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Title: American Slave Trade

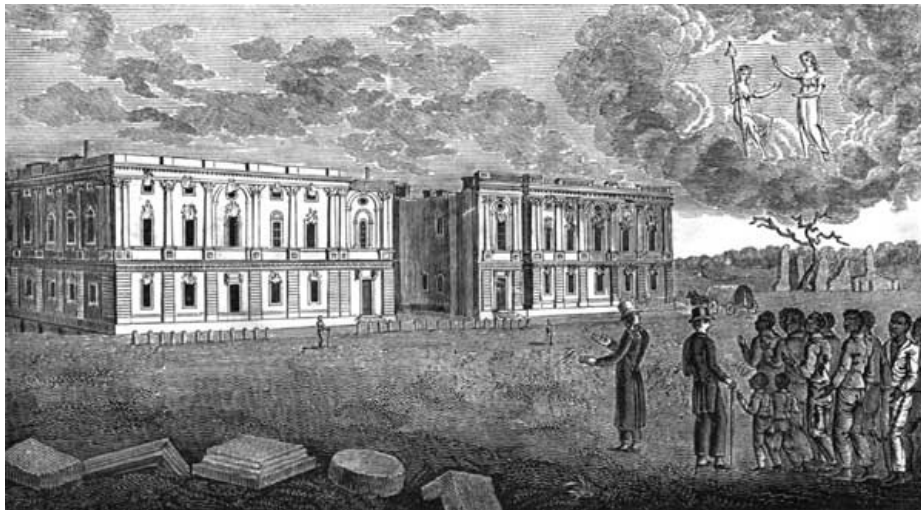
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Release Date: April 19, 2010 [EBook #32058]

Language: English

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE ***



Paragraph 46.

View of the Capitol of the United States, after the Conflagration in 1814.

AMERICAN SLAVE TRADE;

OR,

An Account of the Manner in which the Slave Dealers take Free People from some of the United States of America, and carry them away, and sell them as Slaves in other of the States; and of the horrible Cruelties practised in the carrying on of this most infamous Traffic:

WITH

Reflections on the Project for forming a Colony of American Blacks in Africa, and certain Documents respecting that Project.

By *JESSE TORREY, Jun. Physician.*

WITH FIVE PLATES.

LONDON:

REPRINTED BY C. CLEMENT, AND PUBLISHED BY
J. M. COBBETT, 1, CLEMENT'S INN.
1822.

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PREFACE.

"And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to death."

Exodus xxi. 16.

1. Throughout this work I have numbered the *paragraphs*, a practice which I find to be attended with numerous advantages. The work was published in Philadelphia in 1817.

2. The reader will perceive, that Mr. TORREY, the author of the work here presented to the public, has mixed his reflections with his narrative of facts. A different arrangement would have tended to clearness. But, as applicable to the English reader, there is a defect of greater importance; namely, the want of a description of the relative extent and situation of the Countries or States, in which this abominable slave trade is carried on. The author speaks of the *Middle States*, and the *Southern States*. He speaks of *Maryland*, of *Delaware*; and, then again, of *Georgia*, *Carolina*, *Mississippi*; but the English reader ought to be told, and have pretty clearly explained to him, how these several Countries lie with regard to each other; and, that he may judge of the magnitude of the evil, he ought to be informed over how large a part of the whole of the United States Slavery does actually extend. He ought further to be informed of the nature of the Governments, and of the laws, as far as these latter relate to Slavery. For, he must otherwise naturally be astonished to find that this dreadful traffic is carried on with impunity. He hears Mr. TORREY talk of Judges, Senators, Governors, Presidents, speaking against this traffic; and yet he finds it most vigorously carried on; and actually making a part of the internal trade of the Country; at which he is utterly astounded, so often hearing the *virtues* of Republicans sounded in his ears, and being informed that Mr. JEREMY BENTHAM is actually engaged, at this moment, in the Southern Peninsula of Europe, to teach the art of Constitution-making upon the American plan. The book stands, therefore, in need of a Preface to explain these matters a little; and such Preface I am now doing myself the honour to write.

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3. For want of a map, I must resort to a description by words. The States lie in the following order, along the side of the Atlantic from North to South, *Maine*, *New Hampshire*, *Massachusetts*, *Rhode Island*, *Connecticut*. The four latter are called the New England States, *Maine* being a new territory or State lying to the North and going on to the British territory of *New Brunswick*. After *Connecticut*, going on to the Southward, come *New York*, *New Jersey*, *Pennsylvania*, *Delaware* and *Maryland*. These five are called the *Middle States*. Then come, on to the Southward, *Virginia*, *North Carolina*, *South Carolina*, *Georgia* and the *Floridas*. These are called the Southern States. Then, going back to the North again, *Vermont* lies in at the back of the four New England States, on the western side of a long ridge of mountains. At the back of *Pennsylvania* are the States of *Ohio*, *Indiana*, and the district of the ill-fated creatures that have followed Mr. BIRKBECK, called the *Illinois*. At the back of *Virginia* is *Kentucky*, at the back of *North Carolina* is *Tennessee*, at the back of *South Carolina* and *Georgia* and *Florida* are *Alabama*, *Mississippi* and *Louisiana*. Some of these are not yet recognised as independent States. Now then, all to the South of *Maryland*, front and back, containing ten States, and, I believe, *Indiana* into the bargain. However, all to the South of *Maryland* is real unmodified, unmitigated, unrestrained Slavery; and this is that part of the United States which produces tobacco, cotton, sugar, and rice. This is the rich part of the United States; twice as extensive as all the rest; continually growing in population and cultivation; and, as Mr. TORREY observes, containing a larger portion of personal slavery, than any other part of the globe.

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4. So much for the *Geography* of the subject. Now, as to the *Governments*, this is the state of the case. The *United States* (with the exception of a small spot to be mentioned by and by) extend from *Canada* and *New Brunswick*, which lie to the North, to the *Gulf of Mexico* on the South, seeing that the *Floridas* are now to make part of this territory. They extend to the west, from the *Atlantic Ocean* to the *Pacific Ocean*. Great part of this western territory is, as yet, wholly uninhabited by white people. But, the Country is inhabited more or less thickly from the North to the South on the side of the Atlantic, and the space between the utmost points is about seventeen hundred miles. This territory is divided into *States*, each of which is independent of all the rest. Each has its Chief Magistrate, its Legislature, its Judiciary, and its own Code of Laws. It raises its own internal taxes; has its own Militia; and is, in fact, an independent State, with the following exceptions; namely, that it has nothing to do, and can have no particular connexion, with any Foreign Nation; can make no laws with regard to external commerce; can make neither peace nor war; and is bound to join the other States in case of war or peace. These matters are all left

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to the *Congress*, which is composed of a President, a Senate, and a House of Representatives. This body manages the affairs of the whole Country as far as relates to peace and war, and as far as relates to external Commerce, and to all connexions with Foreign Nations.

5. So that the Congress can make no Law touching the internal economy and jurisdiction of any of the States, each of which, may pass what laws it pleases, so that those laws do not contravene the common compact, contained in the document, or, act of Congress, usually denominated the *Constitution of the United States*. Now, that compact does by no means prohibit the existence of Slavery; but, on the contrary, *expressly recognises its legality*; and this was one of the *conditions*, upon which the Union was founded. [Pg x]

6. As to the several States, Slavery did exist in all, except, perhaps, *Indiana* and *Ohio*; and, I believe, there also. I mean that it existed without any *modification by law*. That is to say, Slaves and the children of Slaves were as much a white man's property as horses and the young ones of horses. In *Maryland* (we are now going towards the North) there is now a mitigation of some sort; also in *Delaware*, *Pennsylvania*, *New Jersey*, *New York*, *Vermont*, and the *New England*, States. I do not know whether an *absolute abolition* has taken place in any State; though I believe it has. In the State of *New York* the law made all free that were born after a certain period; and after another certain period, those born slaves were to become free. I cannot take upon me to say exactly how the thing stands with regard to these States; but I believe, that if you bring your slave into a State with you, he does not become free by that act of yours; and that, if he escape from you and go into one of these States, he may be lawfully seized as a slave and taken away. *Delaware* State and *Maryland*, which lie to the South of *Pennsylvania* and join on to *Virginia*, appear, as the reader will find, to be the principal theatre of the Slave Trade, though, as will be seen, the villains who carry on the traffic have the audacity to carry it on even in the City of *Philadelphia*. [Pg xi]

7. So much for the States. Now, which is very material to observe, the *Congress*, that is to say, the *Government of the Union*, has had allotted to it a *territorial jurisdiction*, exclusive of all the States. This spot is on the *Potomac River*, which divides *Maryland* from *Virginia*. The territory thus allotted is a piece of land ten miles square, in the centre of which is the City of Washington. Now, we shall find this spot to be the very focus of the Slave Trade. The reader will see, in paragraph 46. an account of a drove of chained Negroes marching under the *Capitol* of this very City; and Mr. TORREY gives an account of Members of Congress standing at the threshold of the building, viewing, on their march by, a troop of manacled slaves, one of whom raised up his manacled hands towards the building, while he sang, what Mr. TORREY calls the favourite National Song, "*Hail Columbia, happy Land! Hail the freest of the free!*" This spot is called the *district of Columbia*; and on this spot, Mr. TORREY tells us Slaves were employed when he was there, to re-erect the building burned down by the British. Yea, Slaves employed to raise up the magnificent Temple of Freedom! [Pg xii]

8. With this sketch before him, the reader will enter on this public spirited, humane, and highly meritorious gentleman's book with a tolerable chance of pretty clearly understanding the state of the matter as a whole. The book will speak for itself; and it will have this effect, amongst others, as far as it go, namely, to convince us, that we ought not to be incessantly railing against West India Slave Holders, while we see Slavery existing to such an extent, and the Slave Trade carried on with such shocking cruelty, in a Country which, throughout the world is famed for its *freedom*. There are acts recorded in this book; acts committed with perfect impunity; that West India Slave Holders would be put to death for attempting; a fact which, amongst thousands of others that might be cited, proves, that there is no tyranny equal to that, which is practised under the names and forms of liberty. [Pg xiii]

9. The Congress of America have passed a resolution to authorize their Ambassador to negotiate with our Government for the sending out of a joint squadron of Observation to the coast of Africa, to prevent a violation of the treaties relative to the Slave Trade. I trust that our government will not tax the blood and bones of Englishmen for any such purpose, while Negroes, free as well as enslaved, can be killed with impunity in the United States, and while a trade in the bodies of slaves actually forms a part of the internal commerce of that Country, the magazines of which commerce are in the very spot where the Congress holds its sittings.

10. I do not bring any accusation against the people of the United States generally, and particularly to the North of Maryland. It has required great virtue and self denial to do what has been done in the middle and Northern States, in order to get rid of this stain upon the Country. In the parts where I have lived, and where there is any thing of Slavery remaining, I have always observed great gentleness and goodness in the owners towards their slaves, whom they treat with great kindness and care, and whom they feed and clothe exceedingly well. But, while I have always heard them lamenting the existence of Slavery in their Country, I cannot be so unjust, I cannot act so unnatural a part, as to conclude that *our own West India Planters* must be cruel and brutal; seeing that Slavery exists to so great an extent in America, notwithstanding the very prevalent and strong disposition to do it away. How great must be the difficulty to accomplish this, let the reader judge; and how foolish, then, must the Government of this Country be, if it think to accomplish any thing similar to it, merely, because the thing is called for by a set of visionaries, or, what is worse, by a set of hypocrites, who, by an appeal to the best feelings of the popular heart, knowing all the while that they are misleading the understanding, endeavour to gratify their own selfish ambition! [Pg xiv]

AMERICAN SLAVE-TRADE.

11. Many schemes have been proposed for alleviating the miseries and evils produced by the enslavement of the African race in the United States. Possessors of slaves, as well as others, have investigated the subject with great industry and anxiety; and all agree that something ought to be done. The suggestion of an infallible remedy is useless, if it be impossible to attain or apply it. Exportation to Africa, (the country to which the wisdom of their Creator has adapted their colour and faculties;) separate colonization on the public lands; employment on national canals, roads, &c. have been recommended. These projects are most certainly impracticable, except partially:—because their completion would require the *voluntary* estrangement by its legal holders, of an immense quantity and value of what is generally though erroneously termed *property*—human liberty.^[1] And in the present moral and intellectual condition of the slaves, the result would be perhaps of doubtful benefit.

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12. In examining this subject, I shall endeavour to be temperate, and to avoid indulging in the use of reprehensive acrimonious modes of expression.

13. Without the most distant inclination to aggravate the feelings of any individual, but because "we ought not to shrink from the investigation of truth, however unpopular, nor conceal it whatever the profession of it may cost,"^[2] a concise sketch will be presented, of the facts and incidents which have prompted this address. The peculiar connexion with which some of these occurrences succeeded each other, was certainly extraordinary, and to those who are not incredulous, may seem astonishing.

14. The first opportunity that ever occurred to me, of viewing a slave plantation, was furnished by a journey during the summer of 1815, from Pittsburg to the city of Washington. In the course of my route I travelled through part of Virginia, west of the Blue Ridge, by way of Winchester, and through part of Maryland by way of Fredericktown, on the east side.

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15. My first contemplation of the magnificent edifice,^[3] towering over the surrounding clusters of huts, and the extensive fields, impressed an idea of their similarity to the castles of European princes, dukes, lords, barons, &c. with the cottages of their tenants. But a closer consideration led me to this unavoidable conclusion: that these splendid fabrics are virtually the palaces of hereditary absolute monarchs;—that the labourers and people over whom they reign, are their lawful subjects or vassals—constituting *kingdoms in miniature*;—with this difference from eastern monarchies, that the king here, instead of receiving merely a revenue from his subjects, has *legitimate* power (if he is disposed to avail himself of it) to exercise the most unlimited and tyrannical despotism^[4] over their persons, and to extort the *whole* of the products of their industry, except what may be indispensable to prevent starvation.

16. It is not my intention by any means, to intimate that every possessor of slaves must necessarily be a Nero, but that, if he chooses to be one, there exists no earthly political power to prevent him. Excess of power, like other unnatural stimulants, exerts a deleterious and an intoxicating influence upon the human mind, which but few possess the capacity and firmness to withstand. In tracing the endless catalogues of kings, presented in history, how seldom is the eye dazzled with transport at the name of an Alfred! There are, undoubtedly, Alfreds, among these numerous *states*; but as long as the diffusion of the humanizing principles of pure religion, and the auxiliary lights of natural, moral, and political philosophy, continues to be limited to its present boundaries, it is feared the number of Alfreds will remain comparatively small.

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17. The rod of a tyrant wielded over a few, is infinitely more terrible, than when the number of its victims is great, and detached over a wide extent of country.^[5]

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18. Mr. Jefferson, in his Note on this subject, exclaims, "I tremble for my country, when I reflect that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep for ever." The late Professor Barton, in his work on Botany, while treating on the article of *rice*, and its cultivation by uncompensated slaves, expresses a similar sentiment: "Shall we never learn (says he) to be just to our fellow creatures? Shall we blindly pursue the imaginary advantages of the moment, and neglect the still but solemn voice of God, until

"———Vengeance in the lurid air
Lifts her red arm expos'd and bare?"

