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LETTER

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TO

W. E. CHANNING, D. D.

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

ABUSE OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

IN THE

ISLAND OF CUBA,

AND THE

ADVANTAGE TAKEN OF ITS PROTECTION

IN PROMOTING THE

SLAVE TRADE.

BY R. R. MADDEN,

Author of "Travels in the West Indies," and "Infirmities of Men of Genius."

BOSTON,

WILLIAM D. TICKNOR,

Corner of Washington and School Streets.

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LETTER.

MY DEAR SIR:—

The subject of this letter is one of such importance, the necessity for entering on it so urgent, and the task of performing it so painful, that, were it possible to distinguish men from measures, and to serve the cause of truth and justice without wounding the feelings of individuals, however adverse to both, I would sit down to address you with more alacrity, and would hope to attain my object without exciting a suspicion that the conduct of an unpopular man has been mistaken or misrepresented by me.

Feeling strongly as I do on the subject of this letter, perhaps I may express myself strongly, and I fear it might be harshly, were I less fully impressed with the calmness of that mental composure, that patient spirit of philosophical research, — that clear, cold, pellucid expression of well examined thoughts, and moderated opinions, which so eminently characterize your judgments, and distinguish the communication of your sentiments. Were it otherwise, I might find it difficult, I confess, to restrain my feelings, and yet have to speak of great wrongs committed with impunity against humanity. As it is, I hope in addressing myself to your reason, to execute my task, to direct your attention to that scandalous abuse of the flag of your country, which has been flagrantly connived at by the Consul of the United States in Cuba, and the result of which has been to give a new impetus to the illegal traffic in human beings, and to render it impossible for the efforts of the British Government for the suppression of this traffic, to be carried into successful execution.

This is the third time I have had the pleasure of visiting America. It has been my good fortune to have been permitted to converse freely and to communicate even familiarly, on the subject of this communication, with many of the great and good men of this country, of all parties, of all sects, Northerners and Southerners, and finding greatness of mind and goodness of heart limited to no particular latitudes, I have inquired of all, what interest had the United States in promoting the desolation of Africa by affording the inhuman trade in slaves the protection of her flag? And there has been little or any essential difference in the answers I have received. Let me ask you, my dear sir, this same question; and in the name of truth and justice, on behalf of the unfortunate people of Africa, and for the sake of the honor of that flag which will owe its first stain to the infamy of this unhallowed traffic, without the promptest interposition, let me conjure you to give to this question a reply prompt and loud, that will go through the land, arrest attention at Washington, and find its way to the Havana not only as the voice of the highest wisdom of the country, and moreover of public opinion, but as the stern accents of authority that will speak to a functionary who has betrayed his trust, in the language of rebuke, "henceforth be thou no officer of mine." I am well assured your answer to that question will be the echo of the sentiments that hitherto I have heard here in reply to it. But, perhaps, these sentiments will show a farther view of the bearings of the question, and a deeper understanding of the dangers which are involved in the subject of it. Perhaps your reply to this question would embrace topics of interest to republics beyond your own. Perhaps it would appear to you that the continuance and extension of this felonious trade, was planned and promoted by men who looked even beyond the advantages of their present gains. Perhaps the thought might flash across your mind, that the Texian system of conquest, by means of colonization, was considered applicable to Cuba, as well as to portions of the Mexican dominions, and that the future progress of Texian conquest, and the decline and ultimate fall of the South American republics, were supposed to have rendered it desirable, to prevent the suppression of a trade which was destined to extend the influence of slavery, to spread its empire over the vast regions of South America, and under the protection of its tutelary flag, to continue to Cuba and Porto Rico a traffic, which, in the language of Mr. Trist, "to all practical purposes has become hallowed in all eyes here."

Perhaps, sir, you might not be deterred by the smile of public incre-

dulity, or the sneer of political contempt, from expressing the opinion that the continuance of the slave-trade was a very material ingredient in the policy of those political desperadoes, who, to counteract the power and influence of the Northern States, are prepared to extend the Southern boundary, and to secure the permanence, and to promote the realization of the benefits to humanity conveyed in the opinion solemnly expressed by Mr. Trist, when he declared that he "*entertains a deliberate and oft revolved doubt, whether considered merely in itself, the slave-trade be not a positive benefit to its supposed victims.*"

Perhaps, sir, on the perusal of this letter, you might imagine there was reason to believe such a conspiracy against the people of Africa and the South American territories was in existence, and was acted on in Cuba; and the final accomplishment of its promised "benefits," was reserved for the completion of the Texian policy both in the Spanish Islands and on the Main.

Perhaps you might be induced to believe that wild as this scheme may seem to be, it is not impracticable in the hands of bad, bold men, whose physical and mental energies are so vastly superior to those of the people they settle down amongst, with the strong purpose of dispossessing, when the plot is matured, and the mask of colonial allegiance may be successfully thrown off.

These are considerations which, in all probability, would be pondered over well and long in the depths of thought like yours, before I received a reply. But whatever that reply might be, I am greatly mistaken if the British Government and the people of Great Britain and America, or that portion, at least, of the intelligence and integrity of both countries that goes under that name, would not receive it with respect, examine it with attention, and confide in the justice of its conclusions.

These conclusions would be grounded, I presume, on the following assumptions: —

1. That the Spanish slave-trade has gradually and steadily increased from the year 1820 to the present year; and the importations have been augmented from 15,000 to 25,000 per annum.

2. That the great amount of American capital invested in slave property in the island of Cuba, and the energy with which the new American settlers have entered on the cultivation of new land, (the establishment of new American plantations averaging during the last three years, twenty a year,) have largely contributed to give an impetus to the trade, which has been fatal to the efforts made for its suppression.

3. That the recent treaty of 1835, between Spain and England, for its suppression, has been successfully evaded by the practice adopted of shipping the stores for the slave-trade on board American vessels at the Havana.

4. That American vessels are suffered to proceed with the stores to Africa, and even to return to the Island of Cuba with slaves, under the Portuguese flag, with the full knowledge of the Consul of the United States.

5. That all the vessels in the Spanish slave-trade, are built in America, chiefly in Baltimore; and are publicly sold for the slave-trade in the Havana, by the foreign merchants.

6. That fraudulent transfers of the papers are constantly made, of vessels employed or destined for this trade.

7. That slaves under fictitious titles, described in fraudulent declarations as free, indented laborers, and duly attested by the Consul of the United States, have been exported from Havana to Texas.

8. That within the last two years and a half, two vessels have been detected landing slaves in the United States. One of which, the Emperor, was taken by an American vessel of war and sent to Pensacola for trial; and on her release, by one of these illegal transfers became Portuguese, and was subsequently taken about June last, by a British cruiser, under the name of Sierra del Pilar.

9. That the slave-trade of Cuba for the last two years has been carried on under the protection of the Portuguese and American flags.

10. That the Spanish flag during that period, with one or two exceptions, fell into complete disuse.

11. That on the dismissal from office of the notorious slave-trader Fernandez, the Portuguese consul, Mr. Trist became the acting consul for that nation.

12. That the use and abuse of these two flags were of necessity known to Mr. N. P. Trist, and were connived at by him.

Perhaps before entering into these particulars, I should have informed you that Mr. N. P. Trist is the gentleman who fills the office of Consul General of the United States at the Havana. That he has gained for himself within the last three or four years, a considerable degree of unenviable notoriety, and for his office, unfortunately, an amount of obloquy highly prejudicial to its high character, by the arrogance of his conduct, the neglect of his duties, and lastly, by the scandalous protection he has afforded to the slave-trade, and

the open predilection he has recently avowed, and *officially recorded*, for the interests of that nefarious traffic.

