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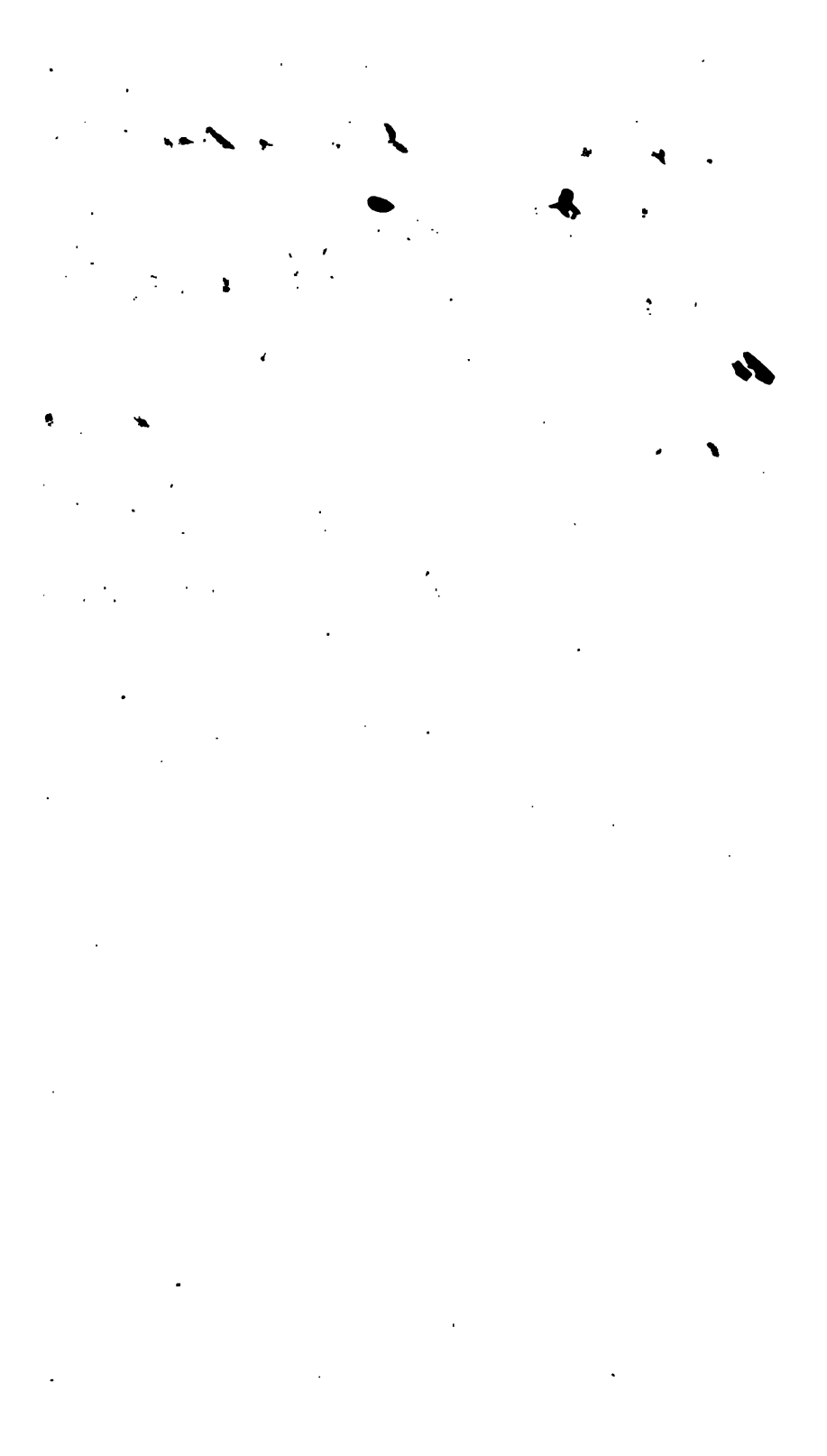
Reasons for an immediate alliance
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Stephens
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HR



THE
OPPORTUNITY;
OR,
REASONS
FOR AN
IMMEDIATE ALLIANCE
WITH
ST. DOMINGO.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF "THE CRISIS OF THE SUGAR COLONIES."

LONDON:
PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street, Fetter Lane;
FOR J. HATCHARD, PICCADILLY.

1801.



TO THE
RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, &c. &c.

SIR,

I USE a freedom which may appear a little extraordinary in prefixing your name to a letter originally addressed to Mr. Addington.

To conceal this seeming impropriety, by expunging his name from the following sheets, would not be difficult; for I wrote not to Mr. Addington, but to the Prime Minister of this country: but to make such an alteration in a work already printed, would be to incur two inconveniences—loss of time, which in this case, perhaps, may be important to the public, and loss of money, which you know is rarely unimportant to an author.

This

This work was commenced soon after the evacuation of St. Domingo by the French was first announced in Europe.—The Author, to his surprise, then found reason to suspect, that his Majesty's ministers were irresolute as to the line of policy which it might be expedient to adopt towards the people of that island; and conceiving that by such indecision an opportunity of obtaining much good, and averting great evils, might be irrecoverably lost, he resolved to offer his advice on that interesting subject, both to the Minister and to the Public.

The execution of this purpose, however, was repeatedly interrupted by unavoidable private impediments, and the work has loitered long in the Press, as well as in the closet. One half of the following sheets were printed, and nearly the whole remainder composed, before the late change of administration took place or was expected; and yet it has been impossible to publish them sooner.

Delay, Sir, in these eventful times, is peculiarly inconvenient to statesmen and political writers.

The

The titles and situations of all my principal parties are already become obsolete. Mr. Addington is no longer Chancellor of the Exchequer; Buonaparte is become Emperor of the French; and Dessalines sole Governor, instead of Triumvir, not of St. Domingo, but Hayti.

But what is more important, the events which it was my aim to avert are already beginning to outwing the tardy progress of my pen and of the press. Dessalines, if late rumour may be trusted, is not only acting upon maxims very opposite to those by which he lately attempted to conciliate his European neighbours, and perpetrating crimes which a better policy on our part might have prevented, but is already waging that maritime war which was predicted in the following sheets, and denouncing, with a voice far more impressive than mine, the necessity of our restoring peace to the Gulph of Mexico, if we would avert from it new revolutions. I must publish without further delay, lest we should hear next of his having quarrelled with Jamaica, and conquered Cuba, or of a reconciliation on the basis of
in-

independency between St. Domingo and France.

Allow me, therefore, Sir, to transfer to you, in its original shape, as an official heir-loom, the advice which was meant for your predecessor.

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

May 31, 1804.

THE
OPPORTUNITY.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
HENRY ADDINGTON,

CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, &c. &c.

SIR,

NEAR two years ago, I publicly addressed to you some reflections on West Indian affairs, in a pamphlet entitled, *The Crisis of the Sugar Colonies*.

Had the opinions maintained in that publication been refuted by intermediate events, it would have been unreasonable to expect from you at this period, a favourable or a patient attention; but if, on the contrary, those opinions have been since strikingly verified by experience, I may, without presumption, claim a second audience on the same interesting subject.

Nor will it weaken this pretension, if you should be able to recollect, that the author's views were thought on their first promulgation, to be singular, and his practical conclusions rash: for the tes-

B

timony

timony of experience in their favour is not the less decisive ; and when political suggestions are demonstrated to have been just, their singularity and apparent boldness become arguments of their necessity and importance.

Unless vanity deceive me, that publication, however diffidently received by yourself or your colleagues, was not wholly fruitless of some important public effects.

Though personally a stranger to you, I know that you honoured the work with a perusal ; and would hope that it contributed in some degree to fix you in a line of conduct in what relates to St. Domingo, from which you have had much excitement to swerve, but of which the wisdom as well as the rectitude, is now universally acknowledged.

If so, my claim to your patient attention rests upon a still stronger title than that which has been already advanced.

To my former advice, much popular prepossession certainly stood opposed ; and as I have now to offer further counsel, suggested by the same views, to which, perhaps, in some points, the current of public opinion may still be adverse, a brief retrospect of some of the leading opinions maintained in " The Crisis," and of the experimental confirmation which they have received, may be no improper or unnecessary prelude.

After

After offering many reasons for believing that the ostensible purpose held out by the French government was not its real object in the great expedition then proceeding against St. Domingo, but that the restitution of private slavery was the Consul's true purpose, I endeavoured in that pamphlet to point out the peculiar obstacles, both physical and moral, by which the accomplishment of that purpose would be opposed*.

In delineating these, it was found necessary to adduce facts relative to colonial slavery, of which the true nature was generally misconceived in Europe†; and here, to some minds celebrated for political knowledge in general, as well as to many ordinary readers, the author's premises, as he has reason to believe, appeared not less questionable than his conclusions: yet, reasoning from these premises, he inferred with much confidence the high probability of events which have since actually occurred in St. Domingo, extraordinary and wonderful though those events have appeared to the European public‡. The harsh and unparalleled nature of West India bondage in general, and those distinguishing features of that state which were delineated in the *Crisis*, were the very corner stones, and

* *Crisis*, Letter 2d.

† *Ib.* p. 7 to 15.

‡ *Ib.* p. 56 to 76.

foundation walls, upon the solidity of which the whole structure of the argument depended.

From the terrible peculiarities of that state, and from these alone, it was inferred, that the negroes of St. Domingo would never submit to it again*; for it was admitted, that to any yoke known elsewhere by the name of slavery, the gigantic power, the relentless vengeance, the craft, and violence of the French government, might probably be able to enforce submission. Political, and even personal freedom had been completely overthrown in many parts of Europe; and there was nothing in the air of the Antilles to make the spirit of liberty there more vigorous, or less tameable by the terror of the sword; but it was predicted that negro freedom would be found invincible in St. Domingo, because the horrors of the state opposed to it were experimentally known to its defenders: and because they were of that intolerable kind which the author endeavoured to describe †. He foresaw the true though strange issue of the unequal contest between the colossal republic of France, and the negroes of a West India island, only because he clearly understood the nature of the practical question in dispute.

The great local and personal advantages,

* Crisis, p. 55-6.

† Ib. p. 46 to 56, 75-6, &c

which

which favoured the cause of freedom in that climate, were not overlooked or concealed—on the contrary, they were fully explained and relied upon* as necessary means; but the vital and indomitable principle, which could alone give life and efficacy to those means of resistance, was an aversion to the former yoke not to be overcome; an antipathy more powerful, than all the terrors that despotism could oppose to it, more stimulating than any passion or appetite that could plead for submission, and more obstinate than the love of life itself.

Upon these premises and these calculations, it was foretold early in March, 1802, that the issue of the French expedition would be such as, to the astonishment of Europe, it has ultimately proved—disappointment to the views of the consul, and a triumph to his sable opponents.

In the progress and incidents, as well as the final event of that extraordinary contest, the “Crisis of the Sugar Colonies” has proved for the most part a history by anticipation of the war of St. Domingo.

That the arms of France would probably have a short-lived apparent success was foreseen †; nor

* Crisis, p. 58 to 69.

† Ib. p. 44-5.

were the artifices and frauds, which concurred with force in the attainment of that ephemeral triumph, unexpected *; but it was also foreseen that the discovery of the true object of the war would produce a new and decisive resistance †.

The facility, so clearly manifested, of obtaining a loyal submission to the republic without the restitution of the former slavery ‡; the speedy resort to a compromise on that basis, such as was actually, though perfidiously, made by Leclerc, after force had been tried in vain §; the division of the negro chiefs and troops, by a crafty concealment of the design against freedom in the outset, and the consequent defection of many of them from Toussaint ||; their faithful adherence, nevertheless, to the cause of general freedom, when the mask was dropped by the invaders ¶; these, and other leading incidents of the contest, were all foretold in the Crisis, with more or less confidence and clearness, in proportion as they were more or less necessary results of the general premises from which they were all inferred.

To point out at large the agreement of these

* Crisis, p. 45.

† Ib. p. 45-6.

‡ Ib. p. 45.

§ Ib. p. 85.

|| Ib. p. 45.

¶ Ib. p. 45-6. 56-7, 8.

conjectural

conjectural conclusions with subsequent events, would be to exceed those limits, which regard to your time, Sir, and my own, must prescribe to this address. The task will be more easy when a tolerably fair and intelligent account of the late war in St. Domingo shall meet the public eye; but in spite of the unprecedented falshood of the consular press, no Englishman is so ill informed of the events of that horrible war, as not to perceive, should he now turn over the pages of the Crisis, that the opinions there disclosed have been fully verified, and the author's expectations very strikingly confirmed.

To the purpose for which this brief review is offered, the confirmation of the premises of fact contained in that pamphlet, some events unforeseen by the author, are no less important than those which his conjectures embraced.

That a compromise would be the result of the obstinate resistance which the French generals would encounter, and of their despair of final success, he foresaw to be probable*; but that perfidy so unexampled in the history of this bad world, as was practised by the French commanders, would be employed to frustrate the compact, was as much beyond his foresight as that of the illustrious victim of the crime, the generous and immortal Toussaint. Ignorant of the yet

* Crisis, p. 85.

unfathomed depth of French depravity, and supposing that the consul had more political wisdom than he has lately exhibited, the author did not foresee the probability of a measure, at once the basest and the weakest that ever dishonoured a nation. The second jeopardy, therefore, to the cause of African freedom, which resulted from this perfidy, put the strength of the defensive principle and means, upon which the author relied, to a proof unexpectedly severe : yet such were the truth and the force of those premises upon which his reasoning was built, so invincible were the feelings which withstood the restitution of slavery, and such the natural means of resistance, that the betrayed and disheartened colonists, though perfidiously deprived of their leaders, of their military champions, and of their arms, again made head against the armies of the republic, and again triumphed over their powerful and ferocious oppressors.

The desperate perseverance with which the war was afterwards prosecuted by the consul, the terrible means which he employed, and the remorseless devotion of the monsters Leclerc and Rochambeau, and their troops, to their master's horrible behests, were also far beyond the author's calculations ; but the principles upon which he relied have passed unhurt through all these extreme ordeals, and their justice has by every trial been more clearly established.

The

The last and strongest confirmation has been given by the consul himself. He, who acted upon notions diametrically opposite to the opinions maintained in the Crisis, and who expected so little difficulty in the execution of his projects, that he sent not only his brother, and brother-in-law, but his sister, with her infant child, to grace and enjoy his expected easy triumph over African freedom, saw at length his error so clearly, that in despair of re-establishing slavery, he resolved on extermination; and instead of still aiming to reclaim a flourishing colony, fought, massacred, and murdered for a desert.

Without detaining you longer with a review, to the seeming egotism of which I could be reconciled only by its undeniable public importance, I demand in general new credence to the facts, and some increased regard to the conclusions contained in my former address; to some of which I shall have occasion to revert in the course of the ensuing discussions. In particular, I hope that one great truth, which was matter of argumentative induction in the Crisis, the invincibility of freedom in St. Domingo, may now be fairly assumed, as a proved and incontestible truth.

The new and interesting question which I propose now to discuss, is "*what line of conduct a British minister ought, at the present juncture, to adopt towards the people of St. Domingo?*"

Upon this important question, but one practical notion, and that of a very indefinite kind, seems as yet to have entered into the conception of the public. That every degree of amity towards this new society, consistent with a due regard to our own colonial interests, ought to be observed, seems to be a unanimous sentiment. It seems also to be in general thought, that some commercial intercourse ought to be formed with them, so as to secure to ourselves whatever trade their industry may immediately furnish. But these opinions, as far as they have met the public eye, are qualified by so many cautious and ambiguous terms, that their authors may be affirmed to have yet formed no decisive practical judgment.

For my part, having a distinct and firm opinion on this interesting subject, an opinion, which, however erroneous it may be, is simple, practical, and, in my own poor judgment, highly important to my country, I feel myself bound to declare it; and shall do so without management or reserve.

YOU OUGHT, SIR, I CONCEIVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITHOUT DELAY, THE LIBERTY OF THE NEGROES OF ST. DOMINGO; AND TO ENTER INTO FEDERAL ENGAGEMENTS WITH THEM AS A SOVEREIGN AND INDEPENDENT PEOPLE; AND YOU OUGHT FURTHER, NOT ONLY TO GRANT, BUT, IF NECESSARY, TO VOLUNTEER, A GUARANTEE OF THEIR INDEPENDENCY AGAINST THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE.

Should this proposition startle at first by its apparent
parent

parent boldness, it is no more than I expect. So let me again hint, did the opinion maintained in the Crisis, that the colossal Republic of France, the terror of continental Europe, could not with all its force, crush this same petty community of negroes. So it might be added, did at its first promulgation, almost every opinion or measure of national policy, which in this age of wonders has ultimately proved to have been wise. These are times in which hesitating choice and tardy decision will generally be found at a fault, and in which a British statesman should remember Cato's maxim, that

“ ——— Fear admitted into public councils
 “ Betrays like treason.” ———

But should you favour me with a patient attention, you will perhaps find that the course here proposed, though a decided, is not a rash one: that the measures I recommend are bold in appearance only, not in reality; and, that they are in truth essential to any plan of colonial policy, from which future security can be expected or hoped.

Let not my advice be prejudged at the outset by that dislike of innovation in the abstract, which the experience of the age has inspired. A new order of things has arisen in the West Indies, to which former precedents are quite inapplicable. The British statesman has there no beaten path to pursue; he has a new country before him, and
 a new

a new road to explore. An unprecedented revolution has rent asunder the basis of our old Colonial policy, and further perseverance in it, out of mere respect to its antiquity, would savour more of pedantry than prudence: its former wisdom, had it indeed been wise, would perhaps be the clearest evidence of its future folly.

It was, I grant, a fundamental maxim of all the powers of Europe who possessed colonies in the Antilles, that the supremacy of the European race, and the depression of the African, must be at all times, and at the expence of every other public principle, maintained. It was a rule paramount in importance to all national rivalships, and to all national quarrels. There was an intercommunity of feelings and privileges among the white skinned colonists, which, when the subordination of negroes was in question, made English and French, Dutch and Spanish, European friend and European enemy, very unimportant distinctions.

But this strong chain of sympathy, forged by mutuality of despotic abuse, and rivetted by a sense of common danger, has been broken by the same shock that overthrew the social edifices of Europe; and effects have followed, of which the stability can now no more be doubted, than the novelty or the importance.

An African people, insubordinated to any
European

European inhabitants of the same territory, and independent of all exterior government, is planted in the centre of the Antilles; and possesses an entire island, the most important of the group*: An island of far greater extent than any other (Cuba alone excepted) in the whole Western Archipelago, and which, in population and produce, was lately equal to all the rest united.

This new society has already proved itself, in its very infancy, unconquerable by the greatest powers in the civilized world, having successively defended its freedom and its territory against the long continued hostility of Great Britain at one period; and against the vast, impetuous, persevering, and merciless, efforts of France at another. By power and victory, therefore, as well as by freedom and independency, is the African race raised from its late prostrate and despised state in this very considerable part of the West Indies. Instead of that abject and brutal condition which was before their universal lot, the black islanders may now reasonably elevate their heads above their palefaced neighbours; for whether their country shall remain permanently severed from

* The language of an old historian of this island is remarkable: "*La situation de cette isle par rapport aux autres Antilles, ne pouvoit être plus avantageuse. Elle en est presque environnée, & l'on diroit qu'elle a été placée au centre de ce grand Archipel pour lui donner la loi.*" Hist. de L'isle Espagnole par Charlevoix, Tom. I. Liv. i.

the dominion of France or not ; it possesses a potential independency, of which none of its neighbours can boast : while they continue to lean for support and protection upon distant states, St. Domingo is found to be able not only to sustain itself without the aid of those states, but to set the greatest of them at defiance.

To persist after so extreme a revolution, in our anterior policy, would be more irrational, than even to retain the prejudices by which that policy was introduced and upheld. If we can be so far the dupes of prepossession as still to hold these sable heroes and patriots personally cheap, let us at least respect their power ; and advert to the danger of still acting towards them upon principles of Creolian antipathy and contempt.

National prejudice may indeed, in this case, as in others, survive the causes from which it was derived ; but a wise statesman will, in such cases, rather veer round with the reflux tide of events, than vainly attempt to stem it, by still courting the lingering breeze of opinion. Rome had not ceased, perhaps, in the days of Honorius to despise the northern barbarians ; but Stilicho was not absurd enough to disdain to treat with those hardy warriors, upon Roman ground ; or to apply to them in other respects the old imperial maxims. At this day we regard, with just derision, the arrogant and contemptuous style of the impotent successors

successors of Othman; but though they call us, “Christian dogs,” they are too prudent to adhere in their public councils, to a correspondent practice. They thankfully accept us as allies, and are happy to secure the patrimony of the prophet by our unhallowed aid.

Though revolution in this case touches only the skirts of the empire, the principle of policy is the same; and let not the British cabinet display more bigotry, and less wisdom, in the western Archipelago, than the Turkish Divan, or Grand Vizier, in the eastern.

An entire and absolute adherence to our ancient policy in the Antilles, will scarcely however now be thought advisable, even by the most prejudiced mind. The necessity of a material departure from it has indeed, been practically admitted, in many measures of the last and present war; especially in our convention with Toussaint, and in the assistance lately given to his successors against their European enemies: for such measures, wise and necessary though they must be allowed to have been, were directly at variance with the policy adhered to at all former periods.

But prejudice, though obliged to abandon its former lines, may be disposed in this case to make only a partial and lingering retreat. Though it is demonstrably unwise still to treat the new people as natural inferiors and enemies, it may to
many,

many, seem a boldness of innovation to treat them as independent equals and friends. Of this hesitating sentiment, I am sorry to perceive strong symptoms in our late conduct on the coast of St. Domingo. My advice, therefore, may possibly still be opposed by some adverse prepossession on the score of novelty. If obliged to innovate, let us, it may be said, be slow and cautious in the process.

But let it well be considered, that the circumstances out of which our colonial policy arose, are not merely altered; they are completely reversed. From universal bondage in the Antilles, the African race, I repeat, has started into liberty, sovereignty, and power. Instead of subjection to the lowest of foreign states, they have triumphed over the most powerful. A correspondent reverse has also, in a more important point, been adopted in the conduct of this and other nations. To that close confederacy of the European race in the Antilles, by which the chains of the negroes seemed to be for ever rivetted, have succeeded wars between European powers, in which these once despised objects of the common hostility and oppression have been received as auxiliaries and co-belligerents at least, if not also as allies. The change, so far as regards the queen of the West Indian islands, the sole subject of these remarks, is, in all points, perfect and extreme. Now if different situations, require different measures,

asures; opposite situations, seem to demand opposite measures. But at least, it can furnish no sound presumption against the wisdom of a new system of conduct, that it is diametrically opposite to former principles, when the case itself has been totally reversed; and this is all for which I wish at present to contend.

Let us proceed then to consider, without any prepossession or bias, the arguments by which the advice I have offered may be fairly recommended or opposed.

The first step towards a right choice, is to survey attentively the different objects among which we have to chuse: and as it seems to me, that in this case there are, in a general view, but four different paths of conduct, in one of which you must of necessity tread, it may be proper to say something of each. They are,

1st. To interdict all commercial intercourse whatever, between his Majesty's subjects and the people of St. Domingo.

2d. To permit such intercourse, but without any conventional basis.

3d. To enter into some commercial treaty or convention with the negro chiefs, not involving any relations closer than those of general amity and trade.

4th. To adopt the decisive measures which I have ventured to recommend.

Of the first of these plans little perhaps need be said, for it will probably find few, if any, supporters. Such a measure would in the first place be found to be attended with great practical difficulties. The advantages of the prohibited trade, and the facility of a clandestine intercourse between St. Domingo and Jamaica, would probably give rise to an extensive contraband commerce. Every view of political caution upon which the prohibition could be founded, would in that case be defeated; for if a trade with this new people, though lawfully and openly conducted, would be dangerous to our colonies, a secret, illicit, and consequently unregulated intercourse, could not be less so.

But the prohibition, whether abortive or effectual, would be very likely to produce a consequence which every reflecting mind must strongly deprecate. A total interdiction of trade between British subjects and the inhabitants of St. Domingo, could not well consist, in the notions of the latter, with the belief of a pacific disposition on our part, and would naturally incline them to regard us as secret foes to their freedom as well as their independence.

Besides, the strong means by which alone such a prohibition could be enforced, would look too much like war, not to be easily mistaken for it, by a people inexperienced in political distinctions, and
justly

justly jealous of the disposition of all their more civilized neighbours.

But supposing this line of policy to be open to no such practical objections, it involves a sacrifice of advantages, which this commercial and maritime country ought not, without very important reasons, to make.

The ports of St. Domingo, notwithstanding all the desolations of the late dreadful war, and the wasteful effects of foreign and intestine calamities during nine or ten preceding years, will still have some valuable exports to furnish. The captures made of cargoes shipped from that island since the commencement of the present hostilities, sufficiently prove that agriculture, however diminished, had not been wholly abandoned; much less will the hoe be idle when the musket may be safely laid aside; for that freedom and a negro government are not incompatible with a large and increasing growth of exportable produce, was, under the beneficent administration of Toussaint*, very clearly proved.

The

* The exports from St. Domingo, throughout the last war, however small when compared to their former amount, were by no means contemptible. But under the government of Toussaint, especially after his treaty with General Maitland had relieved him from the severe pressure of a maritime war, the tillage of the island was rapidly improving. The French commanders on the arrival of their ill fated expedition,

The barbarous and impolitic measures of the consul, have unquestionably occasioned a vast deterioration in the state of the colony since that fortunate period, in respect not only of immediate produce, but of the works and buildings necessary in the manufacturing of sugar; but of so great and fertile a field even the gleanings must be important; and there is no good reason for doubting that its prosperity will speedily revive.

tion, were surprised to find agriculture in so high a degree restored. "The cultivation of the colony," said Leclerc, in his first official dispatches, "is in a much higher state of prosperity than could have been imagined." Official dispatches of February 9th, 1802, in London newspapers of March 26th.

Upon this head, the word of the French government or its commanders may safely be taken; because the exaggeration of existing prosperity, would have magnified the merit of the man, whom they had recently proscribed as a traitor; and tended strongly to recommend an order of things, which they were labouring by the most dreadful means to abolish.

An equally unexceptionable testimony of the same tendency, lately met the author's eye, in a letter found on board *Le Bon Accord*, *Pierre Patissier*, master, a prize taken at the commencement of the present war. The writer, who appears to be a very intelligent Frenchman, and to have been commanding engineer at Port au Prince, and who addresses himself confidentially to a superior officer of his own corps in France, in speaking of the recent battles and conflagrations in the south of the island, says: "*La partie du sud, qui il y a deux mois et demi étoit encore intacte et valait mieux, que la Martinique, tant par son étendue, que par ses rapports, est maintenant le théâtre de la guerre la plus horrible, &c.*"

The original letter is in the Registry of the High Court of Admiralty: it is dated at the Cape, 18 Floreal, An. 11. (May 7, 1803.)

That

That the produce of the island will soon be as great as it was before the revolution, is, I admit, more than can be reasonably expected. The number of adults fit for labour is unquestionably reduced in a very great proportion; nor will free men and women ever be brought to work so intensely as slaves are compelled to do by the coercion of the whip. They will not labour more severely than consists with the preservation of health, with the ordinary duration of life; and the maintenance and increase of native population; which is only saying in other words what is expressed in the preceding sentence.

But unless new demons should arise to react the madness of Buonaparte, the effects of the new system will, in a few years, amply make up for this double drawback on the immediate efforts of the planter. The superfecundity of unoppressed human nature, will not only give back what the sword and the drownings have destroyed, but will produce rapidly an overflowing population; and husbandry will regain in the number of labourers, what it loses by mitigation of toil*.

Whatever

* M. Malouet's information on these subjects must have been more copious and authoritative than that of almost any other man in Europe; for in addition to his long experience in colonial affairs, and extensive private acquaintance in the West Indian circles, he, as the public apologist of the Consul, had access, no doubt, to the official correspondence and other papers in the bu-

Whatever the amount of the exportable produce of this great island may be, its import of foreign commodities will be as great at least as the barter of that produce may suffice to purchase; and its export, as well as import trade, will long be entirely carried on in foreign shipping, and on account of foreign merchants: for it would be extravagant to suppose, that this new community of husbandmen and soldiers, will soon acquire a trading capital of its own, or a commercial marine.

No branch of commerce which we possess, can in its kind be more desirable than this to a manufacturing and maritime country. Its value in a national view will, in proportion to its actual extent, very far exceed that of our present West Indian trade: for the ships which bring over the produce of our islands, do not, upon an average, obtain one-third of an entire freight on their outward voyages; and for this obvious reason, that a small proportion only of the proceeds of the imported colonial reaus of the colonial department. The following testimony of M. Malouet is therefore of great importance. "*Tous les rapports annoncent un beauwoup plus grand nombre d'enfans, et moins de mortalité parmi les negrillons, qu'il n'y en avoit avant la revolution: ce qui est imputé au repos absolu dont jouissent les femmes grosses, et a un moi ndre travail de la part des négres,*" (Collection de *Memoirs sur les Colonies, &c.* par V. P. Malouet, ancien Administrateur des Colonies et de la Marine, Tome IV. Introduction, p. 52.) M. Malouet, let it be observed, is no *ami des noirs*, but a West Indian, and a defender of the Slave Trade.

produce

produce is sent back in European goods, perhaps not a twentieth part* ; whereas these new customers would lay out in our manufactures nearly the whole net value of their sugar and coffee, or rather would barter those tropical products in their own ports, for the goods of Birmingham and Manchester, giving us the carriage of both.

This important consideration cannot be fully discussed without exceeding the limits which must be prescribed to the present publication ; but to the reflections of any well informed and dispassionate mind, it will be obvious that such views are by no means chimerical ; and that a thousand hogsheads of sugar brought from the ports of St. Domingo, would perhaps be the medium of more substantial benefit to the manufacturers, merchants, and ship owners of Great Britain, collectively considered, than five thousand from St. Kitt's or Jamaica ; with this most important difference, that the former branch of trade would

* The rum made on a sugar plantation, of which but a small part is brought to Europe, sometimes defrays all the ordinary expences of the estate. Generally speaking, however, one-tenth part of the proceeds of the sugar is computed to be a necessary auxiliary fund, to supply deficiencies, and provide for contingencies ; but this, for the most part, is applied by the consignees in paying bills drawn by the planter for the purchase of American goods and other colonial expences, and therefore forms no part of the returns in European investment and freight.

not involve as a drawback upon its advantages, any part of that enormous expence of life and treasure by which our West Indian colonies are protected.

