerous and brilliant train. At a festival in honour of this occasion, she and the ladies of her court performed a mimic battle in the dress and armour of Amazons. Though more than eighty years old, this remarkable woman displayed as much strength, agility, and skill, as she could have done at twenty-five. She died in 1663, aged eighty-two. Arrayed in royal robes, ornamented with precious stones, with a bow and arrow in her hand, the body was shewn to her sorrowing subjects. It was then, according to her wish, clothed in the Capuchin habit, with crucifix and rosary.'

PLACIDO, THE CUBAN POET.

In the month of July 1844, twenty persons were executed together at Havana, in Cuba, for having been concerned in a conspiracy for giving liberty to the black population—the slaves of the Spanish inhabitants. One of these, and the leader of the revolt, was Gabriel de la Concepcion Valdes, more commonly known by the name of Placido, the Cuban poet. Little is known of this negro beyond a few particulars contained in one or two brief newspaper notices, which appeared shortly after his execution, announcing the fact in this country. The *Heraldo*, a Madrid newspaper, in giving an account of the execution, speaks of him as 'the celebrated poet Placido;' and says, 'this man was born with great natural genius, and was beloved and appreciated by the most respectable young men of Havana, who united to purchase his release from slavery.' The *Poems by a Cuban Slave*, edited by Dr Madden some years ago, are believed to have been the compositions of this gifted negro. Placido appears to have burned with a desire to do something for his race; and hence he employed his talents not only in poetry, but also in schemes for altering the political condition of Cuba. The Spanish papers, as might be expected, accuse him of wild and ambitious projects, and of desiring to excite an insurrection in Cuba similar to the memorable negro insurrection in St Domingo fifty years ago. Be that as it may, Placido was at the head of a conspiracy formed in Cuba in the beginning of 1844. The conspiracy

failed, and Placido, with a number of his companions, was seized by the Spanish authorities. The following is the account given of his execution in a letter from Havana, dated July 16, 1844, which appeared in the *Morning Herald* newspaper: 'What dreadful scenes have we not witnessed here these last few months! what arrests and frightful developments! what condemnations and horrid deaths! But the bloody drama seems approaching its close; the curtain has just fallen on the execution of the chief conspirator, Placido, who met his fate with a heroic calmness that produced a universal impression of regret. Nothing was positively known of the decision of the council respecting him, till it was rumoured a few days since that he would proceed, along with others, to the "chapel" for the condemned. On the appointed day a great crowd was assembled, and Placido was seen walking along with singular composure under circumstances so gloomy, smoking a cigar, and saluting with graceful ease his numerous acquaintances. Are you aware what the punishment of the "chapel" means? It is worse a thousand times than the death of which it is the precursor. The unfortunate criminals are conducted into a chapel hung with black, and dimly lighted. Priests are there to chant in a sepulchral voice the service of the dead; and the coffins of the trembling victims are arrayed in cruel relief before their eyes. Here they are kept for twenty-four hours, and are then led out to execution. Can anything be more awful? And what a disgusting aggravation of the horror of the coming death! Placido emerged from the chapel cool and undismayed, whilst the others were nearly or entirely overcome with the agonies they had already undergone. The chief conspirator held a crucifix in his hand, and recited in a loud voice a beautiful prayer in verse, which thrilled upon the hearts of the attentive masses which lined the road he passed. On arriving at the fatal spot, he sat down on a bench with his back turned, as ordered, to the military, and rapid preparations were made for his death. And now the dread hour had arrived. At the last he arose, and said: "Adios, mundo; no hay piedad para mi. Soldados, fuego!" ("Adieu, O world; here is no pity for me. Soldiers, fire!"). Five balls entered his body. Amid the murmurs of the horror-struck spectators, he got up and turned his head upon the shrinking soldiers, his face wearing an expression of superhuman courage. "Will no one have pity on me?" he said. "Here," pointing to his heart—"fire here." At that instant two balls pierced his breast, and he fell dead whilst his words still echoed in our ears. Thus has perished the great leader of the attempted revolt.'

The following is a translation, by Maria Weston Chapman, of the beautiful lines composed by Placido, as above narrated. 'They were written in prison the night before his execution, and were solemnly recited by him as he proceeded to the place of death, so that the concluding stanza was uttered a few moments before he

expired.' The original is in Spanish ; but the following appears to be a pleasing version.

' Being of infinite goodness ! God Almighty !
 I hasten in mine agony to Thee !
 Rending the hateful veil of calumny,
 Stretch forth thine arm omnipotent in pity ;
 Efface this ignominy from my brow,
 Wherewith the world is fain to brand it now.

O King of kings ! Thou God of my forefathers !
 My God ! Thou only my defence shalt be,
 Who gav'st her riches to the shadowed sea ;
 From whom the North her frosty treasure gathers—
 Of heavenly light and solar flame the giver,
 Life to the leaves, and motion to the river.

Thou canst do all things. What thy will doth cherish,
 Revives to being at thy sacred voice.
 Without Thee all is naught, and at thy choice,
 In fathomless eternity must perish.
 Yet e'en that nothingness thy will obeyed,
 When of its void humanity was made.

Merciful God ! I can deceive Thee never ;
 Since, as through ether's bright transparency,
 Eternal wisdom still my soul can see
 Through every earthly lineament for ever.
 Forbid it, then, that Innocence should stand
 Humbled, while Slander claps her impious hand.

But if the lot thy sovereign power shall measure
 Must be to perish as a wretch accursed,
 And men shall trample over my cold dust—
 The curse outraging with malignant pleasure—
 Speak, and recall my being at thy nod !
 Accomplish in me all thy will, my God !'

CONCLUSION.

While these notices may be of use in aiding the cause of the much oppressed negro, they are in no respect designed to establish the fact, that the white and dark races are upon the same native intellectual level, and that education and other circumstances effect all the difference which is observable between them. It would, we believe, be imprudent, however philanthropic, to attempt to establish this proposition, for it is inconsistent with truth, and can only tend to obstruct our arrival at a less ambitious, but still friendly and hopeful

proposition respecting the negroes, which appears, both from their organisation and external manifestations of character, to be the only one that can be maintained—that is, that, in the mass, they are at present far behind the white races, but capable of being cultivated, in the course of successive generations, up to the same point; a small advance in each generation being all that can be achieved in the way of civilisation even among the white races, and being apparently the law of social progress. The negro intellect is, we believe, chiefly deficient in the reasoning powers and higher sentiments: these, though doubtless present in some rudimental form, could no more be called instantaneously into the same vigorous exercise in which we find them in Europe, than could the wild-apple, by sudden transplantation to an orchard, be rendered into a pippin. They would require, in the first place, a species of tender nursing, to bring them into palpable existence. From infancy they would need to be fondled into childhood, from childhood trained into youth, and from youth cultivated into manhood. It is not a thin whitewash of European knowledge which will at once alter the features of the African mind. The work must be the work of ages, and those ages must be judiciously employed.

There is no fact more illustrative of this hypothesis than the occasional appearance of respectable intellect, and the frequency of good dispositions, amongst the negroes. Such men as Jenkins and Cary at once close the mouths of those who, from ignorance or something worse, allege an absolute difference in specific character between the two races, and justify the consignment of the black to a fate which only proves the lingering barbarism of the white.

