

*For Mr. Elliot
from the
Author*

A N
A D D R E S S
T O
T H E I N H A B I T A N T S
O F T H E
B R I T I S H S E T T L E M E N T S,
O N T H E
S L A V E R Y O F T H E N E G R O E S
I N
A M E R I C A.
THE SECOND EDITION.

To which is added, A
VINDICATION of the ADDRESS,
in Answer to a Pamphlet entitled, "SLAVERY
not forbidden in Scripture; or, A Defence of the
West India Planters."

By a PENNSYLVANIAN.

Ah! Why will men forget that they are Brethren?

Why delight
In human sacrifice? — why burst the ties
Of Nature, that should knit their Souls together
In One soft band of Amity and Love?

Was it for this
Thy breath divine, kindled within his breast,
The vital flame? — For this, was thy fair Image
Stamp'd on his Soul with god-like lineaments?
For this, dominion given him absolute
O'er all thy works, only that he might reign
Supreme in woe?

— O! better far,
Still had he slept in uncreated Night,
Is this the Lot of Being!

PROFUS.

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AN ADDRESS, &c.

SO much hath been said upon the subject of Slave-Keeping, that an Apology may be required for this Address. The only one I shall offer is, that the Evil still continues. This may ~~in part be owing to~~ the great attachment we have to our own Interest, and ~~in part, to~~ the subject not being fully exhausted. The design of the following address is to sum up the leading arguments against it, several of which have not been urged by any of those Authors who have written upon it.

Without entering into the History of the facts which relate to the Slave Trade, I shall proceed to combat the principal arguments which are used to support it.

I need hardly say any thing in favour of the Intellects of the Negroes, or of their capacities for virtue and happiness, although these have been supposed, by some, to be inferior to those

be caused by partly

those of the inhabitants of Europe. The accounts which travellers give us of their ingenuity, humanity, and strong attachment to their parents, relations, friends and country, show us that they are equal to the Europeans, when we allow for the diversity of temper and genius which is occasioned by climate. We have many well-attested anecdotes of as sublime and disinterested virtue among them as ever adorned a Roman or a Christian character. But we are to distinguish between an African in his own country, and an African in a state of slavery in America. Slavery is so foreign to the human mind, that the moral faculties, as well as those of the understanding are debased, and rendered torpid by it. All the vices which are charged upon the Negroes in the southern colonies and the West-Indies, such as Idleness, Treachery, Theft, and the like, are the genuine offspring of slavery, and serve as an argument to prove that they were not intended for it.

Nor let it be said, in the present Age, that their black color (as it is commonly called) either

ther subjects them to, or qualifies them for slavery ¶. The vulgar notion of their being descended from Cain, who was supposed to have been marked with this color, is too absurd to need a refutation.—Without enquiring into the Cause of this blackness, I shall only add upon this subject, that so far from being a curse, it subjects the Negroes to no inconveniencies, but

¶ Montesquieu, in his Spirit of Laws, treats this argument with the ridicule it deserves.

“**W**ERE I to vindicate our right to make slaves of the Negroes, these should be my arguments.

The Europeans having extirpated the Americans, were obliged to make slaves of the Africans for clearing such vast tracts of land.

Sugar would be too dear, if the plants which produce it were cultivated by any other than slaves.

These creatures are all over black, and with such a flat nose that they can scarcely be pitied.

It is hardly to be believed that God, who is a wise being, should place a soul, especially a good soul, in such a black ugly body.

The Negroes prefer a glass necklace to that gold, which polite nations so highly value: can there be a greater proof of their wanting common sense?

It is impossible for us to suppose these creatures to be men, because, allowing them to be men, a suspicion would follow, that we ourselves are not Christians.”

but on the contrary qualifies them for that part of the Globe in which providence has placed them. The ravages of heat, diseases and time, appear less in their faces than in a white one; and when we exclude variety of color from our ideas of Beauty, they may be said to possess every thing necessary to constitute it in common with the white people. †.

It has been urged by the inhabitants of the Sugar Islands and South Carolina, that it would be impossible to carry on the manufactories of Sugar, Rice, and Indigo, without negro slaves. No manufactory can ever be of consequence enough to society to admit the least violation of the Laws of justice or humanity. But I am far from thinking the arguments used in favour of employing Negroes for the cultivation of these articles, should have any Weight. — M. Le Poivre, late envoy from the king of France, to the

‡ “ Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses.

— — Nimum ne crede colori.

•Alba Ligustra cadunt; Vaccinia nigra leguntur.”

VIRGIL.

“ I am black, — — but comely.”

SONG of SOLOMON.

the king of Cochin-China, and now intendant of the isles of Bourbon and Mauritius, in his observations upon the manners and arts of the various nations in Africa and Asia, speaking of the culture of sugar in Cochin-China, has the following remarks.—“ It is worthy observation too, that the sugar cane is there cultivated by freemen, and all the process of preparation and refining, the work of free hands. Compare then the price of the Cochin-Chinese production with the same commodity which is cultivated and prepared by the wretched slaves of our European colonies, and judge if, to procure sugar from our colonies, it was necessary to authorize by law the slavery of the unhappy Africans transported to America. § From what I have observed at Cochin-China, I cannot entertain a doubt, but that our West-India colonies, had they been distributed, without reservation amongst a free people, would have

§ White sugar, of the best quality, is sold for three Dollars the Cochin-China quintal, which weighs from 150 to 200 pounds French. Ninety-one pounds eight ounces French, makes one hundred pounds English.

have produced double the quantity that is now procured from the labour of the unfortunate negroes."

"What advantage, then, has accrued to Europe, civilized as it is, and thoroughly versed in the laws of nature, and the rights of mankind, by legally authorizing in our colonies, the daily outrages against human nature, permitting them to debase man almost below the level of the beasts of the field? These slavish laws have proved as opposite to its interest, as they are to its honour, and to the laws of humanity. This remark I have often made."

2 "Liberty and property form the basis of abundance, and good agriculture: I never observed it to flourish where those rights of mankind were not firmly established. The earth, which multiplies her productions with a kind of profusion, under the hands of the free-born labourer, seems to shrink into barrenness under the sweat of the slave. Such is the will of the great Author of our Nature, who has created man free, and assigned to him the earth, that he might cultivate his possession with the
sweat

sweat of his brow ; but still ~~should~~ enjoy his Liberty." Now if the plantations in the islands and the southern colonies were more limited, and freemen only employed in working them, the general product would be greater, although the profits to individuals would be less, —a circumstance this, which by diminishing opulence in a few, would suppress Luxury and Vice, and promote that equal distribution of property, which appears best calculated to promote the welfare of Society.——* I know it has been said by some, that none but the natives of warm climates could undergo the

B

excessive

* From this account of Le Poivre's, we may learn the futility of the argument, that the number of vessels in the sugar trade, serve as a nursery for seamen, and that the Negroes consume a large quantity of the manufactures of Great Britain. If freemen only were employed in the islands, a double quantity of sugar would be made, and of course twice the number of vessels and seamen would be made use of in the trade. One freeman consumes usually four times the quantity of British goods that a Negro does. Slaves generally multiply slowly. Freemen multiply in proportion as slavery is discouraged. It is to be hoped therefore that motives of policy will at last induce Britons to give up a trade, which those of justice and humanity cannot prevail upon them to relinquish.

excessive heat and labor of the West-India islands. But this argument is founded upon an error; for the reverse of this is true. I have been informed by good authority, that one European who escapes the first or second year, will do twice the work, and live twice the number of years that an ordinary Negro man will. ~~nor~~ nor need we be surpriz'd at this, when we hear that such is the natural fertility of soil, and so numerous the spontaneous fruits of the earth in the interior parts of Africa, that the natives live in plenty at the expence of little or no labor, which, in warm climates, has ever been found to be incompatible with long life and happiness. Future ages, therefore, when they read the accounts of the Slave Trade (—if they do not regard them as fabulous) — will be at a loss which to condemn most, our folly or our Guilt, in abetting this direct violation of the Laws of nature and Religion.

But there are some who have gone so far as to say that Slavery is not repugnant to the Genius of Christianity, and that it is not forbidden in any part of the Scripture. Natural
and

and Revealed Religion always speak the same things, although the latter delivers its precepts with a louder and more distinct voice than the former. If it could be proved that no testimony was to be found in the Bible against a practice so pregnant with evils of the most destructive tendency to society, it would be sufficient to overthrow its divine Original. We read it is true of Abraham's having slaves born in his house ; and we have reason to believe, that part of the riches of the patriarchs consisted in them ; but we can no more infer the lawfulness of the practice, from the short account which the Jewish historian gives us of these facts, than we can vindicate telling a lie, because Rahab is not condemned for it in the account which is given of her deceiving the king of Jericho. ¶ We read that some of the same men indulged themselves in a plurality of wives, without any strictures being made upon their conduct for it ; and yet no one will pretend to say, that this is not forbidden in many parts of the
Old

Old Testament*. But we are told the Jews kept the Heathens in perpetual bondage †. The Design of providence in permitting this evil, was probably to prevent the Jews from marrying amongst strangers, to which their intercourse with them upon any other footing than that of slaves, would naturally have inclined them ‖. Had this taken place—their national religion would have been corrupted—they would have contracted all their vices ‡, and the intention of Providence in keeping them a distant people, in order to accomplish the promise made to Abraham, that “in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed,” would have been defeated ;

* Prov. v. 19, 12, 20.

† Levit. xxv. 44, 45, 46.

‖ That marriage with strangers was looked upon as a crime among the Jews, we learn from Ezra ix. 1 to 6, also from the whole of Chapter x.

‡ May not this be the reason why Swine's flesh was forbidden to the Jews, lest they should be tempted to eat with their Heathen neighbours, who used it in diet? This appears more probable than the opinion of Doctor MEAD, who supposes that it has a physical tendency to produce the leprosy; or that of VOLTAIRE, who asserts that the Jews learned to abstain from this Flesh from the Egyptians, who valued

feated; so that the descent of the Messiah from Abraham, could not have been traced, and the divine commission of the Son of God, would have wanted one ~~of its~~ most powerful arguments *for its* support. But with regard to their own countrymen, it is plain, perpetual slavery was not tolerated. Hence, at the end of seven years or in the year of the jubilee, all the Hebrew slaves were set at liberty †, and it was held unlawful to detain them in servitude longer than that time, except by their own Consent. ‡ But if, in the partial Revelation which God made

valued the Hog almost to a degree of idolatry for its great usefulness in rooting up the Ground. What makes this Conjecture the more probable is, that the Jews abstained from several other kinds of flesh used by their Heathen neighbours, which have never been accused of bringing on diseases of the skin, and which were used constantly in diet by the Egyptians. The account which Tacitus gives of the diet and customs of the Jews, is directly to our purpose——

“ Bos quoque immolantur, quem Ægyptii apin colunt. Ægyptii pieraque animalia, Effigiesque compositas venerantur; Judæi mente sola, unumque numen intelligunt. Seperati Epulis, discreti Cubilibus, Alienarum Concubitu Abstinent.”