It is needless to dwell on the importance of inducements, like these; for they are in their nature, considerations to which the people of this country are more than sufficiently awake, and to which from a British Minister, I should rather in general fear too eager and exclusive an attention, than any improper indifference.

An inevitable consequence, on the other hand, of our abstaining from this commerce, would be its falling into the hands of other powers, who would have no motive for a similar sacrifice; and here the commercial jealousy of the nation will be also sufficiently quicksighted and apprehensive, without any argumentative excitement. But the importance of this consideration is still greater in a political, than in a commercial view, as I shall soon have occasion to shew. At present, I will not enlarge upon this topic, as its discussion more properly belongs to a subsequent branch of my subject.

The arguments which may be opposed to the permission of commerce with this new people, can only, I conceive, be drawn from the dangers to which our own islands may be exposed by it.

That the new state of St. Domingo will be perilous to our sugar colonies, unless great and
speedy

speedy reformation shall meliorate their own interior system, it is far from my intention to deny. The danger is real and great, and, as I have elsewhere endeavoured to demonstrate*, calls loudly for preventative measures from the government and parliament of Great Britain. Unhappily no such measures have hitherto been adopted; and therefore though the folly and wickedness of Buonaparte have, fortunately for this country, suspended the progress of the danger, and diminished its immediate magnitude, our colonies, Jamaica especially, are unquestionably still in very serious jeopardy. But that the cause of alarm would be lessened by our avoiding all amicable relations with the negro chiefs, and holding towards them a face of jealous dislike, is a proposition which it would be difficult to maintain.

Among the many advantages which the apologists of the slave trade have taken of the misconceptions naturally prevalent in Europe, respecting the true nature and effects of West Indian bondage, an outcry was raised by them on the score of alleged dangers from the speeches and writings of abolitionists; which, they pretended, would reach the ears of the enslaved negroes, and inspire them with revolutionary notions. With equal gravity, "*the virtuous Le Clerc*," declaimed, amidst the details of his destructive campaign, against the "mis-

* Crisis, p. 79, 80-124, &c.

“ chiefs of *abstract principles* *.” Were such ideas sincere and well founded, or were not these poor degraded beings placed by their incessant labour, by the domestic police of the plantations, and still more by that dulness and stupidity to which a brutalizing oppression has reduced them, below the reach of the revolutionary means used by the Jacobins of Europe, I admit that a commercial intercourse with St. Domingo might be no less dangerous to Jamaica, than a hostile disposition in these new and formidable neighbours. Their acquaintance might, even in that case, be more perilous than their hatred. But to those who know the true state and character of those oppressed fellow beings, such grounds of apprehension are not very alarming; and as to the dread of democratical or revolutionary theories being employed to excite disaffection in a gang of field negroes, a West Indian could not hear of such a notion without laughing; unless indeed it were in England, where policy might induce him in such a case to do violence to his risible muscles. To him, such fears must appear scarcely less ridiculous, than those of a waggoner, who having read the voyage to the Hhuynhymms, should dread the effects upon the temper of his team, of a democratical song from the ostler.

* See his dispatches of February 9th, 1802. London Papers of March 24.

It is in truth, through the new means of physical force, not those of political suggestion or intrigue, that the propagation of freedom from the neighbouring coast of St. Domingo, is really to be apprehended at Jamaica. Hostility, therefore, in the breasts of the new people, and not an amicable connection with them, should be the subject of anxious prevention.

For the justice of these views, more fully explained in my former pamphlet, I might appeal to our experience during the whole of the last war; for if precept or example could have excited insurrection among our slaves, those means were never wanting to the enemy; and revolutionary freedom was exhibited for many years in a living model of grand dimensions under the very windows of some of our colonies, especially at Montserrat and Jamaica; yet no insurrection took place among the slaves of those islands; nor was the contagion felt for a moment any where, except where it was carried by hostile force.

But more satisfactory proof how innoxious the new system is in the way of pacific intercourse, may be found in the conduct of those who are most interested in, as well as best acquainted with the subject. The planters of Jamaica are a body not inattentive to their own peculiar interests in public measures, nor badly represented in this country. Have you then, Sir, had any application

application from them to prohibit a trade with St. Domingo? If so, they have strangely altered their views since the last war; for such an intercourse was openly carried on between the two islands to a great extent, after the convention with Toussaint; and not a murmur against it was heard, either from the assembly of Jamaica, or from the very active West Indian committee. It was, on the contrary, so favourite a branch of commerce in that island, that the restrictions which the royal prudence had imposed upon it, for the sake apparently of diminishing the dangers in question*, were there thought to shackle too strictly the profitable intercourse with St. Domingo; and were so broadly violated in the face of day, that English ships, belonging to the ports of Jamaica, were seized by his Majesty's squadron, and confiscated for that cause †. When we next hear of danger to the peace of our islands, from the speeches of abolitionists, I hope these facts will be remembered.

Were the intercourse in question really dangerous to our sugar colonies, there would be no necessity either to expose them to any such peril, or to forego, for their sakes, the national advantages

* Order in Council of 9th January, 1799.

† Case of the Achilles, — Sutherland, master, heard before the Lords Commissioners of Appeals in Prize Causes, March 3d, 1804.

of the trade; for we have ports, even in the West Indies, from which the commerce might be carried on, without producing any such political inconvenience. On this hint I propose to enlarge hereafter. Meantime, supposing enough to have been already said to prove that the commerce which courts our acceptance ought not to be wholly declined, and believing that thus far my opinion is that of the public at large, I will proceed to consider the second of the four projects proposed for discussion: "That of allowing trade to be carried on with the negroes of St. Domingo without any conventional basis."

This scheme has certainly more practical facility than the former: but if it be admitted that a commercial intercourse of any kind ought to be allowed, it will, I conceive, be difficult to deny, that it ought to be sanctioned and regulated by some express compact.

If in the mercantile intercourse of civilized and polished nations, positive conventions are found useful or necessary, in order to prevent disputes, to obviate inconveniencies, and to improve the mutual advantage, surely they cannot be less so in this case, in which, supposing disputes to arise, there are with one of the parties no precedents or known principles, by which they could be decided.

By a treaty with the negro chiefs, better assurance

ance might be obtained, for the observance of mercantile faith, and for the security of British subjects in their property and their persons, while trading in the ports of a country, still perhaps likely to be the seat of much interior disorder. By a treaty also, regulations might be framed whereby such political inconveniencies and hazards as must be in some degree incident to this new branch of commerce, might be materially lessened. Particular ports for instance might be limited, as in his Majesty's order of council for licensing the trade with Toussaint's government, or in the West Indian free port acts, which in like manner innovated upon the general restrictions of our maritime code, and in which it was therefore found necessary to provide many precautions against the probable ill effects of innovation.

Fiscal, as well as political regulations, would obviously, on our side, be necessary; but without a treaty the most salutary and necessary sanctions in laws of that kind, might in their execution, give umbrage to these unenlightened neighbours. It may be added, that by mutual agreement only could adequate security be obtained against some dangerous abuses, and sources of future contention, such as the carrying off negroes, to which there would be strong temptations on both sides.

But a still more powerful argument for a commercial

mercial treaty is, that without a compact, we can have no permanent privilege or favour in the ports of that island.

We are now in a situation to become not only the most favoured nation at St. Domingo, but even perhaps to obtain from this new people a monopoly of their trade ; for we who alone can defy the resentment of France, can alone venture to contract with them at this critical period any foederal relations. Herein consists one material advantage of that opportunity, to which I invite your attention.

The considerations which we must probably give for such exclusive privileges, will be pointed out under the next head of discussion. At present, I would only remark that a treaty of some kind, is the necessary medium of such an important acquisition ; and that if we are content with a mere tacit allowance of general trade, we shall be rivalled by other powers ; and soon, in consequence of the advantages of neutral navigation now possessed by them, shall be undersold and virtually excluded from this valuable branch of commerce. We shall gratuitously relinquish in favour of America, Denmark, and Sweden a great, and perhaps hereafter an inestimable boon, which the circumstances of the present war, as some compensation for its evils, happily throw within our reach.

North America bids fairest to be our great rival

val in the future trade of St. Domingo; but as the injured islanders have seen the American flag bringing supplies to their oppressors, during the deepest horrors of the late dreadful contest, they can at this moment have no predilection for the people of that country; while our present hostility to the Republic, and the assistance we have given in blockading the French armies in their ports, must dispose them very favourably towards ourselves*. Supposing we should acquiesce, as it might be necessary to do, in their importing from North America some articles of provisions and lumber, they would, I doubt not, readily give to our merchants exclusively, the benefit of supplying them with all other commodities.

Extend your view, Sir, to that future complete restitution of the agriculture of this vast island, which is at least a possible, and in my poor judgment, no improbable, or distant event. Reflect, that upon such a restitution, we might import from St. Domingo alone, far more in bulk and value of the rich tropical productions than all the other islands in the West Indies now collectively

* If there should be some abatement of this disposition at present, from our conduct, in destroying or carrying away their means of defence at Fort Dauphin, the policy of which I am by no means able to comprehend, the favourable sentiment might, by means hereafter to be noticed, be easily and fully restored.

afford, and have a million or more of new transatlantic customers to lay out in our manufactures nearly the whole value of their produce; and then ask yourself whether such prospects as these, with such present benefits in advance, ought to be wantonly or for slight reasons renounced? Reject them at this moment, and they will certainly be lost for ever.

But it may be asked, what effectual security would be derived from a treaty for the preservation of any privileges which it might concede? I answer, in the first place, that of a faith which there is no good reason to distrust, for it has hitherto been unviolated, though strongly tried during the last war, the faith of this new community. Rude nations, perhaps, are not the least observant of such engagements. You would, however, have the additional and ever growing security of established custom; for they would soon become habitually partial to our manufactures, and our modes of commerce: but what is a much stronger ground of reliance, their self-interest, their love of freedom, and their abhorrence of a dreadful slavery, would bind them to your side; for a guarantee of their liberty must, as I shall presently show, be the price of the supposed concessions.

To all these probable advantages of a commercial treaty, there does not seem to stand opposed

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any sound objection which would not at least equally apply to the project now under review.

The countenance and support given to the new order of things would be substantially the same, and the actual intercourse with the people strictly so, whether our trade to their ports were carried on with, or without, any conventional basis.

I will here dismiss the consideration of the second plan, and pass to the third.

3d. "To enter into some treaty or convention with the negro chiefs, not involving any relations closer than those of general amity and commerce."

This is probably the scheme of policy which will at first view appear the most plausible.

"We ought not, it may be conceded, to abstain from the advantages which a trade to St. Domingo may afford, or contract the suspicion and odium of its new masters, by prohibiting an amicable intercourse between their territories and our own; we may even prudently and advantageously form with them a commercial treaty; but care should be taken not expressly to recognise their independency, nor to enter into any stipulations which may be found inconvenient in a future pacification with France."

As these views may be thought to derive some recommendation

recommendation from their seeming conformity to the policy adopted during the last war in our convention with Toussaint, I would in the first place remark, that the precedent is quite inapplicable; for between the leading circumstances of that case, and of the present, there is not only great diversity, but a direct and manifest opposition.

At no time prior to the peace of 1801, was there an opportunity of separating the cause of negro liberty from that of French ambition, had we been disposed to adopt that policy. When, by evacuating St. Domingo, we ceased to make war against the sable defenders of that island, a great majority of them were indeed disposed to become our friends and our commercial customers, but no party among them evinced any disposition to become our general allies, or our confederates against the republic. In a considerable part of the island, where General Rigaud commanded, hostility to this country continued to prevail almost to the end of the war; and Toussaint himself, was so far from choosing to engage with us as a confederate, that he maintained strictly the duties of neutrality. Though imperious necessity justified in his eyes, and even in the opinion of the French government, the pacific convention which he made with an enemy of the mother country, he never ceased to acknowledge her sovereignty, and governed the colony in
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right of successive commissions from the immediate rulers of France.

Had we at that period offered a guarantee of liberty and independency, it would in all probability have been rejected ; for the republic, let it be remembered, had not then violated the law by which she had recognised the freedom of her colonial negroes, nor shewn any disposition to restore the ancient system.

But such measures as I now recommend, would, during the last war, have been, on other accounts also, clearly unwise. That France, when released from the restraints imposed upon her by a continental and maritime war, would attempt a counter-revolution in that great colony, was at least probable ; and that the remains of half a million of uncivilized people, after ten years of revolution and war, would be able to effect in the new world what confederated nations had vainly attempted in the old, by repelling the undivided efforts of that gigantic republic, was an opinion, upon the justice of which a statesman could not safely rely. If it appeared a speculation too bold, even in the page of a political pamphlet, to build upon it in the practical deliberations of a cabinet would have been highly imprudent.

A chance, therefore, seemed to remain of the restitution in St. Domingo of the system to which

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we were determined to adhere in our own colonies ; and wilfully to exclude it, would, on our existing maxims of policy, have been inconsistent and absurd. But could even the event of the contest have been with certainty foreseen, it would have been thought bad policy to prevent an attempt by which the armies and the resources of France were to be wasted, and the immediate population of St. Domingo at the same time materially reduced ; and, what is of far greater importance, by which the attachment of the black colonists to the republic, might be converted into enmity and detestation.

The invincible stability of the new order of things in St. Domingo, and the opportunity of effectually separating that important island from the dominion of France, are essential foundations of my present advice ; but of these the former was unknown during the last war, and the latter did not exist.

Since then the project now under discussion can claim no sound recommendation from precedent, let us proceed to examine its intrinsic pretensions to your choice.

If I have thus far reasoned justly, we are already arrived at the conclusion, that a trade with St. Domingo ought not to be wholly declined, and that it should be placed on the basis of some commercial treaty to be made with the negro chiefs. It remains, therefore, next to consider whether
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commercial arrangements should be the only objects embraced by such a treaty, or whether it ought to extend to relations of a closer and more comprehensive nature.

There is obviously no middle point between a commercial treaty, which necessarily implies perfect amity between the contracting parties, and a political league or alliance ; for any advance beyond mere amity and mutual commerce, must amount in some degree to that society in political objects which constitutes the relation of allies.

But to form an alliance with the new people, is virtually to acknowledge their independency ; and that if we make this recognition, we ought at the same time to engage them, if possible, in a defensive league against France, seems almost a political axiom. I shall, nevertheless, shew in the sequel, the prudential necessity of this consequence. Meantime, as it is sufficiently obvious that my argument is now reduced to a comparison between the third and fourth of the projects proposed for discussion ; and that recommendation of the one will, for the most part, be an objection to the other, it may save time, and prevent repetition, to consider them together.

The 3d and 4th Plans compared.

The same arguments which have been already urged in favour of a commercial intercourse in general,

neral, and for giving that intercourse a conventional basis, will be found to recommend the going still further ; for if we form commercial relations alone, the expected benefits will, in the first place, be less extensive, and in the second place, far less permanent, than they might be made by a political alliance.

1st. " They will be less extensive."

The beneficial effects to be expected from amity and commerce with the people of St. Domingo, are not only the acquisition of a valuable branch of trade, but a great diminution of the dangers to which Jamaica and our other sugar colonies will be in future exposed from the power of these formidable neighbours. Now both these advantages will be proportionate in their extent, to the degree in which agriculture shall be re-established and hereafter maintained in St. Domingo.

That this is true in respect of the commercial benefits, is sufficiently obvious ; and it is fairly pre-
sumable, that as the mutual advantages of the intercourse shall increase, so also will the mutual unity and confidence which they naturally tend to inspire. The more amply these new customers are able to deal with us in the sale of their sugar and coffee, and in the purchase of our manufactures, the more they will find their comforts, their enjoyments, and growing prosperity, dependent upon English commerce ; and the more carefully will they ob-
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serve that pacific and amicable conduct towards our colonies, a violation of which would interrupt and diminish those blessings.

But some negative effects of their agricultural pursuits will be not less important to our future advantage and security ; for that military spirit which their late successes, and long exercise in war, must have strongly tended to inspire, will obviously be less general and less dangerous, in proportion as the cultivators are drawn back to their peaceful employments, and the rising generation trained, through the excitement of commerce, to the culture of the soil. The more of their youth they employ in the cane pieces, and the fewer they send to the drill, the less danger will there be that their indigenous military strength will soon be engaged in annoying their impotent neighbours.

But any great increase in agricultural industry, or abatement of military preparation, is not to be expected from them at this critical period, unless we determine to form with them more than commercial engagements.

There is now, let it be well considered, an object infinitely more interesting and important than agriculture or commerce to engage their anxious attention :—for after the dreadful experience they have had, they cannot safely conclude that the French government is even yet disposed to leave them in the undisturbed possession of their liberty.

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The present maritime war gives them indeed a momentary security against invasion by the enemies of Great Britain; but if left to expect that upon the termination of our quarrel with the republic, they shall have again to struggle singly against that despotic and merciless power, against all the ruffians of France and all the bloodhounds of Cuba, not only for independence, but for freedom, and for life itself, the great and almost exclusive object of their present endeavours will naturally be to prepare the means of war.

In the contemplation of "*that horrible yoke which threatens them,*" to use the words of the illustrious Toussaint, all minor considerations will be sunk. Instead of planting the sugar cane, the cotton bush, and the coffee tree, they will cultivate chiefly those provisions of which they may form plantations or lay up magazines in the interior, and thereby enlarge the means of subsistence in a new defensive war. Instead of rebuilding sugar mills and boiling houses, they will erect forts and cast up entrenchments. Instead of the manufactures of Birmingham or Manchester, they will import scarcely any thing but ammunition and arms. Of the rising generation, which we know from the best authority to be very numerous, the males, when of an age to be trained to labour, will be sent, not to the cane piece, but to the drill; and

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a people, on whose character the fate of the Antilles is suspended, will become a nation of soldiers.

Surely it is impossible that a British statesman, or a philanthropist, should contemplate this prospect without dismay. Not only will industry, order, civilization, and all the other blessings of social life, be retarded in their growth, but a national character formed in this new community, equally unfriendly to its own happiness, and tremendous to its European neighbours.

That St. Domingo, whatever course we take, will one day be mistress of the Western Archipelago, is indeed highly probable; and that the shocking slavery of our colonies cannot much longer be maintained, is sufficiently certain; but by a just and rational policy, we might be enabled to look forward to the progress not only of African freedom, but of African sovereignty, in the West Indies, with satisfaction rather than dismay.

The subversion of establishments so guilty, and so fertile in misery and in death, both to Africa and Europe, can be deprecated only from the terrible nature of the means, by which the change, if sudden and hostile, must necessarily be effected, and the ruin in which it would involve individuals: and instead of a misfortune, it would be a great advantage, to this commercial and maritime empire, could we hereafter commute by compact
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with an allied West Indian state, the costly and inconvenient sovereignty of those distant islands, for a monopoly of their valuable trade. But if revolution, civil or political, should be introduced into our sugar colonies by insurrection or hostile force, dreadful indeed would be the effects to individuals, and pernicious to the nation at large.

Let it not then be considered as a question of small moment, to what political character the *Indigenes*, as they call themselves, shall be at this critical period inclined. A restless warlike spirit in them will soon carry liberty and African dominion together in a tempest of revolution through all the surrounding islands. On the contrary, a pacific and industrious disposition in this infant society would at least enable us to meet the approaching change by timely preparation; and, perhaps, by the spontaneous and gradual correction of existing abuses, to introduce freedom generally into our colonies, the only mean of long preserving our sovereignty over them, without any disorder or mischief. The happy effects of liberty and peace in St. Domingo would irresistibly influence the policy of all European powers who possess colonies in the West Indies, and incline them to a willing imitation. Prejudice and self love might indeed still dispose the colonial party to oppose the salutary change; but their influence, unhappily now too powerful in this realm, would progressively decline;

cline; falsehood would vanish before the clear light of experience, the true interests of the nation would be distinguished from the particular interests of the slave holder, and the chains of oppression would at length be loosened by the hand of an impartial legislature.

What sedative then, Sir, can be found for that warlike temper, so likely to mark the infancy of this new community, and so much to be deprecated, in a view both to commerce and security, except the measures I propose ?

Tranquillize the minds of the new people on that heart-stirring subject of anxiety, the defence of their freedom, by guaranteeing it against the power of France, and they will be enabled to reduce, instead of enlarging, their military establishment and preparations; to restore the cultivators to the plantations, and to train up their youth to the peaceful labours of the field. Relying upon the national faith, and the maritime power of England, they will feel no necessity for a larger internal force than such a moderate army as may suffice to maintain industry and order; they will, in a word, revert to the wise policy of Toussaint, and pursuing the maxims of that illustrious statesman and patriot, will apply themselves indefatigably to the restitution of agriculture and commerce. You will reap the reward not only in the rapid increase of a trade, to the mono-
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poly of which you will acquire the strongest of titles, but in the future security of Jamaica and the rest of our valuable islands.

Here it may be proper to point out a new and material difference between the present circumstances of St. Domingo, and those which existed there during our last war with France. It was not so necessary in the former case, as the present, to guard with anxiety against the progress of a warlike character, and to encourage carefully the restitution of peaceful industry; because, after our pacification with Toussaint, that general and his followers had no such powerful motives as must at present be felt by the African leaders, for cherishing the one disposition, and neglecting the other.

The black colonists, let it be remembered, had at that time no apparent grounds of uneasiness in regard to the intentions of the mother country; and naturally relied for the security of their freedom, not only upon the assurances of the government, but upon the then unviolated law of the republic, by which their title to all the rights of French citizens was solemnly declared. It is no impeachment of the discernment of Toussaint to say, that he seems to have had no jealousy on this momentous point; since even the interest of the republic, if rightly understood, would have been a pledge for her good faith towards those

those loyal and useful citizens ; and that the famous Buonaparte would be such a driveller as to act upon the prejudiced views of his wife's West Indian cabinet, and to imbibe their foolish antipathies to a black skin, at the expence not only of the colonial importance of France, but of his power of annoying this country, was an event too improbable to be believed antecedently to experience. It was not till after his preliminary treaty with England, that some broad indications of this extreme folly for the first time appeared in his public language and conduct.

Certain however it is, that the African chief was deceived ; and down to the moment of Leclerc's invasion, reposed with implicit confidence on the treacherous assurances of the government. Hence that great man felt himself at liberty, after his convention with General Maitland, to indulge freely his beneficent wishes for the restitution of agriculture and commerce. His army was chiefly employed in the support of a police framed to promote these pacific objects, and it is demonstrable from the French official accounts, that a great part of his military followers must have been restored to their agricultural employments : for his enemies had more temptation to exaggerate than to diminish his force ; and yet Leclerc's dispatches described the regular black troops as amounting only to a few thousands,
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and the cultivators, who quitted their plantations in order to flock to the standard of Toussaint, as composing the bulk, not only of the general population, but of the army by which the cause of freedom was sustained.

We cannot expect that the successors of this hero, unless furnished with better security than that upon which he fatally relied, will pursue, at the present period, the same course of policy. No professions, and no practical measures of the French government, can renew in their minds the confidence which had so dreadful an issue. As Toussaint was fatally in haste to sink the warrior in the legislator, the new leaders will, if left to their own resources, take an opposite course. He was at once the Romulus, and the Numa, of St. Domingo, but Dessalines will be rather the Hostilius.

Nothing, in short, but the security which their dear bought freedom might derive by being placed under the safeguard of Great Britain, can prevent this new people from devoting all their resources to preparations for future war; from neglecting those arts which might render them most valuable friends to us, and cultivating those habits which will make them most formidable neighbours.

I remarked, in the second place, that the advantages, commercial and political, of a trade with
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St. Domingo, would, without the proposed alliance, "be less permanent" than such an alliance might make them.

The negro chiefs will probably be willing enough to enter with us into a treaty simply commercial, should they find that no more can be obtained; or even without a treaty, they will allow us freely to trade to their ports; and under the circumstances of the moment, amicable conduct towards the subjects of this country will perhaps be carefully observed; but if we wish for a lasting privilege or preference beyond other foreigners, we must, as already observed, obtain it by compact; and though we are the only people on earth who dare at this moment to accept of such a grant, yet in order effectually to obtain and preserve it, we must give in return some equivalent benefit.

The reciprocity of commercial advantage alone will not entitle us for a moment to any such distinction; for in this respect other nations will have equal or superior pretensions. Their vessels will bring the commodities of Europe and America into the ports of St. Domingo for sale upon terms at least as cheap as those of the British importer; and will receive West India produce in return, at a price at least as high as our merchants can afford to offer. In order, therefore, to outbid all other competitors, we must add to mere mercantile considerations, what

what we alone can offer, and entitle ourselves not only to a present predilection, but future gratitude and attachment, by the offer of a defensive alliance.

Should it be supposed, that the assistance which has, for our own sakes, and in a very equivocal spirit, been given towards the expulsion of a common enemy, would at the present moment be so favourably considered, as to procure for us, without any further consideration, a commercial preference to other nations, the permanence of any advantages which should upon that account alone be obtained, might still be reasonably doubted. The powerful motive of self-interest would be wanting to ensure their stability; they would soon therefore be viewed with a grudging eye, as the price of services which were past, and the value whereof had perhaps been over-rated: rival merchants would represent our privileges as unreasonable restraints of trade, and labour, not without success, to render them unpopular in the island, till they might at length become, rather sources of contention, than bonds of mutual amity.

Not so, if a great or exclusive preference of British commerce, were the stipulated consideration for a guarantee of their freedom and a perpetual defensive alliance. In that case, our privileges would stand upon the strongest and most durable
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pillars that the gratitude and self-love of the new people, could conjointly raise to support them; the British flag would be regarded as the palladium of their social happiness and safety, and an attachment might be expected to ensue, not less powerful and lasting than their love of liberty, or their antipathy to a horrible bondage.

So assiduous and successful have been the arts of calumny against this much injured race, that with those who have viewed them only in the pictures drawn by their oppressors, it may not be here unnecessary to assert their claim to human character in the sense of benefits conferred*. National gratitude is certainly a virtue which the page of history does not often exhibit in the conduct of polished societies; but if any one doubts whether the people of St. Domingo can distinguish and

* See a shocking instance of misrepresentation on this head in an author of no vulgar name, well exposed by Mr. Brougham in his able work on the Colonial Policy of the European Powers, vol. ii. p. 458.

This work, though it contains some important errors, abounds in valuable information, deep reflection, and ingenious argument upon West Indian affairs. Mr. B.'s views of practical policy in relation to St. Domingo were diametrically opposite to those which were developed in the Crisis, and which it is the object of these sheets to impress; but Mr. B. wrote when, in common with the European public in general, he thought a counter revolution in that island an attainable object. The contrary being now demonstrated, the author may safely invoke much of that gentleman's reasoning as auxiliary to his own.

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adhere to their public benefactors, let him advert to their unprecedented steadiness of attachment to all their faithful leaders. From the first establishment of their freedom, till they were treacherously bereaved of Toussaint, their fidelity to that great man, in peace, as well as war, was truly remarkable; and since his fall, Dessalines and Christophe, who were his most faithful adherents, and principal officers, have been objects of as steady an attachment. I rely, however, upon principles much surer and stronger than gratitude, which would bind them for ever to Great Britain, should she now become the patroness and guardian of their freedom.

We have hitherto adverted only to those commercial benefits, and that better security of our sugar colonies from revolutionary dangers, which might be derived from the proposed alliance. But the same measure is necessary to avert some political inconveniences and perils of a more direct and comprehensive kind, which are likely to flow from the present state of St. Domingo. These I will proceed to consider,

1st. As they belong to the existing state of affairs.

2d. As they will arise in future, but certain, or highly probable situations.

At this moment, the various political relations of St. Domingo are singular, and highly perplexing.

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The new state is at war with all our confederated enemies, and at war also with one of our friends. It is the foe of France and Holland, who are also our foes, and yet is not our confederate; it is equally hostile to Spain with whom we are in amity, and yet is at peace with ourselves.

What makes these cross relations more singular and more embarrassing, is, that the principal parties to them are all placed within sight of each others territories. The same visible horizon comprises, together with St. Domingo, some of the most important colonial coasts of Spain and Great Britain; and for all the purposes of war against the negro people, Cuba, which is one of those neighbouring shores, may be regarded as a colony of France. It is from the ports on the East end of that island, and from that station alone, that the French cruizers and fugitive troops are now feebly annoying their sable enemies, and menacing them with a new descent.

A man must be totally ignorant of the navigation and trade of the gulph of Mexico, not to perceive at a single glance the mischievous tendency of this state of things to the commerce of Great Britain, and the disputes which it must soon unavoidably occasion between such of the parties as are yet at peace with each other.

Let us advert, for instance, to that profitable trade which is carried on between our free ports
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in the West Indies, and the Spanish colonies. A great part of the goods which are the subject of that commerce, are, during their transit to and from our ports, the property of Spaniards, and of course liable to capture and condemnation by these sable enemies of Spain, the only foes she now has to seize them; and though no inconsiderable portion of the same lucrative trade is carried on upon account of our own merchants, yet from the rigid system of the cabinet of Madrid, the British owner is for the most part obliged to cover his property under the names of Spaniards, and to send it in vessels really or ostensibly Spanish. The consequence is, that when vessels engaged in this trade shall be captured by the cruizers of St. Domingo, they and their cargoes, though actually British, will be apparently hostile.

Such property will, by the law of nations, be fairly confiscable, even though the fact of British ownership should be capable of being clearly established; for it is a principle in the prize court, that a hostile flag and papers are conclusive against the claimant. But supposing the negro chiefs to be either uninformed of this law, or so indulgent towards our merchants as to wave its application, and allow them, on proof of their property in such cases, to obtain restitution; still very serious expence, inconvenience, and loss, must be sustained before their claims could be established: nor is it
easy

easy to say what species of evidence would or ought to satisfy the captors, or a prize tribunal, that property embarked in a transaction wholly conducted by enemies, and avowed by all the papers to be hostile, really belongs to a friend. That such captures would at least be a fertile source of troublesome and dangerous disputes, is certain; nor can it be doubted that they would very greatly discourage, if not wholly ruin, a trade highly beneficial to this country.

