

CONSIDERATIONS

ON

NEGRO SLAVERY;

WITH

**A BRIEF VIEW OF THE PROCEEDINGS
RELATIVE TO IT,**

IN THE

British Parliament.



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CONSIDERATIONS

ON

NEGRO SLAVERY.

THE following pages have been drawn up with the view of communicating a clear knowledge of the question respecting Negro Slavery, as it exists in the West Indies, to those who may not have had an opportunity of perusing the numerous pamphlets that have been published on the subject. The Committee under whose direction this tract has been prepared, are very far from wishing to excite a temporary glow of feeling, by exaggerating the horrors of slavery, or by representing individual instances of cruelty as fair specimens of the usual conduct of West India planters towards their slaves. They look to the gradual and lasting operation of reason and information upon religious and liberal minds; and they have no doubt but that, when these have been allowed sufficient time to operate, a nation, which, like Scotland, has been taught to consider religion as the first, and freedom as the next blessing it has derived from the bounty of GOD, will rise as one man to declare, that it is neither consistent with the honour, the interest, nor the duty of the nation, to debar *six hundred thousand* of our fellow-subjects from any, the slightest participation in these blessings.

Those who take any interest in this most important subject, are aware, that considerable exertions have been made in Parliament, for effecting the immediate Mitigation, and ultimate Abolition of Negro Slavery: and these exertions have been seconded by Associations in London, Edinburgh, and almost all the principal towns of the United Kingdom. The single object of these Associations is to alleviate the state of Negro Slavery in the West Indies, and so to raise the character of the Negroes, by religious instruction, and by political regulations, as gradually to fit them for the enjoyment of personal freedom; and of this, after all that has been written on the subject, they see no reason whatever for being ashamed; nor has the evidence that has been brought forward by the advocates for Slavery as it exists, tended in the slightest degree to shake their confidence in the justice and feasibility of their object. They do not assume, nor do they even insinuate, that the slave-holders are generally cruel; but they assert, that from the present state of the law, they may be so, almost to any extent, without any risk of punishment. They do not assert that no improvements have taken place in the Slave laws; but they assert that they still give such powers to the White, as can scarcely be possessed without being abused*. They do not assert that nothing has been done for the religious and moral instruction of the Negroes; but they assert (on the authority of their opponents) that, at this day, after a lapse of two hundred years, during which British planters have had the absolute command of the Negro population, that population remains in a state of gross ignorance and brutal immorality; that as now circumstanced they are incapable of appreciating or using the liberty which we are anxious should be communicated to them; that marriage, the very first element of civil society, is incor-

* See Note A.

patible with their happiness, and unrecognised and unprotected by the laws under which they live* ; and, finally, that such is their indolence and apathy, that to expect liberated Negroes to work beyond what is actually necessary for the supply of their immediate animal wants, is to betray a total ignorance of their character.

Such is the representation of the actual state of the Slave population, as drawn by those who deprecate any alteration in the system under which this character has been formed ; and such is the state which, we are unwillingly obliged to say, a reverend advocate for Slavery, with an obtuseness of moral feeling fully equal to that which he has been describing, ventures to call superior to that of the British peasantry †.

We have now to shew that this debased state of character is not to be attributed to any peculiarities of constitution in the Negro, but that it is solely and entirely to be attributed to the system under which he has been placed. And, in order to prove this, we need not have recourse to those true, though hackneyed arguments, by which philosophers of old, and even school-boys in our time, have proved that Slavery is destructive of all the higher virtues. We are fortunately enabled to appeal to facts,—to facts existing at this moment. We can refer to a Negro population of nearly 17,000, the greater portion having been liberated from Slavery ‡, of whom we may assert, that they are at least rapidly advancing to an equality with our own countrymen in knowledge, industry, and morality. We refer to the colony of Sierra Leone, the greater portion of whose inhabitants have, during the last ten years, been rescued by British cruizers from such Slave ships as have been

* See Note B.

† See Note C.

‡ By the last returns the population is 16,661 ; of these more than 15,000 are natives of Africa, the rest being Europeans, and Maroon or Nova Scotia settlers.

found transgressing the treaties of 1815; and having shewn what the West Indian system, operating for two centuries, has produced, we may now turn to the opposite example, and shew what has been effected in a few years by a system of liberal policy and religious instruction.