19. Without offering an opinion on the propriety of the expression of Mr. Jefferson, I must add, that *I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just*, and that his justice is ever active and continually executing its commission! The truth of this may be easily recognised by any observer, who has not been familiarized to the constant presence of slavery, from infancy. Indeed, the possessors of slaves, with whom I have conversed, while travelling through several slave districts, frequently acknowledged that they "*have inherited a curse from their ancestors, and that it would be better for the country if the slaves were all out of it.*" And with respect to the *red arm of vengeance, exposed and bare*, it must often menace those neighbourhoods, whence the citizens frequently write to their friends in the *north*, that, "it is high time to leave a country

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where one cannot go to bed in the evening, without the apprehension of being massacred before morning!" I have been assured by citizens having personal knowledge of the fact, that the rage of the slaves is such, in some districts, and especially near Savannah, that their masters and overseers are obliged to retreat to some secure place during the night, or employ armed sentinels. Four slaves were executed but a few months since, in Maryland, for destroying the life of their master's brother, while he was in the act of inflicting corporeal punishment upon them. A citizen of Philadelphia very lately related to me the most shocking heart-rending instance of ferocious vengeance that can be possibly conceived: It very forcibly exemplifies the infatuation and temerity of subjecting those, to whom our persons must necessarily be frequently accessible, to a state of the most savage moral debasement, and then of tampering with their furious untamed passions. A female slave having been flogged by her mistress, watched for an opportunity to indulge her resentment, which she executed in a manner too horrible to describe, and which it is not deemed prudent to specify.

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20. Many instances have existed, where slaves, in a state of enraged desperation, have involved their masters and themselves, of course, in mutual destruction. A gentleman of high respectability lately informed me, that he personally knew a master of slaves who retreated every night into an upper room, the entrance into which was by a trap door, and kept an axe by his side for defence!

21. Does not self-preservation, as well as the obligations of religious duty and brotherly love, enjoin the education and civilization of our sable heathen neighbours in our own dwellings, equally as imperatively as of our tawny ones in the wilderness, and of both, on this side of the Atlantic, as well as on the other?^[6]

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22. While at a public house, in Fredericktown, there came into the bar-room (on Sunday) a decently dressed white man, of quite a light complexion, in company with one who was totally black. After they went away, the landlord observed that the white man was a slave. I asked him, with some surprise, how that could be possible? To which he replied, that he was a descendant, by female ancestry, of an African slave. He also stated, that not far from Fredericktown, there was a slave estate, on which there were several white females of as fair and elegant appearance as white ladies in general, held in legal bondage as slaves. These facts demonstrate that the peculiar hue, with which it has pleased God to paint the surface of the body of an African, is not the only circumstance which reconciles to the conscience of the European, (white man) the act of depriving him of his liberty and the fruits of his labour. Hence it appears to be a melancholy truth, that man, in a morbid state of intellect, (which I consider to be the case with every individual, whose rule of action is not founded upon wisdom and virtue,) voluntarily and almost invariably, confounds right with might, and when stimulated by avarice, frequently hesitates not to *bind and sell* his wife, his children, or his brother! I have received direct information from a gentleman who witnessed the fact, that in one of the slave states, a white man, having married one of his female slaves, after she had borne him several children, sold the whole of them together as he would a drove of cattle; and it is said such instances are frequent. A *gentleman* brought with him from the southward to *Philadelphia*, (the city of brotherly love,) his half brother, the son of his father by a slave, and attempted to sell him! He was happily prevented from executing his sacrilegious design by the interposition of a respectable citizen, who also procured the legal restoration of freedom to the darker *faced* brother.

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23. In the course of a journey through Virginia, from the city of Washington towards James' river, of about 150 miles, going and returning by different routes, I had frequent opportunities of conversing with the possessors and overseers of slaves, and others, and of observing the general effects of the present system of slavery, upon the morals and prospects of the white population. On combining the facts which presented themselves, I was involuntarily led to this deduction: that the present mode, with occasional exceptions, of managing slaves, and of educating the successors to those who now hold dominion over them, must, eventually and *inevitably*, result, by a progressive ratio, unless reformed, in the poverty, bankruptcy and chagrin of a large portion of the posterity of the existing proprietors of even the most extensive slave estates in the country! This state of things has, to a certain extent, already commenced. I was informed of some ancient and immensely rich slave possessions, and shewn some of the subdivided portions of them, the present numerous heirs of which, are obliged to contract increasing debts annually, in order to maintain the magnificent style of living, and the habits of *amusement* and *sport*, which had been imposed on them by their ancestors. In conversation with a gentleman at Charlotteville, I advanced this problem:—Suppose an individual, (who prefers sport and extravagance to prudence and happiness) becomes possessor of 1000 slaves, and 10,000 acres of ground; if he bequeaths his estate to ten heirs, they will receive each 1000 acres of ground and perhaps 125 slaves. Pursuing this ratio, each descendant of the third generation will inherit 100 acres of land and about 25 slaves, and the fourth 10 acres, with 2 slaves. If the slaves should multiply proportionally with their masters, the plantations would not; for it is judged from corresponding information and facts, that many of the proprietors, annually expend the whole amount of their revenue, more or less. The inevitable poverty and physical debility, thus entailed upon the inheritors of slaves, are not half so much to be deplored, as the habits of indolence, dissipation and vice, which, if not the uniform fruits of slavery, are much promoted and encouraged by it.

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24. About eighteen months ago, I saw, in the western part of the state of New-York, a venerable old farmer, whose name is Vaughan. He was in good health (being nearly ninety years of age) and in possession of a delightful farm, which had been rescued from the wilderness and cultivated by himself and his sons. Two years ago, the number of his descendants was about 378! the most of

whom have been, or will be, bred to some useful employment, adequate to their subsistence. If he were in possession of 1000 slaves, and 10,000 acres of soil, he could bequeath them only 26-1/3 acres of land each, and not 3 slaves.

25. On my return to the city of Washington, I met with a most distressing exemplification of the dangerous policy of educating youth, (let their fortunes be ever so abundant,) in luxury and indolence. I saw a stranger, from one of the slave states, of tolerably genteel appearance, in the prime of life, destitute of property, and unqualified for any occupation whatever. He had inherited and dissipated a considerable estate of land and slaves. His former acquaintance and connexions were of the most reputable class. He appeared to be literally a prey to despair. He said he should think himself happy if he were capable of labouring in any mechanical employment whatever. He related an anecdote of himself, which exhibits very distinctly, the delirium which affluence and luxurious habits stamp upon the human intellect when not fortified by virtue. He stated, that at a period when he was totally at a loss for resources, he met with an opportunity of engaging in a pursuit, on the commencement of which he received two hundred dollars. Liberality and hospitality to strangers (if their faces are white) are prominent and proverbial characteristics of well bred possessors of slaves, generally.^[7] So perfectly had his thoughts been attuned and associated to opulence and profusion, that he forgot his inverse position upon the wheel of fortune, and immediately commenced free table and free bottle; and his two hundred dollars disappeared entirely in one month;—soon after which he suffered severe privations for want of cash!

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26. Having sketched an outline of some of the evils, which the present state of slavery necessarily produces to the possessors of slaves, we will next examine its effects upon the slaves themselves, and endeavour to prove that the pecuniary as well as the moral interests and rights of both parties, enjoin the expediency of adopting a different system of management.

27. It has been urged, in justification of domestic slavery, that the slave receives an equivalent for his incessant toil, in the certainty of being provided with food, clothing, and shelter:—and that a rigorous discipline is indispensable to the preservation of industry, and for security against rebellion and assassination. It is well known, in almost every description of human labour, that constant diligence produces more than a sufficiency of the necessaries of life, for the daily consumption of the labourer. Industry, duly rewarded, and accompanied by temperance and economy, is, with but casual exceptions, to every individual blessed with health, an infallible source of competence and wealth. As our all-wise Creator has fitted our organization, individually, to the acquirement of the means of subsistence, without depending on the labour and generosity of each other, there can be no doubt but he designed that each should retain and enjoy the products of his own hands, without molestation. It is certain that the labour of a slave is of more value than the expense of his daily personal necessities, or he could not be sold, (notwithstanding the risk of premature death,) for 400 or 900 dollars.

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28. The excellence of the great fundamental precept of christianity, '*Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them,*' is acknowledged and admired, it is believed, by every member of the human family, of whatever name or nation, that makes any pretension to religion or moral rectitude. And it most assuredly involves this precept also, which is still easier to obey, and cannot be dispensed with in the positive axioms of natural justice;—Whatsoever ye would that men should *not* do unto you, do ye *not* even so unto them. Will any possessor of slaves or other individual, voluntarily consign himself to hard labour during life? will he submit to the will and temper of another man, and surrender at his feet the *whole* of the products of his toil? Unconditional slavery is contrary to the precepts of religion, moral justice, and the abstract, natural and political rights of man. It is a *black, accumulating, threatening thunder cloud* in our moral horizon, the sudden explosion of which might produce dangerous and fatal consequences. I am hence constrained to perform the melancholy task of recording my dissent from the sentiments of those who, from the purest motives and most laudable philanthropy, request the universal, simultaneous and *unconditional* emancipation of a numerous body of meek people, now groaning under the grievous yoke and goading lash of brutal unrewarded servitude in these United States, "the world's best hope." Yet I do not mean to intimate that equal justice should not, or cannot be rendered to them. If guided by discretion, it may be administered to them with the highest advantage and most perfect safety to both parties. African servitude might, at the outset, be rendered so tolerable and reasonable that the present appellation of *slavery*, which sounds so discordant, in connexion with the cheering music of *liberty*, might be exchanged for some title, attended with a less chilling and *base* note. Let *Masters*, without hesitation, become *Patrons, Guardians, Friends, Civil Governors*. Let *Slaves* be converted into *tenants* and indented *servants*, (or *labourers*,) bound, *for the present*, by the lamentable crisis of existing circumstances.—In compliance with the loud and imperative demands of justice and humanity, and the injunctions of policy and self interest, let their toil be carefully and justly proportioned to their bodily strength, and rewarded by a sufficiency of comfortable nourishment, clothing and shelter. And, particularly in cases of correct behaviour and diligence, let a reasonable sum be paid, monthly or annually, to those who have discretion to make a proper use of it, or allotted and reserved for the education and eventual benefit of their children. Let them be effectually protected from the destructive ravages of distilled spirits. Let them not be bought and sold as beasts of the harness, without their consent; unless guilty of criminal conduct;—and let this be decided by the laws of the country. Nor for all the *silver* in the mines of Potosi, let an ounce of *iron* be rivetted upon their *necks, wrists, or ancles*; for he who fashioned these sections of their bodies, never designed them for such barbarous purposes! Let the "resounding lash," and the savage arts of torture and cruelty; be laid aside. The adoption of a discipline, founded on justice

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and reciprocal equity, will render these unnecessary. It is a very important fact, in human nature, that men, in all conditions, perform their duty with far greater alacrity and pleasure, when prompted by the exhilarating anticipation of reward and advantage, than by coercion, and the paralyzing menace of penalties and pain.^[8]

29. Philosophy cries, "Brethren, be just—be beneficent, and you will prosper.—Eternal slavery must be an eternal source of crimes;—divest it at least of the epithet eternal, for anguish that knows no bounds can only produce despair." "With a pure heart, one is never unhappy." Let the possessor of slaves consult the oracles of his own conscience—the spontaneous counsels of his own heart, and the sublime parable of the beneficent founder of the Christian religion, and act accordingly. Did not the slave, (or his ancestors in Africa,) "fall among thieves, which stripped him" of liberty and happiness;—and are purchasers or retainers of known stolen property, (or liberty) entirely absolved, either by the laws of God or man, from a degree of participation in the original transgression? Let every individual, then, who finds a slave in his hands, whether by traffic or inheritance, 'take compassion on him,' like the good Samaritan, *and bind up the old and painful wounds*, which have been inflicted on his "unalienable rights," given him by his Creator and *sole Proprietor*;

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Which no man, for gold, can buy or sell!

30. Intellectual and moral improvement is the safe and permanent basis, on which the arch of eventual freedom to the enslaved Africans may be gradually erected. Let the glorious work be commenced by instructing such of the holders and overseers of slaves and their sons and daughters, as have hitherto been deprived of the blessings of education. Let every slave, less than thirty years of age, of either sex, be taught the art of reading, sufficiently for receiving moral and religious instruction, from books in the English language. For this purpose, the Lancasterian mode of instruction would be admirably well adapted. A well selected economical library of such books as are calculated to inculcate the love of knowledge and virtue, ought to form an essential appurtenance to every plantation.

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31. Governor Miller, in his message of 1815, to the legislature of North Carolina, affirms, that "With knowledge and virtue, the united efforts of ignorance and tyranny may be defied." Governor Nicholas, in his message of the same year, to the legislature of Virginia, says, "Without intelligence, self-government, our dearest privilege, cannot be exercised." President Madison, in his message to the Congress, also of the same year, says, "Without knowledge, the blessings of liberty cannot be fully enjoyed or long preserved." And in his recent valedictory message, that he shall read in the character of the American people, in their true devotion to liberty, and to the constitution, which is its palladium, sure presages that the destined career of his country will exhibit a government pursuing the public good as its sole object, &c. "which maintains inviolably the maxims of public faith, security of persons and property, and encourages in every authorized mode, that general diffusion of knowledge, which guarantees to public liberty its permanency, and to those who possess the blessing, the true enjoyment of it," &c. Thomas Jefferson, in his inaugural speech, says, "If man is not fit to govern himself, how can it be expected that he should be fit to be entrusted with the government of others? Can we expect to find angels in the form of kings?" Whether it be safe to risk the untutored slave with his liberty or not, his situation must be inconceivably horrible, under the cruel lash and uncontrolled power of a master, who is destitute of education or virtue; whose prompter is avarice, and whose religion is intemperance, and the gratification of the most ferocious passions.—It is apprehended that many thousands, *if not hundreds of thousands*, are thus situated! And it is of but little avail, if the master himself be enlightened and humane, as long as he consigns his people to the hands of a cruel stony-hearted overseer. Let legislators then, both national and sectional, perform their duty to their country and its posterity;—and to mankind, by listening to the wise counsels of many conspicuous living sages, and pursue without hesitation the inestimable "parting advice" of George Washington, Benjamin Rush, Samuel Adams, and other departed friends and patrons of man, "to promote, as objects of PRIMARY importance, institutions for the GENERAL diffusion of knowledge:"—and *establish PUBLIC SCHOOLS in every part* of the republic. And, as all men are vitally interested in the universal dissemination of knowledge and virtue, let all classes combine their influence and means, in aiding the cause of human happiness.