The effects of these hostilities between St. Domingo and Cuba, will be the more vexatious, because by them only, at this period, can the peace of the Gulph of Mexico and of the ^{the}thoward Passage be disturbed. We shall lose through this cause alone, the profound tranquillity which our commerce might otherwise, from circumstances unprecedented in any former war, enjoy in that part of the world. Though France has now no port to leeward of Guadaloupe, though St. Domingo is amicable to us, and Spain is still indulged with the rights of neutrality, yet British property may be captured, and British navigation greatly disturbed, in that important gulph, and its outlets, even within sight of Jamaica.

Whether any great inconveniences have hitherto arisen from this situation of things, I am not informed. In some degree its bad effects doubtless have

have already been felt; but the surrender of the Cape, and the expulsion of the French from St. Domingo, were, at the date of the last advices from that quarter which have been given to the public, very recent events; and the hostilities between that island and Cuba had but just commenced. Their noxious tendency therefore in regard to British commerce, could not well so soon have displayed itself, in any very extensive consequences.

These hostilities, however, will, in all probability, soon be greatly increased both in their extent and activity. The *Indigenes*, otherwise called, like all the other brave opposers of French usurpation, *Brigands*, were able, even during their arduous contest with Rochambeau, to fit out many armed boats and vessels, which greatly annoyed the commerce of their enemies on various parts of the coast; but now, when the harbours are in their possession, and when they have no enemy in the interior, their cruizers will naturally become far more numerous; and many of them will probably be of sufficient force to attack openly the largest merchant-men, if not also any armed vessels, by which they are likely to be opposed. Within a short distance of their shores, or in either of those narrow but important channels which divide them from Cuba and Jamaica, it will soon not be easy to navigate without encountering that yet new and
 undescribed

undescribed phenomenon, the flag of the West Indian republic.

Is it asked by what means this rude community will be able speedily to acquire ships and naval stores? Every capture which they make will add to their petty marine such a bottom as may be fit for annoying, in those calm seas, the unarmed merchantmen of their enemy, many of which are continually passing within sight of their ports: nor can it be doubted that they have even at the present moment, produce enough to barter with neutral merchants for such naval and military stores as may suffice for the equipment of their vessels. Indeed the valuable cargoes which must fall into their hands, will soon furnish an ample fund to pay for these, and all other necessary supplies.

But privateering, let me add, is a species of trade which will never be at a stand through the want of capital, where there is a good prospect of profitable captures; and if the proper resources of the new state itself should be inadequate to the fitting out of a sufficient number of cruizers effectually to annoy their enemies, they will be at no loss for foreign assistance, not even, strange though it may seem, for that of his Majesty's subjects. The rich commerce of the Spanish West Indies is a bait which always fascinates the eyes of our seamen, and of all adventurers, accustomed

turned to engage in the business of privateering; especially such of them as inhabit or frequent the Bahama and Bermuda islands; and these men now regard with impatience the delay of a war with Spain; for as to the trade of the few colonies remaining to France and Holland, it offers to such sportsmen but poor game any where; and in the Gulph of Mexico, or its passages, scarcely any at all. Rely upon it, therefore, that should we much longer continue at peace with the court of Madrid, no small part of the privateering capital and enterprize of British subjects will be transferred from our own colonies to St. Domingo. At the same time, the remnant of the old Buccaneer race still remaining dispersed in various parts of the West Indies, and who assume always that particular national character which favours most for the moment their love of contraband employment and maritime plunder, will flock with avidity to the ports of that island, to engage under the new flag in their accustomed pursuits.

Never since Hispaniola was rendered formidable by the exploits of that piratical race, not even when, during the 17th century, they revelled at once in the spoils both of Spanish and English commerce, were there such dazzling inducements offered to privateers-men, as the same island at the present conjuncture holds forth. Not only will the trade of Porto Rico, the rich com-

merce of the Havannah, and the great exports of Cuba at large, increased as they are of late years far beyond all former example, be a sure and easy prey, but a great part also of the treasures of Mexico and Peru may be intercepted on its passage to Europe by the cruizers of this central island: and the facility of bringing the spoil into port, will be not less tempting, than the ease with which it can be captured.

Let the possible effects of these combinations be pursued by the eye of state prudence beyond the present day. I have already adverted to the consequences of a military spirit being formed in this infant society; but would an appetite for maritime capture, be less dangerous to their commercial neighbours? Their war with the Spanish colonies may sow deep in this new soil the seeds of a predatory disposition, which, springing up among the first shoots of social habits and institutions, may be found very hard to eradicate, and the independent Africans of the Antilles, may hereafter, like those of Barbary, be a scourge to all maritime powers.

Should it be objected to these calculations, that Spain, not having acknowledged the independency of St. Domingo, and being at peace with France, might reasonably treat the negro privateersmen and their foreign associates as pirates; I answer, that it would argue great ignorance of the character of such adventurers, and of the
spirit

spirit of privateering in general, to suppose that such severity would materially check their career. It would be much easier indeed for Spain to threaten such penalties, than actually to inflict them; for so slender is her maritime force in the West Indies, when compared with the extent of her possessions and trade in that quarter, that she cannot check, in any tolerable degree, that enormous contraband commerce with her colonies, which notoriously prevails. Although her guarda costa's are sufficiently disposed to make seizures, the smuggler despises their feeble efforts, and carries on, often by day light, and upon the very coasts they are appointed to guard, a trade, which, in case of capture, would consign him to slavery for life. With how much more facility would the hostile cruizers of St. Domingo be able, on the open seas or near their own shores, to elude the few armed ships of Spain, from which her scattered commerce might occasionally derive protection; and how inadequate would such slight danger of capture be, to repress the ardent spirit of privateering! So easy is it on those extensive and accessible coasts to escape into port, that the brigand boats, as they were called, frequently captured the merchantmen which brought supplies to Rochambeau, even while a strong French squadron was stationed at the Cape, and while the principal harbours were still in possession of their enemy. Need it be added, that the consequence

quence of their being made prisoners by the French at that time, would have been death to these enterprizing men, and death too in some horrible form. The Spaniards, however, will scarcely dare to treat as pirates, men acting under the commission of a government which is *de facto* independent, and which is well able to practise a dreadful retaliation.

Without dwelling longer on this copious subject, I may safely consider it as proved, that if the harvest of Spanish booty is to be reaped by the cruizers of St. Domingo, and by them only, there will be no want of labourers or sickles for the work.

“But would such a treaty as is proposed be a preventative of all the evils, commercial and political, to which we have adverted?” It would give us, I answer, the best attainable security against them.

Such an alliance with the negro chiefs would, for instance, intitle us in so high a degree to their confidence and favour, that a pass from our government might be allowed by them to operate as a sufficient protection to British property, even when found in the hands of enemies, and under a Spanish disguise. They would probably go still further, and allow Spanish vessels to pass unmolested to and from British ports, even when trading on their own account. At all events, a full persuasion of our sincere amity in the breast
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of the new government, would be a safeguard against dangerous contentions; and would insure to us easy redress, when our commerce might, through the ignorance or misconduct of individuals, be improperly disturbed.

Our great influence might, however, extend to purposes still more beneficial and important. We might very possibly engage our grateful allies to renounce their just enmity towards the Spaniards; and thus, with the concurrence of the latter, completely restore peace to those seas, in the tranquillity of which we have so large an interest. It would be no unequal condition in the proposed league, to require, as a consideration of the important guarantee we should give, that our new allies should be hereafter the friend of our friends, as well as the enemy of our enemies; and as to Spain, she would have little right or inclination to complain, should we, in consequence of such an alliance, demand of her the termination of a war, which, without any rational object on her part, must be a present nuisance to her colonies as well as our own, and threatens to both in its progress the most pernicious and destructive effects.

The court of Madrid must, doubtless, already view with regret a troublesome and useless quarrel, in which nothing but necessary complaisance to the French republic, could have induced it to engage; and would rejoice to procure a peace through our mediation, if without violence to the
same

same necessary principle, that end could be attained.

I presume not indeed to say whether France would permit such a measure—I cannot venture to conjecture how long the neutrality of Spain may be deemed by the consul more important to his treasury, than her co-operation in the war would be to his arms; nor, on the other hand, can I presume to appreciate those considerations, by which our own court has been induced to treat hitherto, and may be led still to treat, as a friend, this tributary vassal of France. But as *Buonaparte* must have powerful reasons for permitting so dependent and obsequious a neighbour to preserve her pacific attitude, and to admit freely into her ports that odious British commerce which he is anxious to banish from the Continent, the same motives may perhaps induce him to relinquish the object of giving to his sable enemies a trivial annoyance from the ports of Cuba, should he find that a neutrality towards them is firmly demanded from the Spanish court by the ministers of this country.

If, on the contrary, a measure essential to the safe passage of the colonial wealth of Spain in its way to Europe, and consequently to the French exchequer, should be prohibited by the consul, it might perhaps deserve to be well considered, whether his latent views in such conduct must not be of a kind highly dangerous to this country; and
whether

whether the disadvantages of our amity with Spain in the West Indies, were not in that case greater than the balance of precarious profit which we derive from it in Europe. Let it be recollected, that her war with St. Domingo is the only pretence upon which that power could compatibly with the general laws of neutrality towards this country, allow French ships of war to be fitted out, and rendezvous in the ports of Cuba; and at the same time let an estimate be made of the annoyance to which our commerce must inevitably be exposed through this permission, and of the additional waste of men and money to which we shall in consequence be subjected on the Jamaica station. Remove this nuisance by removing the pretext for it, and France will not have a port to leeward of Guadaloupe from which she can fit out a single privateer.

But if, in the case last considered, it should be thought more prudent to submit to some of the inconveniences which have been suggested, than to obviate them at the expence of a rupture with Spain; still a strict amity and alliance with the negro chiefs, would avert from us a great part of the impending evils. If we could not restore peace to the Gulph of Mexico, and its outlets, at least we should obtain the best chance of preserving our pacific and commercial relations with both the neighbouring combatants, and that with the least possible degree of inconvenience and loss.

Having

Having thus far adverted to the inconveniences and dangers, which, during our existing political relations, are likely to spring from the new state of St. Domingo, let us next, as was proposed, consider those which are likely to flow from the same source, in future, but certain or highly probable situations.

If we anticipate, in the first place, an event, which must be admitted to be highly probable, that of Spain becoming a party to the present war, as our enemy, and the confederate of France, it will be found, that the same causes which have already been stated, would still operate very unfavourably to our commerce, as well as to our colonial security.

It was the policy of our government, during the last war, to profit by the necessities of the Spanish colonies, so as to supply them, notwithstanding the existing hostilities, with our manufactures, in exchange for their produce and bullion; and though all commerce with an enemy is in general prohibited, under penalty of confiscation of the property engaged in it, yet in favour of this particular branch of trade, that rule of the law of war was dispensed with by orders of his Majesty in council*. British subjects were permitted to trade upon their own account to and from the ports of Spanish America; and the subjects of Spain were protected by

* Orders of Council of 28th March, 1st May, and 7th August, 1798.

the same authority, in trading as in time of peace to our free ports in the West Indies. Licences from our governors exempted the vessels and cargoes engaged in such commerce from capture; or in case of their being seized, intitled the British or Spanish owners to immediate restitution.

From the same important national considerations upon which this indulgence was founded, we may reasonably expect its renewal, in the event of a new quarrel with Spain; and beyond doubt, our manufacturers and merchants are greatly interested in the maintenance of such commercial policy in that quarter of the globe.

But here the hostilities between the Spanish colonies and St. Domingo, will present to us new and most formidable obstacles; for in war, as well as in peace, our trade with those colonies has always, by their own law, been strictly prohibited; and could only be carried on clandestinely, by means of fictitious papers, under the Spanish flag, and a tually, or ostensibly, on account of merchants of that nation. Even during the greatest straits to which their colonies were reduced by our hostilities in the late war, through the dearth of essential supplies, their vessels were seized and confiscated by their own government, when detected in trading to or from a British port. It is obvious, therefore, that the property which may be engaged in this trade during a future war with Spain, will be ex-

posed to the same jeopardy, and be subject to the same inconveniencies and losses, that have already been pointed out, in respect of our now subsisting intercourse with those colonies.

We shall obviously have no right to protect the ships or goods of Spanish merchants from the hostilities of their new enemy, though we may exempt them from our own; and to elicit the fact of British ownership from the mass of Spanish evidences in which it is disguised, would, as before observed, be a very difficult or impracticable task. A trade, therefore, which already not only exposes the property embarked in it, but the persons of the immediate agents, to serious dangers, would be subjected to such new and formidable additional risques, that it must be greatly discouraged and diminished, if not wholly destroyed.

The operations of war carried on from the neighbouring coasts of Jamaica and St. Domingo against an enemy within sight of both, could not fail to produce other, and numerous, occasions of dispute, and of serious public inconvenience, unless the mutual stipulations of a treaty, and the good will and confidence arising from an express confederacy, were the wholesome expedients of prevention.

Cases of joint capture, for instance, and of recapture or rescue, would in those narrow channels very frequently occur; and the necessary but
invidious

invidious right of search, must be exercised on both sides, between the independent and unallied belligerents. The neutral ships trading to the ports of St. Domingo, and their cargoes, would also be subjects of frequent and dangerous controversy; especially as the new people will have occasion largely to import articles of a contraband nature, and as the pretence of a destination to their ports, might be made a specious mask for the conveyance of such noxious goods to Cuba, or to the Spanish main. Questions of still greater delicacy and danger might arise, from the opposite principles which would be applied by our captors, and those of the new state respectively, to the natives of Africa, or creole negroes, found on board prize vessels; especially should they be the subject of joint capture, or of recapture; or should they, by any other means, be supposed to be privileged by the new sanctuary of African captives and bondsmen.

And here another copious source of discord presents itself. To what extent shall the harbours and roadsteads of St. Domingo on the one side, and of Jamaica on the other, be privileged from the operations of war against any cruizers but their own? or how far shall the property of prizes made within their limits, vest in the government of the country to which they belong?

Without anticipating any further grounds of controversy,

controversy, I may safely affirm, that the most anxious conventional precautions, and that confidence which belongs to the most unequivocal amity, can alone secure us, in the case last supposed, from pernicious and fatal disputes; and that whatever chance we may have of avoiding, under present circumstances, a quarrel with the people of St. Domingo, their speedy enmity would, unless prevented by an alliance, be almost an inevitable consequence of hostilities between this country and Spain.

It may, perhaps, at first sight be thought that hatred to a common enemy, would be a sufficient bond of attachment; and that when at war with the only hostile neighbour of the new state, we should have influence enough over this inferior co-belligerent for every useful purpose, without any express alliance. But as there would be no common cause, or mutual object in the war, much less any claim on our part to be considered as volunteer auxiliaries, the negro chiefs could feel little disposition to abate for our sakes any part of their belligerent rights; much less to conduct their war upon principles calculated to consult our convenience, interest, or security, at the expence of their own.

It would not be forgotten by them, that Spain had been suffered to lend the ports of Cuba to the French fugitives, for purposes hostile to
St. Domingo;

St. Domingo; and that the measure, though dangerous to ourselves, had not been regarded by us as any violation of her neutrality to this country, merely because the Indigenes were the immediate objects of annoyance. Perhaps the memory of these chiefs might take a still longer retrospect, and by suggesting to them our conduct towards the illustrious Toussaint, at the conclusion of our former war with France, might admonish them to look in the existing contest to their own security alone; lest by furthering our selfish views, they should only accelerate a new invasion, and a new surprise, by the armies of the republic. The extraordinary measure of our destroying or carrying away their means of defence upon the surrender to our ships of certain fortresses, after those places had been previously reduced, at the expence of much African blood, to the necessity of an immediate capitulation, might also be remembered; and, to be sure, no conduct could indicate more plainly a design on our part of resuming towards them our former policy, on the close of our new quarrel with France.

But such indications of a separate and selfish object in our war with their enemies, would not be necessary to teach them to take care of themselves. It would be enough that we had not acknowledged their independency, much less undertaken to defend it; and that there was no conventional

conventional association with them in those hostilities in which we had, at length, for our own sakes, engaged. In the selfish and discordant propensities of human nature, at least, the calumniators of the African race will not refuse them a share; and their friends, on the other hand, will neither admit them to be so dull, nor assert that they are so preposterously generous, as to renounce, for the sake of our constrained co-operation, the care of their own interest and safety. For my part, I should expect as little regard from them to their reluctant foreign coadjutors, as if they had been educated at Vienna or Berlin; and should look for as little of practical concert, and mutual deference, between the casual co-belligerents of the Antilles, as was exhibited between those of the late war in Europe.

In the case immediately under consideration, and in all our future wars, much of positive advantage would be lost, as well as very serious evils incurred, should you neglect to avail yourself, as I advise, of the present happy opportunity.

The geographical position of St. Domingo is such, as would make the free use of its ports, of the greatest importance to either party in a war between this country and its ancient enemies. From no station can the trade of Cuba and the Mexican provinces be so effectually annoyed; and, that

that it completely locks in and commands the island of Jamaica, an inspection of the map, with attention to the course of the trade wind, will sufficiently demonstrate.

The importance of the island in a maritime war has hitherto been infinitely less than it is likely in future to prove ; because, since the colonial interests, and the naval strength of Great Britain and France fully attained to their great and long continued preponderance, and engaged those leading powers in frequent West Indian wars, St. Domingo and the Spanish colonies have never till now been hostile to each other, but have been under the dominion of allied and confederated sovereigns. The belligerent consequence of this great island, therefore, has been chiefly felt in the annoyance given by French ships, rendezvousing in its ports, to the commerce of Jamaica ; and this effect has been mitigated, not only by the great naval force of this country, which has enabled us to keep up strong squadrons on that station, and to employ very powerful convoys, but from the immense extent and value of the exports of St. Domingo itself, and of the Spanish colonies, which obliged our allied enemies for the most part to limit their maritime efforts in that quarter to purposes merely defensive. Many of our merchantmen from Jamaica, indeed, were carried into the ports of St. Domingo, but a much larger proportion of
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the enemy's ships which sailed to and from those ports, were captured by British cruizers; so that the balance of prize acquisition and loss, was usually much in our favour. It may be added, that great incidental protection was afforded to our commerce in the windward passage, and the Gulph, by the numerous British privateers which, invited by the hope of falling in with rich St. Domingo-men, made those seas their constant resort.

A moment's attention to the singular reverse in most of these circumstances which must arise from the great change that has lately taken place, will suffice to shew the important influence which the amity or enmity of the new state, would have upon our maritime interests, in our wars with our ancient enemies.

Hispaniola, no longer under the dominion of the house of Bourbon, or of that power, styling itself a republic, which has seized upon one of the thrones of the Bourbons, will, if hostile to Spain, and in confederacy with ourselves, be found a most important ally. With the numerous ports on the North, South, and West of this large island at our command, and with an auxiliary army of negroes at our call, our power to distress the Spanish colonies and commerce, would be as wide as our inclination to do so. From the same advantages, the defence of Jamaica, and of all our commerce in the Gulph of Mexico, would

would be a work of unprecedented cheapness and facility.

Great on the other hand, beyond all former experience, would be the annoyance to which we should be exposed by the hostility of St. Domingo, supposing its government to side in future wars with a maritime enemy of this country. While Jamaica, perpetually menaced with invasion by a negro army, would cost us a frightful waste of British lives, as well as treasure, in a service merely defensive, our trade in that quarter would be harassed by the undiverted operations of such ships and squadrons, as a European enemy, the ally of the new state, might send to rendezvous in its harbours. Nor would these evils be compensated in any material degree by such rich spoils as were formerly made from the commerce of St. Domingo; for supposing its exports to regain even their former magnitude, the new political relations of the island would rescue them from the grasp of our cruizers. Its external commerce, to whatever extent revived, would no longer be conducted on account of the islanders themselves, or of our European enemies, but being at all times entirely in the hands of foreign merchants, would in time of war, be carried on upon account of such foreigners only as should possess the advantage of neutral character; the property engaged

in it would consequently, unless under special circumstances, be exempt from capture. That important belligerent right, the right of maintaining against neutral intervention in time of war; the commercial restrictions by which a hostile government had monopolized the trade of its colonies in time of peace, will here have no application. In this, and many other respects, we shall experience the important difference between a trans-atlantic enemy, the satellite of some European power; and the same enemy, when enfranchised from all exterior connection, and acting against us as a principal in the war, or an independent confederate.

To undervalue or slight these considerations on account of the present depression of the French marine, and the pacific disposition of Spain, or because France has no longer any territory in the Leeward division of the Antilles, would be highly improvident; for of these extenuatory circumstances, the two latter may be very speedily reversed, and the first considerably altered. The Consul could, no doubt, with a single mandate, obtain the cession of Porto Rico, or even Cuba, as well as compel the court of Madrid to join him in the war; and that the navy of France may be one day sufficiently restored to be troublesome to our commerce and colonies, is surely no impossible event.

Whether

Whether then, sir, you regard the probable effects in the West Indies of our existing relations, or anticipate the changes likely to take place in those relations before we can sheath the sword, or look forward, with a providence which the state of Europe loudly demands, to future wars, the prudence of embracing the present fortunate opportunity is too manifest to be denied. In either view, it is of vast importance to insure, if possible, that the new born West Indian power shall hereafter be propitious to ourselves, and adverse to our enemies.

But to this end no half measures will suffice. If a connection merely commercial will not, as has been already shown, be an adequate security against discord and future enmity, much less will it entitle us to the positive benefits, which we might derive from more intimate relations with the new people, when at war with a maritime power. A commercial treaty might indeed so far abate their reasonable distrust, that they might no longer fear to admit our ships of war into their harbours, as Dessalines apparently did, when he declined to furnish us with pilots * ; but if we would have the free

* At the Cape. See Gazette of February 7th, 1804. It is a pity that the whole correspondence upon the subject of the capitulation with Rochambeau was not published, because the apparent mutilation

free use of their ports for the purposes of naval equipment and enterprize, and avail ourselves in other respects of their very important aid against a common enemy, as well as guard against their great power of future annoyance, we must conciliate their confidence and attachment, by a defensive alliance.

Were I to stop here, considerations enough perhaps have been offered in support of the plan recommended to justify its immediate adoption, unless more weighty objections than I am able to anticipate can be placed in the opposite scale.

But these, cogent though they appear to be, are by no means the most important or urgent, of the motives that call for such a measure.

The grand, and I will venture to add, the conclusive, arguments yet remain to be opened.

Hitherto we have not supposed the possibility of a speedy reconciliation between St. Domingo and France—nor have we considered the conse-

quences of it, leaves room for conjecture, that the negro chief had still better grounds for his conduct than met the public eye. Was it intended to destroy or carry away the military stores at the Cape, as well as at Fort Dauphin? A refusal of Rochambeau to permit us so far to frustrate his capitulation with Des-salines, or at least his refusal to capitulate to our squadron on those terms, would appear to have been one cause of the re-sentment which his conduct inspired at Jamaica.

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quences of leaving the republic on the termination of the present war, in possession of her claim to that island—but to these most momentous and alarming views of our subject, I must now proceed to invite your serious attention.

And first, let us advert to the chance of a reconciliation, between the Indigenes and their former masters.

If wrongs the most perfidious, cruel, and exasperating, that were ever offered by a government to a people, could to a certainty preclude the chance of future amity between them, St. Domingo must be for ever lost to France, not only as a province, but a friend. It seems at this moment a monstrous notion even, and injurious to the character of the brave Indigenes, to conceive that they can ever be brought again to profess themselves, subjects or friends of the republic. Their unparalleled wrongs appear to justify, and even to demand from them, an indignation against their barbarous oppressors never to be ended or assuaged.

“ Immortale odium, et nunquam sanabile vulnus.”

But let us not draw precipitate conclusions upon this truly important subject.

That the present despot of France should ever again conciliate the confidence of that injured people,

people, is indeed I hope impossible. He has probably sinned against them beyond forgiveness, and has deceived and betrayed them so basely, as to preclude all future faith in his promises or his oaths.—But Buonaparte, let it be remembered, is not immortal; nor is his authority, secure from a sudden and speedy subversion.

What changes the death or deposition of that tyrant might make in the European policy of France, it is not easy to foresee; but this may with almost certainty be predicted, that in what regards her West India colonies, his measures would be totally reversed. The loss of St. Domingo, the new infamy brought upon the French name by his detestable conduct in the Antilles, the sacrifice of sixty thousand brave and veteran troops, by a project which both in its conception and its intemperate prosecution, was superlatively wicked and weak—these are faults which his inimical successors would be happy to blazon, and which even a new government friendly to his memory, could such a one be expected to succeed to his power, would find it more politic to exhibit than conceal.

Those pernicious measures had, prior even to their ignominious catastrophe, become very unpopular; especially with the army; and it may be questioned whether they were not so from the beginning,

beginning, with a great majority of the people of France. But now at least, their fatal effects must be a source of general discontent; and would furnish reason enough to a new administration, for condemning the past, and adopting an opposite system.

How powerfully must these considerations be strengthened by recent events!—A new war with England, the reconquest of some of the Windward Islands, the danger of the rest, and the ultimate evacuation of St. Domingo, have brought back a state of things such as led the convention, in 1794, to decree enfranchisement to the colonial negroes at large; and such as must make even the Consul himself deplore his own egregious folly, in wholly reversing that decree. If not yet heartily inclined to retrace his steps, and to replace on the side of France, allies who could not only make for him a most powerful diversion of the regular British army, but enable him to stab deep into the bosom of our commerce, it must be because his despotic pride, and the influence of his West Indian connections united, are an overmatch for his policy, and even for his hatred of England. But his successors, on whom such a reverse of system would reflect no disgrace, would infallibly be disposed to adopt it; at least in respect of St. Domingo.

They

They would first, probably attempt to regain the sovereignty of the island ; by offering such a solemn recognition of freedom, and such security for its future maintenance, as might induce the Indigenes to wave their claim of independency, and again to profess themselves citizens of the Republic. But supposing this attempt to fail, political independency, would probably be conceded, upon the condition of their giving to France the exclusive right of trading to their ports, and entering with her into a perpetual alliance. If the new governors of the Republic should be enlightened politicians, they may possibly perceive, that such a confederacy would make St. Domingo far more valuable to France, and more formidable to England, than it would become even by the renewal of its former subjection.

Upon such a basis as this, the practicability of a reconciliation cannot reasonably be doubted. But that a submission even to the sovereignty of the Republic, would be inexorably refused to a government, by which the odious power of the Consul had been overthrown, is by no means certain.

The new rulers of France would be able speciously, and even truly, to ascribe to the despotic government which they had abolished, those hideous sins against the African race, by which the Republic had been disgraced ; and credibly to al-
ledge

ledge that the trans-atlantic measures of the Consul had been as opposite to the sense of the French people, as to the dictates of justice and humanity. At the time, it might be said, when the freedom of the colonial negroes was perfidiously invaded, that of the French citizens in Europe had been totally suppressed; and a new reign of terror, had made them irresponsible for the acts of the second Robertspierre.

In justice to our unhappy enemies, it must be acknowledged, that they have in this case as fair an apology, as their own enslaved condition can afford. It is a striking fact, that the law brought into the senate by the agents of the Consul, to revive the slave trade, and abrogate that charter of colonial freedom, the decree of February, 1794, was opposed with much greater boldness, than any of those domestic innovations by which that assembly was made to sacrifice its own boasted rights, and the liberty of the Republic. No less than twenty-seven members had the courage and the virtue to vote against that execrable law, in opposition to a government majority of fifty-four*. In an attempt to conciliate the negroes of St. Domingo, this fact would not be forgotten, and might fairly produce a very considerable effect.

* Paris Newspapers of May 20th, 1802.

It is obvious, that if such apologies for past conduct, should suffice to appease the resentment, and remove the suspicion of the black colonists, or if a new French government should prudently limit its pretensions to a mode of connection of which confidence is no indispensable basis, there are many powerful inducements which would dispose the new people to intimate connections with France, in preference to any other nation.

Unity of language is one of these motives, of which among an illiterate people, the effect will be peculiarly great.

But a still more powerful sympathy will be found in the unity of religious worship, and tenets.

The slaves in the French islands, prior to the revolution, were by no means wholly neglected in point of religious culture. Many pious missionaries, laboured earnestly for their instruction and conversion, and were protected and aided by the government, in the prosecution of that charitable work. Nor did the established clergy of those islands, regard this degraded class as unworthy of their pastoral care: so that by the concurrence of regular and irregular efforts, a large proportion of the negroes, were brought to as much knowledge of Christianity, as is usually the portion of the poor and illiterate

illiterate in the Roman Catholic countries of Europe. Masters, or colonial assemblies, were not left at liberty, *as in some other colonies*, to gratify their own latent infidelity, or their prejudices against the African race, by obstructing either the parish priests or missionaries, in this part of their clerical duty.

Religion brought in her train, to these unhappy men, temporal, as well as spiritual comforts. They obtained, during the great annual festivals of the church, periods of repose which the master durst not invade; and found in their confessor, one of the awfully privileged race, into whose ear they could, when suffering under any illegal or unusual degree of oppression, without danger, pour their complaints. Through the mediation of this patron, not only was the conscience of the master often induced to listen to the dictates of justice or mercy; but the protection of the magistrate was sometimes invoked with safety to the complainants, against such wrongs as the law would redress.

By these causes, not only was their attachment to, and zeal for, religion promoted, but that reverence which the Romish tenets and ceremonies are strongly calculated to secure to the priesthood, was naturally increased; so that the clergy had a very powerful influence upon the minds of the slaves;

slaves ; and the effect survived at St. Domingo the revolution which gave them their freedom ; for the priests were notoriously in high favour with Toussaint, and were supposed greatly to influence his councils. The popularity of the clergy has since no doubt been much impaired ; but it is probably not entirely lost ; for though some of the body, seem to have become the dupes, or willing instruments, of the Consul's perfidious policy, the greater part of them it is fair to presume, have deplored the vile measures of the government ; and if they durst not oppose, have at least not openly involved themselves in its crimes. But at all events, if the religious principle has survived among any large portion of the people, it will be a necessary effect of the Romish faith, to restore the influence of the priesthood.