HISTOR. LIB. V.

† Deuteronomy xxiv. 7.—‡ Deut. xv. 12.

made, of his will to the Jews, we find such testimonies against slavery, what may we not expect from the Gospel, the Design of which was to abolish all distinctions of name and country. While the Jews thought they complied with the precepts of the law, in confining the love of their neighbour “to the children of their own people,” Christ commands us to look upon all mankind even our Enemies § as our neighbours and brethren, and “in all things, to do unto them whatever we would wish they should do unto us.” He tells us further that his “Kingdom is not of this World,” and therefore constantly avoids saying any thing that might interfere directly with the Roman or Jewish Governments: and although he does not call upon masters to emancipate their slaves, or slaves to assert that Liberty wherewith God and Nature had made them free, yet there is scarcely a parable or a sermon in the whole history of his life, but what contains the strongest arguments against Slavery. Every prohibition
of

§ This is strongly inculcated in the story of the good Samaritan, Luke x.

of Covetousness—Intemperance—Pride—Uncleanness—Theft—and Murder, which he delivered,—every lesson of meekness, humility, forbearance, Charity, Self-denial, and brotherly-love, which he taught, are levelled against this evil;—for Slavery, while it includes all the former Vices, necessarily excludes the practice of all the latter Virtues, both from the Master and the Slave.—Let such, therefore, who vindicate the traffic of buying and selling Souls, seek some modern System of Religion to support it, and not presume to sanctify their crimes by attempting to reconcile it to the sublime and perfect Religion of the Great Author of Christianity.*

There

* The influence of Christianity in putting a stop to Slavery, appears in the first christian emperor Constantine, who commanded, under the severest penalties, all such as had Slaves, to set them at liberty. He afterwards contrived to render the manumission of them ~~much~~ easier than formerly, for instead of recurring to the forms prescribed by the Roman laws, which were attended with great difficulties and a considerable expence, he gave leave to masters to enfranchise their slaves in the presence of a bishop, or a minister and a christian assembly.

Universal History, vol. xv. p. 574, 577.

Dr.

There are some amongst us who cannot help allowing the force of our last argument, but plead as a motive for importing and keeping slaves, that they become acquainted with the principles of the religion of our country.—This is like justifying a highway robbery because part of

the Dr. ROBERTSON, in treating of ~~these~~ causes which weakened the feudal system, and finally abolished Slavery in Europe, in the 14th century, has the following Observations——

“ The gentle spirit of the Christian Religion, together with the doctrines which it teaches, concerning the original equality of mankind, as well as the impartial eye with which the almighty regards men of every condition, and admits them to a participation of his benefits, are inconsistent with servitude. But in this, as in many other instances, Considerations of Interest and the Maxims of false Policy, led men to a conduct inconsistent with their principles. They were so sensible, however, of the Inconsistency, that to set their Fellow Christians at liberty from servitude was deemed an act of piety highly meritorious, and acceptable to Heaven. The humane spirit of the Christian Religion, struggled with the Maxims and Manners of the World, and contributed more than any other circumstance, to introduce the practice of manumission. The formality of manumission was executed in a church or a religious assembly.—The person to be set free, was led round the great altar, with a torch in his hand, he took hold of the horns of the altar, and there the solemn words conferring liberty, were pronounced.”

CHARLES V. Historical Illustrations. Note xx.

of the money acquired in this manner was appropriated to some religious use.—Christianity will never be propagated by any other methods than those employed by Christ and his Apostles. Slavery is an engine as little fitted for that purpose as Fire or the Sword. A Christian Slave is a contradiction in terms. § But if we enquire into the methods employed for converting the Negroes to Christianity, we shall find the means suited to the end proposed. In many places Sunday is appropriated to work for themselves. reading and writing are discouraged among them. A belief is even inculcated amongst some, that they have no Souls. In a word,—Every attempt to instruct or convert them, has

C been

§ St. Paul's letter to Philemon, in behalf of Onesimus, is said by some to contradict this assertion, but, if viewed properly, will rather support it. He desires Philemon to receive him "not as a Servant, but as a Brother beloved," "as his Son—and part of himself." In other parts of his Writings, he obliquely hints at the impossibility of uniting the duties of a Christian, with the offices of a Slave. "Ye are bought with a price, be not therefore the servants of men." 1 Cornith. vii. 23. Had he lived to see christianity established by Law, in the countries where he preached, with what a torrent of christian eloquence may we not suppose he would have declaimed against slavery

been constantly opposed by their masters. Nor has the example of their christian masters any tendency to prejudice them in favor of our religion. How often do they betray, in their sudden transports of anger and resentment, (against which there is no restraint provided towards their Negroes) the most violent degrees of passion and fury!—What luxury—what ingratitude to the supreme being—what impiety in their ordinary conversation do some of them discover in the presence of their slaves! I say nothing of the dissolution of marriage vows, or the entire abolition of matrimony, which the frequent sale of them introduces, and which are directly contrary to the laws of nature and the principles of christianity. Would to Heaven I could here conceal the shocking violations of chastity, which some of them are obliged to undergo without daring to complain. Husbands have been forced to prostitute their wives, and mothers their daughters to gratify the brutal lust of a master. This—all—this is practised — Blush — ye impure and hardened wretches, while I repeat it— by men who call themselves christians!

But

But further——It has been said that we do a kindness to the Negroes by bringing them to America, as we thereby save their lives, which had been forfeited by their being conquered in war *. Let such as prefer or inflict slavery rather than Death, disown their being descended from or connected with our mother countries. ——But it will be found upon enquiry, that many are stolen or seduced from their friends who have never been conquered ; and it is plain, from the testimony of historians and travellers, that

“ From the right of killing in case of conquest, politicians have drawn that of reducing to slavery ; a consequence as ill grounded as the principle.

There is no such thing as a Right of reducing people to slavery, but when it becomes necessary for the preservation of the conquest. Preservation, but not servitude, is the end of conquest ; though servitude may happen sometimes to be a necessary means of Preservation.

Even in that case it is contrary to the nature of things, that the slavery should be perpetual. The people enslaved ought to be rendered capable of becoming subjects.”

Montesquie's Spirit of Laws, Book x. Chap. 3.

“ Servi autem ex eo appellati sunt, quod Imperatores captivos vendere, ac per hoc servare, nec Occidere solent. Servitus est Constitutio *Juris Gentium*, qua quis Dominio alieno CONTRA NATURAM subicitur.——

Justinian. Institut. L. i. Tit. 3.

By what right are the Children of these Captives kept in slavery ?

that wars were uncommon among them, until the christians who began the slave trade, stirred up the different nations to fight against each other. Sooner let them imbrue their hands in each others blood, or condemn one another to perpetual slavery, than the name of one christi-an, or one American, be stained by the perpetration of such enormous crimes.

Nor let it be urged that by treating slaves well, we render their situation happier in this Country, than it was in their own.—Slavery and Vice are connected together, and the latter is always a source of misery. Besides, by the greatest humanity we can show them, we only lessen, but do not remove the crime, for the injustice of it continues the same. The laws of retribution are so strongly inculcated by the moral governor of the world, that even the ox is entitled to his reward for “treading the Corn.” How great then must be the amount of that injustice, which deprives so many of our fellow creatures of the Just reward of their labor.

But it will be asked here, What steps shall we take to remedy this Evil, and what shall

we

we do with those slaves we have already in this Country? This is indeed a most difficult question.' But let every man contrive to answer it for himself. —

The first thing I would recommend to put a stop to slavery in this country, is to leave off importing slaves. For this purpose let our assemblies unite in petitioning the king and parliament to dissolve the African committee of merchants: It is by them that the trade is chiefly carried on to America. We have the more reason to expect relief from an application at this juncture, as by a late decision in favor of a Virginia slave in Westminster-Hall, the Clamors of the whole nation are raised against them. Let such of our countrymen as engage in the slave trade, be shunned as the greatest enemies to our country, and let the vessels which bring the slaves to us, be avoided as if they bore in them the Seeds of that forbidden fruit, whose baneful taste destroyed both the natural and moral world.— As for the Negroes among us, who, from having acquired all the low vices of slavery, or who from age or infirmities

infirmitieſ are unfit to be ſet at liberty, I would propoſe, for the good of ſociety, that they ſhould continue the property of thoſe with whom they grew old, or from whom they contracted *theſe* ~~theſe~~ vices and infirmitieſ. But let the young Negroes be educated in the principles of virtue and religion—let them be taught to read, and write——and afterwards inſtructed in ſome buſineſs, whereby they may be able to maintain themſelves. Let laws be made to limit the time of their ſervitude, and to entitle them to all the privileges of free-born Britiſh ſubjects. At any rate let Retribution be ~~done~~ *made* to God and to Society *.

And

* A worthy friend of mine has favoured me with the following Extract of a letter from GRANVILLE SHARP, Eſq; of London.