At Sierra Leone, then, instead of compulsory labour and incorrigible indolence, we behold 17,000 of our fellow-creatures rescued from Slavery, and living under a free government, rising rapidly from brute ignorance into an intelligent, a civilized, and an industrious population. The Gazette of the colony, appealing to facts within the cognizance of its readers, asserts, "that the superiority
" of the mountain roads, the cleanness and respectable
" appearance of the villages, the immense forests cleared
" away, and the soil covered with the various productions
" of the climate, fully attest the *unremitting* industry, (we
" are quoting the very words of the Gazette,) the *unre-*
" *mitting* industry of this interesting people."

With respect to morality and intelligence, we find the Chief-Justice of the colony observing, that ten years ago, when the population was only 4000, there were 40 cases on the calendar; and now that the population was upwards of 16,000, there were only six cases. We again find the same magistrate declaring, that many of the liberated Africans are perfectly qualified to serve upon juries, and that they have so served with perfect satisfaction to their fellow-jurors. We could easily multiply proofs, equally strong, of the industry, intelligence, and moral character of the liberated Negroes at Sierra Leone. What we have stated is fully sufficient to prove, not merely that the Negroes possess all the natural qualifications for liberty in common with their fellow-creatures of a different colour, but that they have made more rapid progress in the knowledge and practice of Christianity, and in the arts and duties of civilized life, than was ever before made by any barbarous people whatever.

It is upon these unquestioned facts that we ground the principles of our Association. Contrasting the present condition of the Negro Slaves in the West Indies with that to which we see that it is not only possible but easy to raise them, we feel that it is our duty, and we have made it our fixed determination, to use every lawful and prudent means to elevate them from the condition of *brutes*, in which they have been placed and retained by violence, to that of *men*, for which they are qualified by the possession of those intellectual and moral faculties which our common Creator has equally bestowed upon them and us.

But here we are stopped, on the very threshold of our proceedings, by the advocates for Slavery, who tell us that the subject is so full of delicacy and danger, that the bare mention of any proposed alteration in the system is enough to excite disaffection, rebellion and massacre in the West Indies. We will not stop to ask what must be the merits of that system to which examination is ruin. We will not ask why the Slaves, treated rather as children than as servants, should be so insensible of their blessings as to rise in fury against their benefactors, merely because we in Britain are so ignorant or so stupid as to underrate the happiness of their lot. But we say, that whatever may be the weight of this argument, the advocates for Slavery have now brought it to the decisive test of experiment. If the violent and inflammatory resolutions which have lately been passed in the colonial meetings, and inserted in the colonial newspapers for the information of all whom it may concern,—if these resolutions, holding out (however falsely) to the Slaves the assistance of a large body of English fanatics, in the wildest schemes for overthrowing all law and property in the West Indies, and representing even the Government and Parliament of this country as concurring in these violent and destructive plans,—if these resolutions shall not be followed by rebellion and massacre, then certainly it must

be considered as satisfactorily proved, that no danger is to be apprehended from the most violent discussions. But if, on the other hand, it shall turn out, that the publication of these resolutions has been immediately followed by insurrectionary movements among the Negroes ; much as we deplore the effect, we insist that it shall be attributed to its evident and immediate cause,—not to the resolutions of Mr Canning, nor to the speeches of Mr Wilberforce, nor to the pamphlets of Mr Clarkson, but to the unaccountable rashness of the colonists themselves : and while we admit the necessity of prudence and caution, we lament the conduct of our opponents should be diametrically opposed to the advice they have so frequently bestowed upon us.

But our opponents have also facts on their side to produce. They bid us look to St Domingo, and say, Whether it is our wish to produce in the British West India Islands those dreadful scenes of murder and desolation which Negro emancipation produced in that unfortunate colony. To this we answer, That it is very far from being our wish that the British Government should adopt, towards the British colonies, measures in any degree similar to those of the French Conventional Assembly towards St Domingo ; nor, we conceive, can any two proceedings be more essentially different than the resolutions of Mr Canning, and the French decree of 1794, by which Slavery was abolished throughout the whole of the French colonies ; the former only urging upon the colonists the necessity of a more liberal and Christian policy towards the slave population, as tending ultimately to qualify them for the enjoyment of freedom : the latter at once, and without any preparation, bestowing unconditional emancipation. But waving all consideration of the total difference of the two measures, we affirm, that the emancipation of the Negroes in St Domingo was productive of no massa-

ces or insurrections whatever ; and that those who maintain the contrary, manifest a great ignorance of one of the most interesting portions of modern history, or a still more blameable wish to pervert and conceal the truth.