To the independency of the new society, the clergy will probably feel no disinclination, provided it can be placed under the safeguard of a powerful guarantee ; but if not, their prudence, and their European feelings, will conspire with their predilections as Frenchmen and Catholics, to make them desirous of a reconciliation with the Republic ;—Their powerful influence therefore may in that case be expected to favour any agreement which France may propose ; at least if it be not inconsistent with the freedom and happiness of their converts.

Nor

Nor are these the only adherents by whom the Indigenes are likely to be influenced in favour of a compromise with France, should we leave them unoccupied by a better exterior connection. They have European inmates and fellow soldiers, whose superior knowledge and talents must naturally have great weight in their public councils; and to these, an equivocal or irresolute conduct on our part in regard to the independency of the new state, will create an evident necessity of making their peace with France. The Polish, Italian, and French deserters, and even such of the planters, who either from the first opposed the violent measures of the government, or forsook the sinking cause of Rochambeau, are now of course inimical to, and proscribed by, the consular government. The situation of these men must at present be one of considerable uneasiness and anxiety; for though they were induced by prudence, or driven by oppression, or by just horror at the crimes of the Consul, to forsake the execrable standard of the French army, and join the insurgents, it must be an alarming consideration with them that they are at present cut off from every European community, and embarked in a cause which no civilized state has yet patronized or acknowledged; at the peril, on the one hand, of the popular jealousy to which their complexion ex-

poses them among their new associates, and on the other, of the indignation of the Consul, and the perils perhaps of a new invasion. To such men, nothing could be more desirable than to see the freedom and independency of St. Domingo taken under the protection of Great Britain; but should they find that all our animosity to the Republic, will not induce us at this most favourable juncture, to coalesce with an African people in the Antilles, they will perceive that an accommodation with France, can alone deliver them from the dangers of their present situation. They will therefore be eager to make their peace with the existing or some future government of that country; and will be glad to purchase their pardon, by using all their influence to bring over the African chiefs to such a compromise as may be safely recommended.

From these united considerations I infer, that you ought not to rely on the present great and just exasperation of the people of St. Domingo, as full security against the attempts of France to regain their dependency as colonists; much less against the wiser endeavour on her part, to obtain their friendship and alliance.

There is, however, at this critical juncture, a principle far more influential upon the new society than the motives and the interests to which
I have

I have adverted, and all other popular feelings united; and by this, if wisely enlisted on our side, you may raise insuperable bars to their future re-union with France, and perpetuate their animosity to that country. You have only to appeal to that heart-stirring feeling, their solicitude for the safety of freedom, their dread of "the horrible yoke," and bid them to look to our maritime power, for the protection at once of their private liberty, and their independency as a nation. Guarantee those important objects—make the price of the stipulation a perpetual alliance against France—and their breach with her will be widened so extensively as to close no more. The Republic will thenceforth have nothing to concede, that will not be regarded as already securely obtained—no offers to make, that will not be considered as insidious,—no menaces to use, but such as will be despised.—Then indeed, you may rely upon the lasting effect of the Consul's cruelties and frauds, may pronounce a final divorce between this injured people and their merciless oppressors, and effectually say, "*pugnent ipsi nepotes.*"

A treaty or an intercourse merely commercial, would be so far from producing these important consequences, that our disposition to form such relations, and to stop short at that point, might furnish

furnish arguments against us to the advocates of the Republic. Such a half measure under present circumstances, might speciously, nay, it might truly, be represented, rather as a proof of our incurable hostility to the freedom of the African race in the Antilles, than any symptom of a contrary disposition. That we advanced so far, might be reasonably ascribed to commercial cupidity; that we offered no closer relations, could only be accounted for by what may be too fairly imputed to us, a bigoted antipathy to the new order of things in St. Domingo.

The violent and acrimonious nature of our present contest with the Republic, would add great force to such an inference. Our abstemiousness in such a case, could admit but of one solution, a solution so obvious, that neither the emissaries of France, not the sincere friends of the Indigenes, would fail to point it out to them.—“ England, it would be
 “ said, is again practising the policy she used
 “ towards Toussaint.—She will take your com-
 “ merce during the war, but leave you exposed
 “ again at its conclusion, to all the vengeance of
 “ the Republic. Nay, she will perhaps again fa-
 “ cilitate, even at the expence of her own imme-
 “ diate security, new efforts of that power against
 “ your freedom, by allowing French fleets to pass
 “ the ocean, prior to a definitive treaty, in order that
 “ you may the more effectually be surprised by a
 “ powerful

“ powerful invasion. She withholds the recogni-
 “ tion of that independency which you now assert
 “ against France, and avoids an alliance with
 “ you, in order that she may play again this
 “ part, without incurring the reproach of open
 “ perfidy. Nothing, therefore, remains to you,
 “ but to secure, at the expence of this selfish and
 “ bigoted nation, such good terms as you may
 “ now make with the republic.”

If we would estimate rightly the probability of a reconciliation between St. Domingo and France, and form adequate conceptions of the mischievous tendencies of such an event, we must look beyond the period of the present war.

At this moment any conciliatory efforts which the French government might be disposed to employ, however favoured by the hesitating conduct of this country, and by the particular interests of individuals in the colony, would be made under such great disadvantages, as might very probably render them abortive. The injured colonists would naturally regard them as the result of a necessity imposed upon their late oppressors by the renewal of a maritime war, and as mere stratagems of a temporising policy; and there would be no immediate dread of a hostile alternative, to second the other motives which might incline them towards an amicable settlement; but when the sea

shall again be open to the enterprises of the Republic, she will be able to offer to them the olive branch with a better grace, and with a far more powerful effect. The recollection of past horrors even will then plead on the side of peace, and if no dangerous confidence be demanded, may contribute powerfully to silence the lingering voice of hatred and revenge. Should the French government then be prudent enough not to demand the admission of any army, or the submission to any exercise of its authority in matters of interior legislation or police, its sovereignty might very probably be acknowledged; but the closest federal connection at least, would hardly be refused. Indeed I see not how a reconciliation on such a basis, could at that period possibly be declined: for some exterior connection, of a commercial nature, would be indispensably necessary to the welfare of the new people themselves; and no other power could then venture to accept the advantages of their commerce, since France, as against other nations, would assert to it an exclusive, and indisputable title.

“ But will not the supposed reconciliation be
 “ innoxious to this country, when our dispute
 “ with the Republic shall end?” Such a thick
 haze of prejudice and ignorance always hangs
 over the horizon of our colonial interests, that I
 should

should not wonder were this question to arise in the mind of a British politician. But unless our next peace with France is to be eternal, and unless she shall lay down together with the sword, all her disposition to impair the commercial and colonial interests of this country, the restitution of her authority or influence at St. Domingo would be not less formidable to us after, than before, the termination of the war. To demonstrate this proposition would be easy; but it would be to lengthen an argument already too long for your time, if not for your patience. Besides, it is a work which has been anticipated in my former letters *, and if any part of the reasoning contained in them met a pretty general assent, it was that, as I have ground for believing, which applied to this part of my subject. To the Crisis of the Sugar Colonies, therefore, I beg leave to refer, for the probable effects of negro liberty in St. Domingo, when associated with the power, and directed by the councils of France.

To suppose that the Republic will, at the close of her present war with this country, choose rather to embark in a new crusade against liberty in the West Indies, than acquiesce in its establishment, would be to deem the madness of the Consul quite incurable; or if such a choice be expected

* Crisis, p. 85 to 93.

from

from the successors of that despot, it must be from the belief that Frenchmen in general are infected with the same disease; for never was interest more palpable than that which the Republic now has in supporting at St. Domingo the system she has vainly attempted to subvert; nor did experience ever attest any truth more clearly, than the impracticability of the opposite course.

But let it be supposed that the preposterous project of restoring slavery in that great island, will indeed be revived. In that case, an early reconciliation between the black colonists and France is not, I admit, to be apprehended; but will there be no danger to this country, from the new and furious contest which must inevitably ensue? Will our own colonies stand safe within the wind of such contention?

Here again I must use the right of referring to arguments which were offered two years ago to the public*. In calculating the probable effects of the then depending French expedition against St. Domingo, and of the armaments which were preparing to follow it, I pointed out the perilous consequences to which our colonies would, in either event of the contest, be speedily exposed; and shewed that if the attempt of the Consul

* Crisis, Letter 3d.

should prove successful, the new situation of affairs in the West Indies would be such as to place continually at the mercy of an ambitious and perfidious power, our most valuable transatlantic possessions.

The reality of those grounds of alarm was, I believe, very generally felt, and the defensive precautions employed upon the Jamaica station, evinced that they were not wholly disregarded by his majesty's ministers.

If the arguments here referred to were convincing in the month of March, 1802, they cannot be less so at this period; for intermediate events have not tended to detract from their force: every incident, on the contrary, of the war of St. Domingo, and every official letter from the French commanders, might be invoked to verify the grounds of apprehension in question, as they were stated in the Crisis*.

Cast

* I abstain, in general, from extracts; but as a striking confirmation of one of the opinions here referred to, viz. that France, if successful in her war with the negroes, would alledge, and really find, a necessity of forming such a military establishment in St. Domingo, as would enable her, at the commencement of a new war, to overwhelm our colonies by a sudden and irresistible invasion, I request attention to the following parallel passages.

Crisis, p. 97.

"I pretend not to determine, to what extent her permanent military establishment must necessarily

Le Clerc's Letter of March 26, in the Moniteur of May 22d, 1802.

"I hope that the divisions of Flushing and Havre, that which

"nly

"you

Cast your eye then once again, sir, over the pages to which I have referred, and estimate coolly, with the aid of that light which has been since afforded by experience, the probable effects of a new war between France and her revolted colonists. Though the renewal of such a contest, and with the same extreme and irrational object, on the part of France, to exasperate the quarrel, is a supposition sufficiently wide of probability, let it be made; and add, if you please, that the obstinate resistance of the black colonists will at length be overcome, and the old system restored. This was the supreme object of the vows of our plan:

“ rily be enhanced ; it is sufficient
 “ to say, that beyond the defence
 “ of the old fortifications, endan-
 “ gered perpetually by a new in-
 “ ternal enemy, she must establish
 “ and maintain a military organi-
 “ zation in the interior, ramified
 “ enough, and strong enough, to
 “ overawe the slaves, and to give
 “ security and confidence to the
 “ masters, without this the coun-
 “ ter-revolution, we are supposing
 “ would be fruitless of every thing
 “ but blood; and with a permanent
 “ force like this at her command,
 “ no hostile neighbour could be safe
 “ for a moment. Draughts that
 “ would hardly be missed from such
 “ an establishment, would be ade-
 “ quate to overpower the strongest
 “ garrison we ever maintained dur-
 “ ing peace, in the largest of our
 “ islands.”

“ you announced to me from Brest,
 “ and that from Toulon, will spee-
 “ dily arrive. They will be use-
 “ ful to us, by enabling us to oc-
 “ cupy cantonments upon all the
 “ points of this vast colony ; which
 “ is the only means of arriving
 “ the re-establishment of order and
 “ tranquillity.”

On this head general Le Clerc's word may be taken—yet he probably had, at the date of this letter, at least thirty thousand men under his command.

ters and slave traders ; “ the consummation de-
 voutly to be wished ;” and let them again cheat
 themselves and others if they can, with the hope of
 such an event. But surely the British statesman will
 no longer be their dupe, to such a pitch of credulity,
 as to see in this phantom any promise of national
 welfare. The problem has now been practically
 solved ; and it is no longer matter of argument,
 but of experience, that France cannot reduce to
 submission, much less keep in subjection, the ne-
 groes of that large island, but by means utterly
 inconsistent with the security of the British West
 Indies. To facilitate, therefore, or permit such
 a conquest, would be to prepare for an ambitious
 and unprincipled enemy, the same military pre-
 ponderance in the Antilles, that he already possesses
 in Europe ; and wilfully to subject ourselves to the
 ruinous necessity of maintaining large fleets and
 garrisons during peace as well as war, in that de-
 structive climate.

Yes, Sir, whatever be the interest of the
 planter in this question, that of the nation is at
 length become obvious and undeniable. Unless
 the other powers of Europe would give a gua-
 rantée in respect of St. Domingo, which they re-
 fused for Malta, it is not safe for this country that
 France should possess that large island again, by
 such means as must certainly be employed for
 the

the purpose. We must not again suffer fifty or sixty thousand French troops to be transported to the West Indies; for we cannot rely that the folly and bigotry of the present, or any future French government, will again deliver us from the jeopardy of such an experiment. Had not the present war arrived in time to stop the pretended Louisiana expedition, we might have found that even the proud and inexorable Consul, when on the point of a new quarrel with this country, could have sacrificed his thirst for African blood, to his hatred of England; and found better employment for his recruited army, than hunting down with blood hounds their human game among the Mornes of St. Domingo*.

Between

* There is abundant reason to conclude that the great armament which was preparing during several months in the ports of Holland, and which was anxiously represented in the French gazettes, as destined for Louisiana, was in truth intended for St. Domingo. That the Consul should needlessly send a large army, which by the best conjecture I can form would have consisted of about twenty thousand men, with a train of artillery, and large magazines of ordnance and military stores, merely for the purpose of receiving possession of a ceded colony, and this at a time when the commanders in St. Domingo were urgently demanding reinforcements, which from the disposition of the army he found it difficult to send, is too unnatural to be credited.—No resistance could be feared on the part of the Spaniards, and a single frigate with the governor and his staff would have sufficed

Between the opposite extremes of the victory, and the defeat of France, in her late contest at St. Domingo, or rather between the conquest and total

fictioned for the pretended purpose ; but if not, at least the ships would have been dispatched separately, or in small squadrons, as soon as they were ready for the voyage ; instead of being detained as they were, at the expence of great inconvenience and delay, in order to be collected in a large fleet, till sickness at length broke out among the troops, and the sea stores became unfit for service. If New Orleans was the true port of destination, all the evils of trans-marine expeditions in time of war, were wantonly and preposterously incurred in time of peace.

Besides, we have since had ample accounts from Louisiana, and it has not transpired that any preparations were made for the reception of a French army there, or that the arrival of an armament so long preparing, and so accidentally delayed in Europe, had there been at all an object of public expectation ; whereas it has clearly appeared from intercepted letters, that the promise of a new and powerful army had at that period been made to the French commanders in St. Domingo, and was indispensably necessary for the further conduct of the war in that quarter.—When to these and other considerations, we add the known necessity under which the Consul laboured, of concealing from the soldiers, whom he devoted to West Indian service, the fatal field in which they were to be employed, and that Louisiana was the most convenient mask for this purpose, there will remain little or no room to doubt, that the fleet from Holland would have stopped short of the mouth of the Mississippi, and landed its army at Cape Francois.

But was there no ulterior object ?—Beyond doubt, if the desperate contest with the negroes was to be persisted in, the new army would have found full and final employment

total loss of the island, there was a possible middle event, the effects of which were also considered in the Crisis*, and they were shewn to be still more dangerous

in St. Domingo; and it is, I admit, probable enough from the Consul's character, that he would have continued enormously to drain the bravest blood of the Republic without remorse, in the pursuit of his nefarious object. But, on the other hand, there are some strong grounds for suspecting, that this profound dissembler had a design at this period to abandon an attempt which he at length found would be ineffectual; and that instead of obtaining, at the expence of a new army, the chance of recovering a desert in St. Domingo, he would by means of his new expedition, and the garrisons of that island united, have contrived to seize by surprise upon Jamaica; perhaps also on some of our other sugar colonies.

To give all the reasons that might be offered in support of this suspicion, would be to enlarge this note into a dissertation. I shall only mention the following.

1st. It appeared by various accounts, that a large embarkation of cannon and artillery stores, was a part of the preparatory measures for this new expedition; but as the negroes had no artillery, and no longer kept the field in considerable bodies, and as the plan for the new campaign was to hunt them down, and exterminate them in the interior, this part of the preparations, does not seem to point to such a war as that of St. Domingo.

2dly. The delay in the Texel, if St. Domingo was the true object, was of the most discouraging and fatal tendency to the cause of the Republic in that island; but upon the hypothesis we are considering, this effect was of little consequence; and might have been well compensated by the increased effect of the blow to this country, since length of preparation increased the magnitude of the armament to be employed against us.

* Page 85 to 93.

dangerous than either of the former, to the colonial interests of this country. I mean that of a compromise between the Republic and her sable opponents,

3dly. If the further prosecution of the war in St Domingo was really designed, Buonaparte was persisting in that project to an extent, and by means, which were not satisfactory to the commanders employed: for though General Rochambeau had the promise of large reinforcements, he sent a short time prior to his knowledge of the present war, the most respectable and imposing deputation his army could furnish, with General Boyer, the second in command, at its head, to make personal remonstrances to the Consul. (This appears by the letter before referred to in page 20.) Now it is hard to believe that the Consul meant to work in opposition to all his own instruments, though it is by no means improbable on the other hand, that he would keep in his own breast to the last, or confide only to the commander of the intended expedition, the important secret of his designs against England.

4th. It was disclosed in the French newspapers, during the latter stage of the preparations in Holland, and immediately before the rupture with this country, that the celebrated Victor Hugues was appointed to the command of the expedition to Louisiana, and the government of that colony. A man less likely to promote the Consul's views at St. Domingo, or better fitted to conduct the supposed design against the British West Indies, could not possibly have been selected.

5th. The discontent and desertion of the troops which had formerly been trepanned into the horrible service of St. Domingo, and the avowed disgust of the military in general to that service, must have presented strong grounds of apprehension as to the conduct of the new army, when it should find itself brought by stratagem into the ports of that island; but if at the same period, the conquest of the English colonies should
be

ponents, upon the basis of private freedom, after a bloody and indecisive contest—A new war might possibly be ended by such an adjustment, and

be disclosed to them as the alluring object of immediate service, discontent, it was probable, would immediately subside, and be converted into satisfaction and applause. The same critical period would also have presented a happy opportunity, for conciliating the black colonists upon the basis of freedom; and glossing over by a compromise, to which vengeance against England would have furnished a pretence, the dishonour of a defeat by such enemies.

I will only add, in the last place, that upon this hypothesis the conduct of the Consul towards this country will be found perfectly natural. He provoked a quarrel by frequent insult, because he wished to be on such terms with us as would, in due time, furnish an apology for the meditated aggression. But he was at last very desirous to avoid an immediate rupture, because the Louisiana expedition had not yet departed from the Texel. His plan was broken by that bold, though tardy, decision of our ministry, which, by exceeding his calculations, placed him in a severe dilemma between his policy and his pride. He advanced, however, to the verge of extreme humiliation, in order to defer for a short time a war which all his previous conduct evinced a determination to provoke. St. Domingo alone could present no motive for such inconsistency. A brief interval of maritime peace, could there only have served to aggravate his loss, and his dishonour, while an immediate war with England was his best apology for defeat in that disastrous field, as well as the mean of saving a new army from useless destruction.

For these reasons I am strongly disposed to believe, that our complaint of preparations in the enemy's ports was not so groundless as is generally supposed; and that the measure anticipated

and a coalition between the two armies produce that formidable union of European and African arms, to the perilous effects of which I formerly called your attention.

The fearful tendency of such a coalition is sufficiently obvious. It would give to the direction of our inveterate enemy, means of future annoyance and conquest, to which the whole disposable army of Great Britain, could it be spared for West India service, might be vainly opposed. It would make the establishment of French dominion through the whole chain of the Antilles, a matter of such obvious facility, that the most moderate of governments might find it hard to resist the temptation.

Is it thought more likely, that the negroes, should they again triumph over the new efforts of France, would become, by new provocations, too much exasperated against her to be afterwards the willing instruments of her ambition, either as her political dependents or allies? You would, even by this most favourable result, be at best only replaced in the situation, and restored to the happy opportunity which you at present possess; you would still be obliged to acquiesce in the establishment of an

anticipated in the Crisis, p. 90 to 92, was on the point of being adopted by France, when averted by the recommencement of war.

African,

African power in the Antilles; and all the evils, real or imaginary, which that innovation may threaten, would at least remain undiminished.

But the case would, supposing it to arise in time of peace, have this fearful aggravation—that the remedy I now offer would be then unattainable, except at the price of a new war with the republic; for you could not hope to be permitted by that power to form any amicable connections with her late subjects, either political or commercial; and to treat with them without such permission, would reasonably be regarded as highly affronting and injurious.

It cannot be thought that, when obliged to desist from the new war with her colonists, she would make a gratuitous grant of their independency; since no regard to her own security would demand such a sacrifice. She has, let it be considered, no colony to the leeward of St. Domingo; and her windward islands are divided from it, not only by a long tract of sea, which, from the constant course of the trade winds, forms a very sufficient barrier; but by many intermediate colonies of England, Denmark, and Spain. Having therefore no offensive enterprises to fear from these sable enemies, and no commerce which they will have power to annoy, the Republic will, in the event last supposed, find no motive for a pacification

cification on the basis of independency, unless the very advantages which I would now persuade you to secure to ourselves, shall be conceded to her by her late subjects, as the substitutes for her title to govern. To renounce her sovereignty on cheaper terms, would be not only to deliver our colonies from a nuisance; but to transfer to this country or other nations, the trade and the power of St. Domingo.

The course of conduct which France would pursue in such a case therefore, would unquestionably be this. She would withdraw her armies from the island; but surround it, to our extreme inconvenience, with a powerful naval blockade; and having in right of her pacific relations with other states, the power to exclude their interference, would soon or late make the islanders glad to accept of peace and independence, on the terms of granting to their former sovereign the monopoly of their trade, and engaging with her in a perpetual treaty of offensive and defensive alliance.

In short, Sir, you would in this least adverse event, for such, in comparison with a triumph of the French arms in St. Domingo I have elsewhere shewn it to be, gain only a brief respite to our colonies. You would not be able, as now, finally to prevent the irresistible sword of negro freedom from falling into the hands of France.

Take then, Sir, your choice of future prospects.

Place

Place yourself by anticipation in the act of negotiating for a new peace, and look forward to whichever of these consequences of the treaty you deem the least to be deprecated. Expect the future policy of the Republic to be of what character you please, just or nefarious, cautious or rash, rational or absurd;—suppose as you please, either that she will, or that she will not attempt to coerce and subjugate by new armies the people of St. Domingo; and if such an attempt is to be made, imagine it either to be, or not to be, successful. In each of these cases, you will be involved in some of those dangerous consequences to which I have adverted, and the fearful extent of which was demonstrated in my former address.

Of all the considerations then by which my advice may be supported, the most powerful is that which an adversary perhaps might adduce on the opposite side:—*to avoid difficulties in the next pacification with France*, you should not lose a moment in acknowledging the independence, and securing the alliance of St. Domingo.

“What,” I seem to hear some timid politician exclaim, “will you obstruct our path to peace by new obstacles! Have we not differences enough already to adjust with France, without revolting her pride, by demanding the abdication of her most important colony?”

With

With such Englishmen, if any there be, as are prepared to accept from our haughty enemy unequal and unsafe conditions of peace, I desire not to reason—they may be disposed, for ought I know, to renounce all our West Indian colonies, rather than protract the present arduous contest: but for my own part, I see no prudent medium, between truckling to our insolent enemy at once, and exacting from him such conditions, as are compatible with our own future security, abroad, as well as at home. I am sure too, that this commercial country is not yet prepared to give up her trans-atlantic possessions, as the price of the amity of the Great Nation; and therefore if peace were worth the sacrifice of honour and security, it would still, in my opinion, be unwise to leave France in possession of a title to St. Domingo; because that title would soon be the means of engaging us, for the preservation of our sugar colonies, in a new and more formidable war. If we must have a West Indian cause of hostilities with the Republic, I would rather it should be such a cause, as would place the arms of the Indigenes, and the interests of the African race, on our side, than one that would range them both under the standard of our enemies.

I presume not to say at what exercise of our indubitable rights, the arrogant pride of France

may not be offended; but this I will affirm, that the measure in question, will give her no just or specious ground of complaint.

To support the revolting members of a hostile state, is an unimpeachable exercise of the rights of war. By our Elizabeth, and by the Great Henry of France, such policy was practised without scruple; and the haughty Philip was obliged to sheath his sword without avenging the affront. But of the numerous precedents that might be adduced, the conduct of France herself in the American war, is at once the most appropriate and recent; and surely the pride of a French government may fairly brook, what Great Britain herself was obliged to digest, little more than twenty years ago.

It is, however, wronging the argument to compare these two cases; for France had no pretence of any necessity, arising out of the care of her own security, when she acknowledged, and engaged to defend, the independency of the United States; whereas the preservation of our most valuable colonies, demands from us an alliance with St. Domingo. I might add, that the one measure was a violation of the duties of peace: while the other, if now adopted, will be the act of an open enemy, possessing all the rights of legitimate war.

But independently of all precedent, and beyond the range of all ordinary principle, the proposed

posed treaty might be justified, if necessary, upon the very singular nature of the case.

France, by her own act, whether intentionally or through the unforeseen effect of her domestic revolutions, is immaterial, has created a new political power in the Antilles; a power dangerous perhaps in itself, but which in her hands would inevitably be destructive, to the security of its colonial neighbours. She has therefore imposed upon us a necessity of treating this new power as independent; and of engaging it, if we can, in such connections, as may exclude her influence or authority over it in future.

Nor is it material to this ground of defence, that the Republic should be considered as still wishing to maintain that work of colonial revolution, which she once openly abetted. The case to be sure would in that case be stronger against her: for such policy might, upon views lately professed by herself, be justly regarded, as a direct attack upon the security of other powers, in their West Indian possessions; as an injurious violation, to use the words of Villaret, "of those principles, which alone can preserve, and upon which reposes, the common interest of all the European powers in their establishments in the Antilles*."

* Villaret's letter to the British admiral at Jamaica, on the arrival of the first expedition at Cape Francois, February 14, 1802.

The author trusts he cannot be suspected of concurring in the principle of this quotation. He is far from thinking, that the powers of Europe have a common interest, any more than a common right, in maintaining and perpetuating a system of the most odious and impolitic oppression, that ever afflicted or disgraced humanity. But he reasons to many who may differ from him, perhaps, on this subject ; and as between the nations who still uphold that loathsome despotism, the reasoning is undeniably fair.

But it is enough, that what France did, or permitted in St. Domingo, she is found unable to repair. Whatever self conservatory rights the innovation gave to us, they cannot be taken away by an ineffectual attempt to reverse it, and to restore the former state of things ; for that fruitless effort has not removed or diminished the danger, against which we are driven to provide. A man who should wilfully or carelessly set fire to his own house, would thereby give his neighbours a right to pull it down, if such a subversion of his property, were necessary to the preservation of their own. Could he plead inevitable accident in his excuse ; the right, though it might be more tenderly exercised, would not be taken away. But to say, that he had already done all in his power to extinguish the flames without success, would
clearly

clearly be to strengthen, rather than impair, the right of his neighbours to apply the only effectual remedy. What should we say, were he in such a case to claim a right to lock up his doors, to forbid our ascending the roof, and to insist, in all points, on the exercise of his former dominion, as owner of the tenement ?

It may be said, that this illustration proves rather a right in other nations to effect, if they can, a counter revolution in St. Domingo, than to treat it as independent ; on the same principle upon which the late confederated powers of Europe, might have justifiably restored, if they could, the monarchy of France. But I answer, that supposing such a work really capable of being accomplished, and at an expence which other nations could afford, and which they could be reasonably called upon to sustain, there are, in this case, third parties, in respect of whom very serious moral difficulties must first be removed. Such a remedy, however, is demonstrably impracticable. Even were it fit that the blood, the treasure, and the conscience of Great Britain, should be sacrificed to the effecting, for the benefit of France, the re-establishment of the old system in St. Domingo, she has not power to accomplish such a work. She must therefore resort to the only attainable security against that,
which

which is in truth the worst part of the danger, the power of annoyance which the new state of things is likely to impart hereafter to an envious rival, and an insidious enemy. The conflagration in this case is to be dreaded, chiefly through that connection with France, which is likely to carry the flames. To pull down the roof and walls of that connection therefore, not to subvert the fabric of African freedom or independency, is the precaution towards which our efforts must be directed, and which we have an incontestable right to adopt.

Were we now at peace with the Republic, these reasons might justify, perhaps, our entering into an alliance with her late subjects of St. Domingo. They might at least justly warrant our demanding, as an alternative to that measure, good security against the dangers to which, either by a renewal of her quarrel with the new people, or by a compromise of the subject of that quarrel, we must unavoidably be exposed. But happily, I write at a time when the measure in question can, in point of moral rectitude, demand no such arguments in its defence. To the right of self-preservation we need not now resort; nor to any moral consequences deducible from the past conduct of France; since the comprehensive rights of war, clearly entitle us to treat with a revolted colony

colony of our enemy, and to sever it finally, if we can, from his dominions.

That a French government would hereafter reject terms of peace, which might in other respects be mutually acceptable, on the score of our having become allies of St. Domingo, and guaranteed its independence, is highly improbable. But if a renunciation of her claim to that potent and menacing island, be requisite for our future security, it must of course be demanded from her in the next negotiation for peace, although we should not be previously bound by treaty, to prescribe to her such a condition : and the only question in this case is, whether the condition would be more offensive, and obstruct longer the important work of pacification, because during a time of hostility, we had contracted engagements which bound us to insist upon it, and from which we could not, without dishonour, recede.

That the contrary would rather be the effect of such engagements, may safely be affirmed. National pride would be less mortified, and the credit of a minister far less impaired, in such a case, by acquiescing in relations already formed, and engagements already contracted and irrevocable, than by giving way to new pretensions, and allowing an enemy to obtain as the price of peace, more than he had ventured to lay claim to, during all the acrimony of war.

France

France herself understands the value of this distinction, and therefore openly bound herself during the late war in compacts with the people she conquered, not only to maintain them in their revolt from their ancient sovereigns, but to retain them as dependants on, or integral parts of, the Great Nation. Far different indeed, was this audacious proceeding, from the just and necessary measure, which I would persuade you to adopt; yet these covenants of usurpation were alledged by the French government itself, in the subsequent negotiations for peace, and perhaps not without advantage. The self-imposed necessity of demanding extreme concessions, served probably, in some slight degree, to soften to the feelings of the despoiled and injured powers, the arrogant pretensions of the Republic; or at least, by precluding the hope of peace on cheaper terms, made them submit a little sooner than they would otherwise have done, to the urgent calls of necessity.