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32. I can well predict the alarm that many will sound, at the project of introducing letters among slaves. Some will *imagine* that knowledge would be a dangerous instrument in their hands. It is true knowledge disarms oppression. But those who have experienced and appreciated its almost uniform tendency, will perceive that it is a pacific weapon,—an olive branch,—accompanied by moderation, justice, and moral duty. Education has been calumniated with the charge of instigating the rebellion and shocking outrages of the slaves in St. Domingo. But the fact is precisely the reverse. The catastrophe was produced chiefly by the haughtiness and imprudence of the white planters, in opposing decrees of the French government, which concerned only the rights of freemen. In this civil war, in which the *white planters* were arrayed against the laws of the national assembly, and the *planters of colour* in defence of them, it is not surprising that the *slaves* should take sides with their *nearest* relations. The consequent atrocities, most unquestionably resulted from the remembrance of the former barbarity^[9] of masters.

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33. As mental improvement advances, vengeance and crimes recede. That desirable happy era, when the spirit of peace and benevolence shall pervade all the nations which inhabit the earth,—when both national and personal *slavery* shall be annihilated;—when nations and individuals shall cease to hunt and destroy each other's lives and property;—when the science and implements of

human preservation and felicity, shall be substituted for those of slaughter and woe; will commence, precisely at the moment when the rays of *useful knowledge and wisdom* shall have been extended to the *whole* human family. By useful knowledge, I mean, not only an acquaintance with valuable arts and sciences, but also an understanding of our various moral and religious duties, in relation to our Creator, to our neighbour, and to ourselves. By wisdom, I mean that kind of sagacity which influences us to regulate our passions and conduct, in conformity to the precepts of knowledge, reason and religion. Until an approach towards such a state of things is effected, the names of *liberty* and *security* on this earth, will differ but little from *a will with a wisp*, either to monarchs or their vassals. At present, violence bears universal and imperial sway;—and ignorance is the magic spell which sustains its sceptre. This dark veil, which enshrouds nearly the whole human race, can be penetrated and removed with much greater certainty and facility, by the mild but invincible rays of intellectual light, than by opposing violence with violence, and evil to evil. The countryman in *Æsop's Fables*, was induced to throw off his cloak, by the gentle but melting rays of the *physical* sun, after the wind had exerted its fury in vain. What a boundless empire of glory and *unalloyed* bliss might the monarchs and rulers of the age, and all possessors of power or wealth, attain, by causing their numerous subjects or brethren, perpetually encompassed by the snares of ignorance, vice and oppression, to be instructed; and elevating poor degraded, afflicted human nature, to that scale of dignity in the creation, which was evidently assigned to it, by the Supreme Parent of the universe!

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34. Slaves, enveloped in the fogs of brutal ignorance and debasement, and exasperated by constant severity and frequent cruelty, cannot fail of being much more dangerous neighbours, and much less useful servants, than they would be, if tamed by moral instruction and kind treatment. Docility is well known to be one of the peculiar characteristics of the African race; and whenever opportunities have occurred, they have indicated a capacity of receiving instruction, and of becoming qualified for a humane and moral government.

35. Should these remarks ever reach the understanding of the slave whose yoke is rivetted upon him, by the laws of the government under which he lives, if he will believe the writer to be his unfeigned compassionate friend, let him accept his sincere advice, to submit with fortitude to his fate, and wait with patience the arrival of the day of joy, which has already commenced its journey, and will assuredly overtake him or his posterity, not long hence. Let him remember, that it is only the gradual progress of reason, and the principles of humanity, that can relieve him; and that the more he resists the noose of slavery, the closer it girds itself about his neck, *even to suffocation or strangling*. Let him conciliate the good will and friendship of his master, by reasonable diligence and inflexible fidelity.

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36. Governor Miller, in his message, which has been already mentioned, says, "But now, thank God, the human mind having progressed with gradual march in the path of science and political philosophy, &c. the principles, 'that all men are by nature equally free and independent,' &c. have gained and are daily gaining more extensive currency." This declaration, which probably alludes to Europe, is conspicuously true, with respect to our own country. In several or all of the slave states, there are many benevolent respectable individuals, who are dissatisfied with the practice of retaining their *innocent African brethren* in bondage, and have signified their desire to release them.^[10] And although these votaries to humanity are prevented by the existing laws of their respective districts, from accomplishing the full extent of their wishes, it is hoped they will not fail to recognize the high privilege, which still remains in their hands, of exercising reciprocal justice to their sable *prisoners*, (no longer slaves,) and of educating and qualifying them for their eventual freedom and reception into an asylum, which, it may be confidently anticipated, will, ere long, be prepared for them. In fact, I do not hesitate to predict, that whenever slaves shall become qualified by intelligence and moral cultivation, for the rational enjoyment of liberty, and the performance of the various relative social virtues and duties of life, the enlightened American legislators and depositories of the rights of man, will listen to the voice of reason and justice, and the spirit of our social organization, and *permit* the release of

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"——the poor fetter'd slave on bended knee,
From [Columbia's] sons imploring to be free;"

without banishing him, as a traitor, from his native land, where his services as an industrious, though free laborer, may be indispensable to its cultivation. But under present circumstances, I am not disposed to question the policy or propriety of suitable laws, for regulating the manumission of slaves, with a view to their own welfare and subsistence as well as the preservation of the public peace. Many benevolent gentlemen have exercised a sort of morbid or mistaken humanity, in manumitting, or *turning out of doors*, slaves who had devoted the greater part of the common period of man's life to their service, and who, being morally and physically disqualified for securing an *honest* maintenance, have finished their days in misery and woe. A very benevolent possessor of slaves, in the district of Columbia, informed the writer, that he was *principled* against retaining them any longer than while the value of their service amounts to the cost of purchase; and that he had dismissed several, who immediately commenced a career of wretchedness and final destruction. The sentiments, on this subject, of "The American convention, for promoting the Abolition of slavery, and improving the condition of the African race," are highly deserving of consideration. In their circular, addressed to the general Abolition Societies in the United States, they make this declaration: "We are persuaded that the only means of accomplishing the final and complete emancipation of this unfortunate people throughout our country, is, the extension to them of the benefits of moral and intellectual cultivation. That their redemption from the thralldom in which they now are, should be preceded

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or accompanied by such aids, as will qualify them to discharge their relative, social, and religious duties."

37. It would, perhaps, be a problem worthy of the consideration of the legislators of those states in which slavery is tolerated, whether their laws for regulating manumissions, might not, with propriety, be so modified, as to authorise judges, justices, or other magistrates, to grant *permits* for the emancipation of such slaves, as shall be satisfactorily proved to be morally and physically qualified for liberty. Such a regulation would be peculiarly important to those humane masters, who are merciful and just to their slaves, until their own guardianship is annulled by death; and are unwilling to risk them in the hands of their legitimate heirs, or to strangers who may purchase them at public auction.

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38. I have said, in the beginning of this essay, that separate colonization, &c. is impracticable, except partially. I then gave one reason for this opinion, and will now offer another. Were the whole of *our numerous slave population*, already manumitted, and transferred totally to a distinct colonial establishment, in this country or in Africa: *our numerous white population*, in several of the more southerly states, would need to be provided with another colonial establishment, in some latitude more favourable to their *physical* powers, or else perish amidst the desolate cotton and rice fields.

39. My conviction, that the existence of Europeans, (or white men) under the blaze of a torrid sun, is dependent on African industry, (or on the labour of such inhabitants of the earth, as are adapted by nature to the equatorial regions,) must not be mistaken for an assent to the perpetual duration of involuntary servitude and unconditional vassalage. This is a circumstance, resulting from the wisdom of Providence, which ought to fill the hearts of the proprietors of rice and cotton plantations, with gratitude and kindness towards their *black benefactors*. Let the magnificent work of progressive and ultimate emancipation, concomitant with mental improvement, be kept steadily in view;—but let not the total depopulation of an immense tract of valuable *improved* country, be held forth as essential to its accomplishment.

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40. But as there is, probably at this moment, in many parts of the United States, and will continue to be, an increasing excess of free black and mulatto population, and also of slaves, who might be released if they could be disposed of; humanity as well as policy, strongly recommends the institution of some asylum, to which this description of *strangers in a foreign land*, may resort if they please, and enjoy the blessings of knowledge, *social happiness*, and the products of their own industry; and perhaps be protected, at the same time, from the sacrilegious talons of the numerous hordes of men-stealers, with which our reputed free soil has long been infested and polluted. And as the Congress of the United States have hitherto declined patronising this object, (to which their attention has been frequently invited,) its accomplishment will devolve, probably, on beneficent societies, and individuals. The most eligible and practicable plan, perhaps, that could be devised for this purpose, would be to open subscriptions throughout the United States, for raising a fund, to be applied to the purchase of an extensive tract or territory of United States' land, in some proper district, (which probably might be obtained on a liberal credit,) where such coloured people, as now are, or may become free, might be invited to settle as tenants, or eventual purchasers. The settlement might be committed to the care of proper agents, and if the profits should ultimately exceed a sufficient amount to remunerate the original advances with the interest, the surplus might be appropriated to the education and general benefit of the African race in this country.^[11]

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41. Having now (as I hope,) shewn the practicability and mutual advantages, of the melioration and ultimate freedom of the American slave population, I shall proceed to communicate some facts and remarks on the interior traffic in slaves, and on the practice of kidnapping coloured persons, legally free.

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42. To those who may object to the propriety of exposing to public view such deeds as are likely to shock the feelings and sympathy of the friends of humanity, I reply, that the object is not to excite popular execration against their authors, but commiseration towards the sufferers, and to discourage the repetition of cruelty. In supplications for redress of grievances, it is customary and necessary too, for the aggrieved party, to represent the wrongs complained of. The facts adduced, can be well substantiated:—but as it is believed that no valuable purpose will be gained, by the mention of names and specific places where they occurred, they will be omitted as far as it may be convenient.

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43. In the structure of our political institutions, we have, in some respects, undoubtedly excelled the ancient republics:—and in others, we have evidently degenerated. Solon perceived that slavery was a fruitful source of moral depravity to the Athenians, and abolished it; notwithstanding it had its origin in the previous voluntary contraction of debts, by the slaves. We neglect this valuable lesson of Solon, and also a political maxim of his, which ought to form the corner-stone of every republic. Being asked what kind of government is best, he answered, "that in which an injury to the meanest member of the community is esteemed an aggression upon the whole." Our laws for the protection of the rights and liberty of free yellow and black people, must be exceedingly defective, or there could not at this moment be thousands of them illegally held in slavery.

44. Slavery, says Sterne, however disguised, *is still a bitter draught*; but it is rendered tenfold more bitter and intolerable, when the members of families are dragged asunder, never to behold each other, or their native *wanted* country again.—And it is the *uncontrolled slave trade*, between

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the middle and southerly states, which gives facility to the extensive and increasing practice of kidnapping (slaves as well as freemen,) and secures it from the possibility of detection, except casually. Under the existing laws, if a free coloured man travels without passports certifying his right to his liberty, he is generally apprehended; and frequently plunged into slavery, by the operation of the laws. But after being seized and manacled by the kidnapper, the slave merchant drives him through several states, without interruption, and sells him where he seldom regains his liberty. If the wisdom of the state or general governments should not recommend the complete abolition of the internal as well as external slave trade, it believed, at least, that an acquaintance with its abuses will convince them of the necessity of so regulating it, as to confine the traffic *totally* to legal *slaves*. This could, perhaps, be effectually accomplished by compelling every travelling slave-trader to report his slaves to a proper magistrate, in every township or county through which he passes; and to produce certificates, from some magistrate residing near the place in which they were purchased, of their being legal slaves and legally sold;—and also by compelling every purchaser of imported slaves, (by *land* or *sea*,) to register them, and file similar certificates, in the offices of the respective county clerks.

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45. The act of depriving a free man of his liberty, being a violation of the constitution of the United States, and an *overt attack* upon the public liberty, ought to be declared treason of some sort or other, and punished by a reciprocity, in some degree, of the fate, to which the conspirator attempts to involve his victim;—imprisonment in a penitentiary, or some other secure place of industry, and moral education;—for, I do not believe there ever lived a kidnapper, who had read the whole of the New Testament, or any part of Seneca's *Morals*, or Paley's *Principles of Moral Philosophy*, or any similar books.

46. On the 4th day of December 1815, (the day on which the session of congress commenced,) being at the seat of government of the United States, I was preparing to enjoy the first opportunity that had occurred to me, of beholding the assembled representatives of the American republic. As I was about to proceed to the building where the session was opened, my agreeable reverie was suddenly interrupted by the voice of a stammering boy, who, as he was coming into the house, from the street, exclaimed, "There goes the Ge-Ge-orgy men^[12] with a drove o' niggers chain'd together two and two." What's that, said I,—I must see,—and, going to the door, I just had a distant glimpse of a light covered waggon, followed by a procession of men, women and children, resembling that of a funeral. I followed them hastily; and as I approached so near as to discover that they were bound together in pairs, some with ropes, and some with iron chains (which I had hitherto seen used only for restraining beasts,) the involuntary successive heavings of my bosom became irrepressible. This was, with me, an affection perfectly peculiar to itself, which never having before experienced, gave me some surprise. I have since heard an intelligent gentleman, from Scotland, describe a similar symptom. He affirmed, that on his arrival upon the coast of the United States, (in Chesapeake Bay,) his first view of the slaves *brought his heart into his throat*. I have also been told by a gentleman, who holds a seat in the senate of the United States, that "a drove of manacled slaves was to him an insupportable spectacle, which he generally endeavoured to avoid;"—and by a representative, (since deceased,) from one of the slave states, who was himself a possessor of slaves, "that he never could bear to see slaves manacled and fettered with bolts and chains, nor families torn asunder and sold to the slave-traders, and wondered how any one could be so inhuman as to do such acts." Overtaking the caravan, just opposite to the old Capitol (then in a state of ruins from the conflagration by the British army,^[13] I inquired of one of the *drivers* (of whom there were two) what part of the country they were taking all these people to? "To Georgia," he replied. "Have you not, said I, enough such people in that country yet?" "Not quite enough," he said. I found myself incapable of saying more, and was compelled to avert my eyes immediately from the heart-rending scene! Had Sterne been present, and surveyed (with *real* instead of imaginary vision) this groupe of bondmen and bond-women, and *bond-children*, with their mute sad faces veiled with *black* despair—"and heard the chains rattle, which encumbered their bodies,"—and "had seen the *iron* enter their souls"—he would again have "*burst into tears*." I walked along some distance before them, down Pennsylvania Avenue, and, on turning round, observed that they had left that street, (as if the spirit of PENN had repelled the contact of such a tragedy with his name,) and directed their course towards the Potomac bridge. At the same moment an African passed by, driving a hack; and beholding his brethren,

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"—Trembling, weeping, captive led,"

extended his arm towards them, and exclaimed, "See there! an't that right down *murder*? Don't you call that *right down murder*?" On uttering to him indistinctly, that I did not know, he renewed his request to be answered, and I replied, "I do not know but it is *murder*."—These expressions instantly reminded me of the frequency of murders and deaths, not only of slaves, but of white and free black men, resulting from despotic slavery, and particularly from the slave traffic. Several instances of this kind had very recently come to my knowledge, from unquestionable sources, and at that moment pressed themselves with peculiar force upon my excited imagination; among which I will recite the following:

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47. A slave having escaped from his master, in the state of North Carolina, within two or three years past, was seized and brought back, by a being, who, when requested by the master to name the reward he should render him for returning the slave, replied, that all the compensation he desired, was the satisfaction of *flogging* him. This being granted, the slave was bound to a log, and the "*resounding lash*" applied, until the resentment of his executioner was satiated. The infatuated master then took the ensanguined lash himself, and was about to repeat the process of

flagellation, when Death, not then a *king of terrors*, but a generous benefactor, a "*friend in need*" rescued him from the intended protraction of his excruciating torment. After all, let the balm of compassion, rather than imprecations of divine wrath, be administered to these erring mortals. Their egregious mistake may be traced to the mighty force of example, and the deficiency of early, religious, and moral education. This fact having been before published, must be, to many persons, already known.