Of late, he has taken occasion twice, in official communications, to bestow a vast quantity of abuse on the British members of the Commission for the suppression of the slave-trade; and not only the present members of it, but their several predecessors; and moreover the most unmeasured reproach it is possible to conceive, on the British Government. But what is most likely to excite the anger of the folks of the old country, this poor man has bestowed "his pity" on a very large portion of the people of England. And for what calamity, forsooth? — why, for their abhorrence of the slave-trade: because, in the words of Mr. Trist, they waste their energies on a cause that is "a delusion," practised on them by men who are "*self-seekers*," "*deceivers*," "*theatrical exhibitors*," "*fanatics*," and "*impostors*;" for all of whom, his feelings, he declares, are those of "*disgust and indignation*."

The "disgust" of Mr. Trist is certainly sufficiently loathsome without the insult of his "pity," and either of them less patiently to be endured than his "indignation."

There is some allowance, however, to be made for the latter; a latent feeling of respect for the interests of the "market," and of regret for the loss of a property in Cuba, which must have made him a frequenter of it, had he been able to have retained his estate there, no doubt have much to do with the "indignation" of the discomfited planter. Mr. Trist had scarcely entered on his official duties, when he purchased an estate in Cuba. Every one conversant with slavery in that island, knows that the slave population is not kept up by the increase on the plantations. On sugar properties, that there is in fact no increase at all, and that it is necessary under the present system of management, to have recourse to the slave market, to make up for the annual decrease, by the purchase of newly imported slaves from Africa. So that one of the first acts of this officer was to place himself in a condition, which imposed on him the necessity of participating in a crime, which the laws of his country pronounce Piracy, and punish with the penalty of Death.

Fortunately for his office, Mr. Trist became unable to meet the engagements into which he had entered, when the period came round for the payment for this estate. Law proceedings were commenced against him, and he was compelled to shelter himself under the privileges of his office, and the special protection of the Captain General,

to avoid the ruinous consequences of a legal prosecution in a Spanish court. Mr. Trist was compelled to give up his estate, — his poverty, but not his will, consented to the sacrifice.

Driven from the pleasing exercise of power as a Cuban planter, he turned to the prospect of the emoluments of office; and the protection of the slave-trade opened a new field for speculation. In the year 1836, the published correspondence of the Commissioners with the British Government, throws some light on the proceedings of Mr. Trist, during the preceding year, with respect to the countenance given by that person to the slave-trade, then carrying on between Texas and the island of Cuba. This trade in the latter part of 1835, had been carried on by American citizens to a considerable extent. The attention of the Commissioners was at length called to these scandalous proceedings. A new plan was devised to evade their vigilance. The American Consul, when a shipment was to be made, had declarations made before him, by the Captains of the American vessels employed in transporting the bozal negroes from this port, stating that these persons were free indented laborers, and this declaration was duly attested by Mr. Trist. In plain terms, the signature of the American Consul at the Havana was appended to these fraudulent documents. He, Mr. Trist, well knowing that the said free indented laborers, were sent to Texas to be sold there, by dealers established in Cuba for the sole purpose of this traffic.

The Commissioners' knowledge of these matters, in all probability, was made known at Washington, for on the 23d of February, 1836, the following notice was posted up in the American consulate at the Havana.

“It being understood that several American vessels have lately been chartered for the transportation of Africans, or black men, from this Island to Texas, Notice is hereby given to American ship-masters, and to all others, that any and every such proceeding, is in direct violation of the laws of the United States. In no case whatever, is it lawful for any American vessel to carry a slave, or colored person held to service or labor, except only in going from one port in the United States to another.

“Except as just stated, no American vessel can lawfully sail with any black or colored person whatever, unless such black or colored person, be really and truly, to all intents and purposes, *free*. To take, or have on board, any negro or colored person whatever, who

may be in any way held to service or labor, no matter whether such colored person be called by the name of apprentice, or any other, is strictly forbidden by law. The law is just as certainly violated in carrying Africans, no matter under what name, from this island to Texas, as in bringing Africans from any part of their own coast, to this island. In any case of the violation of the law, the vessel and cargo are sure to be condemned, if seized while on the voyage to Texas, or elsewhere, with any such colored person on board, or if prosecuted after her return to the United States, and the master and every person employed in said vessel, are moreover, subject to the heaviest penalties; the least of which is fine and imprisonment for three years, and in some cases amounting to death."

"CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

"Havana, February 23, 1836."

Now, the first question is, what evidence is there of Mr. Trist having given his signature to the fraudulent declarations of the captains of the slave carrying vessels? The best evidence in such a case, Mr. Trist's own official acknowledgment of the fact! In his last communication to the Commissioners, dated the 8th of July, 1839, in referring to this subject, he attempts to prove that Mr. Macleay, the Chief Commissioner, had stated that which was not true, namely, that he had left it to be understood that he, Mr. Trist, was the person who made the declaration, whereas he was only the attestor of the declaration. It happens that Mr. Macleay had stated nothing of the kind. But fortunately for truth, in the anger of Mr. Trist, at the detection of the Texian slave-trade, to which he had lent the influence of his official character, he plainly, and directly, admits that he did sign the declarations, in these cases of Texian exportations of negroes, which were made before him; and moreover that the negroes carried from this port to Texas, went under the denomination of apprenticed laborers.

In his Consular Notice he distinctly states, that

"No vessel can lawfully sail with any black or colored person whatever, unless such black or colored person be really and truly, to all intents and purposes, free." Nay more, that if such persons "are held in any way to *service or labor*, no matter whether such colored person be called by the name of *apprentice*, or any other, it is strictly forbidden by law."

May I ask Mr. Trist, why then he suffered these negroes, whom

he acknowledges were represented in the declaration as "indented laborers," and consequently held to "service" and "labor," to be carried away illegally; and why he gave the sanction of his official signature to documents which he knew were "in direct violation of the laws of the United States?" Why did he, the Consul of the United States, permit the persons who made these declarations, — subjects of America, — to perpetrate crime which involved the penalty of "fine and imprisonment," "seizure" of the vessel thus employed, and "confiscation" of the property of his fellow-citizens? Why did he not refuse his signature proceedings which he denounces the illegality of, after they have been carried into effect with so dreadful a penalty to be incurred by their commission; "in some cases," (to use Mr. Trist's own words) amounting "to death."

The interruption of the Texian slave-trade, by the publicity given to the proceedings of Mr. Trist, on the part of the Commissioners, was the first cause of the "indignation" of Mr. Trist. He found no public occasion for giving vent to it, however, till after the departure of Mr. Macleay. The new Commissioners having begged to call the attention of Mr. Trist to a flagrant case of slave-dealing, carried on with open effrontery under the American flag, the indignant Consul sent back to the Commissioners their official communication, declining to take any steps, or to receive any information on the subject of their letter. In the meantime, those Commissioners having been succeeded by others, another case of slave dealing under the American flag, rendered it necessary to call Mr. Trist's attention again to this new violation of the laws, and the communication was made to him by letter on the 8th of January, 1839, of the present year. This letter was couched in courteous terms. The information was simply given to him, that a vessel, named "the Venus," then in the harbor, had recently arrived from Africa with a cargo of 860 slaves, which she had taken in under the protection of the American flag. That she had sailed from the Havana four months previously under the American flag, and had returned with her cargo of slaves under the Portuguese flag. That on the coast of Africa a British cruiser had visited her, and desisted from capturing her because she was under the American flag; and, finally, expressing a hope that he would take such steps as the case demanded, and regretting to have to state that the Commissioners had reason to know, that a considerable number of American subjects were engaged in this unlawful traffic.