A case more nearly parallel; is to be found in the peace which terminated the American war; and I appeal to the feelings of Englishmen, whether that contest would have ended so soon, had France previously avoided an alliance with our colonies during the war, and afterwards demanded their independency, or security against their re-union with this country, in the negotiations at Versailles.

Unless

Unless then, Sir, you are prepared to say, that the Republic, at the conclusion of the present war, ought to be left wholly unrestrained to act as her policy or ambition may suggest in relation to St. Domingo, you ought, even for the sake of future peace, to embrace the present opportunity. If there be no danger or inconvenience in again suffering large French armies to pass, during peace, into the centre of the Antilles, and if there be nothing to be apprehended from that far more probable event, the reconciliation of St. Domingo with France, you may safely proceed in your present equivocal conduct: but if the dangers pointed out to your notice in the Crisis of the Sugar Colonies, had any reality and importance, you should hasten to profit by the present opportunity, of preventing their future recurrence. By delay, you will not only risk all the inconveniences and evils which I have shewn to be the probable fruits of the present state of things in the West Indies during the war; but will enhance the difficulties that may oppose its safe and speedy termination.

To pursue to the same important period, the comparison between a commercial treaty, and a close political alliance, it should be observed, that the former would, in no degree, deliver us from the dilemma in a negotiation for peace, which

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the latter is calculated to avoid; and that the peculiar advantages of the one, cannot be expected to extend beyond the present war, without the aid of the other. Unless our next peace shall find, or place the inhabitants of St. Domingo, in a state of acknowledged independency, France certainly will not allow this country to trade to their ports: much less to do so with an exclusive preference, or in right of a treaty which would be derogatory from her sovereign authority. She will not, as I before remarked, spontaneously renounce her sovereignty, merely to legitimate our trade, and sanction our commercial privileges.

The four different projects which were originally proposed for consideration, have now been distinctly reviewed.

To prohibit all commercial intercourse between His Majesty's subjects, and the new masters of St. Domingo, has been shewn to be neither politic nor safe; and that such an intercourse, if carried on at all, ought to be sanctioned and regulated by treaty, has, I hope, been sufficiently proved. But whether our commercial intercourse with that people should be confined to commercial objects, or should extend to a political league of the nature I would persuade you to form,

seemed

seemed the question most open to dispute. Those rival projects therefore have been more amply considered, and their respective pretensions compared.

The practical result, if I have reasoned satisfactorily, is this—That a treaty with the people of St. Domingo, involving a recognition of their independence, and a perpetual alliance against France, ought to be negotiated without a moment's delay. No measure less decisive, will secure to you the future commerce of that valuable island—No other expedient, will guard our sugar colonies so effectually from the evils with which they are menaced.—No connection less intimate, will deliver you during the present and future wars, from the maritime inconveniences to be dreaded from the independence of St. Domingo, and its new relations towards other powers; much less secure to you the important belligerent advantages, which its amity is likely to produce.

But the grand consideration of all, is the highly probable, and most pernicious alternative to this alliance, a reconciliation between the new people and France. That they may not speedily become your formidable enemies, you must make them your obliged allies. You must guarantee their independence against the Republic, that they may not, to the ruin of your colonies, fall
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in their enfranchised state, and with their new-born energies, under her dominion, or her influence. Of such a reconciliation there is danger perhaps even at the present moment ; but upon the conclusion of the war, at latest, such an event will almost infallibly ensue, unless precluded by the wise measure which I advise you now to adopt. Supposing the Republic even to be rash enough to recur to her counter revolutionary efforts, the folly would only retard, not ultimately prevent, a coalition fatal to our colonies, would subject them to new intermediate perils, and leave them exposed in the sequel, to dangers not less imminent than those with which they are at present menaced, without leaving a British minister at liberty to employ those means of prevention; which may now be unobjectionably used.

The evils therefore which exist, and those which are likely to arise, the dangers of the war, and those to which peace will give birth, admit but of one remedy ; are to be prevented or lessened by one only expedient. If you would wield the sword without new disadvantages, if you would sheath it without peril to our colonies, and if you would diminish the difficulties which oppose the restitution of peace, you must embrace without delay, the present opportunity ; you must adopt the

the measure I propose. A wall of perpetual separation between France and St. Domingo must necessarily be built; and therefore the liberty and independency of the new people must be acknowledged, and must be placed under British protection. By that wise use of the present opportunity, and by that mean alone, the great revolution which has taken place in the West Indies, an event pregnant perhaps with grander, and more lasting effects, than any of the late revolutions of Europe, may be rendered wholly innoxious, nay, largely beneficial to this country; and pernicious only to that unprincipled power, which first rashly made, and then wickedly tried to reverse it.

I hasten to lay down the pen, lest before these arguments shall meet your eye, the opportunity they relate to should be lost; but it seems necessary to notice briefly, before I conclude, some general prepossessions, by which my advice may perhaps be fatally opposed.

A contempt, not less irrational, than cruel for the much injured African race, has, I fear, through the prejudiced and self-interested representations of their oppressors, been strongly impressed upon the public mind in this country.

From this sentiment indeed, the sable defend-
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ers of St. Domingo must now have delivered themselves in every generous breast—But the malice of their enemies is unwearied ; and though it is now hopeless to represent them as a despicable groveling race, fit only for the harness of a brutal bondage, and likely again to submit with tameness to the whip of the driver ; it is attempted, not, I fear, without success, to pourtray them as ferocious and merciless savages, unfit to maintain the pacific relations of independency with other states, or even to adhere to each other, in any firm political union ; as incorrigible barbarians, who will soon split into petty hordes, and relapse into African manners.

Were there any sound foundation for these notions, the force of some of the motives which I have offered for an alliance with the New State, would certainly be weakened ; yet more than enough would remain to support the practical conclusion. As an experiment at least, and as a temporary expedient, it would still be right to make friends of those, who whether barbarous or civilized, may be troublesome and dangerous enemies : nor would their ferocity, I presume, render them instruments less terrible of the future machinations of France, should she be able to employ them against our colonies.

But this portrait of the brave Indigenes is traced

ed by the pencil of prejudice; and this prediction of their future fate, is rather the voice of a venal oracle, bribed by their oppressors; than the legitimate foresight of reason, derived by fair calculation from historical truth.

If we consider in the first place, their treatment of their vanquished enemies, at and immediately after the surrender of the towns, we shall discover no traits of inhumanity. Reasonably enough did the French garrisons, and their white adherents, expect a dreadful retaliation; for never had cruelty or perfidy, in the conduct of a war, been carried to fouler extremes, than by them or their execrable leaders: nor is there upon earth, perhaps, to be found a people by whom, when outraged by such unparalleled wrongs, the expectation might not have been fully and immediately realized? Yet not a single drop of blood was vindictively shed upon the occupation of those towns by the Negroes.

British humanity indeed in one or two cases interposed, and complaisance to our commanders may be thought solely to have influenced the conduct of the Negro chiefs; but it remains to be proved, that without such interposition, the garrisons or inhabitants would have been put to death, or unmercifully treated; and the contrary is fairly presumable from the event at those places, where the surrender was made, not to British officers,

officers, or under British mediation, but immediately to the African besiegers.

Cape Francois was obliged to capitulate, in consequence of a most gallant and successful assault made by Dessalines, upon the hill forts which command that town. The capitulation was afterwards broken by Rochambeau, who omitted to evacuate the town within the stipulated time; and it seems to be the import of our own official accounts, that the place was ultimately taken by storm; for Dessalines marched hostilely into the town, to enforce the departure of the garrison: consequently the capitulation was totally void, and whatever mercy the inhabitants received, they owed to his clemency alone. It is not pretended that in this case the extreme right of a victor, was waived in complaisance to the British; and it on the contrary appears, that an exemption of the ships from destruction by the batteries on shore, was all we obtained, or treated for. Rochambeau, who having broken his faith, was not intitled to withdraw the garrison or the ships, saved himself and them, by a tardy surrender to the British blockading force*, but left the inhabitants to the mercy of the victors.

Yet

* See the London Gazette of February 7th, 1804. Dessalines seems at this period to have been dissatisfied with the conduct of our commanders, and to have reluctantly permitted

Yet they were all spared, and treated, for a long time at least, with the utmost humanity*.

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ted the execution of the compact between them and Rochambeau. But it is impossible, considering our conduct at other places, to be surprized at, or blame this disposition in the Negro Chief, or his refusal to assist our ships in entering the port by sending them pilots. *He probably had still stronger reasons for distrust than are yet before the public*: but it was enough, that our system evidently was not only to dismantle their forts, and destroy their works, for which the fear of their re-occupation by France might furnish a slight pretence; but to carry away their ammunition and military stores; for which no pretence compatible with sincere amity could be found. Dessalines therefore was probably actuated as much by humanity, as by complaisance for our commanders, when he suffered the fleet to escape. He had, it is admitted, the power of destroying them, as he was preparing to do, by red hot shot from the batteries; and he had, as I conceive, an unquestionable right so to act; in order to compel their surrender to himself, notwithstanding their having capitulated to the British squadron. It is impossible to maintain that we had a right without his leave so to rescue from his hands, an enemy who had broken a prior capitulation with him, who then lay at his mercy, and who was not in a condition even to execute the compact, by putting the ships into our possession, but by his permission. If Dessalines did not act upon principles of moderation and mercy; his complaisance for this country was extreme; and intitles him strongly to our favour.

* Various reports of a massacre at this town and other places at a subsequent period, have been received from Jamaica and North America.—See the London newspapers of the 3d of May. I hope they will prove like a multitude of similar reports from the same quarters, to be either wholly groundless, or great exaggerations of the truth; but considering the unparalleled circumstances by which popular rage and panic

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At Fort Dauphin, General Dumont and his staff, having been surprised in a sortie, had fallen into the hands of the besiegers, sometime prior to the capitulation to his Majesty's ships; but upon notice of that event, they were, at the request of a British officer, given up*. According indeed to our official account, this request was made in order to save them from the vengeance of the Negroes: but if such vengeance was impending over them, how happened it not to have been executed? These allies of the blood hounds, and conductors of an exterminatory war, were surely very fortunate, in being preserved alive, and unhurt, till British humanity could come to their aid, and provide for their ultimate safety. The vengeance of ferocious savages is not usually so very tardy.

At Aux Cayes, St. Marc's, Jeremie, and other captured Towns, a similar clemency was displayed; the Negro Chiefs openly challenged praise upon this ground, and by their enemies the claim was allowed †.

are likely to be excited, especially while the French still menace and annoy them from Cuba, such events are certainly not improbable.

* London Gazette of December 10, 1803.

† See a letter of Dessalines, and a proclamation of the Town Council of the Cape, in London newspapers of February 6.

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To such instances of moderation and mercy at the close of a most infuriated contest, might be added others not less striking, during the utmost fury of the struggle. When a history of that horrible war shall be published by less partial editors than the writers of Buonaparte's gazettes, although with no sources of information less inimical than those mendacious papers themselves, fairly compared with each other, the defence of this persecuted people may be made to greater advantage, and it will appear that they in general conducted themselves, through the whole of that terrible contest, with a degree of forbearance and humanity such as was never surpassed by any people upon earth.

All the white inhabitants of Cape Francois, for instance, were confessedly in the power of Christophe, at the time of Leclerc's arrival; and when the negro general, in obedience to his orders, and conformably to the clearest principles of defensive warfare, set fire to that town on his retreat into the interior, to prevent its affording cover to the invaders, it was at first alleged by the French, and loudly echoed from Jamaica, and North America, that he had put all the inhabitants to the sword. Yet the contrary was soon acknowledged by his enemies themselves—It was admitted in the
French

French gazettes that not one of these inhabitants had perished*.

We learn from the same authority, that a great portion of the French inhabitants, who were carried off from that and other towns and districts on the coast, and an aid-de-camp of General Boudet, remained in the custody of Toussaint among the mornes, during the whole of a dreadful campaign, in which his enemies, by their own avowal gave no quarter to his adherents: yet it is attested by the *Moniteur* itself, that they were all brought back in safety, when that hero at length sheathed his victorious sword on the faith of a treacherous compact †.

Surely such prominent and unquestionable facts as these should suffice, if not fully to vindicate the humanity of the African race, at least to discredit the channels of intelligence, through which the credulity of the English public has often been abused, and its feelings tortured, by shocking and false accounts of massacres in St. Domingo.

In some instances no doubt, the keen feelings of indignation, never surely in any age or country

* French accounts in London Newspapers of March 22, 1802; “*No person was killed at the Cape; every one came back into the Town.*”

† See London papers of June 17, 1802, and the *Moniteur* of June 14. “*All the planters who had been carried off are returned.*”

excited by such cruel and flagitious injuries, have led the multitude to imitate the example of their European invaders; and to retaliate ten thousand massacres and murders, of which their brethren and dearest connections had been victims, upon Frenchmen that fell into their hands. But instead of exhibiting, in those trying scenes, a more than usual portion of human depravity, their forbearance on the whole, has been such as may justly excite surprise, and is not inconsistent with the praise bestowed upon their hapless race by travellers in their native Africa, that of being "the mildest of uncivilized men*."

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* To those who have been accustomed to read with implicit faith, the insertions in the French gazettes, or extracts from Jamaica or American newspapers, these propositions may appear very bold; but whoever will have the patience to look back upon those accounts, and compare them with each other, will find scarcely any accusation against the humanity of these brave men, that has not been refuted by subsequent information, even from the same hostile quarters; while he will find striking instances of their clemency and forbearance, stated on the authority of the French commanders themselves. Of the news from St. Domingo, received through the United States of America, it may truly be said, that it was in general less worthy of credit if possible than even the French gazettes; and to shew the falsehood of most of the shocking accounts copied from American prints, General Leclerc's own dispatches might suffice. It should be remembered, that there is in the United States a large party as much interested in vilifying the African character, as the people of Jamaica; perhaps still more so; on account of the great preponderance in that country

Were the defence of the humanity of this people more difficult; still why the new masters of St. Domingo must of necessity break that bond

try of the party inimical to negro slavery, and the consequent apprehension of slave owners, that the state will be wholly abolished. The author is credibly informed that another motive for misrepresentation, often induces American masters and merchants to spread false or highly exaggerated accounts of horrors supposed to have been witnessed by them in St. Domingo, upon their return from that island. It is often an important commercial object to deter other merchants from sending cargoes to the same port to which they themselves have been recently trading, or to which they mean to return.

After all, however, he desires not to be understood as absolutely denying the truth of the rumours now current, relative to recent massacres. If a proclamation of January 1st, ascribed to Dessalines be authentic, such events must necessarily have followed, though their horrors have probably been much enhanced by report, both in America and Jamaica. In this case Dessalines is indeed a most unworthy successor of the humane Toussaint; but let the inflammatory language of that Proclamation be fairly considered (I will print it for the purpose in an Appendix.) Next let the extreme excitement, of late injuries and of present alarms be fairly estimated, and we shall find more reason to think favourably of the people, to dispose whom to vengeance such exhortation was necessary, and upon whom its effects have been so tardy and incomplete, than to ascribe to them an extraordinary ferocity. In two months it seems not to have produced any outrages, except in the south of the Island.

But it seems to be decisive of the general character of the Negroes, that the *inhabitants of Cape Francois, to whom they were best known, chose to remain in their power*: that it was matter of election, or not of strict necessity, is certain.

See the capitulation, and other papers, in the London newspapers of February 6th.

bond of union which has hitherto bound them to each other, renounce those arts of civil life with which they are acquainted, and degenerate into absolute barbarism, is not easy to discover.

If we look to the peculiar disposition of negroes, or to the little we know of their history, there is nothing in either, from which the hopes of the enemies of their race can derive any support.

As to the miserable man-stealing districts on the coast of Guinea, I inquire not whether those contemptible factories, or rather those shambles, of our slave-traders, which are there mocked with the appellation of kingdoms, are increasing in number, by the splitting of their petty domains; but I believe no such fact is alledged. Certainly, it is the natural tendency of the foul crimes we instigate, to produce political disunion, as well as every other species of evil; but to judge of African character in general, from the inhabitants of that wretched border, would be as unreasonable in us, as it would be in them, to estimate christian morals, and British manners, from what they see of the Liverpool agents and captains. If the calumniators of Africa would point us to its miserable slave coast, for the proof of any of their pretences, let them first deliver it from the excitement of their own execrable commerce. Till then, a procuress might as fairly ask us to read
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the character of our virtuous countrywomen, in the manners of her own brothel.

In the interior of that great continent, nations are known to exist, which unite in one political body, and under a single head, millions of people, spread over a very extensive territory; and we are not told of any separation, or dismemberment, by which their magnitude has been lessened. I remember no relation from which it can be inferred that these nations have undergone any such changes, or that their unity is likely to be broken; and much less, that they have retrograded from any advances in civilization or arts which they may formerly have made: on the contrary, it appears, that in proportion as you recede from the western coast, and emerge from the foul haunts of European man-merchants, symptoms of advancing improvement in civilization, become very conspicuous. But were the case otherwise; still I demand, what are the facts in the history of mankind which warrant the expectation in question, as it applies to Africans already versed in the arts of agriculture and commerce, and formed into a single community? Has it been the ordinary conduct of unpolished societies, to burst the political bonds by which they have been once united, and to renounce the arts they have learned? The institutions of Peter, have not been lost; and it might, for aught I know, be as safe to guarantee

guarantee the integrity of Russia or Abyssinia, as of Germany or France.

If we look to the immediate subjects of this controversy, that portion of the African race, which has emerged in some degree from the artificial barbarism of the West Indies, we shall find still less reason for the opinion that their political concord will be broken, or that they will go backward in civilization.

That no symptoms of such disunion and retrogression have yet appeared, will, I presume, be admitted; for though several parties originally sprang up, as was natural, from the chaos of their great revolution, a centripetal attraction was from the first very active among them; and they were drawn by successive conjunctions, into circles more and more comprehensive, till at length the whole population was united in one political system, under a single head; and this unity was afterwards maintained with the most perfect steadiness, in peace as well as in war, down to the moment of Leclerc's invasion.

Ambitious chieftains, once attempted to disturb it; but the effort was wholly fruitless. Their conspiracy was easily suppressed, by the mild but energetic policy of Toussaint; and even the disorganisers of Europe found it, upon their arrival, a difficult task, to divide by force and stratagem,

tagem, the well-knit fibres of this infant but vigorous frame.

Had divisions since prevailed, they would furnish but a feeble argument to support the opinion I am combating; for after insidious arts had seduced some of the negro chiefs to abandon for a while their illustrious leader, and after that great man himself had fallen a victim to the perfidy of Leclerc, the confidence of the distracted multitude could hardly find a pillar to rest upon; and the military dispositions of the enemy made union extremely difficult. It would not have been strange, therefore, had different chiefs erected several independent standards in different divisions of the island; and refused afterwards to acknowledge a superior, or to unite their authority when the common danger had subsided.

It was said, upon what evidence I know not, that a disunion of this nature had actually taken place; and that a large body of the negroes had agreed on an armistice with Rochambeau at the Cape. But if any such discord really arose, it appears to have had but a small extent, and a very brief duration; for no sooner did the surrender of the French troops open the way to accurate information, than we learned that the three principal chiefs, Dessalines, Christophe, and Clervaux, had united the whole island again under a single government,

vernment; over which, down to the period of the latest advices, they continued jointly to preside. In this triumvirate, Dessalines appears to take the lead; and it is worthy of remark, that he and Christophe, were the most distinguished and faithful officers of Toussaint.

That great man, it should be remembered, from whom the Consul did not disdain to borrow the plan of his present authority*, was elected governor for life, with a power to nominate his successor; but as the sudden act of perfidy by which he lost his liberty and his life, precluded the exercise of this power, a grateful people had no better way to evince their reverence for his memory, and the stability of their social attachments, than by ranging themselves under the standard of those leaders, who held the chief authority under him during his government, and had enjoyed the largest share of his favour and confidence †. His

* While I write, rumour imports that this expression is incorrect. It is said he is Emperor of the French. I must hasten to publish, lest before my work appears he should be deified; and my strictures on his West-Indian policy should outrage his humble worshippers, the free citizens of the Great Nation.

† Again the course of events outstrips the progress of this argument, but confirms my opinion.—It is reported, since the above paragraph was ready for the Press, and apparently upon good authority, that Dessalines is appointed sole Governor for life.

oppressors

oppressors had taken care that there should be no hereditary representative, whom popular affection might have deemed a preferable object of choice.

I ask, then, what circumstance in the history of this new people warrants the conclusion that the union will not be lasting? Let a case be pointed out, of a society now upon earth, or which ever existed; in which the principle of political cohesion has been more vigorous or perfect.

Other nations, let it be considered, have rarely, if ever, been formed under circumstances so unfavourable to the social union. They have either migrated under a single leader from other states, and a fœtus of civil or military organization has been formed, before the political birth: or they have been formed by gradual accretion, round a nucleus which originally possessed the organs of of municipal life; or they have grown into a nation by the multiplication of a single family, of which the patriarchal government has descended upon the elder branch: but in St. Domingo, a new social edifice was to be raised at once, out of a mass of broken and heterogeneous ruins. In a moment, the petty thrones of some thousands of plantations were subverted, and half a million of enfranchised bondsmen, of as many different tribes and nations, and tongues, as the man-selling regions of Africa contain,

were

were suddenly called upon to put on social character, to the first rudiments of which most of them had, to that moment, been total strangers.

It would be but a faint image of this transition to suppose the flocks and herds of Circe restored in an instant to their pristine forms, and that prior to their metamorphoses, they had arrived from every different region of the earth ; unless we should add, that their numerous progeny, born in a brutal form, and instructed only in the duties and manners of the stall, started into manhood along with them.

That men, under such circumstances, should so soon and so abidingly unite themselves under a single government, as the people of St. Domingo did under that of Toussaint, is a prodigy which strongly illustrates the force of those feelings which attract and bind them to each other : but to believe, after such an example, that negroes are such savages as to be incapable of maintaining their political union in the same identical island, is to exhibit a prodigy of another kind, a preternatural extreme of credulity and prejudice.

I grant that the motives for union were in this case exceedingly strong ; nay, I am ready to admit, that nothing but the unspeakable value, in a physical as well as moral view, of negro freedom, when compared with negro slavery, could possibly have so soon produced, out of the vortex of anarchy,

chy, a union so perfect and tenacious. But will not the same peculiar motives still operate in favour of concord? I fear they will: for I have little expectation that Africans will soon find themselves safe in that part of the globe from the rapacious fangs of European avarice and despotism, except by that power of self-defence, which the Almighty has provided in his mercy for a united people every where, and especially for Africans between the tropics, against a European enemy. With the Indigenes, therefore, the dread of a horrible bondage will long be the cement of their political confederation.

Of a retrogression of this people from the point of civilization to which they have attained towards barbarism, there seems still less danger than of their political disunion. Under Toussaint, they advanced, as has been already noticed, both in agriculture and commerce; though never to be sure in the history of any society upon earth, was there a situation of affairs more adverse to that progress. Why then should we suppose that, when they are delivered from the miseries of civil and foreign war, and no longer agitated by the fear of a renovated slavery, they will neglect those grand sources of improvement?

Are they indolent? Indolence itself will plead for the culture of commercial articles. Their rich soil can supply their necessities, by means of its exportable

exportable produce, at a less expence of labour, than it would cost them to provide in any other way, food, clothing, and other indispensable necessaries, even in the simplest style. Are they intemperate? The charge is in general false, insulting and preposterous; but I grant, that of those inebriating luxuries, in which their masters revelled, some of them occasionally obtained a taste, and have, doubtless, retained the relish. This vice, however, in the degree wherein it exists, will be a stimulus operating in favour of commerce; by which alone the means of indulging intemperance, and possessing the objects of luxury, can be obtained. Are they vain? I admit the imputation. They have no scanty share of that universal weakness. They love dress, in particular, in proportion to the difficulty with which the homely and tawdry attire which they used to be proud of, was acquired. Here the foreign merchant will have another hold upon them; a further allurements, exciting them to the preservation and extension of commerce, and of agriculture, as its necessary source.

To these impulses will be added, that which in a limited field, is perhaps the surest cause of agricultural improvement; a population rapidly increasing; and likely, at no far distant period to exceed the number which the immediate produce of the soil could sufficiently sustain.

This

This cause, unless opposed by new territorial acquisitions, is likely to be peculiarly active and powerful at St. Domingo ; because from the great value of the exportable produce of a West India Island, when compared with that of the grain and other provisions imported in return for it, the effects of tillage in multiplying the means of support for a growing population, will there be peculiarly great and encouraging. It may be added, that as long as the complexion of the Indigenes shall constitute a legal presumption of slavery, and a brand of dishonour, in every West India island but their own, and almost in every civilized portion of the western world within the climate they love, they will have little inducement to lessen by migration these good effects of domestic encrease*.

The history of mankind in general, lends no countenance to the opinion I here combat.

* A free negro who travels in the West Indies, incurs a great risque of losing his liberty ; for by the laws of that country, the legal presumption is, that every black man or mulatto, is a slave, until the contrary appears ; and if his master be unknown, he is liable to be seized and sold for the use of the public. To avoid this, he must carry with him written testimonials of his enfranchisement ; but these may be lost or contested ; and the righteous law which lays the *onus probandi* upon him, has provided no means whereby he can make the proof required, or bring the question before any tribunal for discussion, unless benevolence should prompt some person incontestably free, to become his patron or guardian, and apply to the law on his behalf.

Often

Often have the arts of agriculture and commerce been chased away by barbarous invaders; and sometimes, as in Spain, they have declined through the depressing effects of bad civil institutions; but I can recollect no precedent in history, in which a people circumstanced like those of St. Domingo, have wholly abandoned those beneficial arts, and gone back into barbarous manners.

Indeed, history affords no case in which there has been half so much security against that unnatural retrogression. Not tempted by unlimited wastes, to engage in a wandering life; possessing but a moderate domain, where neither the hunter, nor the shepherd state, of uncivilized man, would find any local aptitudes; not cut off by deserts or forests from an intercourse with more polished societies; but placed in the very focus of the richest commerce upon earth, and circumscribed by a tranquil sea upon which the canvass of the merchant is perpetually visible from all points of their accessible coast; already expert in the arts of agriculture, and in the manufacture of its most valuable produce; already accustomed to the operations of commerce, and continually solicited to extend them; if under circumstances like these, the Indigenes should expel those handmaids of civilization and social happiness, and degenerate into a savage state, the event would be strange indeed. Their stupidity might in that case half absolve the guilt of their oppressors,

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pressors, and leave the slave trader little more to answer for at the bar of eternal justice, than the tormenting a mere animal existence, and the destruction of irrational life.

I will not enlarge these gratuitous arguments against an opinion, which though advanced by the despairing enemies of African freedom, and whispered perhaps, not without effect, into the ears of His Majesty's Ministers, is a mere unsupported dogma, and is at war with all the experience of mankind.

Should this brief attempt to disperse the mist of prejudice which hangs over the dawn of the new state, be unsuccessful, my practical conclusions, let it be again observed, depend not upon a favourable estimate of the character of the Indigenes; or on the hope of their future prosperity. Supposing them to relapse into anarchy and barbarism, they will, I admit, be less formidable enemies than I have imagined, and less desirable allies: But it is still wise to secure their amity, while they have advantages to impart; prudent to avert their enmity, while they have power to annoy; and necessary to prolong and perpetuate their separation from France, in whose hand, whether united or divided among themselves, whether civilized or barbarous, they would be most formidable instruments, and certain occasions of mischief.

Here,

Here, Sir, I might fairly take my leave, did not a sense of moral, as well as patriotic duty, irresistibly force upon me another important topic.

There is a subject, a most momentous and opprobrious one, which stands not indeed in any necessary connection with my argument, but upon which when recommending measures of West Indian policy, it is impossible not to reflect, and would be criminal to be silent.

The Slave Trade! How does that dreadful name dishearten the patriot hopes of an Englishman, who knows its horrors, and who has seen its pernicious effects! Could I forget, or doubt, that, "Verily, and indeed, there is a God who governs the earth;" I still could not sincerely hold forth the hope of a result finally beneficial to my country, from the measure recommended in these sheets, or from any other scheme of policy however wise, while that pestilent iniquity is cherished. It would be like promising prosperity to a prodigal, from arrangements of domestic economy, while he refused to forsake the gaming table or the race course; or health to a dropsical drunkard from medicine, while he persisted in the nightly debauch.

Yet I see my country still given up without remorse to the unbridled career of slave trading speculators. As if amorous of guilt and of ruin, we plunge deeper every day into that gulph of African blood.

Happy

Happy had it been, perhaps, if the veil of public ignorance, which for ages covered the deformities of that hideous commerce, had never been withdrawn; for the monster instead of being cut off, as the first burst of honest indignation promised, has been more fondly nourished than before; and fattened with fuller meals of misery and murder, into far more than his pristine dimensions. While the flagitious wickedness of the trade was exposed by the abolitionists, its gainful effects were blazoned by its defenders; and the purblind avarice of the country was so strongly excited, that the man-merchant in an apparent defeat, obtained an actual triumph; a triumph over national humanity; and let me add, over all the moral decencies of legislative character. The pleadings of justice and mercy have served only, like the graceful supplications of violated beauty, to display more attractively the object of temptation; and to inflame that cupidity, which their eloquence could not repress.

A momentary compunction was indeed excited in our senate, as well as in the country at large; but its effect has been only to display in the foul relapse, and enormous extension of the crime, the low state of our public morals; and the fatal tendency of that vile principle of expediency, upon which immediate reformation was withheld.

Do these strictures, Sir, appear too strong?
Ask

Ask yourself then I entreat you, what would have been said in the House of Commons, had an abolitionist ventured to predict in the debates of 1792, events which have since happened, “ that instead of finally terminating the Slave Trade within a few years, we should within that period double its annual extent; that instead of limiting the supply by the alleged necessities of our old sugar colonies, we should covet and acquire a large unsettled island within the tropics, and people it by that detestable commerce*; that we should even explore new receptacles for the miserable victims of our avarice, in a foreign territory; and send a hundred thousand slaves, to fertilize by British capital and credit the sickly regions of Guiana.” Surely, the speaker would have been scoffed at as an absurd dreamer who libelled the fair intentions of the Commons. “ Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?” the indignant reply of a Jewish monarch to a prophet upon a like occasion, might have expressed the feelings of the house.