From the year 1790 to 1793, St. Domingo was indeed, like the mother country, a prey to contending factions ; and royalists and republicans, whites and free men of colour, carried on the most sanguinary contests with each other. In these contests, however, the Slaves as a body took no part, though individuals, enticed by the offer of freedom, attached themselves to the different contending parties. From the declaration of freedom, in 1794, we have the authority of Malenfant, Lacroix, and Vincent, all Frenchmen of rank and character, for asserting that no commotions whatever occurred ; and, what is more wonderful, that the Slaves continued to work as industriously and quietly as before. Lacroix informs us, that in the year 1797, “ the colony marched as by enchantment towards “ its ancient splendour : cultivation prospered ; every day “ produced perceptible proofs of its progress.”

St Domingo was indeed again doomed to be the scene of rapine and bloodshed, when, in 1802, Bonaparte, then First Consul of France, sent out Leclerc with a large army to reduce the Negroes to their former bondage. Then indeed, a scene of horror was exhibited, unparalleled by any of the crimes of revolutionary France : but let the shame and the guilt of these be attributed to the invaders, not to the invaded ;—to the French colonists who instigated, and to the French Government which attempted, the mad and wicked project of restoring Slavery ;—not to the persecuted Negroes, who shewed, by their valour and constancy in a defensive war, as well as by their former quietness and industry in a state of peace, that they were worthy of freedom. These being the facts of the case, we claim the benefit of the evidence thus brought forward by our opponents, as proving that emancipation, as it took

place in St Domingo, produced not idleness and insurrection, but industry and quiet.

Of the present state of St Domingo, or Hayti as it is commonly called, it is not easy to obtain a well authenticated account. It is clear that it has not recovered from the dreadful effects of the French war in 1802; that is from the entire abstraction of all capital from the island, and the destruction of all the property which could not be removed. But on the other hand, it is equally clear, that the Haytians, the Free Negroes of St Domingo, are not indolent, and that their labour is not unproductive. The island abounds with provisions of all sorts, and the Haytian Negro, very different from the Slave Negroes of the other islands, has the means of indulging in animal food to the utmost extent of his wishes. The natural consequence of this plenty has been a rapid increase of the population, which, in spite of the dreadful wars which have desolated the island, is now considerably greater than it ever was at any former period.

But this is not all.—Hayti possesses a very considerable foreign trade in Coffee, Cotton, and Mahogany. The tonnage of the United States employed in the trade to Hayti, during the year ending September 1821, was 50,000 tons, and the value of the imports into the United States from Hayti, 2,246,237 dollars; the exports from the United States to Hayti being nearly to the same amount, and so rapidly has this trade increased, that the value of the imports from the United States into Hayti, during the last year, is stated in the Official Gazette of Hayti, to be upwards of *six millions of dollars*, and those from Great Britain upwards of *three millions*. The trade with France is also very considerable, probably exceeding that with Great Britain. If, therefore, we calculate the value of the annual imports into Hayti at *twelve millions of dollars*, we have a consumption of foreign merchandize twice as great as that of Jamaica, and for which payment must be made in the

produce of Haytian industry. Still, therefore, we are willing to look to St Domingo.

In the year 1780, Mr Steele, a proprietor of large plantations in the Island of Barbadoes, finding that his estate was going to ruin under the ordinary system, and particularly affected at what he called the *destruction* of his Negroes, resolved, though at the advanced age of eighty, to take upon himself the superintendence of his own estates. After a residence of two years, which Mr Steele employed in acquiring a practical knowledge of West Indian husbandry, and of the temper, habits, and dispositions of the Slaves, he began to put to the test of experiment the three following questions: 1. Whether he could not do away all arbitrary punishment, and yet keep up discipline among his Slaves? 2. Whether he could not carry on the plantation work through the stimulus of reward? And, 3. Whether he could not change Slavery itself, into a condition of a milder name and character, so that the Slaves should be led to the very threshold of liberty, from which they might next step, without hazard, into the rank of free men, if circumstances should permit and encourage such a procedure?