On the former occasion of a similar communication, this function-

ary had expended his "indignation" in a short and simple act of vulgar insult; he returned the Commissioners the letter they addressed to him. The rudeness here was congenial to his character, and the vulgarity of the mode of evincing his displeasure bore testimony to the strength of his animosity to the views of the British government, with respect to a traffic which the laws of his own country denounce as Piracy.

To the communication of the 5th of January, 1839, Mr. Trist replied in a letter of sixteen foolscap pages. His "indignation" had taken a new form of outbreak, and if its intensity is to be judged of by its expansiveness and extension in the shape of words, too high an opinion cannot be formed of its virulence. In a strain of the most violent invective, levelled discursively at the Commission for the Suppression of the Slave-trade, the British government, the British people, the deluded victims of certain "deceivers," "self-seekers," practisers of theatrical exhibitions, and other kinds of public impostors, the Consul delivers himself of a great amount of wrath and rigmarole, in reply to a communication that certainly required some ingenuity to find any thing offensive in it to his official character, and which it was impossible to assert contained any thing contrary to truth. The two statements made in it respectfully to him were, namely these, that the slave-ship "Venus," had sailed from Havana under American colors, taken in her slaves under the same flag, and had just landed her cargo under the Portuguese; the other, that the Commissioners had reason to know that a number of American citizens were engaged in this unlawful traffic. This lengthy epistle designedly avoids entering into the question of this scandalous abuse of the American flag, for very obvious reasons. One of which it is alone necessary to state. The entire slave-trade of the island of Cuba was then passing through the identical hands of N. P. Trist, the Consul General of the United States at the Havana, inasmuch as the whole illegal traffic was then carried on fraudulently and scandalously under the protection of the American and Portuguese flags; and Mr. Trist was the Consul General of the one country, and the acting Consul of the other, from the period of the dismissal of the notorious slave-trade Portuguese Consul, Mr. Fernandez. Now the papers of the slave-trading vessels of both countries necessarily passed through his hands. It was incumbent on him to see that they were neither fraudulent nor fictitious. But Mr. Trist felt the only incumbency in question, was one by no means onerous or disagreeable, that of re-

ceiving the fees of his office, and making the most of the precarious tenure of his post.

However, in his long rambling reply to the Commissioners, wherein all kinds of subjects, *et quædam alia*, wholly foreign to their communication, are treated in a style of consular diplomacy peculiar to Mr. Trist, he concludes this official manifestation of solemn nonsense, by reminding one of the Commissioners that he had been brought up in the Temple, and then calls on him for evidence of the facts stated in the letter; plainly intimating that legal evidence was required, he well knowing that no such evidence could be produced with safety to life in any Spanish court.

His latest official communication to the Commissioners, bearing the date of the 8th of July last, was received by these gentlemen on the 31st of August. It purports to be a reply to a note of theirs dated January 10th, 1839, informing him that the Commissioners were instructed by Viscount Palmerston, in reference to Mr. Trist's letter on the subject of the "Venus," to acquaint him, that although the government of the United States had declined entering into any specific treaty on the subject of the slave-trade, the two governments were entitled by the treaty of Ghent, to afford one another any information that either might obtain, and might deem useful to the efforts made for the suppression of the slave-trade; and that it was the duty of the Commissioners to afford any useful information of this kind to Mr. Trist in a becoming manner, as the officer of a government in amity with theirs, and on a subject which both nations concurred in, as to the guilt of the crime, and the legal penalty of it; and further, that the Commissioners would be very glad to receive any similar information from Mr. Trist; and particularly in respect to British subjects supplying the shackles and fabrics for this trade, he, Mr. Trist, having stated in his former letter that such British manufactured articles and goods were regularly imported at the Havana, for the African slave-trade.

To this brief communication, couched in as courteous language as the former, Mr. Trist replied in a letter which occupied him in the composition of it from the 8th of July to the 31st of August, and this official letter consisted of *two hundred and seventy-six pages*.

To say that this production is one long tissue of abuse, vituperation, threats, defiance, and denunciation against the British government, the policy, patronage, views, and objects of its ministers, the

various members of the Commission, their zeal, enthusiasm, and activity, under a variety of hard names, is to say but little.

The invective is occasionally enlivened by Mr. Trist's opinion of things in general, but of the slave-trade in particular; this he has kindly taken under his protection. Jealous in the extreme of the reputation, and above all, of the profits of his foul protegee, he undertakes the arduous task of white-washing the strumpet's character, and as he warms in her defence, he absolutely revels in the guilt of her polluted bed. There is not a blot upon her fame that is not a beauty in his eyes; nor a blood stain on her hands that has not for him an agreeable association of idea: for each one "speaks" (in Pistol's vein) "of Africa and golden joys." Verily, the root that takes the reason prisoner, and the sin that sears the conscience, likewise have had to do with the arts of the mercenary wanton. In the words of the wise man we have the beginning and the end of her allurements. "And behold a woman meeteth him in harlot's attire, prepared to deceive souls, talkative and wandering. And catching the man she keepeth him, and with an impudent face flattereth, saying: I vowed victims for prosperity this day; I have paid my vows. She entangled him with many words, and drew him away with the flattery of her lips. Immediately he followeth her as an ox led to the slaughter, and as a lamb playing the wanton, *and not knowing that he is drawn like a fool to bonds.* For she hath cast down many wounded, and the strongest have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, reaching even to the innermost chambers of death." Such is the harlot that Mr. Trist has taken to his bosom; such are slave-trade seductions, leading its victim by easy stages from crime to crime, till at length he becomes so enamoured of guilt that he wonders how all the world does not dally with it as he does himself.

In this lamentable frame of mind, Mr. Trist in his late production, sets no limits to his fury when he begins the contest against the cause of humanity, *and actually suggests the assassination of the Commissioners, for no other reason but their hostility to the interests of this traffic!*

Of the existence of the Commissioners at the Havana in the exercise of these functions, for the suppression of the slave-trade, Mr. Trist says in his recent official communication of two hundred and seventy-six pages, "The result is the re-awaking of the old guerrilla spirit; that spirit, which when their national independence was suffering at the hands of Napoleon, was known by the French soldier to be

near when he saw his comrade drop with the knife-handle projecting from his chest, which noiseless and unseen, mowed a path for the angel of death through those serried ranks, in countless efforts to penetrate and to scatter which, the mameluke whirlwind had ineffectually spent itself."—Page 43.

He reminds the Commissioners of "the Bowie knife," of which he says these gentlemen "have perhaps read;" and after condemning the use of it, he goes on to say, "but if this Bowie knife were to become an object of philanthropic zeal in yours or any other foreign country, and circumstances should be such as to impart to your government the wish and the power to interfere with ours in regard to this object of my abhorrence, to dictate a law for its extirpation, and to take a hand in its execution, that abhorrence would be laid aside, never again to occupy my thoughts, until your law and your interference had been driven into the sea; and necessary to the accomplishment of this, *every reaping hook should be beat into a Bowie knife, and every maiden in the land should be taught to handle it.*"—Page 44.

"He looks forward to the time with heartfelt pleasure when the people of England will be free. When the House of Lords shall exist only upon the page of history, and a real representative shall have the place of that detestable simulacrum by which in their own land they have been plundered."—Page 45.

He solemnly declares, "To all practical purposes, the slave-trade has become hallowed in all eyes here." He looks forward to the time "when Great Britain quietly basking in the blessed light of democracy, under institutions modelled after ours, shall unite in a hymn to the daughter land that first taught the world how to reconcile liberty with law — the might of an empire nation with the freedom of a village republic." — Page 49.