Such predictions, however, would have been an inadequate expression of our subsequent inconsistency and guilt.

What use, Sir, are you now making of the late Charib division of St. Vincent? As to Trinidad,

* The Slave Trade, ever since our acquisition of Trinidad, has been allowed in the ports of that island without qualification or restraint.

I forbear, now fully to speak, what must, I fear, one day be spoken. While you hesitate upon the plan of colonization to be adopted in that new island, of which the fate is happily not yet committed to an assembly of planters, I will endeavour to hope in silence. But upon what principle, let me ask, is the importation of African negroes into this colony permitted without any modification or restraint, while we are taught to believe that the murderous old system of slavery is not meant to be finally planted there?

The conquest, or let me rather call it the acceptance, of Dutch Guiana, menaces a new aggravation of the guilt of Great Britain, and the miseries of Africa.

That this measure was grossly impolitic, must be evident to every well informed mind. Our cruizers, to the great encouragement of our naval service, would have captured and brought into our ports, at least four-fifths of all the produce exported from that country; thereby checking the growth of settlements, which are a nuisance to the British planter, and leaving to our enemies the deathful charge of their interior defence. Instead of this, Demarara, Issequibo, and Berbice, are already taken again under the fostering wing of Great Britain. The Dutch, and the Anglo-Dutch planters, fondly rush into our arms, in order to be safe from our hostility; and to be nourished
again.

again, as they doubtless hope, with British capital and credit; as well as to enjoy the security during war, of British navigation. In return, they generously allow and engage you to provide for their internal safety; and to guarantee them against the fearful tendencies of their having lately added to their population a hundred thousand African slaves.

Surinam too, if report may be credited, has probably ere now condescended to change its flag on the same advantageous terms: and here, our regular troops, which we so easily recruit, and can so well spare from European service, will have frequent opportunities of gathering laurels, in the unceasing war maintained by that colony against the Maroon negroes of the interior. Perhaps the Dutch Assembly may be more civil than that of Jamaica; and be gracious enough, while we are at all the expence of life, to contribute a little money for their own defence; since the standing contribution to their own government for the support of the Maroon war alone, was six per cent. on all their produce.

How many regiments annually the sickly swamps of that settlement may consume for us, I cannot presume to estimate; but Demarara is said to have furnished graves to almost the entire garrisons sent out to receive it at the last peace, consisting

sisting of about twelve hundred Batavian regu-
lars, in little more than a single year.

Could I with propriety here pursue this sub-
ject further, it would be easy to shew the cruel
hardships imposed upon our own planters, by the
diversion made by Guiana speculations, of such
commercial capital as is usually invested in West
Indian loans; the injustice of opening freely the
British market during war to the produce of these
foreign colonies; and the extreme folly of suffer-
ing them to be improved and extended by sub-
jects of this country.

But these considerations are not strictly within
the scope of my present argument. I now wish
to look to the inauspicious conquests in question,
no further than as they, like the other facts to
which I have referred, stand related to the Slave
Trade; and consequently to the plan of policy
which it is the business of these sheets to recom-
mend. If then, as these measures unhappily seem
to threaten, the old maxims are still to prevail—
if we are still, with insatiable avidity, to prosecute
the Slave Trade, to every extent, and in every
direction, to which the spirit of gambling specu-
lation may invite—if to this end, we are to open
new lands, plant new colonies, and manure with
British capital and credit, every foreign and rival
soil between the tropics, where slave buyers can
be

be found—if I say we are to persist in this infatuated and atrocious career; the advice which I have taken all this trouble to support is certainly not worth your attention.

In that case, it matters little whether you avert from our sugar colonies the evils which menace them from St. Domingo; for mischiefs more surely destructive are ripening in those new fields of blood; and will soon be wafted by the wings of the trade wind upon them. It will profit us little in that case, to rescue our army from the hospitals of Jamaica; for graves sufficiently wide to contain the whole of it, are opening in Trinidad and Guiana.—It will be a fruitless work to stop by a wise policy the course of revolution at one end of the Charibbean Chain, for its electric shock will soon be transmitted from the other.

Nor is it necessary, as far as the welfare of our old colonies is concerned, to suppose, that the sudden introduction of another hundred thousand of Africans into those settlements, will produce in speedy insurrection its natural effect. The rivalry of those colonies, should they prosper, will be certain ruin to the old British planter, and destruction to his slaves.*

But,

* The author regrets that he must here abstain from the discussion of a most important topic. It might be demonstrated,

But, abstaining from the further consideration of these natural consequences of the Slave Trade, and omitting to state its obvious incompatibility with that permanent friendship which I would advise you to cultivate with the people of St. Domingo; let me avow, before I conclude, the influence of still higher motives.—Yes, Sir! however it may revolt the prejudices of many who regard the raising our eyes beyond second causes, as no part of political wisdom, I will freely confess, that I can hope no good result from the measure here recommended, or from any other precautions of national prudence, while we continue to defy the justice of Omnipotence, by the horrible iniquities of the Slave Trade.

I know the unequalled miseries inflicted upon myriads of the children of Adam, by that commerce; I know the horrors of the system which it feeds and perpetrates; I believe that, there is a righteous governor of the earth; and therefore I

strated, from premises which even the West Indian Committee would admit, that the planters of the old islands must be ruined, if the settlement of the cheap lands in these colonies is further to be encouraged or allowed: and it is a plain corollary from this proposition, that slaves bound by mortgages to the soil, as the negroes in the islands almost universally are, must be gradually worked down and destroyed, in the fruitless but necessary attempt, to keep down by parsimony and exertion the interest of the growing incumbrances.

dare

dare not hope well of the fortunes of my country, while she stands with an impious obduracy, between the mercy of God, and the deliverance of Africa.

Nor are there symptoms wanting, which appear to develop a providential plan, for the relief of that much injured race, and the punishment of their oppressors.

In the wonderful events and coincidences which have planted, fostered, and defended, the liberty of St. Domingo, I seem to see that hand by which the fates of men and nations are directed. I seem to see it, in that strange train of public evils, which, since the first blaze of light revealed the full guilt of the Slave Trade, and since we rejected the loud call for reformation, have chastized our national obduracy. I seem to see it, in the dark clouds which now menace the domestic security, the idolised wealth, the happiness, and even the liberty and independency, of my country.

For that Satanic mind which is now suffered to sway the destiny of Europe, few are more inclined, in a natural view, than myself, to mingle contempt with abhorrence; but when I consider what instruments the Almighty has sometimes been pleased to employ in purposes of national vengeance, and when I think of the Slave Trade, I cannot wholly despise the menaces of our
haughty

haughty enemy, even upon British ground. I
can only exclaim—

“ ——— Non me tua fervida terrent

“ Dicta, ferox : Dii me terrent, et Jupiter hostis.”

APPENDIX.

*Extracted from THE SUN, of Saturday,
April 28, 1804.*

St. DOMINGO.

LIBERTY OR DEATH!—NATIVE ARMY.

THE GENERAL IN CHIEF TO THE PEOPLE OF HAYTI.

“ CITIZENS,

“ It is not enough to have expelled from your Country the barbarians who have for two ages stained it with blood; it is not enough to have curbed the factions which, succeeding one another, by turns sported with a phantom of Liberty which France exposed to their eyes. It is become necessary, by a last act of National Authority, to ensure for ever the Empire of Liberty in a Country which has given us birth. It is necessary to
X deprive

deprive an inhuman Government, which has hitherto held our minds in a state of the most humiliated torpitude, of every hope of being enabled again to enslave us.—Finally, it is necessary to live independent or die. Independence or Death! Let those sacred words serve to rally us, let them be signals of battle and of our re-union.

Citizens, Countrymen, I have assembled on this solemn day, those courageous Chiefs who, on the eve of receiving the last breath of expiring Liberty, have lavished their blood to preserve it.—These Generals who have conducted your efforts against tyranny, have not yet done enough. The French name still darkens our plains; every thing recalls the remembrance of the cruelties of that barbarous people. Our laws, our customs, our cities, every thing bears the mark of the French. What do I say? the French still have a footing in our island, and you believe yourselves free and independent of that Republic, which has fought all nations it is true, but which never conquered those who would be free! What, victims for fourteen years of our credulity and forbearance! conquered not by French armies, but by the canting eloquence of the Proclamations of their Agents! When shall we be wearied with breathing the same air with them?—What have we in common with that bloody-minded people? Their cruelties, compared to our moderation, their colour to ours, the extension of seas which separate us, our
 avenging

engering climate, all plainly tell us they are not
 brethren; that they never will become such;
 and if they find an asylum among us, they will
 be the instigators of our troubles and of our
 miseries. Citizens, men, women, young and old,
 turn round your eyes on all parts of this island;
 look there your wives, your husbands, your bro-
 thers, your sisters—What do I say? Seek your
 children—your children at the breast, what is be-
 nefit of them? I shudder to tell it—the *prey of*
tyrants. Instead of these interesting victims, the
 enlightened eye sees only their assassins—tigers still
 gorged with their blood, and whose terrifying
 presence reproaches you for your insensibility and
 your guilty tardiness to avenge them—what do
 you wait for to appease their manes? Remember
 that you have wished your remains to be laid by
 the side of your fathers—When you have driven
 out tyranny, will you descend into their tombs,
 without having avenged them? No, their bones
 would repulse yours; and ye invaluable men, in-
 timid General, who, insensible to private suffer-
 ings, have given new life to liberty, by lavishing
 your blood, know that you have done nothing if
 you do not give to the nations a terrible, though
 a good example, of the vengeance that ought to be
 exercised by a people proud of having recovered
 liberty, and zealous of maintaining it. Let us
 intimidate those who might dare to attempt de-
 priving us of it again:—let us begin with the
 French

French; let them shudder at approaching our shores, if not on account of the cruelties they have committed, at least at the terrible resolution we are going to make, to devote to death, whatsoever native of France should soil with his sacrilegious footstep this territory of Liberty.

“ We have dared to be free—let us be free by ourselves and for ourselves; let us imitate the growing child; his own weight breaks his leading strings, which have become useless and troublesome to him in his walk. What people have fought us? what people would reap the fruits of our labours? and what dishonourable absurdity to conquer to be slaves!

“ *Slaves*, leave to the French Nation this qualifying epithet, they have conquered to be no longer free—let us walk on other foot-steps; let us imitate other people, who, carrying their solicitude into futurity, and dreading to leave to posterity an example of cowardice, have preferred to be exterminated, rather than to be erased from the list of free people. Let us, however, take care, lest our spirit of proselytism should destroy our work—let our neighbours breathe in peace—let them live peaceably under the shield of those laws which they have framed for themselves; let us beware of becoming revolutionary fire-brands—of creating ourselves the Legislators of the Antilles—of considering as a glory the disturbing the tranquillity of the neighbouring Islands; they have not

not been, like the one we inhabit, bathed in the innocent blood of their inhabitants—they have no vengeance to exercise against the authority that protects them; happy never to have experienced the plague that has destroyed us, they must wish well to our posterity.

“ Peace with our neighbours; but accursed be the French name—eternal hatred to France; such are our principles.

“ Natives of Hayti—my happy destiny reserves me to be one day the Sentinel who is to guard the idol we now sacrifice to. I have grown old fighting for you, sometimes almost alone; and if I have been happy enough to deliver to you the sacred charge confided to me, recollect it is for you at present to preserve it. In fighting for your liberty, I have laboured for my own happiness; before it shall be consolidated by laws which insure individual liberty, your Chiefs whom I have assembled here, and myself, owe you this last proof of our devotedness.

“ Generals and other Chiefs, unite with me for the happiness of our Country: the day is arrived, the day which is to perpetuate our glory and our independence.

“ If there exist among you a lukewarm heart, let him retire, and shudder to pronounce the oath which is to unite us. Let us swear to the whole world, to posterity, to ourselves, to renounce France for ever, and to die rather than live under
its

its dominion—to fight till the last breath for the Independence of our Country.

“ And ye, People, too long unfortunate, witness the oath we now pronounce: recollect that it is upon your constancy and courage that I depended when I first entered the career of Liberty to fight despotism and Tyranny, against which you have been struggling these last fourteen years; remember that I have sacrificed every thing to fly to your defence —Parents, Children, Fortune, and am now only rich in your Liberty. That my name has become a horror to all people, the friends of Slavery and Despots, and Tyrants only pronounce it, cursing the day that gave me birth; and if ever you refuse or receive in murmuring the Laws, which the protecting angel that watches over your destinies shall dictate to me for your happiness, you will merit the fate of an ungrateful people. But far from me this frightful idea: you will be the guardians of the liberty you cherish, the support of the Chief who commands you.

“ Swear then to live free and independent, and to prefer death to every thing that would lead to replace you under the yoke; swear then to pursue everlasting Traitors, and the enemies of your Independence. J. J. DESSALINES.”

“ *Head Quarters, Gonaives,
1st Jan. 1804, 1st Year of Independence.*”

Since the above proclamation was sent to press, the author has received the following extract from
a Boston

a Boston newspaper just arrived, which seems to place it out of doubt that vindictive executions, at least, if not massacres, have really taken place in St. Domingo.

Extract from a Boston Newspaper of the 5th of May 1804.

“ The Governor of Hayti has directed the publication of the following Arretés in the papers of the United States:

“ The Governor General considering that there still remains in the Island of Hayti individuals who have contributed either by their guilty writings, or by their sanguinary accusations, to the drowning, suffocating, assassinating, hanging, and shooting of more than 60000 of our brethren, under the inhuman government of Leclerc and Rochambeau: considering that every man who has dishonoured human nature by prostituting himself with enthusiasm to the vile offices of informers, and of executioners, ought to be classed with assassins, and delivered up without remorse to the sword of justice; decrees as follows:

“ 1. Every commandant of division shall cause to be arrested within their respective commands, the persons who are or shall be known to have taken an active part in the different massacres and assassinations ordered by Leclerc or Rochambeau.

“ 2. Before proceeding to the arrest of any individual (as it often happens that many are innocent, who nevertheless may be strongly suspected)

we

we order each commandant to make all necessary enquiries for procuring proofs; and above all, not to confound with true and faithful reports those denunciations too frequently suggested by envy and hatred.

“ 3. The names and surnames of persons executed shall be inserted in a list, and sent to the General in Chief, who will make them public, in order to inform the nations of the world that although we grant an asylum and protection to those who act candidly and friendly towards us, nothing shall ever turn our vengeance from those murderers who have bathed themselves with pleasure in the blood of the innocent children of Hayti.

“ 4. Every chief, who in contempt of the orders and unalterable will of government, shall sacrifice to his ambition, to his hatred, or to any other passion, any individual whose guilt shall not have been previously well ascertained and proved, shall undergo the same punishment which he shall have thus inflicted, and the property of every such unjust officer shall be confiscated, one half to the government, and the other half to the relations of the innocent victim, if any there may be in the island at the time of his death.

“ DESSALINES.”

*Done at Gonaives, 29th of February,
True copy, B. Aimé, Secretary.*

FINIS.

REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE
OF THE
AFRICAN INSTITUTION,

Read to the General Meeting on the 15th July, 1807.

TOGETHER WITH THE
Rules and Regulations

WHICH WERE THEN ADOPTED FOR THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE SOCIETY.

LONDON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM PHILLIPS,
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1807.

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*At a Meeting of the AFRICAN INSTITUTION,
held at Freemason's Hall, Queen-Street,
Lincoln's-inn-fields, July 15, 1807,*

His Royal Highness the
DUKE OF GLOUCESTER,
in the Chair;

A Report of the Committee having been read, containing a view of the objects proposed by the Institution, of the means for carrying those objects into effect, together with Rules and Regulations for its interior Constitution, the following Resolutions were successively moved, and unanimously agreed to, viz.

On the Motion of the Right Hon. Viscount Howick,

Resolved,

That the Report now read be received, and that the Rules and Regulations proposed by the Committee, be adopted as the standing Rules and Regulations of this Society.

On the Motion of Wilbraham Bootle, Esq.

Resolved,

That Subscriptions be now opened, on the plan recommended by the Committee, and that Subscribers be requested to affix their names to their Subscriptions.

On the Motion of the Right Hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Resolved,

That His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester be requested to honour the Institution, by accepting the office of President, in addition to that of Patron.

On the Motion of the Right Hon. Viscount Valentia,

Resolved,

That the Election of Vice-Presidents and of the Board of Directors be deferred till the next meeting of the Society ; and that in the mean time the present Committee be con-

tinued, with the authority to exercise the various powers with which the Board of Directors is invested by the Rules and Regulations which have now been adopted.

On the Motion of the Right Hon. Lord Headley,

Resolved,

That the Committee be requested to print, for distribution, the substance of the Report which has this day been read, with such alterations and corrections as they may think proper, together with the Rules and Regulations which have been adopted, and a list of Subscribers.

On the Motion of the Right Hon. the Earl of Selkirk,

Resolved,

That the warmest Thanks of this Meeting be given to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, for his zealous and assiduous attention to the interests of this Society.

Subscriptions are received by the following Bankers, viz. *Messrs. Down, Thornton, Free & Down*, No. 1, Bartholomew Lane; *Messrs. Hoare, Barnett & Co.* No. 62, Lombard-street; *Messrs. Smith, Payne, & Smiths*, George Street, Mansion House; *Messrs. Hoares*, 37, Fleet Street; *Messrs. Drummonds*, Charing Cross; *Messrs. Ransom, Morland & Co.* Pall-Mall; by the Treasurer, *Henry Thornton, Esq.*; or by the Secretary, *Mr. S. Macaulay*, 26, Birchin Lane; to whom communications relative to the Institution may be addressed.

*LIST of the temporary Committee for Con-
ducting the Affairs of the AFRICAN
INSTITUTION.*

His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester,
Patron and President,

Earl Spencer	The Chancellor of the
Earl Moira	Exchequer
Earl Euston	Right Hon. T. Grenville
Earl Rosslyn	Right Hon. G. Canning
Lord Grenville	Right Hon. J. C. Villiers
Viscount Howick	Right Hon. Sir J. Newport
Viscount Valentia	Right Hon. J. Foster
Bishop of London	Right Hon. N. Vansittart
Bishop of Durham	Right Hon. J. Smyth
Bishop of Bath and Wells	Sir Philip Francis, K.B.
Bishop of St. David's	Sir Samuel Romilly
Lord Holland	General Vyse
Lord Ellenborough	Henry Bankes, Esq. M.P.
Lord Erskine	Thomas Bernard, Esq.
Lord Teignmouth	T. Babington, Esq. M.P.
Lord Headley	T. Baring, Esq. M.P.
Lord Henry Petty	R. Barclay, Esq.

Henry Brougham, Esq.	M. Montague, Esq. M.P.
J. H. Browne, Esq. M.P.	W. M. Pitt, Esq. M.P.
Colonel Barry, M.P.	W. Roscoe, Esq.
T. Clarkson, Esq.	Granville Sharp, Esq.
Edwd. Forster, Esq.	Richd. Sharp, Esq. M.P.
C. Grant, Esq. M.P.	John Simeon, Esq. M.P.
Rev. T. Gisborne	William Smith, Esq. M.P.
Jos. Hardcastle, Esq.	T. Woodroffe Smith, Esq.
Geo. Harrison, Esq.	Jas. Stephen, Esq.
W. Huskisson, Esq. M.P.	S. Thornton, Esq. M.P.
Steph. Lushington, Esq.	R. Thornton, Esq. M.P.
M.P.	H. Thornton, Esq. M.P.
J. B. S. Morritt, Esq.	Rev. John Venn
Zachary Macaulay, Esq.	S. Whitbread, Esq. M.P.
M. Martin, Esq.	W. Wilberforce, Esq. M.P.

REPORT, &c.

A PLAN, which proposes to introduce the blessings of civilized society among a people sunk in ignorance and barbarism, and occupying no less than a fourth part of the habitable globe,* holds forth an object, the contemplation of which, it will be allowed, is sufficient to warm the coldest, and fill the amplest mind.

An attempt to recommend such a scheme of beneficence by considerations addressed to the feelings, seems wholly unnecessary; since the bare conception of the design must give birth to a more lively interest than any persuasions could produce.

* Africa is computed to contain 150 millions of inhabitants, but the interior is so little known that the estimate is purely conjectural.

But it is requisite, in order to obtain active support to any enterprize, that its object should not only be inviting, but rational, and capable of being accomplished.

Your Committee, therefore, in offering a few remarks on the general nature of this Institution, prior to a Report on the immediate subject of reference, (the Rules and Regulations proper for the constitution and government of the Society) have in view, not to persuade, but to encourage; not to suggest motives but to obviate difficulties; and particularly to remove the most specious objection to our design, despair of its success.

The vastness of the object proposed by the Institution, may raise in some minds the idea of a rash and visionary project; especially when contrasted with the apparent disparity of the means which are to be employed, the efforts of a voluntary association of private individuals in this country. But it should be remembered, that the most

striking changes have often been produced in the characters and fortunes of nations, by means apparently very inadequate. There have been critical opportunities, in which the combined efforts of a few private men, or even the energies of a single mind, have sufficed to effect great revolutions in the opinions, the manners, the laws, and civil condition of a whole people, nay even of a great portion of mankind.

It is true, that such changes have been more frequently of a pernicious than salutary kind; for their authors have rarely been actuated by benignant feelings, but in general by ambition, or some other vicious passion: nor can it be denied that it is more easy, in public as well as private undertakings, to disseminate evil than good. If, however, the polished nations of the earth, when they first emerged from barbarism, had possessed historians to record the causes of that change, we should probably

discover, in some cases, that the talents or virtues of an individual (like those of a Czar Peter, or an Alfred) had suddenly imparted a new character to the institutions and manners of his country; and, in others, that intelligent strangers from a more enlightened region of the earth had produced, by their information and their practical aid, the same benign effects. In the early traditions of Greece and Italy some traces of such sources of civilization may be found: and the benefactors of nations, who were said to have descended from the skies, and were honoured as gods, are reasonably supposed to have been no other than intelligent foreigners, who first brought the useful arts of their own countries to a rude and ignorant people. A similar origin has been ascribed to the civilization which was found in some kingdoms of South America, on their first discovery by the Spaniards. If the nations of the old world had their Cadmus and Saturn, Peru

also had her Mango Capac, who instructed her once barbarous people in agriculture and the liberal arts, and whose accidental arrival from some unknown region probably gave rise to the fable of his descent from the sun.

Conquest, it must be admitted, has been the harsh and more ordinary medium by which the blessings of civilization have been conveyed from one part of the world to another ; but this has been because no other has often been attempted. Polished nations have commonly been too selfish to send the plow and the loom to any country, till they have first sent the sword and the sceptre.

Commerce, however, which, after the first introduction of civilization into any country, has contributed to its progressive improvement beyond any other cause, Christianity excepted, has rarely been first extended in any new direction by force, or by any grand and concurrent efforts. The peaceable en-

terprises of individuals, aided by encouragement less important than that which our institution may be able to impart, have often been sufficient to explore the resources, excite the industry, and call forth the commercial faculties of distant and uncivilized nations. Let it not be supposed then that our association is chargeable with aiming at ends too vast, or too difficult for human efforts to accomplish. If we propose any thing more arduous than has often been effected before, it must be because it is more easy to do good by accident than by design; from the impulse of selfish than of benevolent feelings.

The immense extent of the field before us ought indeed rather to animate than to damp our efforts; for in the communication of knowledge,—of such practical knowledge at least as is of universal interest, and within the reach of every capacity—the difficulty is chiefly found in the first stage of the process. Like a hardy exotic in a kindred soil, it may

be speedily propagated on the largest scale, when once brought to flourish on the smallest.—Every pupil soon becomes a teacher; every successful example adds to the number of imitators; and though the field of exertion be originally small, the ultimate benefit will be proportioned to the extent of the sphere through which the knowledge thus communicated may be at last diffused.

When it was discovered, a very few years ago, that there is among the secrets of nature a sure and simple, though wonderful preventive of one of the most fatal and loathsome diseases to which the human frame is subject, it was a work of no small difficulty to establish the credit of the discovery, and bring it into use, even in this enlightened metropolis. Yet already the practice of vaccination is known to the most distant nations of the earth; and it is probable that there will soon be no civilized

people in the world, by whom it will not be generally adopted.

This example, in another view also, may afford us encouragement: for by what means has a discovery so important to mankind been so widely and speedily imparted to distant nations, but by the efforts of private benevolence, aided by a voluntary association of individuals, in this country? Prejudice and incredulity resisted its progress as stubbornly perhaps as they may resist improvement in Africa; and the secret, though known in a western county, might never have been heard of even in London, if its propagation, instead of being assisted by the active and combined endeavours of a great society, had been left to accident, or to the comparatively inefficient efforts of individual benevolence.

Was Dr. Jenner's discovery one, the value of which might be demonstrated by experi-

ment, and brought home to the senses, as well as to the self-love of mankind? The same may be said of those arts and that knowledge which we hope to send into Africa, and which, by giving a right impulse to industry, and some culture to the human mind, must produce benefits of a kind to be understood and felt even by rude barbarians.

Objections more specious, however, may perhaps be opposed to us than the extent of the good at which we aim, when contrasted with the apparent feebleness of our probable means.

The people amongst whom we would endeavour to introduce the blessings of civilized life are a race very distinct in bodily appearance from all others; and are represented by many, as not less distinguished from the rest of mankind by the inferiority of their intellectual powers, and by their moral depravity.

“Upon them” it is alleged “the sun of science might for ever beam in vain; and even the humble arts, which form the exterior comforts of civilized man, would in vain be offered to these coarse and fierce barbarians. They are fit only for the yoke of a laborious and endless bondage.”

But before we admit the justice of a representation so degrading to the character of the negro race, it will be proper to enquire who are their accusers, and what is the evidence on which such charges are founded.

The portrait of the negro has seldom been drawn but by the pencil of his oppressor, and he has sat for it in the distorted attitude of slavery. That there have been found in him such vices as in all ages and countries have been the fruit of private bondage, need not be denied: but that these have been much exaggerated by prejudice and contempt, and still more by policy and party spirit, is no less certain.

While the Aborigines of the West Indies were sinking under the oppression of the Spaniards, they were described by those adventurers as cannibals and monsters; and the Court of Castile gave implicit credit to such calumnies, till it was disabused, when too late, by the humane efforts of Las Casas. The African also is oppressed in the new world, and vilified in the old. His oppressors, like those of the Indians, were at length accused at the bar of their country; and recrimination was the expedient to which some of them resorted, in order to vindicate their conduct. They have denied that the Negro possesses either the feelings, or the moral or intellectual capacity of a human being.

Yet here their testimony has proved to be not a little discordant; so that with a moderate allowance for the ordinary effects of oppression, the character of the Negro might be vindicated by the admissions or inconsistencies of his enemies.

If he be accused of brutal stupidity by one of these prejudiced witnesses ; another, or perhaps the same, taxes him with the most refined dissimulation, and the most ingenious methods of deceit. If the negroes are represented as base and cowardly ; they are, in the same volume, exhibited as braving death in its most hideous forms, with more than human fortitude. Insensibility and excessive passion, apathy and enthusiasm, want of natural affection and a fond attachment to their friends, shipmates, and countrymen, are all ascribed to them by the same inconsistent pens. We are told, by almost every colonial writer, that severe coercion is necessary to quicken them to action ; yet some of those authorities, and among them the most celebrated advocate of Negro slavery in France, ascribe to them an almost preternatural energy. After working for twenty-four hours without remission, they will, according to the last mentioned writer, voluntarily

travel two or three leagues, spend the whole night in dancing and revelling, and return by day-break to take their share in the most arduous labours of the crop, without any intermediate repose. They will, he assures us, pass an entire week without sleep, and yet go through their accustomed toil with their usual vigour. In short he describes them as possessing bodily qualities far superior to those of other men, and states it as a strong argument for effecting a counter revolution in St. Domingo, that if to such physical powers, intellectual culture were added, the Negroes might conquer the world.*

But we might appeal also to other hostile testimony which is less inconsistent with itself; for some Colonial writers, amidst their zeal for slavery and the Slave Trade, have occasionally aspired to the praise of candour in regard to the moral character of the

* Barré de St. Venant, p. 379—380.

Slaves, and have expressly repelled some of the accusations which have been adduced by other writers of the same party. The ingenuity of the Negroes is admitted or defended by one eminent authority, their gratitude by another, their parental and filial affection by a third, their humanity by a fourth, their docility and improvement under religious instruction, by all who have treated on this subject.

Your Committee are unwilling to swell their Report by extracts in proof of these remarks ; but they beg to refer to Mr. Bryan Edwards, to M. Malouet, to Dr. Fermin, and to a highly intelligent work published in London in 1803, intitled, "Practical Rules for the management and medical treatment of Negro Slaves in the Sugar Colonies." The author has only designated himself as a Professional Planter, but the work is generally ascribed to the late Dr. Collins, of St. Vincent, a celebrated apologist of the Slave Trade.

Some positive praise has also been given to this injured race, in respect of which there is no contrariety of evidence. It is noticed for instance, by Mr. Edwards, and several other writers, that the old Negroes are universally treated by the young with singular tenderness and respect. Nor ought a trait like this to be deemed of small account, when we find it adduced by the first moralists of antiquity, as indicating an extraordinary degree of virtue.

If any consistency can be found among the apologists of Colonial slavery, in their charges against the Negroes, it is in ascribing to them the characteristic vice of falsehood. But this, like some other abject qualities, is uniformly the effect of private bondage; and we are so far from finding reason to believe that it peculiarly distinguishes the native African character, that there is good evidence of the very reverse. "One of the first lessons," (says Mr. Park in his travels)

“ in which the Mandingo women instruct their children, is the practice of truth. The reader (he adds) will probably recollect the case of the unhappy mother, whose son was murdered by the Moorish banditti. Her only consolation in her utmost distress was, that the poor boy in the course of his blameless life had never told a lie.”*

That Colonial slavery has generated most of those vices which are alleged in its excuse, was felt, and is distinctly admitted, by Mr. Edwards; and this is a fact which he was very competent to ascertain; for he had seen multitudes of newly imported Africans; had, as he himself informs us, many of them under his own management; and he appears to have taken pains to study their character.