The first of these experiments Mr Steele brought to a successful result, by taking away all whips and instruments of punishment from his overseers and drivers, and instituting a court or jury composed of the elder and more respectable Negroes, for the punishment of all minor offences. After some time, he tried and succeeded in the second, by abolishing task-work, and paying his Negroes wages in proportion to the quantity of work done by them; and, *lastly*, he effected the third, by giving his Slaves the copyhold property of small portions of his estate, making them at the same time *adscripti glebæ*, or serfs attached to the soil.

For a full detail of the manner in which these interesting experiments were carried on, and of their practical

results, we would refer to Dr Dickson's valuable Work on the Mitigation of Slavery. We will only, in conclusion, quote Mr Steele's answer to the 17th Question of the Committee of the Privy Council, on the affairs of the Slave Trade; namely, that while under the old system, the ratio of births to deaths was as 15 to 57; under the improved system, the ratio was as 44 to 41; and that, at the same time, the net clearance of the estate was above three times what it had been before.

We have thus, by the evidence of facts, been able to establish three principles of vast importance in this question. From the existing state of Sierra Leone, we conclude, that the Negro is equally capable with the White, of religious and social cultivation:—from the authentic records of the Revolution in St Domingo, we conclude that emancipation, even when rashly and prematurely carried into effect, was not productive of those deplorable consequences which the advocates of the present system consider as the necessary consequence of emancipation; and, lastly, from the experiments of Mr Steele we conclude, that an alleviation of the system of Slavery, to the extent to which he carried it, while it would add to the comforts and raise the character of the Negro population, would at the same time tend directly to the pecuniary advantage of their masters.

It now only remains for us to give a brief statement of the steps which have been taken in this country towards the mitigation of Slavery, and of the consequences with which those measures have been attended. On 15th May, 1823, the subject was brought under the notice of the House of Commons by Mr Buxton, and at the same time, a series of Resolutions were proposed by Mr Canning, to which the House agreed without one dissenting voice. These Resolutions were,

1. That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive

measures for ameliorating the condition of the Slave Population in his Majesty's colonies.

2. That through a determined and persevering, but judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this House looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the Slave Population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

3. That this House is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose, at the earliest period that may be compatible with the well-being of the Slaves, the safety of the Colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of all parties concerned therein.

The substance of these resolutions was immediately conveyed by letters from Lord Bathurst to the Colonial Governments; and it is deeply to be regretted, that temperate and cautious as they appear to us, they have been received, on the part of some of the colonists, with the most violent and acrimonious opposition. The determined hostility to all effectual improvement, which is manifested in the Jamaica and Barbadoes resolutions, while it shews how little can be said for the existing state of Slavery, on the grounds of humanity, justice, or sound policy, forces us unwillingly to fear, that we are not to look for the co-operation of the Legislatures of these islands*.

Other islands, on the contrary, have received the communication of his Majesty's Ministers with respectful cordiality, and have expressed their readiness to co-operate in any reasonable plans for the improvement of the Negroes. At Tobago, an act was passed last year, (previous to Lord Bathurst's communication,) which establishes courts of judicature for the Slaves, and gives them the benefit of trial by jury,—which admits the evidence of Slaves

* See Note D.

against White persons,—appoints guardians to take charge of their complaints,—directs persons committed as Slaves to be discharged as free, unless an owner proves his claim to them within six weeks,—secures to Slaves the possession and right of willing their property,—abolishes the Sunday markets, and grants them one day in every week for cultivating their provision grounds, except during four months of the year. At Nevis, we find the two branches of the Legislature declaring that they see no possible objection to a Slave buying up his freedom, under certain regulations; and resolving that the whip shall be abolished entirely as an instrument of driving,—that, as far as may be found practicable, the slaves shall be rendered *adscripti glebæ*,—that measures shall be taken for the admission of Slave evidence under certain regulations, and that the punishment of females by cart whipping and exposure of the person should be discontinued. At St Christopher's, the Council has entered into similar resolutions. "These," say they, "are framed with a view of improving the physical and moral condition of the Slave, so as eventually to qualify him for a state of freedom, to which object this board will earnestly contribute, upon such provisions being made for the protection of the person and property of the proprietors of Slaves in this island, as may be expected from the wisdom and justice of the British Parliament, and from the benevolent solicitude of our Sovereign."