“ I AM told of ſome Regulations that have taken Place in the Spaniſh Colonies, which do the Spaniards much Honor, and are certainly worthy our Imitation, in caſe we ſhould not be ſo happy as to obtain an entire Abolition of Slavery, and probably you wou'd find many American Subjects that wou'd be willing to promote ſuch Regulations, tho' the ſame People wou'd ſtrenouſly oppoſe the ſcheme of a total Abolition of Slavery. I have never ſeen an Account of the Spaniſh Regulations in writing, but I underſtand that they are to the following Effect: As ſoon as a ſlave is landed, his Name, Price, &c. are regiſter'd in a public Office, and the Maſter is obliged to allow him One Working Day in every

And now my countrymen, What shall I add more to rouse up your Indignation against Slave-keeping. Consider the many complicated crimes it involves in it. Think of the bloody Wars which are fomented by it, among the African nations, or if these are too common to affect you, think

every Week to himself, besides Sundays, so that if the Slave chuses to work for his Master on that Day, he receives the Wages of a Freeman for it, and whatever he gains by his Labor on that Day, is so secured to him by Law, that the Master cannot deprive him of it. This is certainly a considerable Step towards the abolishing absolute Slavery. As soon as the slave is able to purchase another working Day, the master is obliged to sell it to him at a proportionable price, viz. 1-fifth Part of his original Cost: and so likewise the remaining 4 Days at the same Rate, as soon as the Slave is able to redeem them, after which he is absolutely free. This is such an Encouragement to Industry, that even the most indolent are tempted to exert themselves. Men who have thus worked out their Freedom are inured to the Labor of the Country and are certainly the most useful Subjects that a Colony can acquire. Regulations might be formed upon the same Plan to encourage the Industry of Slaves that are already imported into the colonies, which would teach them how to maintain themselves and be as useful, as well as less expensive to the Planter. They would by such Means become Members of Society and have an Interest in the Welfare of the Community, which would add greatly to the Strength and Security of each Colony; whereas, at present, many of the Planters are in continual Danger of being cut off by their Slaves.—a Fate which, they but too justly deserve!"

think of the pangs which attend the dissolution of the ties of nature in those who are stolen from their relations. Think of the many thousands who perish by sickness, melancholy, and suicide, in their voyages to America. Pursue the poor devoted victims to one of the West India islands, and see them exposed there to public sale. Hear their cries, and see their looks of tenderness at each other, upon being separated. — Mothers are torn from their Daughters, and Brothers from Brothers, without the liberty of a parting embrace. Their master's name is now marked upon their breasts with a red hot iron. But let us pursue them into a Sugar Field : and behold a scene still more affecting than this——See ! the poor wretches with what reluctance they take their instruments of labor into their hands, —Some of them, overcome with heat and sickness, seek to refresh themselves by a little rest. ——But, behold an Overseer approaches them ——In vain they sue for pity. ——He lifts up his Whip, while streams of Blood follow every stroke. Neither age nor sex are spared. — Methinks one of them is a woman far advanced in her pregnancy. —At a little distance from these
behold

behold a man, who from his countenance and deportment appears as if he was descended from illustrious ancestors.—Yes.—He is the son of a Prince, and was torn by a stratagem, from an amiable wife and two young children.—Mark his fullen looks!—now he bids defiance to the tyranny of his Master, and in an instant—plunges a Knife into his Heart.—But let us return from this Scene, and see the various modes of arbitrary punishments inflicted upon them by their masters. Behold one covered with stripes, into which melted wax is poured—another tied down to a block or a stake—a third suspended in the air by his thumbs— a fourth—I cannot relate it.—Where now is Law or Justice? —Let us fly to them to step in for their relief.—Alas! —The one is silent, and the other denounces more terrible punishments upon them. Let us attend the place appointed for inflicting the penalties of the law. See here one without a limb, whose only crime was an attempt to regain his Liberty.— another led to a Gallows for stealing a morsel of Bread, to which his labor gave him a bet-

ter title than his master---a third famishing on a gibbet---a fourth, in a flame of Fire! his shrieks pierce the very heavens.----- O ! God! where is thy Vengeance! ----- O ! Humanity --- Justice --- Liberty---Religion! --- Where,--- where are ye fled.-----

This is no exaggerated Picture. It is taken from real Life.-----Before I conclude I shall take the liberty of addressing several Classes of my countrymen in behalf of our Brethren (for by that name may we now call them) who are in a state of Slavery amongst us.

In the first place let **MAGISTRATES** both supreme and inferior, exert the authority they are invested with, in suppressing this evil. Let them discountenance it by their example, and show a readiness to concur in every measure proposed to remedy it.

Let **LEGISLATORS**, reflect upon the trust reposed in them. Let their laws be made after the Spirit of Religion---Liberty---and our most excellent English Constitution. You cannot show your attachment to your King, or your love to your country better, than by suppressing an evil which endangers the dominions of the
former

former, and will in Time destroy the liberty of the latter. * Population, and the accession of strangers, in which the Riches of all countries consist, can only flourish in proportion as slavery is discouraged. Extend the privileges we enjoy, to every human creature born amongst us, and let not the Journals of our Assemblies be disgraced with the records of laws, which allow exclusive privileges to men of one color in preference to another. ¶

Ye men of SENSE and VIRTUE—Ye ADVOCATES

* “ In moderate governments, it is a point of the highest importance, that there should not be a great number of slaves. The political liberty of those states adds to the value of civil liberty; and he who is deprived of the latter, is also deprived of the former. He sees the happiness of a society, of which he is not so much as a member; he sees the Security of Others fenced by laws, himself without so much as protection. He sees his master has a Soul, that can enlarge itself; while his own is constrained to submit to almost continual depression. Nothing more assimilates a Man to a Beast, than living among Freemen, himself a Slave. Such people as these are the natural enemies of a society, and their number must be dangerous.” Spirit of Laws, Book xv Chapt. 12.

¶ The alterations in the laws in favour of Negroes, should be gradual,—’till the evil Habits they have acquired by Slavery, are eradicated. There are several privileges, however, which might be extended to them immediately, without the least risk to Society, in particular that inestimable one of Trial by JURIES.

VOCATES for American Liberty, rouse up and espouse the cause of Humanity and general Liberty. Bear a testimony against a vice which degrades human nature, and dissolves that universal tie of benevolence which should connect all the children of men together in one great Family.——The plant of liberty is of so tender a Nature, that it cannot thrive long in the neighbourhood of slavery. Remember the eyes of all Europe are fixed upon you, to preserve an asylum for freedom in this country, after the last pillars of it are fallen in every other quarter of the Globe.

But chiefly——Ye **MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL**, whose dominion over the principles and actions of men is so universally acknowledged and felt,——Ye who estimate the worth of your fellow creatures by their Immortality, and therefore must look upon all mankind as equal, — let your zeal keep pace with your opportunities to put a stop to slavery. While you enforce the duties of “tithes and cummins,” neglect not the weightier laws of justice and humanity. Slavery is an Hydra sin, and includes in it every violation of the precepts of the Law and the Gospel.

Gospel. In vain will you command your flocks to offer up the incense of Faith and Charity, while they continue to mingle the Sweat and blood of Negro slaves with their sacrifices.— If the Blood of Able cried aloud for vengeance; —if, under the Jewish dispensation, Cities of refuge could not screen the deliberate murderer —if even manslaughter required sacrifices to expiate it,——and if a single murder so seldom escapes with impunity in any civilized country, what may you not say against that trade, or those manufactures---or Laws, § which destroy the lives of so many thousands of our fellow creatures every year?——If in the Old Testament “ God swears by his holiness, and by the excellency of Jacob, that the Earth shall tremble and every one mourn that dwelleth therein
for

§ “ If any Negro or other Slave under punishment by his master, or his order for running away, or any other crimes or misdemeanors towards his said master, unfortunately shall suffer in life or member, no person whatever shall be liable to any fine; But if any man shall of wantonness, or only of bloody mindedness, or cruel intention, wilfully kill a Negro, or other slave of his own, he shall deliver into the public treasury fifteen pounds sterling, and not be liable to any other punishment, or forfeiture for the same.”

Laws of Barbadoes, Act 319.

for the iniquity of those who oppress the poor and crush the needy," who buy the poor with silver, and the needy with a pair of shoes,"¶ what judgments may you not denounce upon those who continue to perpetrate these crimes, after the more full discovery which God has made of the law of Equity in the New-Testament. Put them in mind of the Rod which was held over them a few years ago in the Stamp, and Revenue Acts. Remember that national crimes require national punishments, and without declaring what punishment awaits this evil, you may venture to assure them, that it cannot pass with impunity, unless God shall cease to be just or merciful.

¶ Amos iv. 1, 2.—viii. 6, 7.

T H E E N D.

ADVERTISEMENT.

*T*HE foregoing Address was written in a few Hours, at the particular Request of a worthy Citizen, in order to promote and accompany a Petition to the Honourable Assembly of Pennsylvania, to procure an Increase of the Duty upon Negro Slaves imported into the Province. The only Condition upon which the Author complied with this Request, was, that his Name should be concealed;—such Subjects being foreign to his ordinary Studies, and Business: By some Accident it was discovered; and he now thinks himself called upon to defend what he has advanced. Although the Sword was unsheathed and put into his Hand without being called for, yet in so good a Cause, he hopes he is not altogether unprepared to wield it. He has nothing to Hope or Fear from any Quarter, by publishing his Sentiments more fully upon this Subject.

The following Observations upon the “Defence of the West-India Planters,” though a Work of more Leisure than the Address, are not so complete as they might have been, had not the Author been afraid of trespassing too much upon the Patience of his Readers.

PHILADELPHIA, SEPTEMBER 15, 1773.

A
V I N D I C A T I O N
OF THE

A D D R E S S,

To the INHABITANTS of the BRITISH
SETTLEMENTS, on the SLAVERY of
the NEGROES in AMERICA, in An-
swer to a PAMPHLET entitled,

“SLAVERY NOT FORBIDDEN

BY

S C R I P T U R E;

Or a DEFENCE of the WEST-INDIA
PLANTERS from the ASPERSIONS
thrown out against them by the AUTHOR
of the A D D R E S S.”

Disguise thyself as thou wilt, still SLAVERY thou art a
bitter Draught; and though thousands in all Ages have
been made to drink of thee thou art no less bitter on that Ac-
count.—’Tis thou thrice sweet, and gracious Goddess LI-
BERTY, whom all in public or in private Worship;
whose Taste is grateful, and ever will be so, till Nature her-
self shall change. — No tint of Words can spot thy snowy
Mantle, or chemic Power turn thy Scepter into Iron.

S T E R N.

BY A PENNSYLVANIAN.

PHILADELPHIA:

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M, DCC, LXXIII.

Rec^d March 28, 1945

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of Toronto

A VINDICATION, &c.

THERE is no Subject so sacred that has not sometimes been exposed to Obloquy. The immortality of the Soul, the Obligations of Morality, and even the Existence of a Supreme Being, have all in their Turns been treated as unworthy of Belief. On the other Hand, there is no Subject so subversive of the Happiness of Mankind, but what has had its Advocates. — Adultery — Perjury,—and even Suicide, have all been defended as lawful. Posterity will hardly believe that human Ingenuity could rise higher, and that a Man had lived, who had undertaken to defend SLAVERY. Should they seek his Name or Country, how will they be surprized to hear that he was descended from a Briton; — that he lived under the Protection of British Laws:—And that he was still connected with Great Britain. The Person I mean is the Author of a Pamphlet, entitled “ Slavery not forbidden by Scripture,
“ or

“or a Defence of the West-India Planters,” &c.
and who calls himself a WEST-INDIAN.