It should be added that the vicious qualities of the Colonial Negro, as far as they really exist, are weeds which neither religious

* Park's Travels into the Interior of Africa, p. 264.

nor moral culture has been employed to pluck up. They are the growth, not merely of bondage, but of ignorance; and of ignorance, grosser perhaps than has ever existed elsewhere among the inhabitants of a civilized land: for it is not pretended that the West Indian Slave, from his birth or importation to his grave, receives from his master any education whatsoever, or possesses in general the means of acquiring any religious knowledge.

The charitable zeal of some religious societies in this country has indeed, of late years, supplied our Islands with a few Missionaries, by whom a small part of the Slaves have been instructed in the elements of Christianity, and provided with some means of public worship. And wherever this has been the case, a striking improvement of morals has followed. It has been publicly admitted by the Planters, and even by the legislative assemblies, of the Leeward Islands,

where alone the experiment has been fairly made, that the vices of their Slaves have disappeared, in proportion as they have been enabled to understand, and induced to embrace, the Christian religion.

If therefore the vices in question were inherent in the African character, and not the effects of oppression, still they would present no just ground of discouragement, but rather a new motive for perseverance: for they would be evils which our charitable aid might contribute to remove.

It is true that the plan of this institution does not embrace the propagation of Christianity, by any efforts of our own. That blessing may be best communicated to Africa by the societies which are already engaged in religious missions, or may hereafter embark in them. But in improving the temporal condition of the Natives, we shall greatly facilitate their conversion, and without interfering with any of the missions,

shall inditeetly, and in a variety of ways, be serviceable to them all.

The moral quality most obviously important to our views, and in which Africans in their native country are alleged to be grossly deficient, is *industry*; and, doubtless, if we were to judge by what appears on the African *Coast* alone, and without any allowance for the necessary effects of the Slave Trade, the charge would be specious.

Indolence, it must be admitted, is a common characteristic of all uncivilized people; and therefore if this imputation, supposing it true, were a conclusive argument against attempting to convey to Africa those useful arts which cannot subsist without labour, it would apply to every similar attempt in every part of the globe. It would be conclusive against the endeavour at any time or place, or in any mode, to improve the condition of any part of our species. Nay, it would become an inexplicable paradox

how men who were once in a barbarous state, like our ancestors, should ever have been raised from it. But indolence is a disease which it is the business of civilization to cure. The motives and the means of industry must be supplied, before men can begin to be industrious. This argument, therefore, against our present undertaking is like making it an objection to the visit of a physician, that the patient is sick.

Waving for a while that too adequate explanation of the indolence observable on the coast, which the long prevalence of the Slave-Trade furnishes, it may still be asked what room there is for the notion, that it is greater, or less remediable, than the same bad quality in other countries, where its correction is matter of recent history, or contemporary example? Perhaps even within his Majesty's European dominions, in Ireland, or the Highlands of Scotland, cases might be pointed out of equal indolence, proceeding

from the same obvious causes, want of knowledge, want of means, and want of excitement to be industrious.

In the Northern parts of Europe we are told, by intelligent travellers, of deserts turned into gardens, and slothful savages into husbandmen and artizans, within our own days; and this by the mere efforts of individual landholders. Their only means, it is added, were such necessary instruction to their tenants or bondmen, and such slight but judicious encouragements, as their ancestors had been too selfish or too unreflecting to bestow.

But if we look to North America, there, at least, we shall find a people, to whom might have been speciously ascribed, even at a very recent period, invincible sloth, and irreclaimable vagrancy of manners. We have been long taught to regard the North American Indian as so strongly addicted to his native habits, and so averse to labour,

as to be absolutely incorrigible by precept, by example, or even by his own experience of the blessings of civilization, when brought for a while to taste them. But some well-directed efforts of that truly respectable body of Christians, the Quakers, have at length vindicated the Indian character from this reproach, and shewn that their long-continued barbarism has, since they were placed within the reach of Europeans, been chargeable less on their own indolence or prejudices, than on those of their civilized neighbours.

By methods which cannot now be detailed, but which may well merit future attention, several tribes of Indians bordering on the United States have been brought to exchange their hunting occupations for an agricultural life, to renounce many of the vices with which they were before chargeable, and even that to which they had been excessively addicted, and which it has been

deemed most difficult to give up, the immoderate use of spirituous liquors; and to learn several of those useful arts to which they had before been utter strangers.

The experience of several years has already shewn, that this is no transient reformation. Instead of depending on the chance for a precarious subsistence, these Indians now cultivate extensive corn-fields, and raise herds of cattle. Instead of their miserable huts, they are now possessed of neat and commodious dwellings. Plenty has succeeded to want; sobriety to drunkenness; and regularity to disorder. The enjoyments and feelings of family life have begun at once to reward and to secure these improvements. The females are released from that unnatural share of toil to which they were formerly subjected, and begin to take their proper station:—they are advancing in those arts of domestic industry in which they are best employed, and though not less active

of useful than before, are no longer disabled, from rearing their offspring by severity of labour and the hardships of a vagrant life. It therefore seems scarcely necessary to state, that population is already on the increase.*

Your Committee has the pleasure to add, that the government of the United States, convinced by experience of the value of this reformation, has lately granted a considerable sum from the public purse for its further extension; and the application of this aid has been wisely committed to the same benevolent society which has so judiciously led the way in this interesting work. Can there be a more striking proof that such enterprises as our own are not impracticable; and that private associations, founded on a benevolent principle, are the best instruments in the prosecution of them?

If, notwithstanding the civilization of the

* See Accounts of two attempts towards the Civilization of some Indian natives. Phillips.

Indians, further difficulties should be raised on the ground of the supposed indolence and indolence of the Negroes; some fair evidence ought to be produced of the existence of those bad qualities, except when there is no adequate motive, or reasonable excitement to industry.

It has indeed been imputed to them, that when in a state of freedom in our Colonies, they are never known to work in the field or in any other laborious occupation. This fact has been repeatedly adduced as an argument for the necessity of Slavery and the Slave-Trade: but the argument is quite fallacious, and can impose on those only who are utterly unacquainted with colonial affairs. The truth is, that the free Negroes and Mulattoes in the West Indies do not often work in husbandry or other coarse kinds of labour, because such occupations, being the ordinary business of Slaves, are not only disreputable, but far less profitable than

others, in which every free workman may find full employment. There no Negro obtains his freedom but by means of faculties superior to that of throwing the hoe, or carrying a burthen; and hardly any Negro, born to freedom, is uninstructed in some trade or profession far more lucrative than ordinary labour, unless, which rarely happens, he is rich enough to live without any exertion of his own industry. The argument therefore is just as fair, as if the indolence of Englishmen were to be inferred from the fact, that our gentry and citizens do not follow the plough.

As to the indolence which is seen on the Coast of Africa, the Slave Trade is its obvious cause. How can it be expected that men should addict themselves to the arts of agriculture and commerce, whilst the labourers in both are themselves the great articles of trade, and form the chief exports of the country? What adequate motive can be found for

toiling to improve their domestic comforts, or their possessions, by men who are in constant danger of being hurried into perpetual exile ?

Security of person and property must ever prepare the way for advances in the gainful arts of industry ; and after all, these are rarely cultivated in a high degree; without the stimulus of that necessity which an increasing population creates. There could be no surer expedient to subdue the active spirit of mankind, and to perpetuate their indolence and barbarism, than a trade which at once thins the population of a country, and breaks down every barrier of private right or personal safety.

It is needless to take into account the many vices adverse to industry which are generated by this traffic : for it is enough to keep men indolent that no fruit of their labour can be secure to them for a moment.

That the indolence of the Africans in their

native land is by no means an incurable defect, might however be shewn by other and positive arguments. We learn from all those travellers who have lately explored the interior of Africa, that there already exists, in districts remote from the coast, a considerable degree of industry; and that no small progress has been made in several of the useful arts. It is also observable, that though these gentlemen travelled in various directions, and from points of that continent widely remote from each other, they all found the same striking contrast between the interior and the coast.

There is reason therefore to conclude, that the indolence and barbarism of the Africans universally diminish as you recede from the coast towards the centre: or in other words as their distance from the immediate sphere of European commerce is increased. It may be true that the Slave Trade pervades, in some degree, the whole continent:

but its activity and extent are inversely as the distance from the sea, while industry and civilization are found to prevail in an opposite ratio. The conclusion is not less important than it is opprobrious to the European character.

Your Committee must again abstain from lengthening their Report by many extracts in proof of the facts alleged; but refer generally to the travels of Mr. Park, Mr. Barrow, and Mr. Golbery. They refer also to Captain Beaver for much conclusive evidence as to the disposition of the natives of Africa to work, when properly encouraged.

The following extracts from Mr. Park, however, are so comprehensive and direct, that they seem to merit insertion. "The Negroes in general," says Mr. Park, "and the Mandingoes in particular are considered by the whites on the coast as an indolent and inactive people; I think, without reason. The nature of the climate is, indeed, unfa-

vourable to great exertion; but surely a people cannot justly be denominated habitually indolent, whose wants are supplied, not by the spontaneous productions of nature, but by their own exertions. Few people work harder, when occasion requires, than the Mandingoes; but not having many opportunities of turning to advantage the superfluous produce of their labour, they are content with cultivating as much ground only, as is necessary for their own support. The labours of the field give them pretty full employment during the rains: and in the dry season, the people who live in the vicinity of large rivers, employ themselves chiefly in fishing." *

He adds that while the men are thus occupied, the women are very diligent in manufacturing cotton cloth, the quality of which he describes as very good, and their manner of dyeing it as excellent.

*Travels in Africa, Chap. xxi.

He afterwards enumerates manufactories of leather, iron, and other commodities, in which the Negroes have arrived at considerable skill, though with very imperfect implements.

But your Committee will add one more extract from the same writer, which furnishes strong matter of excitement to such benevolent attempts as we have associated to recommend and promote.

“It appears” (observes Mr. Park in summing up his account of the trade of Africa) “that slaves, gold, and ivory, together with the few articles enumerated in the beginning of my work, viz. bees-wax and honey, hides, gums, and dye woods, constitute the whole catalogue of exportable commodities. Other productions, however, have been incidentally noticed as the growth of Africa, such as grain of different kinds, tobacco, indigo, cotton wool, and perhaps a few others; but of all these (which can only be obtained by cultivation and labour) the natives raise

sufficient only for their own immediate use; nor, under the present system of their laws, manners, trade, and government, can any thing farther be expected from them. It cannot, however, admit of a doubt, that all the rich and valuable productions, both of the East and West Indies, might easily be naturalized and brought to the utmost perfection in the tropical parts of this immense continent. *Nothing is wanting to this end but example to enlighten the minds of the natives; and instruction to enable them to direct their industry to proper objects.* It was not possible for me to behold the wonderful fertility of the soil, the vast herds of cattle, proper both for labour and food, and a variety of other circumstances favourable to colonization and agriculture; and reflect, withal, on the means which presented themselves of a vast inland navigation; without lamenting, that a country, so abundantly gifted and favoured by nature,

should remain in its present savage and neglected state. Much more did I lament, that a people, *of manners and dispositions so gentle and benevolent*, should either be left, as they now are, immersed in the gross and uncomfortable blindness of pagan superstition, or permitted to become converts to a system of bigotry and fanaticism; which, without enlightening the mind, often debases the heart.”*

Your Committee will now advert to another source of prejudice against our design, which is too important to be omitted. It is frequently alleged and believed, that an experiment to spread civilization in Africa has already been fairly made, and has completely failed, in the case of the Colony of Sierra Leone. But the assertion is untrue in both its parts. The experiment has not been fairly made; and as far as any attempts to lay a basis for the future civilization of Africa by

* Parke's Travels, Chap. xxiii.

means of that Colony have really been made, they have not been unsuccessful.

It is not the intention of your Committee to enter on a full explanation of the original plan of the Sierra Leone Company, of the unforeseen and calamitous events which opposed its successful execution, of the objects which have nevertheless been attained by it, or of the circumstances which have lately induced the Company to surrender to his Majesty the territory which they had acquired and settled, together with the public property and civil authorities which they possessed. Full satisfaction on all these points may be obtained from the printed Reports of the Company, and other public documents.

But your Committee will venture to affirm, that whatever disappointment the Proprietors of the Sierra Leone Company may have experienced, there is nothing in the history of that Company of a kind to dis-

courage the efforts of the African Institution. If commercial gains were expected by any of the Proprietors, their object has certainly been lost: even the capital itself has been sunk without having yielded any interest to the subscribers. But these losses have not been incurred through an attempt to civilize Africa by means like those which this Institution proposes to employ.—It is no part of our plan to purchase territory in Africa, to found a colony, or even to carry on commerce.

Neither has the bad success of this Company arisen from any causes which evince an intractability in the African character, or any other fixed obstacle to our designs. It is sufficiently accounted for by the failure of those just expectations which led to its formation. This Company was instituted in 1791, when the Abolition of the Slave Trade, now at length happily accomplished, was not without reason regarded as an event near at

hand. The Company calculated on being delivered from the rivalship of that traffic, almost as soon as a beneficial substitute for it could be offered to Africa: instead of which, that bane of industry and innocent commerce was permitted to outlive their means of competition with it. They even in vain solicited Parliament to banish it from that almost depopulated region of Africa, in which their settlement was formed. English Slave traders were permitted to the last to frequent the same coast, to trade even in the river of Sierra Leone, and by their offers of European goods, which they furnish upon credit, to preserve their connection and influence with the neighbouring chiefs. Those unfortunate Africans were therefore easily diverted from improvements, to which the Sierra Leone Company would have led them; and they were at length even persuaded to regard with jealousy and ill-will the benevolent strangers whom they at first received with favor.

The unprecedented political events which soon followed the establishment of the Company might also alone account for its ill fortune. No one could have foreseen in 1791 that a maritime war would so soon have enlarged the expences, and checked the growth of the infant colony; much less that it would, like the Slave Trade, have continued its ruinous opposition during fourteen years.* Sierra Leone, be it remembered, was exposed to all the calamities and disadvantages of war, during the whole term of its occupation by the Company, except for an interval too short to afford any experience of its capacities in time of peace.

It ought not however to be dissembled that in the original design itself there was much improvidence, and such as even under

* It will be remembered that in May, 1792, Mr. PITT declared, that though it was impossible to speak with certainty on such a subject, there perhaps had never been a period in the history of this country when we might look with more confidence to the continuance of peace.

less inauspicious circumstances might have defeated its object.

In attempting to found a new Colony, which, if successful, was to give to this country great commercial advantages, the Company took upon itself the whole charge of the civil government, of the public works, and of the military defence of the settlement. At the same time no part of the possible profits was secured exclusively to itself. If the richest channels of commerce had been eventually opened at Sierra Leone, every one of his Majesty's subjects would have had the same right to trade there as the Company or its members. No monopoly, no commercial privilege, was obtained or asked.

In the case that has arisen, the want of such a consideration for the liberal undertaking of the Company, may have been of little importance to its interests: but that undertaking was without any precedent in modern times, and its singular liberality

might alone furnish an adequate reason for its failure.

In no other part of the world, since the value of colonial commerce and the expense of colonial establishments have been known, have men associated to settle in an uncivilized country upon terms like these. The mother country, sure of reaping the fruits of their success, has commonly undertaken the charge of their government and protection; and it may be added that this charge has borne no small proportion to the early value of even the most prosperous Colony.

Let, for instance, an enquiry be made, what was the charge of civil government, what the cost of fortifications, of military garrisons, and of the various other public services connected with the settlement of Dominica and St. Vincent, and it would probably appear that more than the whole amount of the capital of the Sierra Leone Company was

sunk by the public in each of those islands, after their cession by France in 1763, before they were made in any degree valuable to this country. But in Sierra Leone, all these expences were borne by the Company, till it could defray them no longer; and when the Colony was totally laid waste in the last war by invasion, the Company sustained the whole cost of its restitution. The assistance since received from Parliament has come too late to save the stock of the Proprietors, though it may possibly be the source of much future benefit to the nation.

When these circumstances are considered, even if we admit that the undertaking of the Company, regarded as a mere commercial enterprise, has failed, we may yet safely affirm that its failure has been less discouraging than that of the first settlers in the most valuable of our colonial possessions. It is notorious that, in the ceded islands before adverted to, though now, or lately,

in a state of high prosperity, almost every private capital, that was at first embarked in their cultivation, was lost to the adventurers. So extensive was the ruin that the very easy purchase-money of lands reserved to the government, though forming the first lien upon them, remained for the most part unpaid; and Mr. Edwards questions whether a shilling of the nominal sales ever found its way into the treasury.

This is, in truth, from known causes, the ordinary case with new Colonies. It has been proverbial that the first settlers generally fail, though their successors rise on their ruins: and if such is the fate of adventurers in the fertile, well known, and well defended field of our own Sugar Colonies, where they have few or no public establishments to maintain; it would surely be unjust to regard the losses of the Sierra Leone Company, under the peculiar circumstances which have been noticed, as a proof that coloniza-

tion in Africa can never be carried on to advantage.

Your Committee however would again remark, that supposing such an opinion to be well founded, it has no relevancy to the objects of the African Institution; for we mean not to colonize in Africa, or to trade there on our own account, but only to assist and give a right direction to the enterprize of others, and to excite the industry of the natives of that continent. And in these respects, the experience of the Sierra Leone Company presents to us nothing but encouragement. The possibility of introducing agriculture, innocent commerce, and other means of civilization into Africa, if it could reasonably have been doubted before, is established by what that Company has actually effected, notwithstanding what it has failed to accomplish. It has shewn that not only provisions, but the various articles of export which we now bring from the West Indies, may be

raised on the African coast. It has demonstrated that Negroes in a state of freedom may be induced to labour in the field. It has proved that the Native Chiefs may be made to understand such views as our Institution wishes to impress upon them. And above all it has shewn, that the grand obstacle to their heartily embracing those views has been the continuance of the Slave Trade.

The Colony of Sierra Leone can also attest, that free Negroes are capable of being governed by mild laws, and require neither whips nor chains to enforce their submission to civil authority. If a spirit of insubordination appeared for a time in that Colony, it was under circumstances which would in more polished societies have produced much stronger effects. The government was long destitute even of any lawful authority to punish crimes, and never possessed a military force which could overawe the turbulent. Yet if the course of events at Sierra

Leone be compared with the conduct of the first European settlers in the Antilles and on the American continent, whether English, French, or Spaniards, the result will be highly advantageous to the African character.

Nor has the Sierra Leone Company furnished us with matter of encouragement alone, but also with highly important means for the execution of our purposes. In their Colony, now about to be taken under the immediate care of government, there is a basis upon which we may proceed at once to build. In that central part of the great African Continent, schools may be maintained, useful arts may be taught, and an emporium of commerce be established, by those whom our patronage may animate, or our information enable, to engage in such undertakings. There, native agents may be found, and the African languages acquired. From thence, travellers may diverge on their journeys of discovery, and there the scattered rays of

information from the interior may be collected. Nor is it a small advance towards our ultimate purpose to have a secure and convenient station already provided on the Coast, with copious means both of defence and subsistence.

But a still higher advantage, derived from the labours of the Sierra Leone Company is, that the principles upon which we proceed, and the objects which we aim to accomplish; will not, in that important part of Africa; excite either surprize or distrust.

The greatest of all obstacles perhaps to the civilization of the natives of Africa by European means, would be the diffidence in our intentions which they might reasonably entertain. A poor negro might well conceive that a white man could have no other design, in courting his acquaintance, than to make a slave of him, and carry him from the coast. But the experience of fifteen years has now convinced the inhabitants of at least that part

of the Continent which is in the neighbourhood of Sierra Leone, that benevolence and good faith may really reside under a white complexion; that there are Englishmen who abhor the Slave Trade, and who, far from kidnapping the merchant or labourer who puts himself in their power, desire nothing but his improvement and happiness.

Nor can it be supposed that the knowledge of this surprizing fact is confined to the immediate vicinity of Sierra Leone. Its novelty has no doubt caused it to be known in more distant countries; so that Englishmen who may now solicit a commercial intercourse, even with a people of a country considerably remote from that settlement, may gain credit for their real purpose, and not be suspected of meditating violence and fraud under the mask of fair professions.

It is probable that no experience, much short of that term which has elapsed since the settlement of Sierra Leone, would have

sufficed to produce this consequence; and the progress of conviction may have been aided even by the perseverance of the Company under its misfortunes.

Your Committee, when it adds this last important advantage to the rest, is inclined to hope, that the losses of the Company may yet be largely compensated to the feelings of the Proprietors, by the permanent good effects of their labours. They have laid, it may be hoped, a deep and necessary foundation, which the wisdom of Government and Parliament will preserve, and on which, when the Slave-Trade ceases, the benevolence and the commercial industry of individuals will find it easy to build.

The only remaining objection which your Committee can anticipate, is the seeming inadequacy of the means which we can expect to possess and employ.

As we neither propose to colonize, nor to trade on our own account, how, it may be

asked, can we materially contribute to the civilization of Africa?

We answer, by the same means, in part, which are found necessary or useful for the promotion of agriculture, and for the encouragement of useful arts, or other patriotic and benevolent improvements, even in this enlightened country. We shall endeavour indeed to diffuse knowledge and to excite industry in Africa, by methods adapted to the peculiar situation and manners of the inhabitants. We trust to be able in various ways to promote an acquaintance with letters, and with the agricultural and mechanical arts, on different parts of the coast. We hope also to find enterprising and intelligent men, who will explore the interior, not merely to gratify curiosity, but to obtain and disseminate useful knowledge, and to open sources of future intercourse. But information must also be diffused, and the spirit of commercial enterprise excited at home, in order that

Individuals may be prompted by self-interest to aid us in the most effectual manner. And why, it may reasonably be asked, should the efforts of a respectable association be less efficacious in this part of our plan, than in other cases of a similar kind? If even in Great Britain, we have societies to suggest, patronize, and recommend improvements in agriculture; to foster the arts and sciences; to encourage our fisheries; and to promote other national objects; why should not a society to encourage African agriculture and African commerce, be equally useful and necessary?

What are the means employed by those various societies which we cannot with propriety adopt? To collect and circulate information respecting the commercial faculties of Africa, for instance, cannot be less conducive to the advancement of commerce with that country, than the publication of agricultural intelligence or of useful discoveries is to the im-

provement of our English husbandry, arts, and manufactures: and medals or honorary bounties may excite a competition in the importation from Africa of gum, ivory, dye-woods, indigo, or cotton, as well as in the planting of oaks, the catching of fish, or the breeding of cattle.

The utility of such a society is likely to be peculiarly great in the present case, on account of those very misapprehensions which your Committee have endeavoured to obviate.

When prejudice represents any new attempt as chimerical and extravagant, the enterprise of individuals may be unreasonably checked by the dread of ridicule or censure. Now what is more likely to remove this probable obstacle to experiments of the kind that have been alluded to, than the sanction and countenance of a numerous and highly respectable society, comprising in its body some of the most exalted characters in the kingdom?

Your Committee however will not attempt to enumerate the various ways in which our Institution may best promote the great ends for which it is formed. To obviate objections, a few of them have been instanced; but the extent and specific nature of our practical measures must be matter of future and deliberate discussion, by those whom the society may appoint to manage its affairs: and they must obviously in part depend on the extent of those pecuniary funds which we may be able to acquire.

Your Committee, having thus endeavoured to do away such objections as might prejudice our infant Institution, think it necessary to advert to only one argument of a positive kind in its favour, and that is the peculiar advantages for such an undertaking which the present moment affords.

The Slave Trade, among the innumerable evils of which it was the proximate or remote cause, produced, it must be allowed,

the effect of exciting, to a certain degree, a commercial spirit, and a taste for the produce and manufactures of distant countries, in the inhabitants of Africa. The British part of this Trade has at length been abolished, and will shortly terminate upon the Coast. That which has been carried on by America will cease about the same time. Denmark has also extricated herself from the guilt and disgrace of this commerce. France, Spain, and Holland are effectually precluded by the war from taking any share in it; and no other European nation, Portugal excepted, has ever been engaged in carrying it on. After the close of the present year, therefore, the Portugueze Slave Trade alone will remain to oppose or obstruct any efforts which may be made for the improvement of Africa. The privations to which the inhabitants of that Continent will thus be subjected are of themselves calculated to give a great impulse to their en-

terprise and exertion; and there is good reason to hope that many of the more intelligent chiefs will anxiously avail themselves of any practicable means which may be presented to them, for obtaining those European articles to which they have been hitherto accustomed. At such a moment, how much may be effected by an Institution prepared to furnish, what that intelligent traveller, Mr. Parke, states to be alone wanting to the improvement of this quarter of the globe; "example to enlighten the minds of the natives, and instruction to enable them to direct their industry to proper objects?"

Nor ought we to overlook the benefits which this country is likely to derive from such a developement of the faculties of the African Continent. While that gigantic power at the feet of which the Continent of Europe now lies prostrate, is employing his utmost efforts to prevent our commerce from flowing in its ancient channels, surely it be-

comes us to cherish every reasonable prospect of finding other outlets. We have achieved a great and splendid act of national justice in abolishing the Slave Trade. The chain which bound Africa to the dust, and prevented the success of every effort that was made to raise her, is now broken. Let our benevolence interpose to repair the ruin and degradation which we have contributed to bring upon her, and to teach her the use of her liberated faculties; and we may soon discover, by our own happy experience, that in exercising justice and benevolence towards her, whatever may be the apparent sacrifice, we have only been laying a more solid foundation for the enlargement of our own national prosperity.

The Committee will now proceed to submit to the Meeting the plan which seems to them best adapted for the interior Constitution and Government of the Society. To this they have deemed it proper to prefix a Sum-

mary of the grand objects, to promote which we have associated, as declared at the last General Meeting; with some practical suggestions, as to the general nature of those means which it may be expedient to employ.



RULES AND REGULATIONS, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Objects of the Institution.

THE general objects of the Institution are expressed in the following Resolutions adopted at the first meeting of this Society, on the 14th of April, 1807, viz.

1. That this Meeting is deeply impressed with a sense of the enormous wrongs which the natives of Africa have suffered in their intercourse with Europe ; and from a desire to repair those wrongs, as well as from general feelings of benevolence, is anxious to adopt such measures as are best calculated to promote their civilization and happiness.

2. That the approaching cessation of the Slave Trade hitherto carried on by Great Britain, America, and Denmark, will, in a considerable degree, remove the barrier which has so long obstructed the natural course of social improvement in Africa; and that the way will be thereby opened for introducing the comforts and arts of a more civilized state of society.

3. That the happiest effects may be reasonably anticipated from diffusing useful knowledge, and exciting industry among the inhabitants of Africa, and from obtaining and circulating throughout this Country more ample and authentic information concerning the agricultural and commercial faculties of that vast Continent; and that through the judicious prosecution of these benevolent endeavours, we may ultimately look forward to the establishment, in the room of that traffic, by which Africa has been so long degraded, of a legitimate

and far more extended commerce, beneficial alike to the natives of Africa and to the manufacturers of Great Britain and Ireland.

4. That the present period is eminently fitted for prosecuting these benevolent designs; since the suspension, during the war, of that large share of the Slave Trade, which has commonly been carried on by France, Spain, and Holland, will, when combined with the effect of the Abolition Laws of Great Britain, America, and Denmark, produce nearly the entire cessation of that traffic along a line of coast extending between two and three thousand miles in length, and thereby afford a peculiarly favourable opportunity for giving a new direction to the industry and commerce of Africa.

5. That for these purposes a Society be immediately formed, to be called

THE AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

1808

Additional, and various other measures, which shall be
 -approved of by the Society, for the better carrying on of this

CHAPTER II.

Means of effecting the objects of the Institution.

TO prevent misconception concerning
 the views and measures of the African Insti-
 -tution, it may be proper in the very first
 -instance to declare, that it is the Society's
 -fixed determination not to undertake any
 -religious missions, and not to engage in
 -commercial speculations. The Society is
 -aware that there already exist several most
 -respectable Institutions formed for the dif-
 -fusion of Christianity; and means not to
 -encroach on their province. It may also be
 -proper to premise, that it will naturally be-
 -come the duty and care of this Society, to
 -watch over the execution of the laws, re-
 -cently enacted in this and other countries,
 -for abolishing the African Slave Trade; to
 -endeavour to prevent the infraction of those

laws ; and from time to time to suggest any means by which they may be rendered more effectual to their objects ; and likewise to endeavour, by communicating information, and by other appropriate methods, to promote the Abolition of the African Slave Trade by Foreign powers.

The means which it is proposed to employ for the purpose of promoting civilization and improvement in Africa are of the following kind.

1. To collect and diffuse, throughout this country, accurate information respecting the natural productions of Africa, and, in general, respecting the agricultural and commercial capacities of the African Continent, and the intellectual, moral, and political condition of its inhabitants.

2. To promote the instruction of the Africans in letters and in useful knowledge, and to cultivate a friendly connection with the natives of that Continent.

3. To endeavour to enlighten the minds of the Africans with respect to their true interests; and to diffuse information amongst them respecting the means whereby they may improve the present opportunity of substituting a beneficial commerce in place of the Slave Trade.

4. To introduce amongst them such of the improvements and useful arts of Europe as are suited to their condition.

5. To promote the cultivation of the African soil, not only by exciting and directing the industry of the natives, but by furnishing, where it may appear advantageous to do so, useful seeds and plants, and implements of husbandry.

6. To introduce amongst the inhabitants beneficial medical discoveries.

7. To obtain a knowledge of the principal languages of Africa, and, as has already been found to be practicable, to reduce them to writing, with a view to facilitate the diffusion

of information among the natives of that country.

8. To employ suitable agents and to establish correspondences as shall appear advisable, and to encourage and reward individual enterprize and exertion in promoting any of the purposes of the Institution.

CHAPTER III.

Subscribers.

1. EACH Subscriber of sixty guineas or upwards, at one time, shall be a hereditary Governor,

2. Each Subscriber of thirty guineas, at one time, shall be a Governor for life.

3. Each Subscriber of three guineas, annually, shall be a Governor during the continuance of his subscription.

4. Each Subscriber of ten guineas, at one time, shall be a Member for life.

5. Each Subscriber of one guinea, annually, shall be a Member during the continuance of his subscription.

6. Governors and Members shall have the right of attending all General Meetings, and of voting for the choice of the officers of the institution.