These dawnings of liberality ought to be hailed as the promise of better things yet to come. If this be not all that we could wish, it is perhaps more than we had a right to expect; and if the force of habit and prevalent opinion, even upon candid minds, be taken into account, we must allow that the planters of Tobago, Nevis, and St Christopher's deserve the thanks and the approbation.

of their fellow-subjects in this country. And with reference to the white inhabitants of other islands, even of those where slavery may be most severe, and where all overtures towards improvement have been most offensively rejected, we would disclaim not only all calumny, but all personal rancour or general invective. We only believe them to be men of like passions with ourselves; and we are conscious that the best of us is not good enough to be entrusted with absolute power over his fellow-creatures. We believe them to labour under the influence of strong prejudices, under which we in all probability should have sunk, had we been placed in similar circumstances; and we most earnestly hope that they will be enabled to see, before it is too late to profit by the knowledge, that the interests of justice and expediency must ultimately coincide.

Tortola and Antigua have also acceded to Mr Canning's Resolutions. From the latter of these islands particularly, we confidently anticipated such a decision, as it has long been honourably distinguished by attention to the religious and moral wants of the Slave population.

On the 16th March 1824, Mr Canning in the House of Commons, and Lord Bathurst in the House of Lords, made a statement respecting the proceedings and intentions of Government, on the subject of West Indian Slavery. An order of the King in Council was produced, containing the various measures of reform, which it had been determined immediately to institute in the island of Trinidad, and hereafter in St Lucie, Demarara, Berbice, the Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope; these being the only Colonies where the Crown has the direct power of legislation. This order begins with appointing a protector and guardian of the Slaves, to whom a variety of important functions are assigned, and who is not allowed to possess any agricultural Slaves. In the different quarters of the island, as-

sistant guardians are appointed, who are not debarred from being the possessors even of agricultural Slaves.

It is an unpleasant task to point out deficiencies in a measure which is essentially just and good; but it would be improper to pass over this permission for the guardians to hold domestic Slaves, and for the assistants to hold both domestic and agricultural Slaves, without regretting that it is calculated to neutralize much of the good contained in the other provisions of the order. The duty of the guardian is to protect the Slaves against the tyranny of Masters, and how can he be expected to do this faithfully, when he is united to the masters by an imagined identity of interest, and by all the prejudices which arise from the *esprit de corps*.

The order goes on to prohibit the flogging of women, absolutely, and under any circumstances. The use of the whip, or any other instrument of coercion, to compel labour in the field, is also prohibited. When used, as an instrument of punishment by the master or manager, the number of lashes is not to exceed *twenty-five* at one time, and for *one* offence; nor is any punishment to be inflicted till former lacerations are healed. Twenty-four hours must elapse between the commission of a crime and its punishment; and, when punishment is inflicted, it must be in the presence of a competent witness, besides the person by whose authority it is inflicted. A record of all punishments is to be kept, signed by the whites present; and copies of it certified by oath, are to be transmitted to the Governor, and by him to the Secretary of State. It is to be regretted that this excellent regulation applies only to Slaves upon plantations, but not to domestic, mechanic, or jobbing Slaves. In case of cruel or unlawful conduct towards a Slave, the Master may be deprived of such Slave: And any Master or Overseer who is twice convicted of such conduct, is to be deprived of all his Slaves, and declared incapable of

holding Slaves for the future, or of being employed as a manager of Slaves.

As soon as effectual provision shall have been made for the religious instruction of the Slaves, Sunday markets are to cease; and in the meantime, they are not to be held after ten in the forenoon; as soon as such provision is made, then Thursday is to be the market-day instead of Sunday. The master is forbidden to compel the Slave to labour on Sunday. No day, however, being given to the Slave by this order, in place of Sunday, he will be as much compelled by the necessity of the case, to labour for his own subsistence on that day, as if he were driven to the field by the whip. He must work on Sunday or he must starve.

The intermarrying of Slaves is provided for, and such marriage is made binding, whether solemnized by a Church of England, a Romish, or a Dissenting Clergyman. It is made unlawful by any judicial process, to seize and sell separately from each other the husband and wife, or reputed wife, or the child under sixteen years of age. This part of the order lays no restraint on the power of the *owner* to effect a separation of those near connexions by sale. We may hope that the omission arises from such a power being denied to the owner by the Spanish law now in force at Trinidad.