THE Author of this Defence begins, by pleading in behalf of the Slavery of the Negroes in the West Indies, “the imperfections of all human Institutions*,” This must be acknowledged by every Body, but is by no means an Apology for our not doing every thing that lies in our Power to Remedy them. Shall Judges descend from their Benches, and cease to distribute Justice, because Fraud and Violence still prevail in Society? Shall Physicians cease to relieve the Pains of the Sick, because the Body must at last pay the Tribute to Mortality? Shall the Clergy cease to inculcate the Duties of Religion, because they cannot put an entire stop to the progress of Vice and Infidelity?—

IMPROVEMENTS of all kinds in Society are progressive. It is impossible to review the Constitution and Laws of Great Britain, without admiring the gradual Improvements which have been made in both: Many of
which

* Page 2.

which at their first Proposal were no Doubt
 treated as visionary and impracticable. The
 abolition of domestic Slavery is not an Utopian
 Scheme. It was abolished by Constantine the
 first Christian Emperor throughout the Roman
 Empire. It ceased in many parts of Europe
 after the Reformation. It is unknown in Bri-
 tain. It's Foundations are now shaking in
 Spain and Portugal. It begins to loose Ground
 in America. The Assembly of Virginia have
 petitioned for a Law to prevent the future im-
 portation of Negroes amongst them. The
 Assembly of Pennsylvania have imposed a Duty
 of twenty Pounds Currency upon every Negro,
 imported into the Province. The inhabitants
 of the Province of Massachusetts Bay have in-
 structed their Representatives to enact Laws to
 restrain it. Reason and Humanity with res-
 pect to Negro Slavery, have at last awaken-
 ed in the West-Indies, and many respectable
 Planters now wish to extricate themselves from
 it. With such Success, and Prospects, I venture
 once more to take up my Pen in behalf of the
 poor Africans. Great Events have often been
 brought about by slender Means. Permanent
 changes

changes in Government are seldom produced suddenly. It shall be our Business to collect Materials: — The next Generation we hope, will behold and admire the finished **TEMPLE OF AFRICAN LIBERTY IN AMERICA.**

THE Author of the Defence in the next place attempts to prove that Slavery is not forbidden by Moses, the Jewish Lawgiver*; without repeating the Reason mentioned in the Address, for the distinction which was made between Hebrew and ~~Heathen~~ Slaves; and which is not overthrown by our Author's Appeal to the Power of the Supreme Being, I shall remark here, that Providence never employs extraordinary Means to accomplish an End, when ordinary ones will do. Where there is no *Legal* Impediment, we find that differences of Nation—Religion, or even Color, cannot prevent People from marrying amongst each other§. That the Jews should continue a
distinct

* Page 3.

§ “The Africans (who are to be seen in every Corne. of the Streets of Lisbon) are allowed to Marry, not only amongst themselves, but also with those of a different Color.
These

distinct People at this Time, under so many Circumstances unfavourable to it, cannot be equalled by any similar Case in History; and therefore has always been looked upon as a standing Miracle.——But again, we are not to set up a few detached Texts of Scripture against the whole Tenor of the Jewish Law. It is not thus we interpret our English Laws, or Acts of Parliament. Can it be supposed that the Supreme Being could deliver a System of Laws that ~~should~~ contradict each other, or favour Injustice and Violence? This would be to degrade him below a Lycurgus, or a Justinian *, or even Mahomet himself †. I shall
only

would

These strange Combinations have filled this Town with such a variety of odd Faces, as to make a Traveller doubt, whether he is in Europe; and it may be foreseen that in a few Centuries, not a Drop of pure Portugueze Blood will be left here."

BARETTI's Travels.

* The three Maxims upon which the Laws of Justinian were founded are "to live honestly; to hurt no one; and to give every Man his Due."

† Mahomet proclaimed Liberty to all Slaves. He not only emancipated his own Slave, but made him his Friend.

only add further upon this Head, that although the chief Design of rendering the Slavery of the Heathens perpetual, was to prevent the Jews from intermarrying with them, yet this Evil like the Divorces spoken of by our Saviour *, was permitted amongst them, upon the Account of the “Hardness of their Hearts.” “From the beginning it was not so.”—That is, the same Law of Nature, which in the Beginning of the World ~~forbid~~ Divorces, upon trifling Occasions, likewise ~~forbid~~ Slavery. But The depravity of the Jews, and in particular their proneness to mix with, and adopt the Customs of other Nations, rendered a Dispensation from the Rigor of the Moral Law necessary, not only with respect to the keeping of Slaves, but to other things, equally repugnant to its Perfection, and Purity §. But the same Plea cannot

* Matth. xix.

§ “The whole History of the Jews shews that the Pride, Magnificence, Power, and Glory usurped by their Kings, were utterly contrary to the will of God. They did lift up their Hearts above their Brethren, which was forbidden by the Law of God.”

cannot be made under the Christian Dispensation. Every seeming imperfection which was accommodated to the State of Knowledge, and Society amongst the Jews, was abolished by Christianity; instead of “an Eye for an Eye, or a Tooth for a Tooth,” we are commanded “not to resist Evil, but to him that smiteth on the right cheek, to turn the other also.” Can it be believed that this divine Lawgiver, who inculcated such Patience of Injuries, could approve of an Evil; which involved in it every thing that was destructive to the Happiness of Individuals and Society? * Although he reprov'd Vice in all its shapes, yet (I repeat it again) he maintained a regard to the Roman and Jewish Governments. This appears plain from his ordering Tribute to be paid to Cæsar. It appears likewise from his Behaviour to the Woman caught in Adultery. Had he condemned her, he would have offended against the Roman, and had he acquitted her, he would have abro-

F

gated

* “The Gospel is so far from enslaving us, or divesting us of these Rights, and Privileges which we have already, that it encourages us to procure more Liberties and Franchises, if we can come honestly by them. God never commanded any thing contrary to the Law of Nature.”

LORD SOMMERS.

gated that Part of the Jewish Law which related to that Crime. He only commands her to “ go and sin no more.”

The Author of the Defence employs several Pages to shew the Loss that would arise to the Planters, and to Great-Britain, from the Manumission of the Negroes in the West-Indies †. I am far from recommending such a Step to the Planters—It would be as prejudicial to the Slaves as to their Masters. Men used to Slavery, such as prevails in the Southern Colonies and West-Indies, are ever afterwards unfit for Liberty. The first Thing proposed was to leave ~~of~~ importing them. The Evil after this would in some Measure remedy itself. As to the loss Britain would sustain, it should not be mentioned. It hath been proved by Mons. Le Poivre, that she would derive not only Reputation, but immense Riches from it. Many Families in Algiers would perhaps suffer a few temporary Inconveniencies, and the Revenues of that State be lessened, by their calling home their piratical Ships.—But will any Man pretend, upon this Account, to vindicate their
flagrant

† Page 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 29.

flagrant Violations of the Laws of Nature and Nations?—If political Advantages can justify the Infringement of the Laws of Justice and Humanity, then let us cease to look with Horror upon the Massacre of the Protestants in France and Ireland—of the English at Amboyna—and of the Jews in Spain. It cannot be repeated too often, that the Obligations of Morality are alike binding upon Communities and Individuals; and History as well as daily Observation shew us, that they both promote their true Interest in Proportion as they comply with them. The Extract from Mons. Le Poivre, in the Address, may serve as a full Answer to the common Objections of dividing the Lands in the West-Indies among a Number of Freemen, and effectually Refutes all the Arguments adduced from the Expence of Cattle, Sugar-works, and the speedy Fermentation of the Cane Juice. *

OUR

* “ Before Christianity had abolished civil Slavery in Europe, working in Mines was judged too toilsome for any but Slaves, or Malefactors, but at present there are Men employed in them who are known to live happily. To an Increase of Labor, they have joined an Increase of Gain.”

MONTESQUIEU Book v. chap. 8.

OUR Author attempts to palliate the Account given of the Severity of the Punishments inflicted upon the Negroes †. To such as know the Weakness, and Depravity of Human Nature, no Accounts of the Cruelty of these Punishments will appear exaggerated. Invest the proud — passionate — ambitious, and covetous Creature Man, with an absolute Dominion (such as is held in the West-Indies) over the Lordly independant Creature Man, and we may venture from what we know of Human Nature, to tell what will be the Consequence. It is true, as our Author remarks*, most of the Natives of the West Indies are educated in Britain, in the Principles of Liberty and Humanity; but why are they sent from Home to be educated?—Why do Parents give up the most sacred Charge Heaven can deposit in their Hands, the Formation of the Minds of their Children, to Strangers? Why is the Love of their native Country (so necessary in Human Societies) to be weakned, or destroyed by a foreign Education? It is because it is so difficult for them to improve in Learning

† Page 16, 17, 18.

* Page 16.

ing or Virtue at Home, where they are exposed to Vice from every Quarter, and where they breathe nothing but the polluted Atmosphere of Slavery*. But have all the Planters in the West Indies been educated in the Principles of Liberty and Humanity? Or do those who have had a British Education always reside at their Estates, or look after their Negroes? Perhaps they may in some Cases disapprove of their Punishments, these being inflicted by Overseers or their Dependants; yet they are generally ~~too far removed from them~~ to prevent, or regulate them.

at too great a Distance

IT is to no Purpose to urge here that Self Interest leads the Planters to treat their Slaves well. † There are many things which appear true in Speculation, which are false in Practice. The Head is as apt to mistake its real Interest, as the Heart its real Happiness. It would be
the

* “ The Luxury — Indolence — Pride — and Cruelty of the Masters, have among other Causes been very *justly* attributed to their being bred up amongst Slaves, a prodigious Number of whom are kept on Purpose to wait upon them.” CAMPBELL'S Account of the Portuguese Settlements in America.

the Interest of every Man to live agreeable to the Rules of Reason and Morality; but, how few in this Respect pursue their true Interest? It would be the Interest of Great Britain to give over attempting to tax her Colonies: It would be her Interest likewise to abolish Slavery in every Part of her Dominions; but how has she sacrificed her Interest in these Respects, to the Party or private Considerations of a few weak, or bad Men.

I SHALL not leave the Account I have given of the cruel Treatment of the Slaves in the West-Indies to rest upon my own Authority.

THE Rev. Mr. Godwyn a Clergyman of the Church of England, in relating the Difficulties he met with, in endeavouring to instruct the Negroes in Barbadoes, in the principles of Christianity, informs us, that “ they treat their Negroes with far less Humanity, than they do their Cattle, for they do not Starve their Horses, nor pinch the Cow by whose Milk they are sustained. The more innocent and laborious are worked to Death. They are
tormented

tormented and whipped almost, and sometimes quite to Death, even for slight miscarriages."