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48. In the state of Pennsylvania, a considerable number of years ago, the proprietor of a furnace took up a black boy, a few years old, and in the presence of his distracted father, wantonly thrust him into the flames and melted metal, where he was instantly consumed! The information of this horrible deed was originally communicated by a respectable citizen of the city of Washington, who formerly resided in the state of Pennsylvania, and it has been further corroborated by another, of the city of Philadelphia.

49. In the state of New Jersey, a female slave, several years ago, was bound to a log, and scored with a knife, in a shocking manner across her back, and the gashes stuffed with salt! after which she was tied to a post in a cellar, where, after suffering three days, death kindly terminated her misery. This fact was communicated at Washington, by the same gentleman above mentioned.^[14]



Paragraph 50.

Barbarity committed on a free African, who was found on the ensuing morning, by the side of the road, dead!

50. As two persons were returning from the *horse races*, a few miles north of the city of Washington, eight or ten years ago, they met on the road a free man of colour, who resided in the vicinity. They seized him, and bound him with ropes. His protestations that he was free, and his entreaties that they would accompany him to the house, (but about half a mile distant,) where his wife resided, and where he could satisfy them of his freedom, were in vain. Having fastened him by a rope, to the tail of one of their horses, they were seen, by a citizen, who met them on the road dragging him in this manner, and beating him to make him keep pace with the horses. He cautioned them, and begged of them not to kill the black man;—but one of the ruffians plucking a stake from the fence, and threatening with horrid oaths to knock him down, he found it necessary to retire for his own safety:—a few miles farther along, on the following morning, this poor African was found by the side of the road, dreadfully bruised, and his eyes bloodshot,—dead!

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^[15] This distressing catastrophe strongly exemplifies the defect of the laws of the state in which it occurred, concerning free Africans, which authorise their seizure, without any specific judicial authority, if found without certificates of freedom, by the most vicious and abandoned members of the community. These two ill-starred wretches, just sallying forth from a notorious school of intemperance, were undoubtedly intoxicated, and of course, in a state of insanity at the time they committed this outrage;—and had probably been reared in the *wilderness* of ignorance and vice. I was assured, that one of them had long been accustomed, in company with his *own father*, to the business of apprehending runaway slaves, and such free Africans as they could catch without certificates.

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51. In the vicinity of the place where the above transaction occurred, a young black boy, living at a house in which there are just grounds for believing that the lives of several slaves had been destroyed, by whipping, and other severities, yet entertained such horror at the thoughts of transportation to Georgia, (with which he had often been threatened, by way of reprimand,^[16]) that on seeing a stranger coming towards the house, (on a cold day,) whom he suspected to be a *Georgia-man*, he fled into the fields with the greatest precipitation, and secreted himself so effectually, that he was not discovered until the expiration of a fortnight,—when he was dead!—frozen!—and the pupils of his eyes picked out!

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52. With these mournful spectra, flitting in succession before me, and the black procession still in view, the pleasant anticipations which I had been indulging but fifteen minutes previous, became

totally reversed. Returning pensive towards my lodgings, and passing by the Capitol, I thought—Alas! poor Africa,—*thy cup* is the *essence* of bitterness!—This *solitary*, magnificent temple, *dedicated to liberty*,—opens its portals to *all* other nations but *thee*, and bids their sons drink *freely* of the cup of *freedom* and happiness:—but when *thy* unoffending, enslaved sons, clank their blood-smear'd *chains* under its towers, it sneers at their calamity, and mocks their lamentations with the echo of contempt!—

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53. Blessed, infatuated Columbia! the eyes and the hopes of weeping admiring nations are upon thee! Suffer not the lamp of public liberty to be smothered and extinguished by the gloomy shroud of private slavery! Dost not thou assume a pre-eminent distinction among the nations for magnanimity and honour? Does any high-minded christian nation chain her prisoners of war, and subject them and their posterity to perpetual ignorance, and the oppressive toil of involuntary servitude without reward? In thy late contest with a powerful sister state, many of her *political slaves*, who sought the lives of thy sons, and the conflagration of their dwellings, fell into thy custody by the chances of war—I have seen fourteen hundred of these at a single depôt—Fourteen hundred large loaves of good bread, and fourteen hundred pounds of excellent beef, were daily spread before them. As many as could meet with opportunities, were permitted to labor for the neighbouring farmers and manufacturers, for which they received a pecuniary equivalent in monthly stipends.—Fourteen hundred *thousands* of the sons and daughters of thy neighbour Africa, *breathe and mourn* on thy expanded bosom. The privileges of a vast proportion of these forlorn victims of sorrow and woe, are reduced below the privileges of the ox, the horse, the hound, and various other domestic animals;—in respect to sustenance, toil, and severity of chastisement, if not quarters and raiment!—As an aggregate people, they, nor their ancestors, never disturbed thy repose, with fire or sword, or the cannon's deathly roar. *They are, nevertheless, virtually prisoners of war*:—not by a war in defence of human life, but generally, by a *hideous sacrilegious war*; waged (among the African kings) for the plunder of human souls, human flesh, *blood and bones*, to be exchanged as articles of merchandize, for contemptible gewgaws, implements of war, distilled spirits, tobacco, &c. The booty thus gained by the savage despots and man-hunters of Africa, had its assumed sale and exportation been impracticable, might possibly have been consigned to the same purposes there as it is now here (*slavery*) or annihilated by massacre; but most probably would have been sought with much less avidity. If these commodities were *obtained* at the sacrifice of justice, and the natural rights of man, upon no other terms can our laws permit them to be indefinitely *retained*, by their present *possessors*, who are the substantial *successors* and assigns of the original captors.^[17]

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54. To return from this lengthy excursion, I must acknowledge, (however ludicrous it may seem to those who are *hardened* to such things by repetition,) that the tragedy of a company of men, women and children, pinioned and bound together with chains and ropes, without accusation of crime, and driven as beasts of the harness, through the metropolis of that country, of which I had hitherto indulged both pleasure and pride, in the consciousness of being a *native citizen*, and, of having commenced my life coevally with its constitutional organization; occurring at the precise hour of the convocation of the guardians of its liberties; produced a new era in my sensations. Disinclination, as well as the delay incurred, prevented my visit to the congressional hall on that day.—And I devoted several succeeding days to the purpose of delineating on paper, a faithful copy of the impressions and sentiments which involuntarily pervaded my *full* heart and agitated mind. Those memoirs have furnished some materials for this essay.

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55. One evening while writing notes concerning the occurrence just mentioned, a lad, sitting in the same room with me, was studying his lessons in Goldsmith's Abridgment of Geography; in which I noticed he read these words:—"The United States are celebrated for the excellence of their constitution, which provides for political liberty and individual security. *The inhabitants are justly famed for their ardent love of freedom*." Immediately after reading those paragraphs, he addressed me, without knowing on what subject I was occupied, thus: "Why, how can it be said that the inhabitants of the United States love LIBERTY, *while they hold almost a whole nation of people in a state of bondage and ignorance*?" I endeavoured to explain to him this puzzling problem, by replying, that "by *the inhabitants* was meant the *white* population of the United States, and the liberty which they ardently love is probably their *own* liberty, which they appear to care more about than they do about the liberty of *black* men."

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56. I mention this minute circumstance more particularly, because it forms one of the links to a chain of incidents which conducted to the development of some very important facts; such as I then had no conception or suspicion of the existence of, on this side the Atlantic ocean. I then supposed the instances of the streets of the city consecrated to freedom, being paraded with people led in captivity, were rare. But I soon ascertained that they were quite frequent, that several hundred people, including not legal slaves only, but many kidnapped freemen and youth bound to service for a term of years, and unlawfully sold as slaves for life, are annually collected at Washington (as if it were an emporium of slavery,) for transportation to the slave regions. The United States' jail is frequently occupied as a storehouse for the slave merchants, and some of the rooms in a tavern devoted chiefly to that use, are occasionally so crowded that the occupants hardly have sufficient space to extend themselves upon the floor to sleep.^[18]

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Paragraph 46.

"... But I did not want to go, and I jump'd out of the window."

57. A short time after having completed the memorandums above alluded to, the youth just mentioned, having learned the subject on which I had been occupied, and being prompt to communicate whatever he might meet with relative to it, informed me on returning from school, in the evening of the 19th December 1815, that a black woman, destined for transportation to Georgia with a coffle, which was about to start, attempted to escape, by jumping out of the window of the garret of a three story brick tavern in F. street, about day-break in the morning; and that in the fall she had her back and both arms broken! I remarked, that I did not wonder that she did so; and inquired, whether it had not killed her? To which he replied, that he understood that she was dead, and that the *Georgia-men* had gone off with the others. The relation of this shocking disaster excited considerable agitation in my mind, and fully confirmed the sentiments which I had already adopted and recorded, of the multiplied horrors added to slavery, when its victims are bought and sold, frequently for distant destinations, with as much indifference as fourfooted beasts. Supposing this to have been a recent occurrence, and being desirous of seeing the mangled slave before she should be buried, I proceeded with some haste early on the following morning, in search of the house already mentioned. Calling at a house near the one at which the catastrophe occurred, I was informed, that it had been three weeks since it took place, and that the woman was still living. Having found the house, I desired permission of the landlord to see the wounded woman; to which he assented, and directed a lad to conduct me to her room, which was in the garret over the third story of the house. On entering the room I observed her lying upon a bed on the floor, and covered with a white woollen blanket, on which were several spots of blood (from her wounds,) which I perceived was *red*, notwithstanding the *opacity* of her skin. Her countenance, though very pale from the shock she had received, and dejected with grief, appeared complacent and sympathetic. Both her arms were broken between the elbows and wrists, and had undoubtedly been well set and dressed; but from her restlessness she had displaced the bones again, so that they were perceptibly crooked. I have since been informed by the Mayor of the city, who is a physician, and resides not far distant from the place, that he was called to visit her immediately after her fall, and found, besides her arms being broken, that the lower part of the spine was badly shattered, so that it was doubtful whether she would ever be capable of walking again, if she should survive. The lady of the Mayor said she was awakened from sleep by the fall of the woman, and heard her heavy struggling groans.

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58. I inquired of her, whether she was asleep when she sprang from the window. She replied, "No, no more than I am now." Asking her what was the cause of her doing such a frantic act as that, she replied, "They brought me away with two of my children, and wouldn't let me see my husband—they didn't sell my husband, and I didn't want to go";—I was so confused and 'istracted, that I didn't know hardly what I was about—but I didn't want to go, and I jumped out of the window;—but I am sorry now that I did it;—they have carried my children off with 'em to Carolina." I was informed that the Slave Trader, who had purchased her near Bladensburgh, (she

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being a *legal* slave,) gave her to the landlord, as a compensation for taking care of her. Thus her family was dispersed from north to south, and herself *nearly* torn in pieces, without the shadow of a hope of ever seeing or hearing from her *children* again! He that can behold this "poor woman," (as a respectable citizen of Washington afterwards expressed himself, on requesting of her landlord the privilege of seeing her,) and listen to her *unvarnished story*; and then delineate it with the mental pencil, (*quill*) and then view the picture from his *own hand*, without a *humid eye*, I will confess possesses a *stouter heart* than I do.

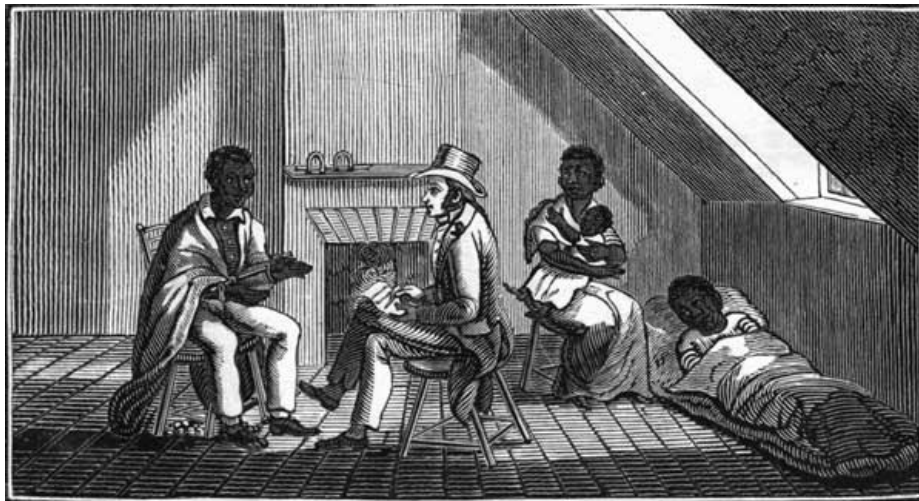
59. The sympathy of the whole American white population, (and it is presumed of the black also, for they know how to estimate such matters by dear experience,) has recently been very justly excited towards young King Prather and his "confus'd and 'istracted" mother roaming in search of him, along half the extent of the coast of the United States. As he was kidnapped by a son of Africa, (though not for the detestable purpose of cupidity or enslavement, but for a ladder to his own liberty,) it is presumed if Africa's Genius were permitted to offer her sentiments on the subject, she would pronounce it a *retort courteous apropos*, from Africa to her sister Columbia.

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60. I have since learned many recent instances of the tragical consequences of the usurped trade in the souls and bodies of men.^[19] I have been informed by several different persons in the district of Columbia, that a woman who had been sold in Georgetown, for the southern slave market, cut her own throat, ineffectually, while on the way, in a hack, to the same depository above mentioned; and that on the road to Alexandria she completed her design of destroying her life, by cutting it again mortally. A statement was published in the Baltimore Telegraph, a few months ago, that a female slave, who had been sold in Maryland, with her child, on the way from Bladensburgh to Washington, heroically cut the throats of both her child and herself, with mortal effect. This narrative has been since confirmed by a relative of the person who sold them. An African youth, in the city of Philadelphia, lately cut his throat almost mortally, merely from the apprehension, as he said, of being sold. This information was obtained from several respectable citizens of Philadelphia, who had personal knowledge of the fact.

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Paragraphs 61. 63. 65. 66.