The property of Slaves is secured to them by law, and banks are instituted in which they may deposit their savings; and such property they may transmit by will. All taxes and fees on manumission are abolished, and a power is given and adequately secured, to Slaves, for purchasing their own freedom, or that of their children, at a fair appraisement. Any Slave whom any Clergyman, Priest, or Religious Teacher shall certify to understand the nature of an oath, shall be recorded as entitled to give evidence in courts of justice, in all cases except in civil suits where his master is concerned, or in trials affecting the *life of a white*. This

last exception is preposterous, and partakes of the very worst spirit of West Indian legislation. The admissibility of Slaves to give evidence is necessary, in order to secure them against the murderous tyranny of such men as Hodge and Huggins. But the end of this exception, is to make the enormity of the crime secure the perpetrator from punishment. Nay, by the law as it now stands, encouragement is actually held out to commit murder. If a white man cruelly punishes a slave, that is only a *misdemeanour*, and any Slave may be received as evidence against him. But if he kill the Slave outright, that is a capital felony, and no Slave evidence can be admitted affecting the life of a white man. We can have little doubt but that the preposterous injustice of this exception must cause its speedy repeal. Such is the substance of the regulations, all of which are enforced by suitable penalties.

It is very clear that the great body of persons in this country, who are desirous to ameliorate the situation of the Negroes in the West Indies, received this order in Council with feelings of considerable disappointment: And they certainly had reason to expect, from the tone of Mr Canning's speech on Mr Buxton's motion, some measure of a more decided character, and more general application. On the other hand, the sincerity of his Majesty's ministers on this subject, cannot with any candour be questioned; and the same feelings which led them to enact so much that is good in the order, will, it may be hoped, lead them to correct its important and manifest deficiencies.

While therefore the friends of religion, freedom, and social improvement, ought to hail the publication of this order as an important step in advance; it cannot be expected that they should consider it as valuable in any other light than that of a preparatory measure, or that they should give up without another effort, the cause of

six hundred thousand Slaves, in those islands possessing legislative assemblies, to which none of the provisions of the order extend. Nor again, is it to be expected that they will fully join in the charitable anticipations of Mr Canning, as to the influence of good examples on the Colonial legislatures. They cannot forget the incorrigible pertinacity with which those legislatures resisted the abolition of the Slave Trade; and while they can smile with the Right Hon. Secretary, at the rage of the Jamaica House of Assembly, as it affects the interests of Great Britain; they cannot, without deep fear and regret, contemplate it as affecting the interests of the Slaves, and ultimately of the Slave owners themselves. They cannot believe that a system like that of West India Slavery, founded on injustice and robbery, and supported by no one principle of reason, humanity, policy, or religion, will be permitted in the present state of the world, to go on unmolested, in a quiet perpetuity.

The abettors of Slavery as it exists, ought to be aware, that the hatred of that system which has lately been manifested in Great Britain, is not confined to any particular class or denomination of men, to the fanatics in religion, or the agitators in politics. The sentence of condemnation which was passed in the Senate, has been echoed back from the remotest village of the land; and the petitioners who have loaded, and who will continue to load the tables of both Houses with their prayers, can only be designated as the *people of Great Britain*. They ought also to be aware, that hazardous as it may be, to resist the general wish of the mother country, their most imminent danger is totally unconnected with the proceedings in this country. Their danger arises from the unnatural state of society in the West Indies, where the interests of the many are sacrificed, not to the interests, but to the pride and prejudices of the few. It arises from the physical force which they persist in compressing.

from the moral ignorance which they refuse to enlighten; it arises from the powerful and increasing body of Mulattoes, many of whom have acquired in the schools and the society of this country, knowledge, principles, and manners, which raise them greatly above the average of the white colonists. How long such men, accustomed to the freedom and the courtesy of Britain, will submit to the degradation of their West Indian condition, it is impossible for us to say—but it needs no prophetic gift to be certain that they will not submit to it for ever. Let the Colonists look to these things. They are in imminent danger; their danger is every day increasing; and the struggles of a timorous cruelty will serve only to hasten the catastrophe. In order to avert it, they must humanize, liberalize, and Christianize their policy. The choice is still in their hands; but if, in the insolence and madness of despotism, they are still deaf to the voice of reason,—of justice,—of humanity, and of their country, they must abide the consequences.—And if we are asked, what are those consequences; we would reply in the expressive language of the Colonists themselves, and desire *them*, as they have desired *us*,

“ *To LOOK AT ST DOMINGO.*”

APPENDIX.