In speaking of his conversion to slave-trade doctrines;—"My own earliest recollection of a print is, of that celebrated section of a slave ship, constituting, if I recollect right, the frontispiece to one of Wilberforce's publications. There was something in it which excited my curiosity, and this was, by my grandmother, diverted from the engraving, which necessarily remained a puzzle to me, to the trade itself, with the horrors of which my infant mind was filled, and for which a hatred was inspired, correspondent to that which animated the bosom of my instructress, the most remarkably generous and benevolent person in a very large circle of acquaintance. Nor did my subsequent

education at all disturb this first impression. The feeling grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. My preparation therefore in coming to this country, had not been of a character to predispose me to view the slave-trade with favor, and to form upon what I saw, a judgment conflicting with that which had been the growth of my life. *And yet it has so happened! So far at least, that I now entertain a deliberate and oft-revolved doubt whether, considered merely in itself, the slave-trade be not a positive benefit to its supposed victims.* Were the trade open and regulated in the way that emigrant vessels are, I should entertain no doubt on the subject."

He then enters into a long, elaborate advocacy of slavery and the slave-trade, and with respect to making communications to him on the subject of the slave-trade, he says, page 141, "You shall not interfere in any mode, manner or degree with the execution of any law which it may have pleased my government to pass for the government of its citizens. So far as the principle of national independence is in my keeping, it shall not be invaded in any way, nor to any extent. Henry Brougham should not do it were he here in proper person. Wm. Wilberforce should not do it could he rise from the dead to make the attempt. Think ye, then, it shall prosper when coming from stipendiaries? No, not if war were to come of it." Then he goes on to deprecate the evils of war, and comes to the following flowing conclusion: "And yet, if I could read the book of destiny, that by flinging your communications into your teeth, I should prove the author of the longest war that ever desolated Christendom, there would be no faltering on my part; no, not if I foresaw that in defence of my country, *of that part of it I mean* which would be chiefly exposed to assault, *every matron and every maid would have to arise* before I would submit to your pretensions, or would meet it when persisted in, in any other tone than that defiance which I now hurl; my *daughter should make a bonfire of her books and her music*, and bidding adieu to those pursuits which are to qualify her for the womanly employment she has been taught to look forward to for her support, that of *training the minds and hearts of her young fellow-citizens of our magnificent Republic* in the same way that her paternal grandfather's countrywoman, Maria Edgeworth, hastrained her own;— she should *dedicate herself to her rifle*, until to her eye and to her finger its cunning should be as obedient as it proved to the Tennessee man who drew the closest sight, and touched the surest hair-spring trigger at New Orleans."—Page 250.

But will it be believed that this man, in whose hands the slave-trade may be said to have been for the last two years, has the effrontery to talk of his "principles" being opposed to the slave-trade, and the folly to write about the repugnance of *his "grandmother"* to this vile traffic; to speak to strangers of his condemning the trade in men "*on principle*;" of his dislike to it "*in the abstract*;" of his concern for the impossibility of wiping off the stain, and the stigma too of the victims of it, in the *Tristian* phraseology, *at once, together, simultancously* and *collectively*. This is the slang of Mr. Trist and his associates in the Havana. They talk of their principles, and make it their practice to go the whole hog for the "rights of man," in men duly imported under Mr. Trist's American-Portuguese Consular authority, and sold in the market at Havana. This kind of hypocrisy, with its facilities of speech and pliability of morals, Englishmen, too, have borrowed from Mr. Trist; *they rail like him at the theory and they fall into the practice of slavery*; they condemn the principle of man-stealing, and yet purchase the stolen men; they profess a dislike to slavery in the abstract, and yet feel an extraordinary interest in its details, prospects and prosperity: they declare that as to the slave-trade, "*quoad*" morals, nothing can be worse; but "*quoad*" sugar, it can't be done without, and consequently nothing is more to be approved. In Mr. Trist's official situation, it certainly required a little courage to step forward in defence of an illegal trade, condemned by Spain, and declared by the laws of Great Britain and America a felony punishable with death. But to impugn the motives of those governments which had endeavored to suppress so atrocious a traffic, was a flight of fancy that for its boldness surpassed his previous efforts. In these days, to stand forth before the world in the bold character of an open apologist and defender of the slave-trade, is certainly an arduous undertaking. There are few men out of the trade who would be content to participate in the obloquy attached in his own country to the man who avows himself the champion of such a cause. If respect for the office so unworthily filled by Mr. Trist, a regard for public decency and for the character of his country and its government were not sufficient motives to lay his official acts bare and naked before his countrymen, the cause he strikes at would still render it necessary to take it out of the power of his friends or patrons to prop up his reputation, and retain him in his present office.

Even were he an honest man, he would yet be unfit for his appoint-

ment.—*An incapable, intractable, injudicious, overbearing person.* He seems to have heard that Burke had spoken “Of the high and stubborn spirit of liberty,” which predominated at the Revolution, and of this burly bearing of independence. Mr. Trist evidently thinks that a rude demeanor, a supercilious carriage, an insolent tone, and an uncouth address, are manifest indications. When these are to be displayed on paper, he deems it requisite to make amends for the absence of personal rudeness by giving to his language an offensive energy; and he mistakes for strength a prolix pedantry that he looks upon as logic; and a gunpowder character on most unnecessary occasions for excitement, which he verily believes to be indicative of the highest courage. In his brief communication of two hundred and seventy-six foolscap pages he enters on the subject not of the letter addressed to him, but of the rise, progress, and results of the American Revolution, of the slave-trade as it existed some forty years ago in the British colonies, and of slavery itself, with all its advantages as it now exists in Cuba and of the cruelty of the conduct of Great Britain towards the Spanish nation, in taking advantage of her weakness to extort treaties from her, so injurious to her slave-trade and insulting to the people of her colonies. In these two hundred and seventy pages of his Consular letter, he travels very nearly over the whole habitable globe. From the moment this “great writer” takes pen in hand, the gods seem to have annihilated both time and space to make a Consul happy. He thinks nothing of crossing and re-crossing the Atlantic. He flies from the blessings of democracy in America, to the evils of monarchical government in Great Britain. He visits poor Ireland in quest of misery, and anon he luxuriates in Cuba, in slavery and riches. He touches at San Domingo and forthwith by a natural consequence of the increased facilities for exercising the locomotive organs, we find him, of all places in the world, at Exeter-Hall, trembling with patriotic rage, and exuding at every pore with the most virtuous indignation,—the days of yore, when slavery was in its English cradle in America,—the melancholy period when it was followed to the grave by a mournful band of Jamaica planters in 1834. The era past when the trade was the crime of England; and the present time when her insidious efforts for its suppression are a calamity for Cuba; at the thought of which, he, Mr. Trist, from the purest motives of generosity and respect for the national independence of a weakened power, feels called on to express his “indignation.” All these dates, in the admirable disorder of an indignant mind, are jumbled together, over

the two hundred and seventy-six pages of official folio. Throughout this precious document, there is a painful effort at diplomatic effect, visible in every page; a lawyer's-clerk-like endeavor to appear learned in the law; a hard run upon technical terms, and a sufficient acquaintance with the elementary parts of Blackstone's Commentaries, to convey an idea of a petty-fogging attorney floundering in a legal correspondence; affecting a forensic phraseology that quite throws such professional fustian and expletive redundance as "*Any thing herein contained*, to the contrary thereof, or in any wise notwithstanding"—aye! altogether into the shade. In this specimen of the stunted pedantry and infatuated ambition of a third rate dangler on official life, we perceive the insuperable folly of a man of his calibre, attempting to attain to the high honors of diplomatic rank; profaning the name of Jefferson, and aping the tone and style of the philosopher of Monticello, the charge of whose memory he believes to have fallen on his shoulders, because the grand-daughter of the great man Jefferson happens to have become the wife of the "mighty small gentleman" Mr. N. P. Trist. This poor man dreaming of "doing" Jefferson indeed! The efforts of that imitative animal (that is commonly restrained from pranks of mischief by a chain about his loins) to parodize humanity, are tolerable caricatures, compared with the ludicrous attempts of this official chimpanzee. But there are no limits to the ambitious exertions of Mr. Trist. The slave-trade is not enough to be a just and holy cause, which he is prepared to defend against the world in arms, he is a metallic currency advocate likewise. He talks incredible nonsense, and writes interminable absurdity in praise of hard dollars, which he looks upon as the very life and soul of the "Democratic principle," and as for Banks, he becomes perfectly papyrophobious when these pandemoniums of fictitious money are mentioned in his presence.