The Author noting down the Narratives of several free-born People of Colour who had been kidnapped.

61. Believing the facts already recited are sufficient to satisfy every candid reader, of the unreasonableness, injustice, and inhumanity of the prevailing interior slave trade, and of the necessity of legislative control; I will now commence a delineation of the still more outrageous and abominable practice of seizing, and selling into exile, *men, women, and children*, whose freedom and *moral* rights are guaranteed by our national and state constitutions. In the same recess with that mangled woman, while interrogating her, I discovered (without having the least previous intimation, or even suspicion, of any thing of the kind) three persons of colour, who were born free, and had been forcibly seized in the time of night, bound and transported in the night, out of their native state, (Delaware) and sold as slaves for life to itinerant *Man-Dealers*^[20] in Maryland, who generally range themselves along near the line of division between the two states. One of these was a mulatto man, about 21 years of age. I found him thoroughly secured in irons. His arms were manacled with strong loops round his wrists, resembling a *clevis*, connected by a strong iron bolt. On the shelf over the fireplace, lay a pair of heavy rough hobbles (or hobbles,) with which he said his legs had been fettered until a short time previous, but were then secured by a pair of polished gripes, (perhaps manufactured for the purpose, resembling the patent horse fetters with locks,) connected by a strong new tug chain, with a loose end of two or three feet in length, lying upon the floor.^[21] He stated, that a journeyman to the man with whom he resided, and to whom he had been bound to service for a term of years, having decoyed him into the fields, some distance from the house, late in the evening, on pretence of hunting opossums, two strangers rushed upon him with ropes in their hands, and with the assistance of the person^[22] just mentioned, bound his hands, and led him with a pistol held each side of him (with which he said they threatened to shoot him if he made any alarm,) 15 or 20 miles, where he

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was secreted till the next evening; when another person came with a chaise and conveyed him to a tavern in Maryland, a little over the line,^[23] from whence one of the Man-Dealers, (who has since been advertised as a man-stealer, in a different case,) brought him to Washington in manacles, and sold him to another, as a slave for life. He said his *Driver* overhearing him tell a coloured woman near Annapolis, that his parents (both of whom are light coloured mulattos) were free-born, threatened to shoot him, if he should catch him talking to any body again about his being free. He said the trader did strike him on the head with his fist, after his arrival at Washington, for telling a person to whom he was offered for sale, that he was lawfully free, and threatened to flog him if he should fail of selling him in the city on that account. He also stated, that another boy, about sixteen, was brought off with him at the same time, and sold for a slave in Washington, who was lawfully free, and had been sold to the traders, by a person to whom the boy's father had let him to service.

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62. This statement has been since confirmed by corroborative information; and I am in possession of memorandums, by which the boy might probably be traced and found.



Paragraph 63.

KIDNAPPING.

63. The others, whom I found in the same garret, and at the same time, were a young black widow woman, with an infant at the breast, both of whom were born free. Her husband had died but a few days previous to her seizure, and she was in a state of pregnancy at the time. She stated, that the man in whose house she resided, together with his brother, and three other persons, came into the room (a kitchen,) where she was in bed, seized and dragged her out;—fastened a noose round her neck, to prevent her from screaming, and attempted to blindfold her, which she resisted with such violence, that she prevented them from succeeding. She said, while one of them was endeavouring to fix the bandage over her eyes, that she seized his cheek with her teeth, and tore a piece of it entirely off. She said one of them struck her head several times with a stick of wood, from the wounds of which she was almost covered with blood. She shewed me a large scar upon her forehead, occasioned by one of the blows, which a gentleman, who saw her the day previous to her seizure, has since informed me was not there before. She said, while she was struggling against them, and screaming, the man in whose house she lived *bawled out*, "Choke the d—d b—h! don't let her halloo—she'll scare my wife!" Having conquered her by superior force, she said they placed her with the child in a chaise, (her description of which, with the horse and the driver, who was one of the victors, corresponds precisely with that given by the mulatto man of the carriage, &c. by which he also was conveyed,) and refusing to dress herself, three of them, leaving the two who belonged to the house, carried her off in the condition that she was dragged from bed, to a certain tavern in Maryland, and sold them both to the Man-Dealer, who brought them to the city of Washington. She stated, that one of her captors drove the carriage, and held the rope which was fixed to her neck, and that one rode each side, on horseback.—That, while one of them was negotiating a bargain with her purchaser, he asked her who her master was; and, replying that she had none, her seller beckoned to him to go into another room, where the business was adjusted without troubling her with any farther inquiries. She stated, that her purchaser confessed, while on the way to Annapolis, that he believed she might have had some claim to freedom, and intimated that he would have taken her back, if the man^[24] of whom he bought her had not ran away; but requested her, notwithstanding, to say nothing to any body about her being free, which she refused to comply with. She affirmed, that he offered her for sale to several persons, *who refused to purchase, on account of her asserting that she was free*. She stated, that her purchaser had left her in Washington for a few weeks, and gone to the *Eastern Shore*, in search of more black people, in order to make up a drove for Georgia.

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64. These facts clearly exemplify the safety with which the free born inhabitants of the United States may be offered for sale and sold, even in the metropolis of Liberty,^[25] as oxen; even to

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those who are notified of the fact, and are perhaps convinced of it, that they are free!^[26]

65. The discovery of these captives, on their road to the dismal *gulch*^[27] of (perhaps) interminable slavery to themselves, and their multiplying progeny; in this very accidental, unless providential manner, filled me with a mixture of astonishment, compassion and joy. With a view to commence immediate legal measures, for restoring them to their liberty, I took my pencil and noted down their narratives circumstantially.

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66. I had not quite finished, before the purchaser of the mulatto man came into the room. He seemed a little surprised to find me writing, but made no inquiries about it, and having obtained all the information that I wished, I continued noting it down, notwithstanding his being present, until my memorandums were completed; when I left him in the room, without having had any conversation with him, except answering some questions, which he asked me relative to the wounded slave. Without hesitation, I commenced a suit in the circuit court of the United States, for the District of Columbia, for the restitution of their liberty. The first attempt to secure the persons of the captives, by a writ of habeas corpus, was ineffectual. I accompanied the deputy marshal myself, to the house in which I found them. The landlord declared, that "if he had known I was writing so long in the room where the Negroes were, he should have been very angry with me; and that if I had no other evidence of their freedom, but their stories, we should not see them." He said he believed "Negroes were made to serve the Whites, and that they had no more sense than horses." He stated, that the person who saw me writing, suspected some difficulty, and had directed him to conceal the Negroes, and that he had done it. He told me, in a sneering manner, that if I wished to take the part of the negroes, he could find me plenty of such business. He informed me that he had been in the way of keeping Negroes for the Traders many years, and took better care of them than they received in the jail.^[28]

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67. Notwithstanding the writ of habeas corpus was returned to the magistrate unexecuted, I still persevered, and obtained a process of injunction, in order to prevent the removal of the captives from the District, until the commencement of the session of the court; by which it was ascertained that they still remained in the same house. A second writ of habeas corpus having been issued from the court while sitting, they were at length produced, which, fortunately, was accomplished on the very day that the purchaser of the woman and child left Washington, with a coffle of ten or twelve coloured persons, with whom he had just returned from Maryland.^[29] The court having examined them, placed them in safe custody for further examination at the ensuing summer session, so that time could be had for procuring the requisite testimony from Delaware. For defraying the expense of accomplishing this purpose, and of prosecuting the suits, a subscription was drawn up by Francis T. Key, esq. who volunteered his own services as attorney, gratis, as did also J. B. Caldwell, and J. B. Lear, Esqs. The subscription was commenced by general Van Ness; the heads of the executive departments of the government, with but rare exception; several gentlemen of the senate and house of representatives, and the mayor and citizens of Washington generally, (possessors of slaves as well as others,) to whom application was made, joined in the contribution. I was highly gratified to meet with this practical evidence, that the disposition to extend the hand of relief to abused *African* strangers, is not at the present period, by any means confined exclusively to the limits of a solitary religious society. Between one and two hundred dollars having been collected,^[30] I proceeded myself to the state of Delaware; and having travelled from Wilmington to Lewestown and Georgetown, returned with unequivocal proof of the legal right of the captives to their liberty, which was accordingly restored to them by the court at the ensuing June session.

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68. One of the attorneys having addressed letters to several respectable citizens of Delaware, for the purpose of obtaining information respecting the correctness of the statements of the captives, an answer was received relative to the female, of which the following is an extract:—

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69. "Your letter of the 30th ult. I received by yesterday's mail, and am happy to find the unfortunate negro woman is once more rescued from the fangs of the —s and others, as vile a banditti as ever were permitted to disturb the peace of society. The statement by — [the woman] is no doubt true. This poor creature was rescued from the —s some time last winter, and seems in the case which occurred then, as well as that which you relate, to have been saved by an almost miraculous intervention. The ----s stand now indicted for taking her off last winter.— Their gang is numerous, daring—full of money, &c."

70. Understanding that several of the persons concerned in the cases had been arrested, and having been informed by one of the representatives to congress, from Delaware, that the laws of that state inflict corporeal punishment for offences of this kind, such as whipping, cropping the ears, and exposure in the pillory, I wrote a reply to the above letter, of which the following is an extract:

71. "Not for vengeance, but for the sake of humanity, I hope this fell banditti, with which the free (or ought to be free) soil of America is polluted, may be routed. But, for Heaven's sake, and for the sake of their wives and children, and *for my sake*, let the wrath of justice and law be so managed, that their *animal* bodies shall not be tormented, in consequence of my exertions to arrest the progress of their outrageous and unpardonable conduct, equal to the scratch of a pin. Yet I cannot help charging that state jurisprudence, which permits the easy repetition of the crimes of which they have been guilty, with being exceedingly defective. It seems to me, that where there is no work-house in a state, such persons should be limited under sufficient securities and penalties, to their own farms, or some prescribed boundaries;—and, in case they

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transgress these, to be declared to be outlawed, and liable to be estimated and treated no other than as wolves and tygers, to which they have already assimilated themselves of their own accord."

72. Governor Miller of North-Carolina, says in his speech already alluded to, "The principle will be conceded, that the end of punishment is the prevention of crimes." Lacerations and mutilations of the human frame, exasperate its occupant in the highest degree, and are very likely to excite an obstinate perseverance in crimes, by way of retaliation and spite. Imprisonment, with labour, if it does not reform the disturber of the public peace, by the opportunity of reflection and salutary instruction, it certainly restrains his career for a specific time, effectually.

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73. The satisfaction of beholding the yellow man, and the black woman, with her two female infants, (one of them having been born but a short time previous to their release,) seated in the stage, under the care of one of the senators of the legislature of Delaware, who had attended the court as a witness in behalf of the woman; afforded me a rich reward for thus having performed an indispensable *duty*, which I owed to their Creator, to them as their *neighbour*, to the principles of our social and political system, and to myself.

74. The specimen here given of *man-stealing*, forms but a mere speck in an extensive system of this nefarious profession, which for many years has been, and continues to be pursued, with increasing vigor and *pecuniary* profit, in all the middle states. Even the city of Philadelphia is not exempt from this moral pestilence.

75. To enumerate all the horrid and aggravating instances of men-stealing, which are known to have occurred in the state of Delaware, within the recollection of many of the citizens of that state, would require a heavy volume. In many cases, whole families of free coloured people have been attacked in the night, beaten *nearly* to death with clubs, gagged and bound, and dragged into distant and hopeless captivity and slavery, leaving no traces behind, except the blood from their wounds.

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76. During the last winter, since the seizure of the woman and infant, as related above, the house of a free black family was broken open, and its defenceless inhabitants treated in the manner just mentioned, except, that the mother escaped from their merciless grasp, while on their way to the state of Maryland. The plunderers, of whom there were nearly half a dozen, conveyed their prey upon horses; and the woman being placed on one of the horses, behind, improved an opportunity, as they were passing a house, and sprang off; and not daring to pursue her, they proceeded on, leaving her youngest child a little farther along by the side of the road, in expectation, it is supposed, that its cries would attract the mother, but she prudently waited until morning, and recovered it again in safety.

77. I consider myself more fully warranted in particularising this fact, from the circumstances of having been at New-Castle at the time that the woman was brought with her child, before the grand jury, for examination; and of having seen several of the persons against whom bills of indictment were found, on the charge of being engaged in the perpetration of the outrage; and also that one or two of them were the same who were accused of assisting in seizing and carrying off the woman and child whom I discovered at Washington. The ingenuity and stratagems employed by kidnappers, in effecting their designs, are such as to prove, that the most consummate cunning is no evidence of wisdom or moral purity, nor incompatible with the most consummate villainy. A monster, in human shape, was detected in the city of Philadelphia, pursuing the occupation of courting and marrying mulatto women, and selling them as slaves. In his last attempt of this kind, the fact having come to the knowledge of the African population of this city, a mob was immediately collected, and he was only saved from being torn in atoms, by being deposited in the city prison. They have lately invented a method of attaining their objects, through the instrumentality of the laws:—Having selected a suitable free coloured person, to make a *pitch* upon, the *conjuring* kidnapper employs a confederate, to ascertain the distinguishing marks of his body and then claims and obtains him as a slave, before a magistrate, by describing those marks, and proving the truth of his assertions, by his well-instructed accomplice.

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78. From the best information that I have had opportunities to collect, in travelling by various routes through the states of Delaware and Maryland, and from statements of an ingenuous trader exclusively, (as I believe,) in lawful slaves, I am fully convinced that there are, at this time, within the jurisdiction of the United States, several thousands of legally free people of colour, toiling under the yoke of involuntary servitude, and transmitting the same fate to their posterity! If the probability of this fact could be authenticated to the recognition of the congress of the United States, it is presumed that its members, as agents of the constitution, and guardians of the public liberty, would, without hesitation, devise means for the restoration of those unhappy victims of violence and avarice, to their freedom and constitutional personal rights. This is a work, both from its nature and magnitude, impracticable to individuals or benevolent societies to accomplish; besides, it is perfectly a national business, and claims national interference, equally with the captivity of our sailors in Algiers. The most successful, economical, politic, and just method of effecting this object would, perhaps, be to institute a board of commissioners, with authority to redeem every individual satisfactorily ascertained to be legally free, at a fair appraisal of the common value of a similar slave. Inquiries might be made in those districts where many coloured persons are known to have been kidnapped, and all possessors of slaves might be required to report the names, ages, and origin of their possession, of all the coloured

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persons in their custody, under legal affirmation, to the clerk of such county, to be transmitted by them to some department designated for the purpose in each state. The most of the present holders of these *stolen men*, probably acquired possession of them as innocently as they do of legal slaves, and an attempt by coercion, although justifiable with respect to the captive, would render the enterprise abortive, through evasion, and probably would be more expensive if successful.

79. It is my impression, that the introduction of slaves for sale into almost every state in the union, is prohibited by specific statutes, and if an annual inspection and registering of all slaves were enforced, it would guarantee a compliance with such laws in a most effectual manner, and dissolve the man-hunting fraternity at once.