NOTE (A) p. 4.

IN the debate on Mr Buxton's motion, May 15, 1823, Mr Marryat brought forward Lieut. Col. Arthur, Governor of Honduras, as an evidence to prove that the state of the Slaves was so good that it scarcely admitted of improvement; and no doubt the extracts from Col. Arthur's dispatch read by Mr Marryat did assert this. His words are: "With regard to the state of the Black population, I have the most heartfelt gratification in assuring your Lordships, that it is scarcely possible it can be meliorated. So great is the kindness, the liberality, the indulgent care of the woodcutters towards their Negroes, that Slavery would scarcely be known to exist in this country, were it not for a few unprincipled adventurers in the town of Belize, who exercise authority over their one or two Slaves in a manner very different from the great body of the community."

On this extract, which is certainly very creditable to the Slave-Masters of Honduras, we may make one remark. It acknowledges that some "unprincipled adventurers treated their Slaves in a very different manner from the great body of the community." Now, as Col. Arthur makes no mention of his attempting to check the misconduct of these adventurers, it is fair to conclude he had no power to interfere, and that their conduct, however cruel it might be, was not *illegal*.

This, however, is not the only letter on the subject from Col. Arthur to Lord Bathurst. We find another in the correspondence ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 16th June 1823. The letter is dated October 7, 1820; and from it we extract the following passage: "In my report to your Lordship on the 16th May last, upon the insurrection which had taken place in the interior of the colony, I represented that it had originated in the harshness with which some of the Slaves had been treated,

“ and that I was not without hope the consequences on that occasion would
 “ have had the beneficial tendency of exciting a greater degree of humanity
 “ towards these unfortunate people. I am much distressed, my Lord, that
 “ my expectations have not been answered ; and such is the increasing sever-
 “ rity and cruelty which is now practised with *impunity*, that although I
 “ am very conscious of the difficulty which has hitherto presented itself to
 “ his Majesty’s Government upon the general question of the administra-
 “ tion of justice in Honduras, I am most reluctantly constrained to bring
 “ the matter again under your Lordship’s consideration. The result of a
 “ trial, which was instituted on the 6th instant, against an inhabitant for
 “ excessive cruelty towards a poor Slave, *absolutely excludes every hope, un-
 “ der the present system of jurisprudence, of bringing offenders to punishment,
 “ when guilty of the most flagrant acts of inhumanity and oppression.*

But not to speak of particular cases or colonies, it should be kept in mind, that the general law of the colonies is, *that the evidence of Slaves is wholly inadmissible, not only against their owners, but in all cases whatever, either civil or criminal, affecting persons of free condition.* And where such is the law, it is impossible the Slave should have any *real* legal protection. The law, for instance, provides that only thirty-nine lashes shall be inflicted at once ; but if a master inflicts ten times that number, and does so in the presence of a thousand other slaves, there is no evidence, and he does so with perfect *impunity*. The language of the Report is therefore strictly correct.

NOTE (B) p. 5.

The following is the return of marriages of Slaves which have taken place during 14 years in 13 parishes of Jamaica up to 1822.

St John’s,	1
St Thomas’s in the Vale,.....	none
Vere,	1
Clarendon,	2
St Ann’s,	none
St Elizabeth’s,	none
St James’s,	2
Portland,	27
Hanover,	none
Falmouth,	1
Port Royal,	2
St Mary’s,	26
St George’s,	47

It should be remembered, that the average Slave population of each of these parishes is upwards of 16,000. Nor are the few marriages that have taken place recognized or protected by the law. The married Negro has no security that his wife shall not be torn from him by the caprice or necessities of his owner ; nor, when she is taken from him by force or by seduction, has he any claim for legal compensation. But such a union between the sexes,

possessing neither the sanction of religion, nor the protection of law, is not *marriage* :—the proper designation of such a state is *concubinage*.

The Clergy of Grenada are very candid on this point. “The legal solemnization of marriage between Slaves, in this island,” says the Rev. Mr Nash, “is a thing *unheard of*; and, if I may presume to offer my sentiments, *would, in their present state of imperfect civilization, lead to no beneficial results.*” To the two other clergymen of Grenada, no application had ever been made to marry Slaves. Neither Mr Macmahon, during a ministry of thirty-seven years in British Colonies, nor Mr Webster, in his incumbency of twelve years, had ever *heard of such a thing*. In Trinidad, the marriages of Slaves are stated, in thirteen years, to have been three; in Nevis, Tortola, St Christopher’s, Demerara, Berbice, Tobago, Antigua, Montserrat, Barbadoes, St Vincent’s, Grenada, and Dominica, (with the exception of about sixty marriages stated to have been solemnized in the Romish Church,) the returns are absolutely *none*.