To appreciate the gigantic intellect of Fox, it was said, that one "must measure the magnitude of his mind by parallels of latitude." But how, I would be glad to know, are we to estimate the merits of Trist's epistolary correspondence;—for here there are no parallels? We must mete them I presume by degress of *longitude*. But however we measure Mr. Trist, if we make his worth the standard, we find, on completing the disagreeable task, a political pigmy, elevated on a lofty pedestal of ridiculous pretensions, "diminished even by his elevation." It has been the lot of Mr. Trist to have been born and bred in the midst of the evils of which he is enamoured; evils that could not

have been removed while "a recent people were still in the gristle, and had not yet hardened into the bone of manhood." But the source of those evils in the progress of the people's growth, became better known, and by the wise men of the time were finally cut off; the cause was removed, but the effects remained for progressive wisdom and virtue to cope with, in future times. But here is a man who clings most pertinaciously not only to the evils, but to their cast-off cause, who advocates the interests of the slave-trade, at a period when every enlightened man in Christendom either feels or expresses his detestation of them. Surely the poison of the unholy influence which this man has breathed so long, has continued about his whole career. A domineering passion for power without control, and wealth without industrious pursuits, has consecrated in his eyes the highest human injustice that can be inflicted on mankind. This unholy passion has indeed grown with the gristle, and hardened with the bone of Mr. N. P. Trist; and therefore is it that his moral vision labors under so extraordinary an obliquity, that he actually looks upon the odious traffic in human beings as a time-honored pursuit, that it becomes an ardent lover of his country to support and to defend. He looks upon the system of slavery in Cuba as involved in the trade, and he fights for both with the indiscriminate fury of an intoxicated partizan. He argues that slavery is favorable to liberty; that it gives to the spirit of republicanism a fresh vigor, and a new robustness to its burly bearing. Such is Mr. Trist's understanding of "the stubborn spirit of liberty," that Burke so happily eulogized when the ancestors of Mr. Trist were struggling, not for the wages of slavery but for the prize of freedom. And he has the audacity to put himself forward not only as the champion of this illegal trade, but as the representative of the opinions of the people of the United States with respect to it. The good people of America, however, I believe, sir, will feel little inclined to be represented in any of their sentiments on any subject by Mr. N. P. Trist. It behooves them notwithstanding, to disabuse the Consul of his egregious error; for if they allow him to presume on their patience, or to be still deceived himself by the silence of their contempt, his conduct will compromise the character of his government at least; to disparage that of his countrymen it probably may not be in the power of his acts. This last official performance of his he regards as his *chef-d'œuvre*; it has gained him "golden opinions from all sorts of people." Among the slave dealers of the Havana, from his Excellency Don Joaquim Gomez down to the "notorious Mr. Forcade. (and if there be any

lower depth in crime, down even to that lowest depth of infamy.) His popularity has surpassed his expectations, and it may in charity be thought, surpassed even his own desires. He is now reposing on his laurels; the compendious epistle of two hundred and seventy-six pages has been duly read to the select circle of his friends. Vanity like his must be homaged with more than the thin vapor of adulatory incense; the thick smoke of flattery must fume under the nostrils, before the dull organs of egotism are tickled by the breath of praise. His fame is established in the Havana; and if adverse circumstances menace his character at home, he has taken care, by an apparent espousal of the interests of the Southern states in his luminous epistle, to secure an asylum in the event of a recall, and to be able to fall back on their sympathies, with the claims of an advocate, and all the merits of a martyr in their cause. Thus making "the assurance doubly sure" of a successful struggle, or a secure retreat, he faces the enemies of his detestable principles with "the fretful smile of irritated self-sufficiency," and fights the battles of the slave-trade under the mask of national independence; and brawls about his country when he is stabbing at its laws and conniving at the infraction of one of them, the penalty of which is death. There is a species of deception peculiar perhaps to West-India politics, which has been already referred to, but which requires some further notice. It consists in bewildering those who are adverse to the views and principles of the party in question, by professing to hold opinions diametrically opposite to those on which they are known to act, and at variance with those which they are perhaps in the very act of supporting by their countenance or example. Of this talent for setting "springs to catch wood-cocks" in the colonies, let us take the habitual conduct of Mr. Trist for an example. All his feelings are engaged on the side of the trade in slaves. He advocates it by word of mouth and in official correspondence, strenuously, openly, and even indiscreetly. And yet if you ask him his sentiments on the subject of this traffic, "no contraries hold more antipathies" than his opinions; he will tell you gravely he is opposed to it "in the abstract;" nay, more, if a stranger is the person in communication with him, he will tell him "he is an abolitionist" in his principles. When he addresses the Commissioners, vituperating the efforts made for the suppression of the slave-trade, he has the boldness to speak of his feelings being opposed to this odious traffic; and he tells them these feelings were instilled into his tender mind by his grandmother; (poor old lady how fruitless were her lessons;) and yet,

in a page or two more of the two hundred and seventy-six, he acknowledges that the only objection he sees to the trade, is in the stowage of the slaves in the Guineamen, now that the regulations are not under legal control. Elsewhere, he professes to be an ardent friend of liberty ; and shortly afterwards he expatiates on the blessings of slavery and the especial benefit to Cuba arising from it. Anon, he declares that he is a sincere friend of the negroes ; and scarcely has he given vent to his philanthropical sentiments, ere he represents the whole people of Africa as monsters in the human form — cannibals — murderers, eternally cutting one another's throats ; or victims offered up in hecatombs on the reeking altars of African superstition ; as wretches, in fine, whom it is a work of mercy to make slaves of, or to buy out of African slavery ; and to carry to such happy countries as Cuba, where they are sure to attain to an old age in the midst of peace and plenty.

As his fervor increases in the cause of the injured dealers in flesh and blood, he has recourse to the Bowie knife ; he talks of putting the murderous weapon into every female hand in the United States, to resist any interference similar to that which the Commissioners attempted, in directing his attention to the employment of the American flag in slave-trade enterprises ; he speaks of his readiness to promote a war with Great Britain on such high grounds of offence, of war to the knife with England ; and he crowns the climax of patriotic phrenzy by threatening to take his daughter from the music-school to practise with her rifle in order to be prepared for the emergency. But, notwithstanding all these blood-thirsty indications, it must be highly consolatory to the British government to know that Mr. Trist has declared in the same alarming letter, that he is naturally averse to war ; that there is nothing he would not do to avert its evils ; that the use of the Bowie knife is extremely reprehensible in his opinion ; and elsewhere, that Miss Trist is at the present time receiving her education in France, to qualify her for the occupation of a school-mistress in her native land. The mode of advertising for the scholars in an official letter, is a very novel one, and it is sincerely to be hoped that the intimation may produce the desired effect. The peaceful avocations of the young lady in the meantime may allay any apprehensions on the part of her Majesty's troops in the event of war ; and lest any juvenile officer, who " never set a squadron in the field," should feel any uneasiness at the prospect of having to encounter Miss Trist in arms, and ready for the fray, he may be assured there is infinitely more peril

to be feared from a glance "shot from the deadly level" of her dark blue eye, than from any number of bullets from the rifle of this very amiable young lady.