SIR HANS SLOAN (who resided many years in Jamaica) in his Introduction to the Natural History of that Island, gives the following account of the Punishments inflicted on the Negroes. "For Rebellion, the Punishment is burning them, by nailing them down on the Ground, with crooked Sticks on every Limb, and then applying the Fire by Degrees from the Feet and Hands, burning them gradually ~~upon~~ the Head, whereby their Pains are extravagant. For Crimes of a less Nature Castration or chopping off half the Foot with an Axe. For Negligence they are usually Whipped by the Overseers with Lance-wood Switches. After they are whipped 'till they are raw, some put on their Skins Pepper and Salt to make them smart; at other Times their Masters will drop Melted Wax on their Skins, and use several very exquisite Torments."—— I could here add the Testimonies of many Gentlemen of Character who have witnessed Tortures (if possible) more cruel than these, in several of the Islands, and who are ready if required

up to

quired to give in their Names. But for the Honour of Human Nature I shall suppress them. Let not our Author after this, be offended at the harshest Epithets that can be given to those who inflict these Punishments. If he is, let him defend the West-India Planters from the Aspersions of Dr. Campbell, who speaking of the Negroes in the West Indies, says, “ They endure a Slavery more complete, and attended with far worse Circumstances, than what any People in their Condition suffer, in any other Part of the World ; or have suffered, in any other Period of Time §.” Let him defend them from the Aspersions of Huberus, who in his Defence of the necessity of a mild Slavery in some Countries adds, “ I speak only of that kind of Slavery which was in Use amongst civilized Nations — not of that which prevails amongst BARBARIANS, or which the Africans endure in America ||.” Let him defend them from the Aspersions of Dr. Adam Smith, who speaking of the Contempt of Death and Torture which prevails amongst Savage Nations, has the

§ Account of European Settlements in America.

|| Prælect. Jur. civ. Page 48.

the following Passage, “ There is not a Negro from the Coast of Africa, who does not in this Respect possess a Degree of Magnanimity, which the Soul of his sordid Master is too often scarce capable of conceiving. Fortune never exerted more cruelly her Empire over Mankind, than when she subjected those Nations of Heroes, to the Refuse of the Jails of Europe, to Wretches who possess the Virtues neither of the Countries which they come from, nor of those they go to, and whose Levity, Brutality, and Baseness, so justly expose them to the Contempt of the Vanquished. * ” Here I must turn Advocate for the first Inhabitants of the West-India Islands. Many of them fled from religious and civil Persecution. Most of them were descended from the first Families in Great Britain. The first Settlers in Barbadoes in a particular manner, who fled from the Tyranny of Cromwell, carried with them some of the purest Blood in the Nation. But what a Change has Negro-slavery made in some of their Posterity !—— to be mistaken by a most ingenious

ingenious Writer, from their “ Levity, Brutality, and Baseness ”—for “ the Refuse of the Jails of Europe. ”——In a Word, if our Author means to defend the Slave Trade, or the West-India Planters to any purpose, let him defend them from the Aspersions of Montesquieu, Franklin, Wallis, Hutchinson, Sharp, Hargrave, Warburton, and Forster, who have all employed their Talents against them. The flashes of their Eloquence have long been seen at a Distance. I shall think myself Happy if I have served as an Instrument of *conducting* them to those Piles of Iniquity, which Slavery has raised in the British Settlements in America.

THE Author of the Defence endeavours to palliate the Severity of the *penal* Laws which relate to Slaves in the West-Indies by saying, that they may appear “ harsh at first Sight * ”. We shall mention a few of them, extracted from the laws of Jamaica, and see whether they do
not

* Page 18.

not appear harsh upon a closer Examination.
“ If a Slave strike a White-Man, two Justices with three Freeholders, may punish him with Death, provided such Offence was not committed by his Master’s Order, or in a legal Defence of *his Goods*.” What a Door is here opened for Injuries of all kinds against the Slaves! — Even Self Preservation, the first Law of Nature, which often shews itself in Instinct, antecedent to the slower Operations of Reason, is here suspended by the Law of the Land *.
“ Killing a Slave found stealing, or running away in the Night, shall be no Damage.”
“ Runaway Slaves may have a Foot cut off by order of two Justices and three Freeholders.”
“ Persons

* Passive Obedience without Reserve, is charging God with as palpable a Contradiction as any two things can be, it being diametrically opposite to the Law of self Preservation, which is the Law of Nature, and the Decree of the Almighty, which Law is sacred, and not to be infringed by any Man.”

“ He that lets any Person whatsoever destroy him contrary to Law, when it is in his Power to defend himself, does tacitly Consent to his own Death, which he is obliged to defend by the Law of Nature, and therefore is guilty of his own Blood, as well as he that destroys him.”

LORD SOMMERS.

“ Persons wilfully killing Slaves shall for the first time be guilty of Felony, and the second Murder † ”. Where are the Laws in any other civilized Country which make a distinction between a *first* and *second* Murder?—The difficulty of proving this Crime (so much complained of in other Countries) is encreased, by a Negro not being suffered to be a Witness in their Courts. The small number of White People here, renders it extremely difficult to prove this or any other Crime by their Evidence.

I HOPE it will not be thought that I am about to desert the Cause of Humanity, when I maintain with the Author of the Defence, that these severe Laws, and arbitrary Punishments are “ absolutely necessary to the Safety and good Government of the Islands *.” Despotic Governments always require severe Laws. It is the same in Domestic Slavery : The natural Love of Liberty which is common to all Men, and the Love of Ease which is peculiar to the Inhabitants of Warm Climates, can only be
 overcome

† Abridgement of the Acts of Assembly of Jamaica, No. 70.

* Page 13.

overcome by severe Laws and Punishments. While Slaves are employed in a Climate and Labor, and treated with an Inhumanity, unknown to former Ages — While every Nerve must be kept stretched, and every Pore *constantly* open — While the Ideas of Liberty are kept up in the Minds of any of them, by the yearly Importation of Cargoes from Africa—While they are denied so many of the Necessaries and Comforts of Life, and lastly while their Proportion is so much greater than that of the white People, nothing but the Whip, melted Wax, Brine, the Gallows, the Stake, and the Gibbet, will long prevent Insurrections among them *. Even these

* Dr Bancroft who resided several Years in the Dutch Settlements at Guiana has the following passage in his Natural History of that Country.

“ The Blacks are at least five Times more numerous than the Whites, and are therefore kept at a submissive and humble Distance by severity of Discipline, which not only contributes to the safety of the White Inhabitants but to the Happiness of the Slaves. The impossibility of obtaining, is ever found to destroy the Desire of Enjoyment; and rigid Treatment by annihilating every Hope of Liberty, renders them Content with Slavery. The late Insurrection of the Slaves in *Berbice* who of all others were the most favoured, affords a recent Example of the Danger of too much Indulgence

these are often ineffectual for that Purpose.
In spite of them all, Human Nature is now
aiming

gence to Slaves, by which they are excited to attempt the perfect Recovery of their Liberty. In this State there is no Medium, either the Minds of Slaves must be depressed by abject Slavery, or the Lives of their Masters are in eminent Danger. For this Reason they have been oppressed by many humiliating Penalties, and Distinctions. Their evidence relative to a white Person is of no validity; an Attempt to strike a white Inhabitant is punished with Death; and their Masters and Overseers have not only the Power of inflicting Corporal Punishment, but are in some Measure allowed to exercise a Right over their Lives, since the putting a Negro to Death is attended only with a pecuniary Punishment. In this Situation they are subjected to many complicated Species of Misery, exposed to the Tyranny of the Imperious, and the Lust of the Libidinous, and to an incessant Toll, which will have no Period but with their Lives." Page 367, 368.

" It is certain the Treatment of the Negroes in the Plantations is very severe, and the Punishments inflicted upon them for Faults or Neglects very cruel and inadequate. In Capital Cases it is generally attended with Torture. They are often burnt, and frequently hanged up alive. This, besides the Natural Inhumanity of those who have been long among Slaves, are owing to the vast Disproportion between the Whites and Blacks, which obliges the former to observe the latter with a stricter Eye, and to chastise them with a severe Hand." WYKNE'S History of the British Settlements in America. Page 542. vol. 3.

" The greatest Severities, the most cruel Punishments, are certainly in the present State of things absolutely necessary, on Account of that total want of Principle, and that Malice
and

aiming to regain her Dignity, amongst the Slaves, in the Brasils, Surinam, and Chili, who have at last asserted their Liberty*. Are not these Insurrections the beginnings of universal Retribution and Vengeance upon European Tyranny, in America? and is it not high time for
Britain

and Dishonesty, which Slavery necessarily introduces into the Minds of the miserable Subjects of it. It is shocking to think that those unhappy Victims must from the Nature of the thing, become more wicked, dangerous and refractory, in proportion to the Natural greatness of their minds. A brave ingenuous Principled Slave is indeed a Monster, and not included in the general Oeconomy of Nature."

Plan for the Abolition of Slavery in the West Indies. P. 12.

" It is certain these Punishments (formerly mentioned by Sir Hans Sloan) are sometimes merited by the Blacks, who are a very perverse Generation, and though they may appear harsh are scarce equal to some of their Crimes."

Introduction to the Natural History of Jamaica.

* " There is more Reason to believe that Passive Obedience is a damnable Doctrine, than the contrary; for it is inconsistent with those glorious Attributes of the Deity, by which we believe him to be a God of infinite Love, Mercy and Compassion to all Mankind, and no respecter of Persons; for that Doctrine makes him an unmerciful, cruel, tyrannical God, in making all Mankind that they may be used as Beasts, at the Will and Pleasure of a few of their Fellow Creatures, who are but their Equals, till they make them supreme Heads, or Governors."

L O R D S O M M E R S.

Britain to change her Conduct, and to adopt some safe and equitable means of abolishing Slavery in her Colonies. ?

THE Author of the Defence endeavours to strengthen his Cause by degrading the Genius and Manners of the Africans, below the ordinary rank of human Creatures †. Few Travellers possess Abilities, Introductions, or Languages, proper to acquire a complete knowledge of National Characters. Nations often differ widely in the compass of a few Years, and even the same Nation is different, in different parts of the same Kingdom. How widely do the Manners of the Chinese differ according to Du Haldt, and the Author of Lord Anson's Voyage round the World. The one describes the interior parts of the Country, the other, a Sea-port town. Human Nature is the same in all Ages and Countries; and all the difference we perceive in its Characters in respect to Virtue and Vice, Knowledge and Ignorance, may be accounted for from Climate, Country, Degrees of Civilization,

† Page 21, 22, 23, 24.

On, form of Government, or other accidental causes, “ Mankind (says that Citizen of the World Mr. Baretti) are of one great Family, and he is not a Friend to that Family, who contributes his Mite towards keeping it in Discord, by partial and false Representations. It is the Devil’s Business to spread such erroneous Notions, that Men may not consider themselves as Brothers, but contemn and hate each other.”