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80. I shall close this subject, which indeed "*is almost too deep and awful to look into,*" by declaring my solemn and decided conviction, that the abstract relative principles of moral and political justice; the sacred axioms of our Declaration of Independence, and of our Constitution, as well as sound policy and prudence, obligate this nation, most unequivocally, to ransom every human creature held in *lawful* bondage for life, against his will, without accusation of crime; at an equitable valuation of his worth to the possessor under existing laws, within the jurisdiction of the republic; and to place him so nearly in a state of *personal* liberty, and the enjoyment of his natural and moral rights, as to secure to him the fruits or reward of his own labour, the benefits of mental improvement, and exemption from corporeal laceration. I do not consider it to be our duty to grant them a participation in the *civil* privileges of citizenship;^[31]—but, they have an incontestable claim to the protection of the laws, and to the common privileges of aliens and strangers, or at least of prisoners of war, so far as is compatible with the public peace and welfare. They are created a distinct race of people, and the designs of the Author of Nature ought not to be thwarted, by permitting their conjugal commixture with a race physically different. Without examining the problematical question of the inherent physical or moral superiority of either in the scale of being, (which is not relevant to the present subject,)^[32] I must affirm, that in my humble view there is both a moral and political propriety in prohibiting by energetic laws, the sexual commerce between the descendants of Europe and Africa, either by marriage, *slavery*, or otherwise. The extinction of slavery would promote this purpose far more than its toleration. Uncontrolled slavery, as facts have manifested, in the United States as well as the West Indies, facilitates and protects licentiousness, and a species of brutal debauchery, the consequences of which are deplorable and afflicting beyond description.^[33]

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81. It was a wise sentiment of the late Dr. Benjamin Rush, that "Nothing can be politically right that is morally wrong; and that no necessity can sanctify a law that is contrary to equity." It is morally and politically wrong both, (and without necessity too,) that an innocent, "feeble and untutored people"^[34] should be detained by a powerful and enlightened people, professing superior honour and justice, in a state of beastly, unwilling, unrequited servitude, and indescribable moral and physical degradation! But let not the fell stigma be attached entirely to the present retainers of the slaves. Every citizen of the republic, entitled to the right of suffrage, is responsible for his proportionable quota of the miseries inflicted on the defenceless Africans, in our privileged country. Human nature is such, that a large proportion of men, will improve every means within their reach, for advancing their fortunes, indulged by political laws. In this country the laws emanate primitively from the people. The outrage upon the rights of our present slave population originated in Africa. Our laws have, from their infancy, until recently, sanctioned the perpetration of that outrage, in Africa, by permitting its principles and products to be transferred to, and adopted in, our own country; and they still sanction their continuance. Laws ought to be responsible for their own operations and results. If a law were enacted authorizing the sale of all the debtors now in prison in the United States, for unconditional and perpetual servitude, with their posterity, and they should be accordingly sold, it would be morally unjust, with respect to the purchasers, but not the slaves, to proclaim an immediate emancipation, without restoring the purchase money: that is, it would be unjust not to restore it. Hence the people of the United States, considered collectively as a nation, having confirmed and *legalized* the transfer, (or abdication) of the assumed power of African despots and banditti, to their assigns in America, and now holding the sovereignty over the laws in their own hands, are the *master aggressors* upon the victims of those savage tyrants, and are bound to make them appropriate reparation. While justice is rendered to the slave, remuneration is due to the holder, for the loss he sustains in consequence of his prior confidence of the continuation of his legal power over him. It would be necessary and right, probably, until several successive rising generations shall have been moralized by education, that the government should retain, or leave with their present possessors a rational and definite civil guardianship over the persons of these national prisoners. The redemption of the existing population of slaves would preclude the necessity of purchasing any of their descendants; and thus the blessings of freedom and moral improvement might be guaranteed to unknown millions of unborn members of the human family. As the interests of the southern white population would be vitally benefited by the accomplishment of this object, even if they were to consummate it without the co-operation of the northern states, the additional impulse of humanity cannot fail to influence their unanimous assent and a generous compromise. Such an act of national magnanimity, beneficence and justice, would diffuse joy and admiration amongst all colours and all nations. There would be no murmuring. It might be effected without making any man feel the poorer for it; and if it did, that is no excuse for injustice and oppression. A great proportion of the necessary sum might be raised from duties on the imported products of the labour of slaves, which are generally luxuries, as rum, sugar, coffee, &c.; and the amount of all the funds heretofore raised, or to be raised, from the taxation of slaves, is justly due to them,

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for this purpose; for they have resulted exclusively from the products of their toil and sweat. It is both the right and the duty of the citizens of the north to unite with their brethren in the south, in washing away this obnoxious stain upon the national character. Let the public will and honour be consulted; let the national voice be elicited by universal public meetings, and concentrated, so as to vibrate with irresistible effect, in the sanctuaries of freedom and justice. Mr. Randolph, in the house of representatives, on the subject of constitutional compromise, said, (alluding to the words "*three fourths of all other persons*," made use of in the constitution, in order that the statute book should not be stained with the name slave,) "he wished to God our consciences were not stained."

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REFLECTIONS ON THE *BLACK COLONY PROJECT.*

Since the foregoing part was composed, a highly respectable meeting, consisting of a considerable number of the Members of our National Legislature, with many benevolent and intelligent citizens of the District of Columbia, has been held in the City of Washington (on the 21st Dec. ult.) for the purpose, as expressed by the gentleman who presided as chairman, (Mr. Clay,) "*of considering the propriety and practicability of colonizing the free" people "of colour in the United States, and of forming an asylum in relation to that object.*"

As the proceedings of this Meeting indicate a flattering prospect of the consummation of a measure, on which I had recorded my sentiments, and hope^[35] of its adoption, several weeks previous to the time that the meeting was announced, it is deemed useful and appropriate to annex a sketch of their deliberations, as published in the National Intelligencer.

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Extracts from the speech of Mr. CLAY, (on taking the chair.)

"That class of the mixt population of our country was peculiarly situated. They neither enjoyed the immunities of freemen, nor were they subject to the incapacities of slaves, but partook in some degree of the qualities of both. From their condition, and the unconquerable prejudices resulting from their colour, they never could amalgamate with the free whites of this country. It was desirable, therefore, as it respected them, and the residue of the population of the country, to drain them off. Various schemes of colonization had been thought of, and a part of our own continent, it was supposed by some, might furnish a suitable establishment for them. But for his part, Mr. C. said, he had a decided preference for some part of the coast of Africa. There ample provision might be made for the colony itself, and it might be rendered instrumental to the introduction, into that extensive quarter of the globe, of the arts, civilization, and christianity. There was a peculiar, a moral fitness in restoring them to the land of their fathers. And if, instead of the evils and sufferings which we had been the innocent cause of inflicting upon the inhabitants of Africa, we can transmit to her the blessing of our arts, our civilization, and our religion, may we not hope that America will extinguish a great portion of that moral debt which she has contracted to that unfortunate continent? Can there be a nobler cause than that which, whilst it proposes, &c. contemplates the spreading of the arts of civilized life, and the possible redemption from ignorance and barbarism of a benighted quarter of the globe?"

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"It was proper and necessary distinctly to state, that he understood it constituted no part of the object of this Meeting to touch or agitate in the slightest degree, a delicate question connected with another portion of the coloured population of our country. It was not proposed to deliberate upon, or consider at all, any question of emancipation, or that was connected with the abolition of slavery. It was upon that condition alone, he was sure, that many gentlemen from the south and the west, whom he saw present, had attended, or could be expected to co-operate. It was upon that condition, only, that he had himself attended."

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Extracts from the speech of ELIAS B. CALDWELL, Esq. of the District of Columbia.

"The more you improve the condition of these people, the more you cultivate their minds, the more miserable you make them, in their present state. You give them a higher relish for those privileges which they can never attain, and turn what we intend for a blessing into a curse. No, if they must remain in their present situation, keep them in the lowest state of degradation and ignorance. The nearer you bring them to the condition of brutes, the better chance do you give them of possessing their apathy. Surely, Americans ought to be the last people on earth, to advocate such slavish doctrines, to cry peace and contentment to those who are deprived of the privileges of civil liberty. They who have so largely partaken of its blessings—who know so well how to estimate its value, ought to be among the foremost to extend it to others."

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These sentiments, it will be readily perceived, clash diametrically with those which I had

previously advanced in paragraph 30, on the subject of extending mental cultivation to the African race in this country. And notwithstanding I have no inclination to retract the sentiments which I have heretofore had occasion to express, concerning the practical benevolence and ardent zeal of Mr. Caldwell in the cause of religion and human happiness; yet, it is out of my power to unite with him in his opinion, of the utility of subjecting *men* of any colour, or any situation whatever, to "*the lowest state of degradation and ignorance,*" and, as near as possible, "*to the condition of brutes.*" Right education and knowledge should teach the legitimate slave fortitude, and the advantages of submission, duty, and fidelity; and should elevate the free man, of whatever colour, above the unhallowed crime of despising himself for its having been ordained this or that tint, or for its being obnoxious to those who have been created with a different colour, or with none at all. Ask Capt. Paul Cuffee, Prince Saunders, and many other well educated and worthy persons of African extraction, whether they hate themselves, or whether any body else possessing common sense, hates them, because they cannot *repeal* the laws of nature; or because there is a political and physical propriety in their being considered as foreigners and aliens in *our* country.

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Mr. Caldwell, having considered the various positions in which it had been respectively proposed to establish the colony, and expressing his preference of Africa, enlarged upon the greater importance of selecting that quarter of the globe, "in the belief and hope of thereby introducing civilization and the christian religion, &c." correspondent to the sentiments of Mr. Clay. "The great movements (said he) and mighty efforts in the moral and religious world, seem to indicate some great design of Providence on the eve of accomplishment. The unexampled and astonishing success attending the various and numerous plans which have been devised and which are now in operation in different parts of the world, and the union and harmony with which christians of different denominations unite in promoting these plans, clearly indicate a Divine Hand in their direction. Nay, sir, the subject on which we are now deliberating has been brought to public view, nearly about the same time in different parts of our country. In New Jersey, New York, Indiana, Tennessee, Virginia, and perhaps other places not known to me, the public attention seems to have been awakened, as from slumber, to this subject."

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Mr. Caldwell remarked, that "it is a great national object, and ought to be supported by the public purse. And that, as had been justly observed by the honourable gentleman in the chair, there ought to be a national atonement for the wrongs and injuries which Africa had suffered." He said that "as a nation, we cannot rid ourselves entirely from the disgrace attending the iniquitous slave traffic formerly pursued by this country, until we, as a nation, have made every reparation in our power." He observed, that the example of our own ancestors, braving the various dangers and hardships of their early emigration and settlement upon these shores; and the prospect of the enjoyment of civil rights and a state of equality, ought to encourage and influence these people to comply cheerfully with the proposed plan of colonization.

The question being stated by the Chairman, on agreeing to the preamble and resolutions offered by Mr. Caldwell, for forming an association to accomplish the object of the meeting:

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"Mr. JOHN RANDOLPH (of Roanoke) rose and said, that it had been properly observed, by the chairman as well as by the gentleman from this district, that there was nothing in the proposition submitted to consideration which in the smallest degree touches another very important and delicate question, which ought to be left as much out of view as possible, (Negro Slavery.)

"There was no fear, Mr. R. said, that this proposition would alarm the slave holders; they had been accustomed to think seriously of the subject. There was a popular work on agriculture, by John Taylor of Caroline, which was widely circulated, and much confided in, in Virginia. In that book, much read because coming from a practical man, this description of people were pointed out as a great evil. They had indeed been held up as the greater bug-bear to every man who feels an inclination to emancipate his slaves, not to create in the bosom of his country so great a nuisance. If a place could be provided for their reception, and a mode of sending them hence, there were hundreds, nay thousands of citizens, who would, by manumitting their slaves, relieve themselves from the cares attendant on their possession. The great slave holder, Mr. R. said, was frequently a mere sentry at his own door—bound to stay on his plantation to see that his slaves were properly treated, &c. Mr. R. concluded by saying, that he had thought it necessary to make these remarks, being a slave holder himself, to shew that, so far from being connected with abolition of slavery, the measure proposed would prove one of the greatest securities, to enable the master to keep in possession his own property."

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Extracts from the Speech of Mr. WRIGHT.

"Mr. Robert Wright (of Md.) said he could not withhold his approbation of a measure that had for its object the amelioration of the lot of any portion of the human race, particularly of the free people of colour, whose degraded state robs them of the happiness of self-government, so dear to the American people. And, said he, as I discover the most delicate regard to the rights of property, I shall with great pleasure lend my aid to restore this unfortunate people to the enjoyment of their liberty; but I fear gentlemen are too sanguine in their expectation, that they

would be willing to abandon the land of their nativity, so dear to man. However, I have no indisposition to give them that election by furnishing all the means contemplated by the honourable and benevolent propositions submitted to our consideration."

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"Nothing would have a stronger tendency to effect the contemplated relief of the free people of colour, than some efficient laws to secure the restoration of those not entitled to liberty, to their masters, whose rights ought to be protected by law, and who, without such law, would be certainly sacrificed by the transportation of the free blacks with whom they would most certainly mix for that purpose. However, I feel no hesitation in saying, I should be happy to see some plan for the gradual abolition of slavery, that would prepare the rising generation for that state, and remunerate the master out of the funds of the nation, amply abundant for that purpose, without being felt by the people of America."

It is a strong presumptive evidence in favour of the rationality of a moral proposition, when it emanates from several sources perfectly distinct and remote from each other. The sentiments of Mr. Wright on the propriety of adopting some plan for the gradual abolition of slavery, &c. and to remunerate the master out of the funds of the nation, &c. are so perfectly analogous to those which I had adopted and recorded, (precisely as expressed in paragraphs 80 & 81,) fifteen days previous to the Meeting at Washington, that my confidence in their correctness, and hope of their favourable reception by the citizens in general of the United States, is greatly strengthened; particularly as Mr. Wright is one of the representatives of a large state in which slavery prevails, and is himself probably a possessor of slaves.

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The Preamble and Resolutions having been unanimously adopted by the Meeting, committees were appointed to draught articles of association, &c.

The following are the two first articles of the Constitution:—

"Article I.—The Society shall be called 'The American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States.'

"Article II.—The object to which its attention is to be exclusively directed, is to promote and execute a plan for colonizing (with their consent) the free people of colour residing in our country, in Africa, or such other places as Congress shall deem most expedient."

In pursuance of this object, a Board of Managers have been organized; of which Bushrod Washington, one of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States, has been appointed president. This body have submitted their views to the Congress, by a Memorial.—And as this Memorial embraces subjects which concern, more or less, every description of population in the United States, its circulation cannot, perhaps, be too widely extended.