But these conflicting declarations of Mr. Trist, of peace and war, according to Senor Brabantio's notions :

" The sentences to sugar or to gall,
Being strong on both are equivocal,
And words, mere words."

And the worthy Consul illustrates the fact in his usual forcible manner, in another remarkable portion of his very remarkable epistle.

He sets out by assuring the Commissioners that assassination is a crime he feels a great deal of repugnance at the perpetration of; indeed, he censures the practice very severely : *but* circumstances, he plainly informs these anti-slave functionaries, do arise, when this wild justice is essential to national independence, as in a similar case of hostility to Spanish interests, when the knife-handle used to be found projecting from the breast of the French soldier, and the enemy was got rid, by this mode of mowing a path through the files of the invader. In plain English, the Consul General of the United States in the island of Cuba, points out a way of getting rid of the British Commissioners, and in a country like Cuba, where the knife-handle projects pretty frequently from dead men's breasts, to quote Mr. Trist; the hint is intelligible enough; it certainly will not have been his fault if "the war to the knife" work should be left untried. Elsewhere he make some delicate allusions to plain Henry Brougham, without the "Lord" of course, and Daniel O'Connell, with a variety of other names not fit for ears polite, which in numerous portions of the two hundred and seventy-six pages he has generously bestowed on the learned member for Dublin. But then, after pointing out the victims we have alluded to, how gratifying must it be to the wives and children of the objects of his vengeance to learn that the objects of their solicitude have nothing to apprehend from the knife or pistol of Mr. Trist himself; because he specially states that assassination is repugnant to his feelings. His protestations of esteem and respect are in nowise less versatile than his declarations of war and recommendation of Bowie knives, rifles, &c. He protests with vehemence, he feels the greatest respect for the people of England; and lo, and behold, no sooner has he protested, than he repents, and he describes them as the veriest dupes that can be found wasting their energies on a fanatical pursuit, and yielding themselves up to the guidance of miserable knaves and hypocrites.

“*Hic et ubique*, we must change the ground,” wherever we follow the desultory Consul through the labyrinth of official rigmarole. He does the old country itself the honor of some very high-flown, complimentary remarks, in consideration of its having been fortunate enough to give birth to some relatives of his in olden times, an event, no doubt, very “important if true,” and rendered still more remarkable by the strong probability there was that the world might have remained in total ignorance of so curious a fact, as that of the grandmother of Mr. Trist having been actually born in England, had not the curious circumstance of a slave ship, called the *Venus*, sailing from the Havana under the American flag, taking in her human cargo under the same banner, and landing the living freight under the colors of Portugal, on the coast of Cuba in the year 1839, having been brought under his notice by H. B. M. Commissioners, happily recalled the analogous circumstance of his grandmother’s birth, about a century before, in one of the most aristocratic counties of England.

The compliment to the fortunate country that gave birth to his grandmother, is however no sooner paid, than the bewildering policy is immediately displayed in the strongest colors. The laws of this identical country are forthwith reprobated, in the finest off-hand style of Mr. N. P. Trist; the monarchical government of the said country is mauled in a way that might cause the venerable shade of Tom Paine (if “the dread corpse” might indeed “revisit thus the glimpses of the moon”) to smile benignantly on the efforts of the “imperious” Consul. The aristocracy of the land is reviled, moreover, in the choicest terms of Chartist eloquence; the hackneyed declamation of our popular destructives, sounds like new invective from the mellifluous lips of the atrabilious gentleman; the Lords are handled with republican freedom, and their privileges attacked with all the zeal of the democratic spirit let loose on the higher order of the state.

In short, Mr. Trist on paper is “every thing by turns, and nothing long,” except in committing himself, and there he is “lengthy” *usque ad nauseam*, and a little beyond those mawkish limits.

When Mr. Trist shall have an opportunity afforded him of defending his conduct in his own country, of showing how clear he hath been in his great office, there is one little item in “the soft impeachment” to which the attention of his countrymen has to be directed, and to which something more than a sweeping answer of general abuse may be required. The absorbing topics of national interest that engage the attention of the public mind both in England and in America,

leave little time and less inclination for subjects of such remote importance as those of the trade in slaves, and the efforts made for its suppression are thus comparatively unknown. It may be well therefore to state, that with regard to the Spanish slave-trade, it ceased to be a legal traffic north of the line, by the royal cedula of the King of Spain, of the year 1817, and from the year 1820 it totally ceased to be a legal trade by the same ordinance, and by treaty of the same date between the sovereigns of Spain and Great Britain, the terms of its suppression were entirely agreed on.

By these terms all negroes carried from Africa in Spanish vessels and captured by British cruisers, were declared to be free, and were handed over to the authorities of the Spanish Colonies, to which they were taken, to be treated in every respect as free persons destined to undergo a certain term of probation or apprenticeship, during which they were to be instructed in the Christian religion, and to be taught some trade by which they were to be enabled to earn their bread. And then to be to all intents and purposes free from slavery or servitude of any kind. It is a lamentable fact, that from the year 1820 to 1830, of some fourteen or fifteen thousand of these unfortunate negroes called "emancipados," delivered over to the Spanish authorities at Cuba, *one* individual only has obtained freedom, and that individual a negro, held by the Secretary of the Commission whom the Governor recently, on application, gave his permission to be carried off the island at whatever period his master should return to Europe. These emancipados were regularly sold into slavery for terms of five, seven and ten years, by the late Captain General Tacon, for sums varying from seven to ten doubloons; and the payments were made under the name of voluntary contributions to public works. Previously to General Tacon's government they were sold less openly and scandalously, and for much smaller sums. When the term of the first sale was expired they were sold over again; so that the unfortunate emancipados were infinitely worse off than the slaves of the island, because their lessees had not a life interest in their health and strength; and the temporary interest they had in them made it essential (as matters are viewed in Cuba) for the holders of the emancipados to get the greatest quantity of labor out of the unfortunate negroes, mocked with the name of freedom, in the shortest given space of time. Another great, evil which rendered the condition of the emancipados far worse than that of the slaves was, that they were debarred from the legal privilege of changing masters when ill treat-

ed, or of demanding to be sold to another for the price at which they were purchased by the original owner. Another grievance to which they were subjected was, that of sending them into the interior on plantations, contrary to the express terms of the agreement, where the invariable practice was, in the event of a slave death on an estate, to report the emancipado dead, and to procure false certificates from the officiating clergy, whereby the emancipado slipped into the shoes of the dead slave.