WITHOUT availing myself of the Authorities of Smith, Adanson, Astley, Bosman, and others who speak in high Terms of the Africans, I shall allow that many of them are inferior in Virtue, Knowledge, and the love of Liberty to the Inhabitants of other parts of the World : but this may be explained from *Physical* causes. The different Nations of Africa are divided from each other by vast tracts of uninhabited Land. This is the reason why ~~this~~ quarter of the Globe has never been the seat of a wide extended Empire ; and hence the Natives continue chiefly in a Savage or Barbarous State ; for Arms (on which extensive Empire has always been founded) and the Arts of Civilization

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have

that

have generally travelled together. Moreover the Heat of the Climate in Africa, by bringing on Indolence of Mind, and Body, exposes ~~them~~ at all Times to Slavery, while the Fertility of the Soil renders the Want of Liberty a less Evil to them, than it is to the Inhabitants of Northern, or less Warm and fruitful Countries†. These last Causes, have likewise fixed Slavery in Asia: but from the undivided Nature of ~~this~~ Country, it has not been confined as in Africa to petty Monarchies; but extended through large Empires: Hence the Asiatics are a civilized People.

the

C O U L D it be proved, that the Negroes are the only People in the World, who are ignorant of a Supreme Being, or that Worship Idols, it might add Weight to our Author's Argument* derived from these Facts, to shew that they are an inferior Race of Men. Human Inventions in all Ages have corrupted Natural, as well as Revealed Religion. The Natives of Peru so famous in History, were discovered in a State of the most blind Idolatry; Examples of the same Kind are to be found without Number, in
the

† Montesquieu.

* Page 16.

the Accounts of Travellers, of every Age and Country. In the Polite City of Athens, there were many who worshipped an "unknown God," and in Ephesus others, who lived altogether "without God in the World."

THE best Definition that can be given of Man is, that he is a Creature capable of Religion. Who has not heard of the Christian Church in Africa? If Christianity has made less Progress, and been more corrupted in this Country than in many others, it must be ascribed among other Causes to its opposing Polygamy, a vice to which the Heat of the Climate, the early Maturity, and speedy Decay of the Women, and the peculiar fertility of the Soil, strongly disposed of them. It is ~~owing to the less severe Restraints~~ ^{because} which Mahomet laid upon this Vice, that his Religion continues to prevail throughout the greatest Part of ~~this~~ Country.* *that*

*less severe
Restraints*

OUR Author's last Charge against the Genius and Manners of the Africans, is founded upon their being "unacquainted with Friendship and Gratitude," and upon their being "separated

* Montesquieu.

parated from their nearest Relations without looking after them, or bidding them farewell.*" Friendship and Gratitude are founded upon the Wants and Weaknesses of Man in a State of Society. If any of the Negroes appear to be Strangers to these Virtues, it must be ascribed to their independent Mode of Life, as Savages, which exempts them from most of those Weaknesses, and artificial Wants, which are introduced by civilized Life. The Savage is indebted entirely to his Bow and Fishing Rod, for his Support. The Woods and Brooks, by satisfying, chief of his Desires, raise him above the Obligations of Friendship and Gratitude. They likewise, by precluding all comparative Ideas, render him a Stranger to Envy and Ambition. The seeming Indifference with which some of the Negroes part from their Relations, must be ascribed in like Manner to their Character as Savages; it being esteemed amongst them the highest Mark of Heroism to bear the utmost Degrees of Pain and Misery without complaining. But this Insensibility to the Ties of Nature, Friendship, and Gratitude,

* Page 22, 23.

is far from being general amongst the Negroes. The Natives of Congo, I have been informed by a Gentleman who has witnessed the Sale of many Cargoes of Slaves in the West-Indies, always show Signs of Grief upon being parted from their Friends, and Relations. The Cormantics are always prone to Insurrections. The Natives of Angola generally seek to destroy themselves*. The Degrees of Natural Affection, Love of Liberty, and Resentment, discovered by the Negroes, are always proportioned to the Progress they had made in political, and domestic Happiness, in their own Country.

THE Amusements, Songs &c†. of the Negroes, are urged as signs of their Happiness, or Contentment in Slavery. Every one knows how often the Mind flies to these, to relieve itself from Melancholy. Although some of their Songs, like those of *civilized* Nations, are

* Two Negro Men a few Years ago in the Island of St. Croix were observed to be much affected upon being sold apart. Their Masters lived at a Distance from each other. They both ran away at once, and after being absent two Weeks, were found in a lonely place, hanging dead in each others Arms, on the Limb of a Tree.

† Page 27.

are Obscene and Warlike, yet I have been informed that many of them, as well as their Tunes, are of a most plaintive Nature, and very expressive of their Misery.

To a Mind divested of those Prejudices with which Custom leads us to view objects, the same Follies and Vices will appear under different forms in every state of Society, not only in the Individuals of the different Ranks and Characters of Mankind, but amongst different Nations likewise.

W H E R E is the difference between an African Prince, with his face daubed with Grease, and his Head adorned with a Feather; and a moderen Macaroni with his artificial Club of Hair daubed with Powder and Pomatum? Where is the difference between the British Senator who attempts to enslave his fellow subjects in America, by imposing Taxes upon them contrary to Law and Justice; and the American Patriot who reduces his African Brethren to Slavery, contrary to Justice and Humanity? Where is the difference between the sceptical Philosopher who will not allow
those

those Men to be his equals in Genius or Manners, who differ from him in a few trifling Customs; and the bigotted Christian who will not allow those Christians to partake of the merits of his Saviour who mix with their worship a few trifling Ceremonies? Where is the difference between the Mahometan Negro who maintains three or four Wives agreeable to the Religion of his Country; and the European Christian who keeps three or four Mistresses contrary to the Religion of his Country? Where is the difference between the Pagan Negro who worships an evil Spirit, and uses a few ceremonies at a Funeral; and the superstitious Christian who worships God from a fear of the Devil, and connects his future Happiness with a Sacrament before, and a Funeral right after, his Death? Where is the difference between the African Savage, whose scanty wants are supplied by Nature; and the European Nobleman, whose numerous wants are supplied by Art? They are both alike free from the Obligations of Friendship and Gratitude*. It would lead us too far from
our

* "*Vere Amicitia rarissime invenitur in iis qui in honoribus, reque publica versantur.*"
CICERO.

our subject to shew in how many other Instances, the same rural sports, the same violent and lasting Resentments, the same Arts of Address and Dissimulation, and the same want of Affection in the Union of the sexes, Mark a Resemblance between the extremes of civilized, and the savage Life.—Lastly ; where is the difference between that civilized Nation that yearly destroys 50,000 souls by her Trade under the sanction of Laws ; and that barbarous Nation which destroys the same number with the Sword, without the sanction of Laws ? The proportion of Vice is the same in both Nations. In the latter it appears like certain Diseases in strong Constitutions upon the Extremities and surface of the Body, whereas in the former it is thrown upon the Vitals. Still however, like the dreaded Worm of Africa it spreads its malignant Influence to every part of the Body, and unless it be wholly extracted, will at last end in its entire Dissolution. But supposing our Author had proved the Africans to be inferior in every thing to the Inhabitants of

“ Pity, Benevolence and *Friendship*, are things almost unknown in high Stations.”

BOLINGBROKE.

of the other quarters of the Globe will his Cause derive any strength from it? Would it avail a man to plead in a Court of Justice that he defrauded his Neighbour, because he was inferior to him in Genius or Knowledge?

W A S I an arbitrary Prince in a Country whose Laws punished the lowest degree of Inferiority of Genius or Manners with perpetual Slavery, and should a Man claim a fellow subject for a Slave upon the best proofs of his being deficient in both,—I would suffer the unfortunate Criminal to go free, and inflict upon the Prosecutor the whole penalty of the Law. This Man's Genius and Manners above all others, would render him fit for nothing but Slavery.

I come now to enquire into the causes which have prevented the encrease of the Negroes in the West-Indies. These must be sought for, not in their “carelessness in preserving their Health †” as our Author supposes, but in their peculiar situation and manner of Life as Slaves. The Africans multiply in their own Country with a Rapidity that is hardly credible, and

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from

†Page 27.

from their Color and certain Customs* which Experience has taught them, they are exempted from those Diseases which prove so fatal to the Europeans that come amongst them.

THREE Causes concur to check Population in a Country, namely, Luxury, Debauchery, and Slavery. The first of these by encreasing our wants, encreases the difficulties of supporting a Family; the second renders the Sexes unfit, while the last abates the Appetite, for propagating the Species. All these produce their Effects according to their Degree, or according to their being more or less combined. Slavery operates differently, whether it be of a political, or domestic Nature. Political Slavery in some Countries has but little influence upon Population, such as in some parts of Asia, and Africa. In others it operates against it, as in Russia, and most of the states of Italy. Domestic Slavery in like manner

* The chief of these is anointing their Bodies with Palm Oil in the wet Seasons.

BARBOT'S Account of Africa, Page 105.

ner sometimes exists under such alleviations as to have little influence upon Population. This was the case in Egypt. The Israelites multiplied in a rapid manner during their Captivity. That they were treated with Lenity we learn from the history of Joseph. Had Masters possessed a right over the Lives of their Slaves, Potiphar would have avenged the dishonour Joseph was accused of attempting to bring on his Bed, and not have consigned him over to be tried, condemned and punished by the municipal Law of the Country. Slaves encreased nearly in the same proportion as Freemen in the virtuous Ages of the Roman Empire. We read of some who owned 10,000, and others 20,000 of them. That the Romans treated their Slaves with Lenity, we learn from the testimony of Seneca*. It is true the Romans imported many Slaves from the Barbarous Countries they subdued, but this was in the declension of their Empire. It was not 'till this time that we read of the Ergastula, or House of Correction for Slaves. They partook of the dissolute manners of their Masters

* Epist. 47.

ters, and therefore foreign supplies were necessary to repair the waste which Debauchery had introduced amongst them. It is true also, the right of Life was held over Slaves, and Tortures were inflicted upon them in criminal Cases: But the same right was held by the Romans over their own Children, and Tortures were inflicted in like cases upon Freemen. They were seldom put in Execution upon either, in the early Ages of the Empire. Slaves multiplied among the antient Germans, by whom they were treated with the Familiarity of Children, according to the Testimony of Tacitus*. Slaves have multiplied moreover in the Northern and Middle Colonies of America. But in the West-Indies they have never encreased by ordinary Population. We shall first prove this Fact, and then assign the reasons of it.