NOTE (C.) p. 5.

The Rev. G. W. Bridges, Rector of the Parish of Manchester, in Jamaica, author of a “Voice from Jamaica.” This gentleman, in reply to Mr Wilberforce, says, “If a constant supply of all the necessaries of life; the best advice and assistance in sickness; perfect reliance on the future support of themselves and their children; if warm houses, freedom from all restraint during fourteen hours of relaxation out of every twenty-four, with a proportion of labour incalculably inferior to that of our own English workmen, whose o’er-wearied slumbers are too often broken by the agonizing thoughts of the future, or by vain attempts to sooth the heart-rending cries of their hungry helpless children; if these are blessings which can elevate the one above the other, so far the comparison is infinitely in favour of our West Indian labourers.” Does not the conclusion of this extract look as if the writer were himself aware of the absurdity of his position? He knew, that if the contrasted ideas of slavery and freedom had been presented to the minds of his readers, they would at once reject his conclusion with scorn and indignation. Bold as he is, he dared not say, “in favour of the Slaves,” but sinks into the softer expression of West Indian labourers, in the vain hope that we may forget, for a moment, that the West Indian labourers are Slaves. But, further than this, if Mr Bridges’ be a fair average account of the state of the Negroes, then every author on the subject, from Edwards down to Pinckard, Williamson, and Stewart, have most grossly misrepresented the state of things. Williamson, in particular, was an advocate for Slavery, and, as a practising surgeon, had better opportunities for judging than Mr Bridges. The reader may compare the following passage with Mr B.’s statement. “The yawy Negroes on estates seemed to me to be in a very neglected state. In the progress of disease that *maintenance was not afforded them*, which, with a view to cure, should be liberally dispensed. A disease, itself injurious to the constitution, is thus aggravated; whereas,

“if nature were supported by *fit diet, clothing, cleanliness, and comfortable housing*, she would work her own cure in most cases.” (Williamson, vol. i. p. 88.)

Is it not evident, besides, that Mr B. considers the Negro only in the light of an animal; and would it not be easy to prove, on similar principles, that a well-fed horse is superior in happiness to a British peasant? But, whatever he may think of the Negroes, we will not consent to measure those in whom God has implanted rational and immortal souls, by so mean a standard. The British peasant knows his duty to others, and the duties of others towards him, no driver stimulates his labour with the whip,—no overseer can confine or torture him at his pleasure,—no master can forcibly separate him from his wife or his children. If his talents be superior to his station, the path of honourable ambition lies open before him; and if his lot be hard, it is his own fault if he possesses not the comforts of religion and the anticipations of immortality. These are the superiorities of the British peasant, and these,—but, above all, the last of these,—it is our object to procure for the West Indian Negro.

NOTE (D.) p. 13.

Of the degree to which the passions of the Legislators of Jamaica have obscured their judgment, every one of the Resolutions affords abundant proof. Their 32d Resolution proposes an address to the Governor, concluding thus, “*The House think the present moment peculiarly unfavourable for discussions, which may have a tendency to unsettle the minds of the Negro population, which the House have the greatest reason to believe, is at present perfectly quiet and contented.*”

This Resolution was passed in the House of Assembly, December 11, 1823. Mr Buxton’s motion was made May 15, so that intelligence of it must have reached Jamaica nearly five months before. The Slaves, therefore, had for five months been acquainted with the proceedings in the British Parliament, and still their minds remained *perfectly quiet and contented*. Again, the present moment, says the House of Assembly, is *peculiarly unfavourable for discussions, &c.* and, therefore, they at once plunge into discussions of the most inflammatory nature. But why was that moment *peculiarly unfavourable*? Because the minds of the Slaves were then perfectly quiet and contented. We must, therefore, take it as the recorded opinion of the House of Assembly, that times of tranquillity are peculiarly unsuited for discussion, and that periods of insurrection and civil war are peculiarly adapted for temperate discussion and moderate decisions.