Now with respect to the fraud practised on the British government, perhaps some idea may be formed of its amount, and of the vexation it must have caused those whose efforts had been so long and anxiously directed to the amelioration of the condition of those victims of slave-trade avarice, by referring to its cost. Previously to the new treaty with Spain of June, 1835, the bounty accorded to the British captors was ten pounds a head. By the recent treaty it was reduced to five. The expense of the cruising squadron for the suppression of this traffic has been estimated by one of the Lords of the Admiralty at £100,000 a year. The bare expense of the Commission at the Havana alone is about £4,000 per annum. The amount paid to Spain by Great Britain in consideration of the interests hurt by the suppression of the trade in slaves, was £400,000. Now, if by the immensity of the expense incurred, we are to estimate the value set by the British government on the liberty of those captured by the British cruisers, and who ought to have been restored to liberty, some notion may be formed of the disappointment that must be felt at the complete frustration of the hopes entertained for the emancipation of these people; and some idea may be had of the culpability of those who have practised the double fraud of robbing the nominally emancipated negro of his freedom, and of counteracting the benevolent intentions of the British government by such a course of chicanery and fraud. Mr. N. P. Trist stands charged with this guilt; and if there were the shadow of a doubt of his culpability in this case, the charge would not have been brought forward.

Mr. Trist obtained, like other foreign and native functionaries in favor with the reigning powers at the Havana, shortly after his arrival in Cuba, one of those emancipados for his domestic service, from the government, without the customary *voluntary contribution in aid of the public works*. The emancipados thus distributed, it was equally incumbent on the holders, as in all other cases, to prepare for freedom by Christian instruction. Will it be believed in America that

the representative of that great Republic in the Island of Cuba, so recently as the month of September last, was still receiving from that unfortunate emancipado woman, after years of service, a paltry pittance of three reals a day from the sale of fruit, hawked about the Havana by this poor woman, robbed of her freedom, and the price of it thus daily pocketed by the Consul of the United States!

What answer Mr. Trist may condescend to give to this charge it is hard to say. The facts it is impossible for him to deny. The motives for his conduct it may be in the power of his ingenuity to explain to the satisfaction of himself and of his friends in Cuba, but elsewhere, a multitude of words, and above all, in America a multitude of frothy words "full of sound and fury, and signifying nothing," will be as "the idle wind" which matter-of-fact people "regard not."

But to the general charge of connivance during the last two years, at the carrying on of the Spanish slave-trade under the Portuguese and American flags, by sanctioning in his Consular capacity the fraudulent transfer of the papers of vessels sailing under these colors, by permitting them to clear out on illegal voyages, by refusing to receive communications from the Commissioners for the suppression of this traffic, of notorious instances of the abuse of the American flag,—and of the use of the Portuguese flag in connexion with this felonious traffic,—Mr. Trist has pleaded not guilty, and he grounds his defence on his interference in two cases, where certainly no benefit was derived from it, but wherein undoubtedly if his interference was opportunely and judiciously made, he would be entitled to full credit for the honesty of his intention. Both of these cases are of occurrence within the last twelve months. In one case of a Spanish vessel fraudulently acquiring papers for slave-trade purposes at one of the Keys on the coast of Florida, *the transfer, be it noted, not having place in the Havana*, Mr. Trist, without any detriment to the interests of his consulate, was enabled to display a vigor even beyond the law, and no sooner does the vessel arrive in the Havana than he seizes her in this foreign port; and of course his government is no sooner apprized of this illegal seizure, and of the complaints of the Spanish government, than the restitution of the vessel is ordered, and she is accordingly given up.

The other case is that of the *Venus*, that landed her cargo under Portuguese colors, and took them in under the American flag, which being reported to him by the Commissioners, he, having vented his indignation *at the detection* of the felony, entered on an investigation

of the facts alleged in the Commissioners' communication, at a period when no trace of the traffic in which this slave vessel had been engaged was any longer to be discovered, instead of instituting his inquiries on the receipt of the communication, when the vessel had just entered the port, and the proofs of the service on which the vessel had been employed were to be obtained, and the existence of the crew still on board her must have furnished ample evidence of the facts stated in that communication. But the Consul's prudence was not to be betrayed into any prompt proceedings of this kind, — and his choler in the meantime was to be expended on the Commissioners in the two hundred and seventy-six pages of his official, historical, political essay on all things, and some besides, too numerous to insert herein.

So that having for two years the entire slave-trade of the island of Cuba, passing under the Portuguese and American flags — of which he of necessity must have been officially cognizant — at the lowest computation one hundred and fifty vessels in that term having been employed in the illegal traffic, he allows one hundred and forty-eight to pass through his official hands without the slightest molestation, and he interferes in two instances, once illegally, and in the other case untimely, and in both instances no good arises from his interference.

Pictures of battles seldom excite feelings of compassion, but individual portraitures of misfortune or distress, fail not to interest and move us. No matter on what authority, however high it may be, the general statement be made of Mr. Trist's official protection of the slave-trade during the last three years especially, I am fully aware a single case of his connivance and collusion accurately detailed, will make more impression than any general statement of his delinquences. I will take one for an example, not because it is the most obvious, as to the guilt of the Consul, — and even that is evident enough, — and sufficient were he arraigned on the felony, before a British jury, to place his liberty, if not his life in jeopardy, but because it is one of the most recent instances of his mis-deeds which has been brought before the eyes of his countrymen.

One of the Baltimore vessels, called the "Eagle," built for the slave-trade, in the month of March, 1838, went through the usual fraudulent process of transfer of ownership in the American Consulate at the Havana. It was evident that she was destined for the African man-trade to every one at the Havana engaged in commerce; that the good ship "Eagle," was sold into this trade, was taken up by slave

dealers, and fitted out for the coast of Africa at the notorious place for the fitting out of such vessels, Casa-blanca at the Havana. These facts were notorious. Yet the fraudulent transfer takes place before the American Consul, without a suspicion being excited of her being engaged in an illegal traffic. Nay more, the fraudulent papers are not only attested by him in his Consular capacity, and all due official formality given to them, but the attesting signature of his Vice-Consul, Mr. Smith, is absolutely given to a fictitious "bill of sale," purporting to be the transfer by sale of the brig *Eagle* from her Baltimore owners, as represented by the master in command, to one Littig, her new master; and which attestation of the Vice-Consul, certifying as it intended to do, the legality of the transfer, and the presence and execution of the deed of sale on the part of the fictitious purchaser Littig, in the presence of the said Vice-Consul, is solemnly contradicted by the man Littig himself, who acknowledges and signs voluntarily, the declaration, that he knows nothing whatever of the execution of the deed in question, purporting to be made in his name, and for his security; but he supposes that the management of the fictitious sale was carried on at the office of his Consul, Mr. N. P. Trist. To spare you, my dear sir, any further comments on this fraudulent proceeding, I shall lay before you exact copies of the documents in question, beginning with the declaration of the captor, Lieut. Fitzgerald, of H. M. S. *Buzzard*, who having captured this identical slave vessel, the *Eagle*, on the coast of Africa, engaged in this illegal traffic under the American flag, carried her to New York and delivered her over to the proper authorities of that place; which authorities, fully satisfied that she was engaged in an illegal trade, and was owned at the Havana, delivered her over to the captor, who is now about to proceed with her to Bermuda, so that the decision of the authorities at New York, grounded on the legal opinion of the Attorney General, Mr. Butler, as to her Spanish slave-ownership, is a tacit condemnation of the conduct of Mr. Trist, who permitted this vessel to prostitute the flag of his country, and by his Vice-Consul's act assisted the culprits in carrying their fraud into execution. The following document is well worthy of your perusal; it has this advantage, and likewise the papers connected with it, the authority of legal documents; they are legally available here in the event of Mr. Trist being brought before a court of justice to answer for his conduct. The first paper is the solemn declaration of the captor of the "*Eagle*," and voluntarily subscribed by the nominal master and fictitious owner of her, Mr Joshua W. Littig, and which docu-

ment being no longer a matter of official privacy, there can be no impropriety in presenting to you.