LIGON in his Account of Barbadoes tells us that in the year 1646 there were 20,000 Whites on that Island, besides, to use his own Words “ a far greater number of Blacks”. In the year 1675 the Negroes in Barbadoes amounted to
above

* De Morib. German. Chap. 20, 25.

above one hundred thousand *. Upon a Parliamentary enquiry into the state of the African Trade in the year 1728 it appeared that in three years only the number of Negroes imported into Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Antigua amounted to 42,000, besides what were carried to St. Kitts, Nevis, and Monferrat. From this it appears, that the Island of Jamaica, allowing it only an equal proportion with Barbadoes and Antigua, imported 14,000 Negroes in three years. When we consider the great increase of the demand for Sugar, and the other Produce of that Island, since the year 1728, we cannot admit of less than 5,000 Negroes being imported there every year since. Let us now enquire what is the present number of the Negroes in ~~these~~ ^{one} Islands. In Barbadoes § they do not exceed

100,000,

* Campbell's European Settlements in America.

§ " The Island of Barbadoes notwithstanding all the Means they use to encrease their Negroes by Propagation, notwithstanding that the Climate in every Respect, except in being more Wholesome, resembles the Climate from whence they came, notwithstanding all this, Barbadoes lies under a Necessity of an annual Recruit of five thousand Slaves to keep up their Stock. This prodigious Failure which is at least, in

the

100,000, and in Jaimaica they do not amount to 200,000. If in the latter they have encreas- ed by a few thousands within these forty years it is not owing to ordinary Population, but to the many new Estates which have lately been settled on that Island. When we look back and estimate the numbers which have been sacrificed by this Trade, and when we look forward, and estimate the encreasing proportion which it must destroy, if it continues upon its present footing †, we would wish to forget the obliga- tions

the same Proportion in all our Islands, shows that some un- common and insupportable Hardships lye upon the Negroes, which wear them in such a surprizing Manner."

CAMPBELL'S European Settlements.

" Allowing the Number of Negroes to be 100,000 they are entirely renewed every twenty Years." What then must we think of the Management of a People, who far from en- creasing greatly as those who have no loss by Wars ought to do, must in so short a Space of Time as twenty Years, with- out foreign Recruits be entirely consumed to a Man." Ibid.

† The Number of Negroes imported one Year with ano- ther from Africa to America, amounts to 200,000, a fourth Part of which falls to the Share of the British Colonies and Islands. In the Year 1769 they imported 104,000. Comput- ing each Negro at £ 30 Sterling, they pay £ 1500,000 a Year for Slaves. Five thousand seven hundred and thirty one were imported into Charlestown between November 1771, and July 1773. A few of them were brought from the West Indies

tions we owe to Justice, Humanity, Religion, and to the British name. What War, or Pestilence ever made such Havock with the human species? Spaniards blush at the Recital of the Massacre of the Indians in South America, and wish to blot it out of their Histories*. But Britons, once famed thro' every quarter of the Globe for their love of Justice, Humanity and Liberty,—nay more, British Americans, the descendants of those illustrious Men of whom Britain at one period of her History was not worthy,—British Americans, who a few years ago risked their all in opposing the claims of the British Parliament; these very Americans, have fallen into a trade more destructive to
their

Indies. “The Negroes sent from Jamaica to the Continent of America (says Sir Hans Sloane) are only the Sick and the Mutinous.” They do not amount to one twentieth Part of the Number who perish yearly in that Island.

* The same Crimes amongst different Nations and Ages, often seek to screen themselves under the same Sanctuary. Lopez de Gomara the Spanish Historian who relates this Event, attempts to justify it, by degrading the Genius and Manners of the Indians below those of Human Creatures, for, says he, “they eat Lice and Worms, they intoxicate themselves with a Wine made of Indian Corn, also with the Smoke of Tobacco, and they pluck out their Beards.”

General History of the Indies, Chap. 219.

their fellow Creatures than Spanish tortures, they have pursued it upwards of an hundred years, and what is more — they defend it as lawful.

HAVING proved that the Negroes in the West-Indies do not encrease by ordinary population, I come now to enquire into the Reasons of it.

OF the three Causes we mentioned which concur to check Population, the two last, namely, Debauchery, and Slavery, act chiefly upon the Negroes. Dr. Bancroft ascribes their Decrase entirely to Debauchery*, but we shall find

* In these as well as in all other West India Colonies the Slaves diminish in Number unless recruited by successive Supplies from Africa. This Decrase has been attributed to various Causes, commonly to hard Labor, though with very little appearance of Reason, since they are more Robust, Healthy and Vigorous than their Masters. The true Cause of their Want of Increase results from the Intercourse of the Whites with the young Wenches, who derive no inconsiderable Emolument therefrom, and as childbearing would put an end to this Commerce, they viciously use every Precaution to avoid Conception; and if these prove ineffectual, they even procure repeated Abortions, which incapacitates them for
Child

find that Slavery (under its peculiar aggravations in the West-Indies) has a great share in destroying them. The Appetite for propagating the Species amongst the Blacks, bears no relation to the heat of the Climate, or to the degrees of the same Appetite in the White People. A greater proportion of Infants than in other Countries, perish in their Birth*. Their Children besides being subject to all the numerous Diseases of Children in warm Countries, have one that is peculiar to them, and which arises from their peculiar Circumstances as Slaves, which proves

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fatal

Child bearing in a more advanced Age. This unnatural Practice is very frequent, and of the highest Detriment to the Planters."

Natural History of Guiana. Page 372, 373.

* Dr. George Taylor an eminent Physician and Manmidwife at St, Kitts informed me that the Negro Women in that Island have very difficult, and sometimes preternatural Births. He attributed it to the Pelvis being distorted, by the Kicks they get when young, and to the Hardships they undergo during their Pregnancy. The white Women he adds, have very easy and safe Births. Childbearing is attended with little Pain and Danger in all warm Countries.

Dr. Bancroft says the Indian Women in Guiana seem to be exempted from the Curse inflicted upon Eve. The same has been remarked of the Women in many Parts of Africa.

fatal to Numbers*. The Want of Confidence in Fathers in the Fidelity of their Wives, and the

* This Disease is called by some of the Natives the *Jaw-Fall*. It is a species of the Tetanus. The late Dr. Cadwallider Evans of this City, who practised Physic several Years in Jamaica, informed me that it was very common among the Negro Children in that Island.

Dr. Chevalier in his "Lettres sur Les Maladies de St. Dominique," gives the following Account of this Disorder, "Le mal de mâchoire, ou le *Tetanos* des Enfans est presque incurable. Il a différentes Causes. La plus ordinaire est le trop de feu que les Nègresses accouchées font dans leur Case; à laquelle on peut ajoûter la fumée continuelle, car elles n'ont point de Cheminée. par la Chaleur du feu les Enfans sont souvent in sueur, et la mondre fraîcheur, fait Impression sur les Nerfs délicats de ces jeunes Créatures. Une autre Cause fort ordinaire de cette Maladie sont les Passions de la mere, et la maniere dont elle a vécu dans sa Grossesse."

"Il y a de certaines Habitations, ou presque, tous les enfans meurent, du Mal de Mâchoire. Ce Malheure, cause beaucoup de perte aux Habitans."

Lettre Premiere.

"The Jaw Disorder, or the Tetanus of the Children, is almost always incurable. It has different Causes. The most ordinary is the large Fires which the Negro Women have in their Huts when they lie inn. To which we may add the continual Smoke of these Fires, for their huts have no chimnies in them to carry it off; the Children are by these means thrown into Sweats, so that the least Cold makes an impression upon their Delicate Nerves. Another ordinary cause of this Disease, is the Passions of the Mother during her Pregnancy. There are certain places where almost all the Children die of it. This misfortune causes a great loss to the Inhabitants."

the Wretchedness of Mothers, have always been found to lessen that care which is the Offspring of Natural Affection in Parents for their Children. This Disregard in Parents for their Posterity, is encreased among the Slaves in the West Indies by the Reflection of the Misery they have entailed upon them;—here then we discover another Source of Accidents and Mortality among the Negro Children.

I MUST not omit taking Notice of a Disease called the *Seasoning*, which destroys many of the Negroes. It arises partly from their unwholesome Diet † on Shipboard, and partly from the
 Hippocondriac

† Il est rare, que les Esclaves, qu' on apporte de Guinée, soient attaqués de fièvre maligne; Mais quelques-uns, principalement les Juenes, Jusqu'à l'âge de quatorze ou quinze sont sujets à une Maladie que l'on appelle Mal D'Estomac. Ils sentent de la Douleur à la Region épigastrique, tout le corps est pesant, le Sommeil les accable, en marchant, en travaillant; ils voudroient être toujours couchés; il faut les battre pour les faire lever; & les Outils en travaillant tombent des mains, ils ont une faim dévorant, on ne peut les rassasier. Cette maladie vient de la nourriture grossiere qu'on leur a donnée toute la traversée, car ils ne mangent que fèves de marais cuites avec du sel, & peut-être quelque graisse."

Lettres par M. le Dr. Chevalier sur les Maladies de St. Dominique.

“ The

Hippocondriac Disorder, which their new and wretched Manner of Life brings on them. Now when we add to all these, the hard Labor which the Negroes undergo in a Climate not intended for it—their spare Diet * —and their intemperance

“ The Slaves who are brought from Guinea are seldom attacked with a malignant fever, but some of them, especially those about fourteen or fifteen years of age are subject to a disease which is called the *Disorder of the Stomach*. They feel a pain in the Epigastric Region, the whole body is unwieldy, and sleep weighs them down in walking, and at work. Their working instruments fall ~~from~~ their hands. They incline ~~al-~~
~~ways~~ to be in bed, and it is necessary to beat them to make them get up. They have a voracious appetite, which is never satisfied. This disease arises from the gross food which is given them on their passage, for they eat nothing but marsh beans dressed with salt and sometimes a little fat.”

out of
always

* Upon deducting all the Expences of fresh Negroes, Taxes, Doctors fees for attending them when Sick, Accidents happening to Cattle and Mills, Land Carriage, &c. All the Profits of the Sugar Trade to Great Britain and the Planters, have appeared upon a nice Calculation to be saved from the Food and Cloaths of the Negroes. That many of them have been abridged in the last Article, appears from the following Act of Assembly.

“ All Slaves shall have Cloaths, that is, Men Jackets and Drawers, and Women Jackets and Petticoats, or Frocks once every Year, on or before the 25th Day of December, upon Penalty of five shillings for every Slave's wanting.”

Laws of Jamaica, No. 70.

“ The

pearance in drinking the most pernicious Liquors; we may account for the immense Waste of them in the West-Indies. They all stand charged upon Slavery.

I know it has been said by some, that the Climate of the West-Indies destroys many of the Negroes. But Experience convinces us that this is not the Case. They are even exempted from the most fatal epidemic Diseases to which the White People are subject. Nor should the Mortality among the Whites be attributed entirely to the Climate. The most populous Nations, and the longest lived People, have always been found in warm Countries. The Mortality of the Europeans arises from their carrying with them to the West-Indies their European Diet, and Manners. † These, together with that Luxury which is founded on the
Labor

“ The Negroes in the Plantations are subsisted at an easy Rate. Some support themselves by working on Saturdays and Sundays; others are supported with an Allowance of Guinea or Indian Corn, a salt Herring, or a small quantity of Bacon, or salt Pork, a Day. All the rest of the Charge consists in a Cap, a Shirt, a pair of Breeches, Stockings and Shoes. The whole not exceeding forty Shillings a Year ”

CAMPBELL'S European Settlements.