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In the House of Representatives, Jan. 14.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

To the honourable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

The Memorial of the President and Board of Managers of the "American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Colour of the United States,"

Respectfully shews—

THAT your Memorialists are delegated by a numerous and highly respectable association of their fellow citizens, recently organized at the seat of government, to solicit Congress to aid, with the power, the patronage, and the resources of the country, the great and beneficial object of their institution; an object deemed worthy of the earnest attention, and of the strenuous and persevering exertions, as well of every patriot, in whatever condition of life, as of every enlightened, philanthropic, and practical statesman.

It is now reduced to be a maxim, equally approved in philosophy and politics, that the existence of distinct and separate casts or classes, forming exceptions to the general system of polity adapted to the community, is an inherent vice in the composition of society; pregnant with baneful consequences, both moral and political, and demanding the utmost exertions of human energy and foresight to remedy or remove it. If this maxim be true in the general, it applies with peculiar force to the relative condition of the free people of colour in the United States; between whom and the rest of the community, a combination of causes, political, physical and moral, has created distinctions, unavoidable in their origin, and most unfortunate in their consequences. The actual and prospective condition of that class of people; their anomalous and indefinite relations to the political institutions and social ties of the community; their deprivation of most of those independent, political, and social rights, so indispensable to the progressive melioration of our nature, rendered, by systematic exclusion from all the higher rewards of excellence, dead to all the elevating hopes that might prompt a generous ambition to excel; all these considerations demonstrate, that it equally

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imports the public good, as the individual and social happiness of the persons more immediately concerned, that it is equally a debt of patriotism and of humanity, to provide some adequate and effectual remedy. The evil has become so apparent, and the necessity for a remedy so palpable, that some of the most considerable of the slaveholding states have been induced to impose restraints upon the practice of emancipation, by annexing conditions, which have the effect to transfer the evil from one state to another; or, by inducing other states to adopt countervailing regulations, and in the total abrogation of a right, which benevolent or conscientious proprietors had long enjoyed under all the sanctions of positive law and of ancient usage. Your Memorialists beg leave, with all deference, to suggest, that the fairest and most inviting opportunities are now presented to the general government, for repairing a great evil in our social and political institutions, and at the same time for elevating, from a low and hopeless condition, a numerous and rapidly increasing race of men, who want nothing but a proper theatre, to enter upon the pursuit of happiness and independence, in the ordinary paths which a benign Providence has left open to the human race. Those great ends, it is conceived, may be accomplished by making adequate provision for planting, in some salubrious and fertile region, a colony, to be composed of such of the above description of persons as may choose to emigrate; and for extending to it the authority and protection of the United States, until it shall have attained sufficient strength and consistency to be left in a state of independence.

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Independently of the motives derived from political foresight and civil prudence on the one hand, and from moral justice and philanthropy on the other; there are additional considerations, and more expanded views to engage the sympathies and excite the ardour of a liberal and enlightened people. It may be resolved for our government (the first to denounce an inhuman and abominable traffic, in the guilt and disgrace of which most of the civilized nations of the world were partakers) to become the honourable instrument, under Divine Providence, of conferring a still higher blessing upon the large and interesting portion of mankind, benefited by that deed of justice; by demonstrating that a race of men, composing numerous tribes, spread over a continent of vast and unexplored extent, fertility and riches; known to the enlightened nations of antiquity; and who had yet made no progress in the refinements of civilization; for whom history has preserved no monuments of arts or arms; that even this hitherto ill-fated race may cherish the hope of beholding, at last, the orient star revealing the best and highest aims and attributes of man. Out of such materials, to rear the glorious edifices of well ordered and polished society, upon the deep and sure foundations of equal laws and diffusive education, would give a sufficient title to be enrolled among the illustrious benefactors of mankind; whilst it afforded a precious and consolatory evidence of the all-prevailing power of liberty, enlightened by knowledge and corrected by religion. If the experiment, in its remote consequences, should ultimately tend to the diffusion of similar blessings through those vast regions and unnumbered tribes yet obscured in primeval darkness; reclaim the rude wanderer, from a life of wretchedness, to civilization and humanity; and convert the blind idolater, from gross and abject superstitions, to the holy charities, the sublime morality and humanizing discipline of the gospel; the nation, or the individual, that shall have taken the most conspicuous lead in achieving the benignant enterprise, will have raised a monument of that true and imperishable glory, founded in the approbation and gratitude of the human race; unapproachable to all but the elected instruments of divine beneficence: a glory with which the most splendid achievements of human force or power must sink in the competition, and appear insignificant and vulgar in the comparison. And above all, should it be considered, that the nation or the individual, whose energies have been faithfully given to this august work, will have secured, by this exalted beneficence the favour of that Being, "whose compassion is over all his works," and whose unspeakable rewards will never fail to bless the humblest effort to do good to his creatures.

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Your Memorialists do not presume to determine that the views of Congress will be necessarily directed to the country to which they have just alluded. They hope to be excused for intimating some of the reasons which would bring that portion of the world before us, when engaged in discovering a place the most proper to be selected, leaving it with confidence, to the better information and better judgment of your honourable body to make the choice.

Your Memorialists, without presuming to mark out, in detail, the measures which it may be proper to adopt in furtherance of the object in view; but implicitly relying upon the wisdom of Congress to devise the most effectual measures; will only pray, that the subject may be recommended to their serious consideration, and that, as an humble auxiliary in this great work, the Association, represented by your Memorialists, may be permitted to aspire to the hope of contributing its labours and resources.

BUSH. WASHINGTON, *President.*

With respect to the most eligible situation for the establishment of the proposed colony, I shall probably more certainly avoid the imputation of unbecoming assurance, by omitting, for the present, to add any thing more specific to what I had already expressed (Par. 38, 39, 40) before the least intimation of the design of forming this Association had come to my knowledge.

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I cannot forbear, however, to remark, that although it would give me inexpressible pleasure to

see the banners of knowledge and rational religion triumphing over ignorance and superstition, in Africa, as well as in the many other vast regions of the earth, yet it impresses me that it will absorb all the benevolence, all the delegated authority, and all the resources, for a century to come, of both our national and state legislatures, to reclaim from the awful abyss of ignorance, vice, and consequential misery, in which thousands and hundreds of thousands of human beings, of all colours and all extractions, are involved on our own continent:—That moral contamination on this continent cannot produce religion and moral purification by a transfer to the continent of Africa:—And that the great moral debt which this continent has incurred, is due more specifically to the immense population of the sons of Africa, who still remain in the shackles of slavery, than to those who are now enjoying personal liberty, or to the continent of Africa.

I have been assured by citizens of Philadelphia, who were active in aiding Capt. Cuffee in collecting emigrants for Sierra Leone, that the injunctions of the British authorities were very positive not to admit any without testimonials of an irreproachable moral character from respectable magistrates. After a proper system of African education has become matured in this country, the seeds of much future good might be gradually disseminated in Africa, by frequent exportations to that country of well instructed virtuous school-masters, artisans and farmers; as the Society of Friends have done, with encouraging prospects of success, amongst the aboriginal natives of this country.

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I will conclude for the present, with a transcript of the Proceedings of a Meeting of the free Coloured People at Richmond, (Virg.) which have come to hand (through the "Freeman's Journal.") just in time for insertion, before this Work is dismissed from the press.—They are similar to those of a similar Meeting at Georgetown several weeks ago.

RICHMOND, JAN. 28.
Meeting of Free People of Colour.

At a Meeting of a respectable portion of the Free People of Colour, of the City of Richmond, on

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Friday the 24th of January 1817, William Bowler was appointed Chairman, Ephraim Speed, Moderator, and Lantey Crow, Secretary.

The following Preamble and Resolution was read, unanimously adopted, and ordered to be printed:

Whereas a Society has been formed at the seat of Government, for the purpose of "colonizing (with their own consent) the Free People of Colour of the United States;" Therefore, we the Free People of Colour of the city of Richmond, have thought it adviseable to assemble together, under the sanction of authority, for the purpose of making a public expression of our sentiments on a question in which we are so deeply interested. We perfectly agree with the Society, that it is not only proper, but would ultimately tend to the benefit and advantage of a great portion of our suffering fellow-creatures, to be colonized: but while we thus express our entire approbation of a measure, laudable in its purposes and beneficent in its designs, it may not be improper in us to say, we prefer being colonized in the most remote corner of the land of our nativity, to being exiled to a foreign country.^[36]

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And whereas the President and Board of Managers of the said Society, have been pleased to leave it to the entire discretion of Congress to provide a suitable place for carrying their laudable intentions into effect;—Be it therefore resolved, That we respectfully submit to the wisdom of Congress, whether it would not be an act of charity to grant us a small portion of their territory, either on the Missouri river, or any place that may seem to them most conducive to the public good, and our future welfare: subject, however, to such rules and regulations as the Government of the United States may think proper to adopt.

W. BOWLER, Chairman.

Ephraim Speed, Moderator.
Lantey Crow, Secretary.

The following article from the New York Columbian, may, perhaps, throw a little additional light on this subject:—

"NECESSITY OF A COLONY OF FREE BLACKS—SUPERSEDED.

We gave an abstract of the Constitution of Hayti some weeks ago; and out of compassion, &c. we again publish the 44th clause, which shows a land of promise nearer our doors than Sierra Leone.

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"44. Every African, Indian, and their descendants, born in the colonies of foreign countries, who shall come to reside in the Republic, shall be recognized as Haytians, but shall not enjoy the rights of citizenship until after a year's residence."

The same constitution that excludes the white man, invites the black; and, gentlemen from Port au Prince have assured us, that President Petion gives a marked welcome to the Free Blacks from the United States who settle in Hayti."

THE END.

Printed by C. Clement.

FOOTNOTES:

- [1] The liberty of the black population in but a single state, is estimated at about thirty millions of dollars.
- [2] Governor Miller's message to the legislature of North Carolina in 1815.
- [3] The Capitol at Washington.
- [4] "Political subordination, however hateful to a liberal mind, is as bright as day when compared with the dark and hopeless bondage of the Negro."

- [5] Since writing the above, I have been favoured with the perusal of a letter from the brother of the late Governor of the State of Delaware, to his friend in Philadelphia, dated Lewes, November 27, 1816, in which, after mentioning the arrest of a banditti of kidnappers, &c. he relates the following narrative:—

"A melancholy catastrophe has recently occurred here. A pilot, who owned a young black man, last Thursday morning, when in the bay off here, for some small offence, struck him three or four times with a rope's end; his man observed, 'Master, you have promised whenever I am unwilling to serve you, that I might choose another master; I now want to leave you.'

'Very well, (replied the master) but I will settle with you first, pull off your shirt,' and signified or said he would beat him until sun-set. His man replied, 'I will die first,' and immediately jumped overboard and drowned himself."

- [6] The aboriginal Americans have offered their civilized brethren a most beautiful and instructive lesson on this subject. The author of "The Star in the West," Elias Boudinot, LL. D. relates the following fact. From page 232:—

"The writer of these sheets, many years ago, was one of the corresponding members of a society in Scotland for promoting the gospel among the Indians. To further the great work, they educated two young men, of very serious and religious dispositions, and who were desirous of undertaking the mission for this purpose. When they were ordained and ready to depart, we wrote a letter in the Indian style, to the Delaware nation, then residing on the northwest of the Ohio, informing them that we had, by the goodness of the Great Spirit, been favoured with a knowledge of his will, as to the worship he required of his creatures, and the means he would bless to promote the happiness of men, both in this life and that which is to come. That thus enjoying so much happiness ourselves, we could not but think of our red brethren in the wilderness, and wish to communicate the glad tidings to them, that they might be partakers with us. We had therefore sent them two ministers of the gospel, who would teach them these great things, and earnestly recommended them to their careful attention. With proper passports the missionaries set off, and arrived in safety at one of their principal towns.

"The chiefs of the nation were called together, who answered them, that they would take it into consideration, but in the mean time they might instruct their women, but they should not speak to the men. They spent fourteen days in council, and then dismissed them very courteously, with an answer to us. This answer made great acknowledgments for the favor we had done them: They rejoiced exceedingly at our happiness in thus being favored by the Great Spirit, and felt very grateful that we had condescended to remember our red brethren in the wilderness: But they could not help recollecting that we had a people among us, who, because they differed from us in colour, we had made slaves of, and made them suffer great hardships and lead miserable lives. Now, they could not see any reason, if a people being black, entitled us thus to deal with them, why a red colour should not equally justify the same treatment: They therefore had determined to wait, to see whether all the black people amongst us were made thus happy and joyful, before they could put confidence in our promises; for they thought a people who had suffered so much and so long by our means, should be entitled to our first attention; that therefore, they had sent back the two missionaries, with many thanks, promising that when they saw the black people among us restored to freedom and happiness, they would gladly receive our missionaries. This is what in any other case, would be called close reasoning, and is too mortifying a fact to make further observations upon."

- [7] An inn-keeper, in the south part of Virginia, who hires his stand, complains that his landlord *does* him *much* harm, by inviting nearly all his respectable company to the festivities of his own dwelling house.
- [8] The ingenious and benevolent Mr. J. M'Leod, teacher of a respectable seminary in the city of Washington, has assured the author, that he has extended the science of encouraging promptitude in duty to such a degree, that, (by his permission) his pupils have often flocked to his lodgings, in crowds, before the dawn of day, emulating each other, who should first rouse him from his bed, in order to proceed upon their studies. At the same time, he did not permit his rules to be violated with impunity. He pursued the same policy with soldiers, while an officer a short time formerly, in the United States' army, and with the same success. While a private teacher in a family in which slaves

were kept, his sympathy was so deeply wounded by the severity of their punishments for misconduct, that he frequently gave them a quarter of a dollar out of his own pocket, as an inducement for doing their duty so as not to incur the displeasure of their masters. Might not such a system of *genuine and generous republican government* as this be adopted with mutual benefit to both *the people and their rulers*, on the slave plantations universally?

[9] "Give me an uninformed brute," said Mirabeau, "and I will soon make him a ferocious monster. It was a white, who first plunged a negro into a burning oven,—who dashed out the brains of a child in the presence of its father,—who fed a slave with his own proper flesh. These are the monsters that have to account for the barbarity of the revolted savages. Millions of Africans have perished on this soil of blood. In this dreadful struggle the crimes of the whites are yet the most horrible:—They are the offspring of despotism; whilst those of the blacks originate in the hatred of slavery—the thirst of vengeance."

[10] Several letters have been addressed to the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, by individuals residing in the southern and south-western states, expressing their desire to emancipate their slaves, and requesting the Society to receive them under its patronage.

In a letter from Dr. John Adams, to the Society, dated Richmond Hill, Dec. 19, 1815, he states that, "A certain Samuel Guest, deceased, had, by his will, directed that his slaves, amounting to about 300, should be emancipated, and his lands sold for their benefit; which, being prohibited by law, unless they should be removed out of the boundaries of the commonwealth of Virginia, he requests the aid of the Society, and recommends their transportation to Guinea."

The committee of the American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, to whom this letter was referred, reported, "that it did not appear that the convention could, at present, propose any specific plan for accomplishing the benevolent intention of Samuel Guest." This is really a distressing case. If there exists *any where*, the power of affording a remedy in such instances as this, the omission of exercising it is, in effect, an act of converting freemen into slaves! This subject demands the serious attention of the government, and of every citizen, who, like Howard, the model of beneficence, is "a patriot of every clime."