“I, Lieutenant Charles Fitzgerald, commanding Her Britannic Majesty’s Brigantine Buzzard, hereby declare, that on this 12th day of March, 1839, being in Clarence Cove, Fernando Po, I detained the brigantine named the Eagle, commanded by Joshua Wells Littig, who declared himself to be a citizen of the United States; and that he was not the bona-fide owner of said brigantine, as set forth in the bill of sale, found among her papers; and that the said Brigantine and cargo are *Spanish property*, and that she was equipped in the port of Havana for the purpose of carrying on the slave-trade, in May of last year; and that the two persons, (whose names as declared by them respectively) now on board the said brigantine, are part of the crew shipped on board at Havana at that time, that the other seamen composing her crew were landed at Lagos, in the Bight of Benin, by Commander Reeves of Her Britannic Majesty’s sloop “Lily,” when that officer detained the said brigantine “Eagle,” while she was riding at anchor in the said Road of Lagos, on the 14th day of January, 1839: that Commander Reeves sent the said brigantine to Sierra Leone, for adjudication in the Court of Mixed Commission at that place, under the charge of Mr. George Sayer Boys, a mate in Her Majesty’s Sloop, (at that time a passenger in the Lily, in order to join the vessel he had been appointed to) and a prize crew; that the said court refused to take cognizance of the charge laid by Commander Reeves against the said brigantine “Eagle,” and that thereupon Mr. George S. Boys, the prize-master, proceeded with her from Sierra Leone back to Lagos, and to this island, where on my boarding the said brigantine this day, he, the said Joshua Wells Littig, feeling that he could no longer disguise the true character of the said brigantine Eagle, frankly and voluntarily declared to me in the presence of the said Mr. George Sayer Boys, mate, and other witnesses, that he surrendered her to me as *Spanish property*, both on account of Her Majesty’s brigantine under my command being present, and because that he was boarded by the boats of the Buzzard in the Road of Lagos, and himself and papers strictly examined, on the night of the 31st of December 1838, when he the said Joshua Wells Littig, refused to acknowledge what he has now voluntarily stated to me.

“The said Joshua Wells Littig also declares that he was engaged by Don Francisco Morales, at Havana, as a citizen of the United States, in order to cover the said Spanish brigantine Eagle with the flag of the

nation of which he is a citizen, and that he hath no interest, nor expected interest in the said brigantine Eagle, further than what his wages might have amounted to at the termination of his expected voyage.

“ The said Joshua W. Littig also declares, that when first boarded by Her Majesty’s brigantine Buzzard, and subsequently by Her Majesty’s sloop Lily, he was engaged in taking in provisions for the expected cargo of slaves for the said brigantine Eagle; and that when the slaves might have been ready for embarkation, he should have gone ashore at Lagos, and the Spanish flag would have been hoisted by the said brigantine.

“ The said Joshua Wells Littig further declares that the said bill of sale found amongst the said brigantine’s papers was drawn out without his being at all a party to it; and that he gave no consideration, money or other value, for the said brigantine being transferred or sold to him; and that he supposes the whole was transacted in the United States’ Consul’s office at Havana, without his being privy to it. And that having sworn to nothing, he does not consider that he is at all a perjured man.

“ The said Joshua W. Littig further declares that an agreement was drawn up at Havana before the said brigantine Eagle left that port, between himself and a Don Francisco Morales, a Spaniard residing in Havana, (but believed to have come across to the coast of Africa in the said brigantine, and to be now on shore at Lagos) by which he, the said Joshua W. Littig, bound himself to obey the orders of the said Don Francisco Morales on board the Eagle, but which document is not now to be found amongst the papers of the said brigantine Eagle, although I found and read it when I examined that vessel’s papers on the morning of the 1st of January, 1839.

Given under my hand on board Her Britannic Majesty’s brigantine Buzzard, in Clarence Cove, Island of Fernando Po, this 12th day of March, 1839.

Signed,

CHARLES FITZGERALD,
Lieutenant and Commander.”

“ In witness and listening to the truth of the above declarations, Joshua W. Littig has hereunto set his hand this 12th March, 1839.

Signed,

JOSHUA W. LITTIG.”

“In my presence,

WALKER SCOTT, *Clerk in Charge.*”

Names of the crew of the *Eagle*, 12th March, 1839. Jose Mijares, *First Pilot*; Benito Cajigar, *Mayordomo*.

“CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, HAVANA.

“I, N. P. Trist, consul of the United States, do hereby certify, that the document hereunto annexed is a true and correct copy of a letter of Attorney, granted by William G. Harrison and Walter Price, to Thomas I. Wingate, late master of the within named vessel.

SEAL. “In testimony whereof I hereunto set my hand and affix my seal of office at Havana this 10th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1838, and of the Independence of the United States the sixty-second.

N. P. TRIST.”

(Copy.)

“CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, HAVANA.

“I, N. P. Trist, Consul of the United States, do hereby certify, that on the day of the date hereof, before me, personally appeared Thomas I. Wingate, subscriber to the bill of sale of the brig *Eagle*, hereunto attached, and acknowledged the same to be his free act and deed. And I further certify that there is embodied in said bill of sale a correct copy of the original register of said brig. And that the original register is deposited at this consulate to be sent to the collector of the customs at Baltimore.

SEAL. “In testimony whereof I hereunto set my hand and affix my seal of office at Havana this 10th day of March, in the year of our Lord 1838, and of the Independence of the United States the sixty-second.

N. P. TRIST.”

And then follows a power of Attorney for the disposal of the brig “*Eagle*,” of Baltimore, made by William G. Harrison, and Walter Price, both of the city of Baltimore, to Thomas I. Wingate, master, signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of John Gill, Notary Public, Baltimore, and likewise a “bill of sale” of the “*Eagle*” of Baltimore, signed 1st of December, 1837, from T. I. Wingate, master, on

part of owners, to Joshua W. Littig, duly attested by J. A. Smith, and signed by Thomas I. Wingate.

Such is the case of the brig "Eagle," one out of a multitude of similar cases of fraud, connivance and collusion, with a guilty participation in which I plainly and distinctly charge Mr. N. P. Trist in his official capacity, in relation to his conduct towards the subjects of Portugal and America engaged in this traffic, and the uniform protection and encouragement he has on all occasions afforded the interests of these persons.

If Mr. Trist has been dragged before the bar of public opinion in America to answer for his conduct in Cuba with respect to the encouragement he is charged with giving to the slave-trade, private pique or personal ill-will has no share in the proceedings against his official conduct. If he has been misrepresented, a fair opportunity is here afforded him of meeting the charges brought against him. But if the truth and nothing but the truth has been told of his delinquencies, the painful task of unmasking them will not have been in vain. It would be a misprision of treason against truth and justice, in one who knew them, to have allowed the friends and allies of the slave traders of Cuba the power to palliate his conduct.

That his sentiments on the various subjects referred to in these pages have not been exaggerated or mis-stated, I need but refer to the specimens already cited, of his ordinary opinions, threats, denunciations, eulogiums of the slave-trade, and advocacy of its interests, taken verbatim from his two hundred and seventy-six pages officially addressed to the Commissioners; and whether the perusal of them render it more a question of the sanity of his mental powers than one of the soundness of his moral principles, whether his connivance at the slave trade is less the result of corrupt motives than of perverted feelings, (and I lean to the opinion that to the latter his misdeeds are mainly to be attributed,) one thing is evident, that the interests of humanity, as well as those of the people of America, are badly represented by Mr. N. P. Trist in the Island of Cuba.



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INDIANA 46962