† Lind's Diseases of warm Climates.

Labor of the Negroes, have prevented the Increase of White People in the Islands. The Assembly of Jamaica have in vain attempted, by Laws made for that Purpose, to encourage Artificers and Labourers (who constitute the greatest Body of the People in all Countries) to settle amongst them. They can never reconcile themselves to working with Slaves.

*These are
the Reasons
why*

~~It is owing to these Causes, that~~ the Number of White People in Jamaica has not exceeded 30,000 at one time, in the Course of Ninety Years. Compare this, with the Province of Pennsylvania, whose inhabitants in the same Space of Time, from ordinary Population and the Accession of Strangers, have amounted to near 400,000 Souls. In these consist the true Riches * and Glory of Britain. " In the Multitude of People is the King's Honor, but in the Want of People is the Destruction of a Prince." †

T H U S we see that the Slave Trade is not only repugnant to Religion, and the true Interests of our Mother Country, but that it offers Violence to the
economy

* The Exports from Great Britain to the English West Indies from 1754, to 1758 inclusive, amounted to £ 3,765,000 Sterling. To the Colonies in the same Time, 7,410,000
The Difference in behalf of the latter - - - 3,645,000

† Prov. xiv. 29.

œconomy of Nature. The Air—the Sea—Heaven and Earth—all the Elements, conspire against it.

The Author of the Defence endeavours to shelter the West-India Planters under the Practices of some of the “ firmest Supporters of Religion in England, both of the Clergy and Laity‡.” The greatest Sanctity of Office, and the highest attainments in Wisdom, will not always preserve Men from Vice and Error.* The Clergy of every Church are as apt to confound the Attributes of the Deity, with a few detached

Passages

* The Author of the Treatise upon the Trade from Great Britain to Africa uses the following Arguments in Defence of the Slave Trade, “ What vain pretence of Liberty can in-
thatfatuate People to run into such Licentiousness, as to assert, a Trade is unlawful which Custom immemorial, and various Acts of Parliament have given a Sanction to? Could they support their enthusiastical Arguments, the African Trade would be effectually ruined, for at present the richest Adventures in it, are such Men as would scorn to be engaged in any Pursuit, but what the Laws of God, and Man would fully sanctify. Can the Defender of the Faith, and their most Catholic and Christian Majesties join in a Trade illicit in its Principles, and dishonorable in its Pursuit? Where slept the Pope’s Thunders, while these Dominions were under his sway, that he never vindicated the universal Right of Freedom? How came it that no Nation ever yet asserted so natural a Privilege, if it had from the first, Religion, and Reason for its Foundation?” ——— For this Performance the Society of African Merchants voted public Thanks to be given to the Author. ‡ Page 30.

Passages in the Scriptures, as Lawyers are, to confound Natural Equity with Acts of Parliament, or as Physicians are, to mistake the Operations of Nature for those of Medicine. A Planter in one of the West-India Islands who felt some uneasiness in his Mind from keeping Negro Slaves, wrote lately to a learned Divine in London, to know whether it was unlawful. The Divine wrote for answer, that the Jews had Slaves—that it was not forbidden in the New Testament—that domestic Slavery had existed in every Age and Corner of the World—and that

if he treated

~~by treating~~ his Slaves well, he committed no Crime in keeping them. Had this Planter listened a little longer to the Voice of Heaven, speaking in his Heart, or consulted the whole Tenor of his Bible, he would have received a very different Answer to his Question. I beg leave to add here, that the same Arguments derived from Scripture and Precedents, which establish domestic, likewise establish political Slavery. The Jews, God's peculiar People, were under Bondage to the Egyptians, and unless we oppose the whole Spirit of Christianity, to a few single Precepts, St. Paul's advice to the

Romans

Romans † is a much stronger Proof of the Lawfulness of political Slavery, than any yet adduced from the Old or New Testament, in Favor of the Lawfulness of domestic Slavery. If domestic Slavery is agreeable to the Will and Laws of God, political Slavery is much more so.—Then it follows, that our British Constitution was obtained unjustly—King Charles the First did no wrong—Passive Obedience was due to Oliver Cromwell—King James the Second was the Lord's Anointed—The Revolution was a Rebellion—King William was a Tyrant—The illustrious House of Hanover are Usurpers—and the Right of the British Parliament to tax the American Colonies, is unlimited and indisputable.—Ancient and modern Precedents should have no Weight in this Dispute; for political as well as domestic Slavery, has existed amongst civilized Nations in every Age, and Corner of the World. But has its Iron Sceptre been softened, by the few despotic Kings who have been wise and just, and the few Nations which have lived happily and flourished in that State? In a Word, if we reason from Example, where shall we stop? For where is the

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Error

† “ Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers. For there is no Power but of God: the Powers that be, are ordained of God. Whoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.” Chap. xiii.

Error, or Vice, that has not been admitted as true, or practised as lawful, in some Age or Country? “ There is a Way which seemeth right unto a Man; but the end thereof are the Ways of Death.” ¶

THE Reader will here pardon my saying a Word or two of myself. I am called upon by the Author of the Defence to answer a Question.—Should I become “ an Owner of a West-India Estate by the Death of a Relation, or some other unexpected Means,” he desires to know “ whether I could lay my Hand on my Heart, and say, with a safe Conscience, that I would instantly free all my Slaves, and destroy my Sugar Works.” Suppose I should refuse to do this, the Subject remains where it did,—I should then commit a Crime for which I should *justly* “ loose the Esteem of Men of Sense, and of a rational Way of thinking.”

AND now my West-India Friend, give me leave in my turn to ask you a few Questions. Lay your Hand upon *your* Heart, and tell me; would you like to be sold, for no fault, or torn against your will from your Sisters and Brothers, and carried into a foreign Country, to be subjected to the absolute dominion of a Master; to be obliged to labor without intermission, to cease to make any further improve-
ments

ments in Virtue or Knowledge; to be fed and cloathed scantily; to be temp.ed by your situation to all the low Vices of Slavery, to be punished in the most cruel manner if you attempted to regain your Liberty; Would you like to be told, if you should complain of your hard fate, that the "Imperfection of Human Society" required that you should be a Slave; that Moses the Jewish Law-giver commanded it, that the Gospel did not proclaim a jubilee to Slaves*; that you had "no Genius" that Mr. Hume had said, from your Ignorance of the Religion, and your backwardness in acquiring the Language, and Learning of the Country you were in, you belonged to an inferior race of Men,† that you wanted feeling, because Resentment, and the prospect of greater Misery absorbed the Grief you would otherwise have shewed upon parting with your Family; that your Master was "educated in a Country of Liberty and Humanity," and that it was his "interest to treat you well"; that the Tortures inflicted upon you for attempting to regain your Liberty, "were inferior to those inflicted upon Damien, and the Conspirators against the Life of the present King of Portugal"; §that "all Happiness was comparative"; that you were "much happier than the Peasants of Scotland, Ireland, and Poland;" * that upon the whole

† Page 21.

§ Page 19.

* Page 19.

whole your situation was more to be envied than pitied, “ and that you might quit the World with the certainty that your Children would be treated with the same care you had experienced yourself ” † ?——

I anticipate your Answer to these Questions. You would not. Then Sir pause a few Minutes, and reflect upon what you have done. You have called in question the Justice and goodness of the Supreme Being. You have charged the FATHER of Mankind with being the Author of the greatest Evils to his Children. You have aimed to establish Principles, which justify the most extensive and cruel Depradations which have been made by Conquerors and Tyrants, upon the Liberties and Lives of Mankind, and which at the same time condemn those glorious Events, and illustrious Men, that Britain and her Colonies, are indebted to for their Liberty and Prosperity. You have misrepresented the true Interests of our Mother Country. You have attempted to palliate Crimes which are founded on a Pride and Depravity of Soul, unavoidable in Masters and Slaves in the West-Indies. You have thrown a Veil over the true Causes which destroy so many Thousands of your fellow Creatures every year. You have (to use your own Words) “ unworthily traduced ” not “ many of my valuable Friends ” § but the *whole* of your

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† Page 2. § Preface to the Defence, Page 1.

our Brethren—the poor Africans. You have attempted to sink Creatures, formed like yourself, in the Image of God, and equally capable of Happiness both here and hereafter, *below* the rank of “Monsters and Barbarians” §, or even Brutes themselves. You have ——— but I forbear to add to the Reproaches to which you have exposed yourself.———
 “As a Person cannot err so grossly as not to be able to make Atonement” || I hope you will not fail immediately to ask forgiveness of your Maker, and your Country, for the Attack you have made upon the Rights of Mankind.

PERHAPS some of my West-India Readers are waiting to see an Apology, for the Account I have given in the Address of the Punishments inflicted upon the Negroes in the West-Indies. If they are, they will certainly be ~~misled~~. Although the Address “was written hastily,” yet the most ingenious Tortures that ever were inflicted upon a West-India Slave, should not prevail upon me to acknowledge, that it was written “without sufficient Proofs of what I advanced*.” The Authorities upon which I have rested all my Facts, cannot be contradicted. But I am far from applying the Account that is given of the inhuman Practices of *some* Masters, to

Disappointed

A L L

§ Preface to the Defence, Page 2.

|| Defence, Page 30. * Page 30.

ALL the Planters in the West-Indies. If it is unfair to reason against the Practice of any Thing in itself lawful, from its Abuse; it is not so, to reason against Practices, in themselves unlawful, from their Abuse. The rankest Weeds, and the most delicious Fruits, often grow in the same Soil. I honour the West-Indians for their Hospitality, Generosity, and Public Spirit. I have had the Pleasure of knowing many of them, who were distinguished for their Humanity, and every other Virtue that could adorn human Nature. There are some Metals so pure that they receive no Rust from being exposed to the moistest Atmosphere; so there are some Dispositions naturally so good, that they cannot contract the least foile of Vice—even from Slavery.

I HAVE avoided as much as possible every Thing through the whole of this Vindication, that could draw me from my Subject to the Author of the Defence. I shall not even give him the Pain of repeating here the many unkind Insinuations and Reflections he has thrown out against me. He was perhaps warm when he wrote them—When he cools, I am persuaded he will be “ sorry for his ungenerous abuse of a man who never injured him,”† or any other *Individual* born in the West-Indies.

† Page 30.

F I N I S.