Since the original of the preceding note was written, the following statement has been published in the National Intelligencer:—

"The legislature of Indiana are now actively engaged in the organization of the details of the state government. Much debate has taken place on a petition or letter from W. E. Sumner, of Williamson county, (Tennessee,) requesting that the legislature may enable him to bring into the state a number of slaves, with the view which he expresses in the following words:

"I have about 40, and my intention is, if permitted by the laws of Indiana, to bring and free them, to purchase land for them and settle them on it; to give them provisions for the first year, and furnish them with tools for agriculture and domestic manufactory, and next spring with domestic animals. You must be aware, sir, that this must be attended with no small expenditure of money and trouble. I think, that after a man has had the use of slaves and their ancestors, twenty or thirty years, it is unjust and inhuman to set them free, unprovided with a home, &c. &c. All that I have were raised by my father and myself, and the oldest is about my age (46.) I am also very desirous to leave the slave states, and spend my few remaining days in that state where involuntary slavery is not admissible; and will, with the blessing of God, prepare to do so as soon as I can settle my affairs."

"The mode in which this letter should be treated is the subject of the debate. It appears to be agreed that the constitution of the state forbids a compliance with his request."

The writer has been assured that this conscientious, just, and generous individual is one among the number of those who made similar propositions to the above, to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society, and with the like disappointment.

[11] A few days subsequent to the time that the above suggestions were originally committed to paper, the House of Delegates of the Virginia Legislature, passed the following resolution, by an almost unanimous vote; "That the Executive be requested to correspond with the President of the United States, for the purpose of obtaining a Territory upon the North Pacific, or at some other place, not within any of the states, or the territorial governments of the United States, to serve as an asylum for such persons of colour, as are now free, and may desire the same, and for those who may be hereafter emancipated within this commonwealth, &c." If the present system of restrictions upon emancipation should be persevered in, for an indefinite length of time, the necessary final result must be frightful to contemplate. If a state, containing soil sufficient to subsist only 1,000,000 of slaves, besides the free population, provides no outlet, for the excess of that number, by permitting their emancipation or otherwise, *starvation* must be the consequence!

[12] On first hearing this epithet used, I was at a loss to account for its meaning. I have since observed that, in the middle states, the general title applied to slave-traders, indiscriminately, is "*Georgia-men*."

[13] Would it be superstitious to presume, that the sovereign Father of all nations, permitted the *perpetration* of this apparently execrable transaction, as a *fiery*, though salutary signal of his displeasure at the conduct of his Columbian children, in erecting and idolizing this splendid fabric as the temple of freedom, and at the same time oppressing with the yoke of captivity and toilsome bondage, twelve or fifteen hundred thousand of their African *brethren* (by logical induction,) making merchandize of their *blood*, and

dragging their bodies with *iron chains*, even under its towering walls? Yet is it a fact, that *slaves* are employed in rebuilding this sanctuary of *liberty*.

[14] It is a notorious and afflicting truth, that in the United States, the head of a *poor black man* has been cut off *with impunity*, by a white man (or master;) that black men have been *wantonly shot* by white men; and that a free black man (whom I have seen myself) was *hopped*, and being unsuccessfully offered for sale as a slave, was bound to a post in the winter, and left without food until his feet *were frozen*, where he would probably have perished, had he not extricated himself by his own struggles.

[15] This statement was furnished by a respectable citizen, who was one of the first that found the dead body, near his own house.

N.B. Nothing can more strongly indicate the true state of the case than this *disguising of names*. The *Author* dared put *his* name; but he was in *Pennsylvania*: he would, probably have exposed his *Maryland*-informant to *death* by naming him. W. C.

[16] It is a frequent custom in the district of Columbia, Maryland, and Delaware, for masters to endeavour to reform their bad slaves, by terrifying them with threats of selling them for the Georgia market, or "*to Carolina*" them; which is often carried into effect. There are, notwithstanding, several individuals, so conscientiously opposed to selling men against their will, that the most unpardonable conduct will not induce men to do it; and they prefer rejecting them, and letting them keep all the wages they can get for their own use.

[17] One of the members of the house of representatives (Mr. ADGATE,) related to me, while at Washington, the following fact:—"That during the last session of congress, (1815-16,) as several members were standing in the street, near the new capitol, a drove of manacled coloured people were passing by; and when just opposite, one of them elevating his manacles as high as he could reach, commenced singing the favorite national song, "*Hail Columbia! happy land,*" &c.

N.B. This is an excessively stupid song, written more than 20 years ago by one HOPKINSON, a lawyer of Philadelphia, who seems to have been born to be an ornament of Grub-Street. But, however silly the thoughts or inflated the expressions, down it goes if national vanity or party strife lay hold of it. "*Hail Columbia*" is much about upon a level with "*God save the king;*" they have both had about the same cause to keep them in vogue; but, I must confess, that the Americans, with *manacles on their hands and chains round their necks*, singing songs in praise of the *freedom* of that Country, is going a little further than our fools when they bleat and bellow and bawl out that parcel of stuff, that low bombast, which the news-papers, in their cant, call "*Our great National Anthem;*" an "*Anthem*" that talks, amongst other things, of "*confounding politicks* and all their *knavish tricks!*" Come, come: we must not pretend to *laugh* at the Washington Negro!—W. C.

[18] Judge Morrel, in his charge to the grand jury of Washington, at the session of the circuit court of the United States, in January 1816, for the district of Columbia, urged this subject to its attention very emphatically, as an object of remonstrance and juridical investigation. He said the frequency with which the streets of the city had been crowded with manacled captives, sometimes even on the sabbath, could not fail to shock the feelings of all humane persons; that it was repugnant to the spirit of our political institutions, and the rights of man, and he believed was calculated to impair the public morals, by familiarizing scenes of cruelty to the minds of youth.

[19] Extract from the preamble to the first act passed by the legislature of Pennsylvania, for the gradual abolition of slavery in that state:

"Sect. 2. And whereas the condition of those persons who have heretofore been denominated negro and mulatto slaves, has been attended with circumstances which not only deprived them of the common blessings that they were by nature entitled to, but has cast them into the deepest afflictions by an unnatural separation of husband and wife from each other and from their children—an injury the greatness of which can only be conceived by supposing that we were in the same unhappy case," &c.

Darwin, who may well be styled an *arch connoisseur*, both in physiology and morality, in his classification of human diseases, includes one which he denominates *Nostalgia*, and thus defines it:

"*Nostalgia*. An unconquerable desire of returning to one's native country, frequent in long voyages, in which the patients become so insane as to throw themselves into the sea, mistaking it for green fields and meadows. The Swiss are said to be particularly liable to this disease, and when taken into foreign service frequently desert from this cause, and especially after hearing or singing a particular tune, which was used in their village dances, in their native country; on which account their playing or singing this tune was punished with death. Zwingerus.

Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill, which lifts him to the storms.
Goldsmith." Zoonomia, Cl. III. 1. 1. 6.

The late *indefatigable Rush*, in his Inquiry into the Causes of the Derangement of the Human Mind, states, that the slaves imported into the *West Indies from Africa*, frequently become distracted when they are about to commence the toils of perpetual slavery on the plantations.

N. B. This "*indefatigable RUSH*" was, indeed, *indefatigable* in *puffing himself off* for a friend of *humanity*, in which he was pretty successful too. He made his court to the Quakers, and even exceeded some of them in cunning. It was as puny a creature, in point

of talent, as ever contrived to get a reputation for wisdom. Principles he had none: he wrote about every thing, and about nothing well; but, as a *pretender* to humanity he was consummate. Only mind how he *here* calls for indignation against the "*West India*" planters. Not a word about those of his own "*free country!*" What a hypocrite! He was a Doctor of Physic; and he knew well that he would have lost his best patients, those that paid best for the *blood-letting*, (for which he was so famous) if he had made free with the Slave-holders of his own "free-country."—W. C.

[20] To those speculators in human flesh, who purchase free people as well as slaves, without discrimination, I must now apply the title of *Man-Dealers*, instead of Slave Traders.

[21] While interrogating him about the manner of his being seized and bound, he gave his chains a shake, by moving his feet on the floor, and with vexation muttered, "When the devil gets 'em he'll *chain them*." "No, no," said I, "you shouldn't make such speeches as that, perhaps they were brought up to such things, and don't know any better." "*Well but,*" said he, "*they know what's right.*" I have since been assured, that several instances of *black* man-stealing had occurred, in which fathers, sons, brothers, and even wives and daughters, were promiscuously engaged.

[22] I was informed, on my arrival in the neighbourhood where this affair was transacted, that this *person*, on hearing that the mulatto man had been intercepted at Washington, said he had a *bad pain* on his mind, and believed he should *clear out*; which he had done accordingly.

[23] Thos. Clarkson states, in his History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, that "the arrival of slave ships on the coasts of Africa was the uniform signal for the immediate commencement of wars for the attainment of prisoners, for sale and exportation to America and the West Indies." In Maryland and Delaware, the same drama is now performed in miniature. The arrival of the Man-Traffickers, *laden* with cash, at their respective *stations*, near the coasts of a great American water, called justly, by Mr. Randolph, "a Mediterranean sea," or at their several *inland posts*, near the dividing line of Maryland and Delaware, (at some of which they have grated prisons for the purpose) is the well known signal for the professed *kidnappers*, like beasts of prey, to commence their nightly invasions upon the *fleecy flocks*; extending their ravages, (generally attended with bloodshed, and sometimes murder,) and spreading terror and consternation amongst both freemen and slaves throughout the *sandy regions*, from the western to the eastern shores. These "two-legged featherless animals," or *human bloodhounds*, when overtaken (rarely) by the messengers of law, are generally found armed with instruments of death, sometimes with pistols with *latent* spring daggers attached to them! Mr. Cooper, one of the representatives to congress from Delaware, assured me that he had often been afraid to send one of his servants out of his house in the evening, from the danger of their being seized by kidnappers.

While at Wilmington (Del.) I accidentally heard a black woman telling the gate-keeper of the bridge, that she had set out to go to Georgetown, (Del.) but was returning without having reached it, for fear of being caught on the road by the kidnappers.

[24] I was informed in Delaware, that her seller absconded in about ten days after the outrage was committed.

[25] The mulatto youth had been purchased in the city of Washington, and kept in it in irons several weeks, by a person who confessed his regret that he had not removed him before the suit for the recovery of his freedom had commenced; and that, if he had known it sooner, he would have taken him on to —, (the place of his residence,) even if he had been satisfied of his being free. One Slave-Trader, to whom he had been offered, was however so conscientious, that he refused to purchase him, or the lad who was with him, (before mentioned) being confident that they were illegally enslaved.

[26] I have been assured by a gentleman of the highest respectability, that a former representative to Congress, from one of the southern states, acknowledged to him, that he held a mulatto man as a slave, having purchased him in company with slaves, who affirmed that he was free born, and had been kidnapped from one of the New England states; who was well educated, and who, he had no doubt, was born as free a man as himself, or my informant. Upon being asked, how he could *bear* then to retain him, he replied, that the customs of his part of the country were such, that these things are not minded much.

[27] I was informed that the mulatto man was probably destined for the New-Orleans market, not very far distant from the *Gulf of Mexico*, which probably embraces more personal slavery, including its neighbouring regions, than any region of equal extent on the globe.

[28] On the ensuing day, having persevered in endeavours to secure the captives, the son of this landlord (to whom I presume *manacles, hand-cuffs, iron man-fetters, hopples &c.* are as familiar as steel-traps and snares to the hunter of the *animals which yield fur*;) expressed his sympathy for the loss of the purchaser of the mulatto man, (who still remained in his chains,) should he be set at liberty. I asked him whether he considered it worse for the trader to lose a few hundred dollars in money, than for the mulatto man to be transported to a strange country, and be deprived of his liberty for life. To which he replied, after a short pause, *that he did not know as there was much difference!* I assured him, that if he *did not*, I was *sorry* for him. This illustrates the invincible force of morbid education and of habit.

[29] By information, derived from distinct and corresponding sources, a few days after this caravan left Washington, there is no doubt of the fact, that it contained, in addition to the slaves, a young black woman, who had been emancipated in Delaware, and was sold by the same person as an agent, that assisted in seizing and sold the black woman and child; and also a legally free mulatto man, in irons, who had been sold in the night by his

employer, near Philadelphia, and who was most unmercifully beaten with a club, on the night previous to their arrival in the city, for telling a person that he was free.

- [30] Additional aid was also rendered by the Abolition Society at Wilmington.
- [31] It would be equally as absurd to do this, as it would to import 2,000,000 prisoners of war from Turkey or China, and make citizens of them.
- [32] "It is not for us to inquire why, in the creation of mankind, the inhabitants of the several parts of the earth were distinguished by a difference in feature or complexion. It is sufficient to know, that all are the work of an Almighty Hand." [From the first section of the Preamble to the Pennsylvania act for the Abolition of Slavery, before referred to.]
- [33] M'Gurran Coulon, in his "Observations on the Insurrection of the Negroes in the Island of St. Domingo," read before the National Assembly of France, attributes the *troubles* of that island, "above all, to the injustice of which the whites have been guilty, in refusing to let the mulattos partake of the blessings of liberty." This was evidently one of the chief *proximate* causes;—but the primitive radical origin of those implacable conflicts between different shades of colour, may be traced to the miserable fatal policy which permitted the production of those shades. "The white father falls a victim to the unnatural rage of his mulatto son." "In a country where it is by no means unusual for the known children of the Planter to undergo all the hardships, and the ignominy of slavery, in common with the most degraded class of mortals, is it there we are to seek for instances of filial affection?" [Inquiry into the Causes of the Insurrection of the Negroes in St. Domingo.]
- [34] Recent message of the President of the United States to Congress, alluding to the red natives of America.
- [35] See Parag. 40. I consider it a fortunate circumstance, and one which will protect me effectually from the imputation of plagiarism, in respect to the similarity of what I had previously written on the subject of colonization by "*beneficent societies*" and the national ransom of slaves (see Parag. 80 & 81) to any thing advanced at this meeting; that I had communicated the contents of the original manuscript of the preceding work to page 98, except some notes and slight alterations, to Roberts Vaux, Esq. one of the members of the common council of the city of Philadelphia, on or previous to the 8th of Dec. 1816—And the fact is made public, in this manner, with his consent and approbation.
- [36] Several free persons of colour, of both sexes and all a little shaded with a yellowish tint, being employed as servants in the house in which I lodge, I inquired of two of the females, a few days ago, whether they would like to go to Africa, as it was the country of their forefathers. One of them expressed great repugnance at going there, and the other said her fathers did not come from Africa, "and (said she) if they (the Americans) did not want us, they had no need to have brought us away: after they've brought us here, and made us work hard, and *disfigured the colour*, I don't think it would be fair to send us back again."

Transcriber's note:

There is some inconsistency in the placing of italic and small capital markup. They are as in the original.

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