7. Hereditary Governors shall have the farther privilege of transmitting, to any person whom they may appoint by will, their interest in the Institution.

8. No Subscriber, whose subscription shall be more than one year in arrear, shall have any right to vote at the General Meetings of the Society, until his arrear shall have been paid.

9. All annual subscriptions become payable on the 1st of January, in each year.

10. After the 1st of May, 1808, no person shall be entitled to vote at a General Meeting, until he shall have been a Subscriber for six calendar months.

CHAPTER IV.

Management of the Institution.

1. THE sole management of the affairs of the Institution shall be vested in a Patron and President, twelve Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, and a Board of thirty-six Directors, to be chosen from among the Governors of the Institution, five of whom shall be a quorum.

2. Six of the Directors who shall have attended the meetings of the Board the fewest times, shall vacate their seats annually, and their places shall be supplied by a fresh election.

3. The Patron and President, Vice Presidents and Treasurer, are *ex officio* Directors; but for the more regular and systematic administration of the affairs of the Institution, a Chairman and Deputy Chairman shall be

chosen by the Directors from their own body, one of whom, if present, shall preside at all meetings of the Board.

4. The Directors shall be empowered to hire or purchase a House or Office, and to appoint Officers for conducting the affairs of the Institution; to call General Meetings of the Subscribers; to divide themselves into Committees for the more convenient dispatch of business; to form local Committees for promoting subscriptions, and for other purposes connected with the welfare of the Institution; and generally to frame such By-Laws, not inconsistent with the fundamental rules of the Society, as shall appear to them to be necessary for the due administration of its concerns.

CHAPTER V.

General Meetings.

1. A General Annual Meeting of the Subscribers shall be held on the 25th day of March next, and in every subsequent year on the Wednesday which is the nearest to the 25th of March, that being the day on which the Act for abolishing the Slave Trade received the Royal Assent.

2. At this Annual Meeting the Election of the Officers of the Society shall take place, and the vacancies in the Board of Directors be supplied.

3. At this Meeting a Report shall be made of the proceedings of the Directors during the past year.

4. In case of an equality of Votes, either at a General Meeting or at a Board of

Directors, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

5. A General Meeting shall be called by the Directors, in case a requisition to that effect shall be addressed to them by fifteen Governors or Members; which meeting shall take place in not less than a fortnight, nor more than one month, from the time of the requisition being received.

6. No General Meeting shall be competent to the transaction of business, unless nine Governors or Members be present. If that number be not present, then the Meeting shall be adjourned for a week, notice being sent to the Subscribers.

CHAPTER VI.

Funds of the Institution.

1. **THE Treasurer shall superintend the accounts of the Institution at their Bankers, and order payment of such drafts as shall be made on him by the Directors.**

2. The Treasurer shall keep a general cash-book of all his receipts and payments, which shall be laid before the Directors at all their meetings; and he shall make up the accounts of the Institution to the 31st Day of December in every year, in order to their being audited before the General Meeting in May.

3. Three Auditors shall be annually appointed from among the Subscribers, for the purpose of auditing the accounts of the Institution.



LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS
TO THE
AFRICAN INSTITUTION.

Those marked thus () are annual.*

	£	s.	d.
*William Allen, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Thomas Babington, Esq. M.P. - - - -	3	3	0
Robert Barclay, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
David Barclay, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
*William Barnard, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Thomas Barnett, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
Ely Bates, Esq. - - - -	10	10	0
*Rev. G. F. Bates - - - -	3	3	0
Thomas Bernard, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
Charles Birch, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
*Mr. A. Black - - - -	1	1	0
Wilbraham Bootle, Esq. M.P. - - - -	31	10	0
*Essex Bowen, Esq. - - - -	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
*J. S. Brooks, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*William Brooks, Esq. - - -	1	1	0
J. H. Browne, Esq. M.P. - -	31	10	0
*John A. Brown, Esq. - - -	2	2	0
James Brown, Esq. - - - -	10	10	0
*William Brownlow, Esq. - -	1	1	0
*Joseph Bunnell, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
Joseph Butterworth, Esq. - -	10	10	0
*A. Clarke, Esq. - - - - -	1	1	0
*Mr. F. Collins - - - - -	1	1	0
*Charles Crawford, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Mr. Geo. Cromwell - - - - -	1	1	0
*E. Curry, Esq. - - - - -	3	3	0
Bishop of Durham - - - - -	31	10	0
*Mr. William Dawes - - - - -	1	1	0
Miss Dyson - - - - -	4	0	0
*Lord Ellenborough - - - - -	3	3	0
Bishop of Ely - - - - -	10	10	0
John Egerton, Esq. M.P. - -	31	10	0

	£	s.	d.
Edward Forster, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
*T. F. Forster, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Edward Forster, jun. Esq. - -	1	1	0
*B. M. Forster, Esq. - - - -	1	1	0

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER -	105	0	0
Earl Grosvenor - - - - -	31	10	0
Samuel Galton, Esq., - - - -	31	10	0
Sir William Geary, M.P. - -	31	10	0
*Emanuel Goodhart, Esq. - -	3	3	0
*Emanuel Goodhart, jun. Esq. -	3	3	0
*Joseph Goodhart, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Rev. Samuel Greatheed - - -	1	1	0
*Mr. William Greaves - - -	1	1	0
Right Hon. Viscount Howick -	31	10	0
Right Hon. Lord Headley - -	31	10	0
Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. - - -	31	10	0

	£	s.	d.
*George Harrison, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Mr. John Hatchard - - -	1	1	0
*W. S. Hathaway, Esq. - - -	1	1	0
*Thomas Hawkes, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Thomas Hayter, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*D. Henderson, Esq. - - -	1	1	0
*John Hill, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Thomas Hodson, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
John Huddleston, Esq. - - -	31	10	0
William Huskisson, Esq. M.P. -	31	10	0
W. Jacob, Esq. - - -	31	10	0
*Benjamin Jowett, Esq. - - -	2	2	0
*Rev. G. King - - -	1	1	0
Bishop of London - - -	31	10	0
*C. E. Lefroy, Esq. - - -	3	3	0
*Gam! Lloyd, Esq. - - -	3	3	0

	s	d.	d.
Zachary Macaulay, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
*R. Marsden, Esq. - - - -	1	1	0
*Amb. Martin, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Mr. Geo. Martin - - - -	1	1	0
*Matthew Martin, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Peter Martineau, Esq. - - - -	3	3	0
*Owen Maurice, Esq. . - - -	1	1	0
Sparks Moline, Esq. - - - -	31	10	0
David Niven, Esq. - - - -	10	10	0
*Mr. Thomas Nott - - - -	1	1	0
*Rev. J. Owen - - - -	1	1	0
Right Hon. Lord Henry Petty -	31	10	0
Right Hon. Spencer Perceval -	31	10	0
*Sir William Pepperel, Bart. -	1	1	0
*Mr. William Phillips - - - -	3	3	0
Charles Pieschell, Esq. . - - -	63	0	0
William Morton Pitt, Esq. M.P.	31	10	0
*Rev. Josiah Pratt - - - -	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
*Rev. T. Rees - - - - -	1	1	0
*George Robinson, Esq. - - - - -	3	3	0
*Mr. William Rowley - - - - -	1	1	0
Right Hon. Earl Selkirk - - - - -	31	10	0
*Mr. William Sancho - - - - -	1	1	0
*Henry Salte, Esq. - - - - -	1	1	0
*Rev. John Saville - - - - -	1	1	0
*Granville Sharp, Esq. - - - - -	5	5	0
*William Sharpe, Esq. - - - - -	3	3	0
*Rev. R. Simpson - - - - -	1	1	0
*Thomas C. Slack, Esq. - - - - -	3	3	0
William Smith Esq. M.P. - - - - -	31	10	0
*Rev. J. P. Smith - - - - -	3	3	0
*Benjamin Smith, Esq. - - - - -	2	2	0
*Mr. T. Smith - - - - -	1	1	0
H. P. Sperling, Esq. - - - - -	31	10	0
*James Stephen, Esq. - - - - -	3	3	0
*Col. Stephenson - - - - -	3	3	0
*Mr. G. G. Stibbs - - - - -	1	1	0
*Mr. William Stokes - - - - -	1	1	0

	£	s.	d.
*Richard Taylor, Esq. - - - - -	1	1	0
*Rev. Thomas Thomason - - - - -	5	5	0
Samuel Thornton, Esq. M.P. - - - - -	31	10	0
Henry Thornton, Esq. M.P. - - - - -	63	0	0
James Towers, Esq. - - - - -	63	0	0
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BY CAPTAIN LAYMAN,
OF THE ROYAL NAVY.

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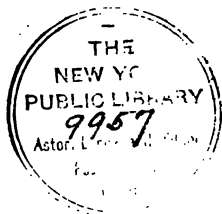
OUTLINE OF A PLAN
FOR THE BETTER
CULTIVATION, SECURITY, & DEFENCE
OF THE
BRITISH
WEST INDIES:
BEING THE
ORIGINAL SUGGESTION
FOR PROVIDING
AN EFFECTUAL SUBSTITUTE
FOR THE
AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE,
AND PREVENTING
THE DEPENDANCE OF THOSE COLONIES
ON
AMERICA FOR SUPPLIES.

BY CAPTAIN LAYMAN,
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LEADENHALL-STREET.

1807.



*T. Plummer,
Printer, Scobbing-Lane.*

INTRODUCTION.

SOON after our acquisition of the fertile Island of Trinidad, in the year 1802, and during the discussions which then took place concerning the best means of availing ourselves of its resources, the writer of the following sheets, (who from many years personal observation in the East and West Indies, and in China, had been led to a consideration of the comparative advantages attending the different modes pursued in those countries) was induced to take the liberty of suggesting to his Ma-

jesty's then Ministers, some hints for the cultivation of that island, and the general improvement of the British West Indies, at a comparatively small expence ; at the same time providing an effectual substitute for the Slave Trade.

This communication was honored with that attention which the importance of the subject demanded, and which was to be expected from a liberal and enlightened government.

The writer was introduced to several conferences with the then Members of Administration, and *at the particular desire* of the Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, explained the details of his plan, and the means of putting it in execution.

Notwithstanding the principle of this measure met with the unqualified approbation of his Majesty's Ministers, the

Author was told that the carrying it into effect could not be proceeded on until an official report should be made by the Commissioners appointed for Trinidad; and being afterwards aware that the unpleasant termination of that Commission had prevented the possibility of any such report being made, the writer took it for granted that no measures had been taken towards the execution of this project.

When, therefore, his Majesty's late Ministers came into power, and a determined disposition was evinced to effect a total and immediate abolition of the Slave Trade, without an intimation of attempting to provide any effectual substitute for it, the importance of the present subject appeared infinitely increased. If the adoption of its principle appeared before a matter of great policy, it now seemed one of absolute necessity.

Under this impression the writer ven-

tured to submit his plan upon a more extensive scale, to Government, which led to an introduction, by the late Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, to a Member of the House of Commons,* of considerable West-India property, who took a most lively interest in the question; and to whose noble disinterestedness, public spirit, and exertions in forwarding the plan, no praise of the writer can do justice.

The question was deemed by Ministers of sufficient national consequence to be referred to the consideration of the Committee of the Privy Council, before whom the writer attended several times to give every necessary explanation and information; and their lordships were pleased to

* John Foster Barham, Esq. who voluntarily offered to remove the Negroes from a considerable plantation, and without any view to profit, to give up the Estate worth upwards of £40,000, and be at the expence of procuring provisions, and settling a Colony of Chinese.

report, a short time previously to the late change of Administration, that the carrying the plan into effect would be attended with great national advantage.

The following work, containing the substance of the communications from time to time submitted by him to Government, was certainly not intended for the public eye, but his original suggestions having been, in some measure, although imperfectly, acted upon without his previous knowledge, and a Pamphlet* upon the subject having lately made its appearance, the writer, although extremely diffident of obtruding his opinions upon the public, feels that he is called upon, in justice to himself, to submit to them the result of his enquiries and personal observation upon

* Written by Robert Townsend Farquhar, Esq. who was Lieutenant Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, when the writer's original Plan was attempted to be carried into effect.

this subject, for the purpose of claiming
(however little merit may be attached to it)
a right to the originality of the measure.

OAKLEY-HOUSE,

August 1, 1807.

OUTLINE OF A PLAN,

§c. §c. §c.

THE immense importance of our West-India colonies to the manufactures, commerce, revenue, and naval strength, of this country is so well known, that it is by no means the intention of the writer to enter into any discussion upon the subject: next to our home trade, they unquestionably form the greatest source of our wealth and power, whether considered as to the value of exports, the duties on import or the employment of British shipping*.

* In 1805, the number of British ships employed in the West-India trade was 837, amounting to 206,510 tons, and employing 17,680 seamen.

But the advantages to be derived from the possession of these valuable settlements, must be, in a great measure, proportioned to the degree in which their resources can be brought into action by a proper and extensive system of cultivation.

Without entering, at present, into the question arising from the recent abolition of the slave trade, as to the possibility of keeping up the population of slaves, by a total alteration of the system hitherto pursued with respect to their labour and subsistence, it is proposed to enquire whether, if the slave market, and the sources for its supply, were still open, it would not be to the interest of the planter himself, to adopt the plan of cultivating his estate by the industrious hands of freemen, could the practicability of a constant and sufficient supply of them be clearly proved?

If it can be shown, that, by the adoption of such a measure, the produce of our colonies will be increased, and the expences of cultivation diminished; that a much greater profit will be derived by the planter, and a proportionate increase of revenue by the public, it is presumed the plan will need no other advocate, than its own intrinsic advantages, to recommend it to public adoption.

It is remarked by the father of poetry, that the day which makes a man a slave, takes away half

his worth; and it is an opinion supported by the best writers upon political economy, that no labour is so expensive as that performed by slaves*. Nothing more can be expected from a man in a state of slavery than what is produced by the dread of punishment; for being deprived of every stimulus to mental exertion, he becomes indolent in body and debased in mind.

In the West Indies the slave system, with all its baneful effects, has taken deep root. We are not, therefore, to wonder at the want of invention, ingenuity, or exertion, in such a country; nor are we to expect that those who are familiarized to this system, and unacquainted with any other, are able to form a comparative judgment between the advantage of employing freemen and slaves in the cultivation of the earth. Men of this description are naturally prejudiced in favour of bondage, from habit and mistaken considerations of interest; and to be convinced, must be shown by *example* that the present system is

* Dr. Adam Smith says—"The experience of all ages and nations demonstrates that the work done by slaves, though it appears to cost only their maintenance, is in the end the dearest of any. A person who can acquire no property, can have no other interest but to eat as much, and labour as little, as possible. Whatever work he does beyond what is sufficient to purchase his maintenance, can be squeezed out of him by violence only."

unprofitable. It may be urged, that it has been under the present system, that these colonies have attained their present degree of cultivation, wealth, and consequence. But the circumstances under which they so long flourished, and which were sufficiently favourable, for a time, to hide the deformity, and cover the disadvantages, of this system, have been, for several years, progressively changing; and, at the present moment, these valuable colonies are in a situation to justify the best grounded apprehensions of their decay and ruin, unless speedy and effectual measures are taken to avert the evil.

On the first settlement of these islands, the price of slaves was from £10 to £15 per head; and when the price amounted to £35 per head, the average price of sugar was greater than at present, when the average cost of a slave is upwards of £80.

But to place this question in the clearest point of view, it will be necessary to enquire into the expences and disadvantages attending the present mode of West-India cultivation. The first, and most obvious, objection to the slave system arises from the enormous amount of capital sunk in the purchase of slaves, the number of whom in the British West Indies, in the year

1789, appears to have been no less than 466,070 *. Since that time, in consequence of fresh importations of Negroes, and acquisitions of territory the number, in 1805, had increased to 524,025 †, and estimating this number at the present average value of new negroes only, viz. £80 sterling, it will amount to £41,936,400 of sunk capital, which would otherwise yield at the current West-India interest of £6 per cent. an annual profit of £2,516,184.

In the able report of the Lord's Committee of the Council in 1789, it appears, that the average duration of the labouring period of a slave's life does not exceed sixteen years, - the average annual expence of capital, reckoning the original cost at £80 per head, will therefore amount to £5; the annual interest at £6 per cent will be £4 16s. and the expence of food, cloathing, medical assistance, and contingencies, cannot be estimated at less than £4 4s.; for, although, in some plantations in Jamaica, the annual subsistence of a negro is not reckoned to cost more than 40s. in consequence of a great part of it, such as maize, cassavi, yams, plantains, &c. being supplied by his own labour, yet, a conclusion that such articles,

* Report of the Privy Council.

† Sir William Young's West-India Common-Place Book.

to be replaced by...

are produced without expence to the planter, must be fallacious, in as much as, previously to a stock of negroes being settled upon an estate, houses must be prepared for their reception, and a portion of ground cleared and stocked with provisions, after which the slave must be allowed sufficient time to cultivate it, the whole of which must be at the master's expence.

The annual cost of a slave will, therefore, stand as follows :

	£.	s.	d.
Yearly.—Diminution of value	5	0	0
Interest of capital	4	16	0
Expence of food, cloath- ing, medical attend- ance, and contingencies }	4	4	0
<hr/>			
Total	£14	0	0
<hr/>			

X But as the number of *workers*, *i. e.* able-bodied men and women, is not computed, even on a well-conducted plantation, to exceed one-third of the whole number on the estate, the owner is at the expence of maintaining three persons to obtain the labour of one, at an apparent annual charge of £42; but with every allowance for the work of Negro artificers, the labour of boys and girls, &c. at an actual charge of not less than

£28. This calculation is independent of the expence of a white establishment to oversee the forced labour, and of the great losses which sometimes happen by casualties; these form a material consideration, for, in the six years between 1780 and 1787, there perished no less than 15,000* negroes, in the island of Jamaica alone, from famine, or diseases contracted by scanty or unwholesome food, which, at £50, the then average price of slaves, was a loss to the proprietors of £750,000. y a

The produce of every plantation must, of course, depend upon its particular soil, situation, and management; but, upon the medium, it may be concluded from the report of the committee of the Council at Jamaica, founded upon a calculation of the aggregate produce of all the sugar estates upon the island, and the number of slaves employed thereon, that an acre of canes yields annually $10\frac{3}{16}$ cwt. of sugar, and that the proportion of sugar and rum produced is to the number of negroes, as $10\frac{4}{16}$ cwt. of the former, and 40 gallons of the latter, to every negro on the estates. This is the gross quantity, but, as there is a loss of not less than $\frac{1}{12}$ th on the former, by drainage of molasses, &c. and of about $\frac{1}{12}$ th of x /

* Vide Report of the Committee of Assembly at Jamaica.

Presented in the ...
...
...

the latter by evaporation, absorption, and leakage, from the time of making, until disposed of in England, it reduces the neat proceed to $9\frac{1}{16}$ cwt. of sugar for each negro on the estate, at a cost exceeding 40s. per cwt. and to $37\frac{2}{3}$ gallons of rum, at upwards of 1s. 6d. per gallon, for labour, stock, and capital, exclusive of all other expences, the aggregate of which, the writer speaks without fear of contradiction, amounts to considerably more than the price at which the same can now be sold in this country, or which, from the causes which will be stated, can reasonably be expected in future.

The expence of the labour of purchased slaves, enormous as it has been for the last seven years, has been proved from experience to be cheaper than that of negroes bred upon the plantations. Independent of the great difficulties which have hitherto presented themselves to any extensive system of breeding slaves, the planters, in general have not considered it their interest to maintain female slaves for the purpose of rearing children. In the report of the Privy Council, it is stated, "that a slave child does not earn its maintenance until twelve years of age, up to which period the cost is averaged at £8 per annum, exclusive of the loss of the mother's labour during the latter part of pregnancy, and one

half of her time for the first year after the birth of the child, which makes the expence of breeding a slave to exceed £100. The expence of hired slave labour is still more considerable: the present price of a day's labour of a hired slave is 2s. 7d.; which, deducting Sundays, and the half of Saturdays, gives 287 working days in the year, at the rate of £37 1s. 5d. *per annum*.

Besides the losses and disadvantages to which the planter is exposed by the enormous expences attending the present system of cultivation, there are other considerations, arising out of it, of the gravest importance, as affecting most deeply the commercial and political interests of the British empire. In a memorial and petition from the House of Assembly at Jamaica, presented to the House of Commons, it is stated—"That nothing but a reasonable participation in a trade with the United States can, in many probable contingencies in future, prevent the British West India Islands from ruin and death." And the committee at Jamaica adds—"It is a fact well established, that the necessities of the said islands cannot be supplied in any degree adequate to their wants, even from the United States, *unless in vessels actually belonging to the said States.*" If this representation be just, the British West-India Islands are, indeed, in a miserable state of

dependence on America: they exist only at the pleasure of a power on whose friendly disposition towards us, recent circumstances have too well shown but little reliance is to be placed; and to the extension and strengthening of whose maritime resources it cannot be the policy of this country to contribute. The Americans have already sufficiently enriched themselves with the spoils of our commerce, and, apparently, want nothing but the power to rob us of the means of protecting the remainder. The lamentable necessity which his majesty's late ministers conceived to exist for a relaxation of the navigation laws in favour of this trade, cannot but be considered a strong proof of their opinion as to the truth of the above representations.

It has never been doubted that the soil of our West-India colonies is perfectly well suited to the production of grain as well as of timber. The true cause then of provisions and lumber being purchased from America, can only be referred to the errors of the present system, and the expence of slave labour, compared with that of freemen, which (high as it is in the American States) admits of those articles being sold in the West Indies, after paying the expence of freight, for less money than they could be produced upon the spot. For although in the island of Jamaica

(a greater portion of which is cleared and settled than any of the others) only *one fifth part is under cultivation, and Trinidad is nearly covered with woods, uncultivated savannahs, and swamps, the planters avow—" that the raising of provisions and cutting lumber upon their own estates, is the least profitable of any application of their labour."

Another, and by far the most serious, consequence of the enormous cost of labour, added to the burthens and disadvantages to which the West-India planter is exposed, is, that foreign Europe, which till of late was chiefly supplied with colonial produce from England, is now furnished, by means of the American flag, with sugar from Batavia, Manilla, and other parts of the east, where the expence of free labour in the cultivation and manufacture of that article is so low, that, after a charge of even double the amount of freight from the British colonies, it can be brought to market in Europe at a lower price than it can be afforded from the British West Indies, by the present system of culture. This evil, (which is probably at present only in its infancy) by cutting us off from so material a vent for our colonial productions, has a manifest tendency to diminish con-

* *Vide Report of the Committee of the Privy Council.*

siderably the public revenue, and totally ruin the West-India planter, with the long train of commercial and domestic mischiefs which would necessarily result. It also tends directly to the increase of the resources and prosperity of our enemies' settlements, and to affect, most deeply, our carrying-trade—that great source and support of our naval strength—in the same proportion as increasing the maritime consequence of the United States, the evils of which have already been hinted at.

In fine, the disadvantages attending the system hitherto adopted in the West-India Islands, and the impoverished state of the planters in consequence of it, cannot be more forcibly summed up than by adverting to the present state of property there. The total value of lands, buildings, and stock, in these colonies, exclusive of the negroes, is estimated at £56,037,500. The mortgage debts alone, upon West-India property, amount to no less a sum than £24,000,000*; and the committee of the House of Assembly at Jamaica report, that, in the course of twenty years, eighty thousand and twenty-one executions, to the amount of £22,563,786 had taken place in that island alone †.

* Sir William Young.

† In the year 1788, the governors of Greenwich Hospital came

Having thus endeavoured to point out the enormous and ruinous expences and disadvantages attending the cultivation of our West-India colonies by slaves, it will be proper to show, on the contrary, the great saving in expence, and the important and numerous advantages which would attend the introduction of a system of cultivation by the hands of industrious freemen. It is obvious that the people to be employed for this purpose ought to be inured to a tropical climate. If this qualification were the only requisite, some expectations might be formed of rendering the free negroes and aborigines, as far as the inconsiderable number of them extends, an useful acquisition to the West-India islands. But, it is equally clear, that industrious habits are also essentially necessary in the constitution of a class of free labourers, which, it is well known both those classes of people are lamentably deficient in*. It would, therefore, be necessary to resort to other countries.

into possession of an estate in Jamaica, called Golden Vale, for a debt of £55,000 sterling; since which period it has been a loss of £28,000 to that establishment.

* In the West Indies no free negro was ever yet known to hire himself, or be employed, in agriculture of any kind. The men are averse to labour the ground, even for themselves; and when they do it, it is only to supply their immediate wants. The aborigines are of a still more lethargic disposition.—*Report of the Privy Council.*

It is probable there is not in the known world a class of men so admirably calculated for this purpose as the Chinese husbandmen; they are inured to a hot climate, and habitually industrious, sober, peaceable, and frugal, and eminently skilled in the culture and preparation of every article of tropical produce.

The advantages, to be expected from the cultivation of our islands by the hands of these skilful and indefatigable people, will be best understood and appreciated by a consideration of the effects which have been produced by them in the several countries where they have, hitherto, been able to colonize.

It will appear, from the concurrent testimony of the best informed writers upon the subject, that the Chinese husbandmen and artificers not only possess all the important qualifications above imputed to them, but, that a great increase in the produce, wealth, and resources of those countries, has been the invariable consequence of their introduction. Although subjected, in many instances, to the most oppressive and arbitrary exactions and regulations, their persevering industry has been found to surmount difficulties and discouragements, which, any other description of

people would have fled from in disgust, or sunk under in despair*.

* The number of Chinese resident in and about Batavia, in 1788, was 200,000. It is these people who are the support of this important settlement; and if they were obliged to abandon it, by any impolitic measure, it would soon lose its splendour. They carry on every trade and occupation; and the number of large junks* which arrive annually from China is between thirty and forty. It is remarkable that the Chinese are the only strangers who are not affected by the unhealthiness of this place. Indeed much may be said in favour of their temperance and regular manner of living. The police established among them is so very good, that except in cases of property, the fiscal or justices are seldom troubled with a Chinese criminal. The better sort of Chinese are very rich, but they are subject to great exactions from the Company, or their servants; they are suffered to farm the duties of exportation and importation. About three quarters of a mile from the city is the Chinese burying ground, consisting of fifteen or twenty acres; for the annual rent of this ground they pay 10,000 rix-dollars, (£3,366 sterling;) and at the end of every ten years they repurchase it for a very great sum, which in general is regulated by the governor and council. The Chinese pay a tax of 20,000 rix-dollars (£6,732 sterling) a-year for the privilege of wearing their hair queued; and these industrious people are subject to many more exactions.—*Captain King's Voyage to Batavia.*

At Batavia the houses have a stately appearance; and we are told that the Chinese, of whom there are great numbers at this place, were the architects. The number of people here is incredible. The Chinese have a large town to themselves, and carry on a considerable trade, for they have annually ten or twelve large junks from China; and to them the opulence of the Dutch, at

* Chinese trading vessels. One of these junks was measured in Batavia Roads, and found to be forty-one feet upon the beam, which is some inches broader than the *Warley East Indiaman*, of 1175 tons.

The most obvious and immediately beneficial effect which would result from the introduction

Batavia, is in a great measure owing.—*Commodore Byron's Voyage.*

At Batavia the merchants carry on their business with less trouble, perhaps, than in any other part of the world; every manufacture is managed by the Chinese, who sell the produce of their labour to the merchants resident here, for they are permitted to sell it to no one else. There is nothing that the Chinese will not readily do for money; so it is rare to see them idle: in eating they are easily satisfied; rice, with a small proportion of flesh or fish, is the food of the poor; and being under no restraint, they eat pork, dogs, cats, frogs, lizards, serpents of many kinds, &c. with many vegetables which an European, except he was famishing with hunger, would never touch*. The taxes paid by the Chinese to the Dutch, at Batavia, are very considerable: the ground sold them for burying their dead is at the most exorbitant price; and the tax which is exacted of them for liberty to wear their hair, is by no means the least.—*Captain Cook's first Voyage.*

The number of Chinese who live both within and without the walls of Batavia, cannot be determined with precision, but it must be very considerable. The suburbs of the city is remarkable on account of their considerable extent, and great population. The Chinese quarter is the most populous of all, and seems itself a city. It is crowded with shops, containing all kinds of goods, as well those of their own manufacture, and such as they receive annually from China, as what they buy of those imported from

* A Chinese will eat almost any production of the earth or water, except turtle, to which they have an unconquerable objection. The author recollects when in China, much diversion being afforded by a scramble amongst the crews of three Chinese vessels for a dead rat, which was afterwards dressed and eaten by the fortunate winners; and formed to the eye by no means an uninviting dish.

Chinese cultivators into our West-Indian colonies, will be the acquisition of a most useful class

pe. Ploughing is performed here, as in most parts of India, by buffaloes, which are abundant; what land is tilled is owing to the industry and perseverance of the Chinese who are settled there.

Every Chinese, who has a profession, is obliged to pay a yearly poll-tax of half a ducatoon, (3s. sterling).—*Admiral Staus.*

Exclusive of the Javanese, who are the original inhabitants of the island, the Chinese constitute the major part of its inhabitants, live not only in Batavia and its suburbs, but are settled in great numbers in the heart of the country. These people are employed in almost every handicraft business, carry on an extensive commerce, cultivate the sugar cane, coffee, and indigo; and likewise farm the arrack distilleries, and government duties. In short, they are indispensibly necessary, being the most industrious people in the whole country, and indefatigable in every thing they undertake.—*Dr. Thunberg's Travels.*

In Bencoolen many attempts have been made by the English to bring to perfection the manufacture of sugar and arrack from the rice, but the expences, particularly of the slaves, were always found to exceed the advantages. Within these few years that the plantations and works were committed to the management of Henry Botham, it has manifestly appeared that the end is to be obtained by employing Chinese in the works of the field, and giving them a proportion of the produce for their labour. The influx of money thrown into Batavia for arrack and sugar have been immense.—*Mr. Marsden's History of Sumatra.*

The Dutch acknowledge that Batavia could scarcely subsist without the industry and ingenuity of the Chinese. Their houses are crowded with people; great numbers of them come constantly to Java in junks, which generally sail from the provinces of Candan and Fookeen. They apply to every industrious occupation,

of labourers, without the enormous and unprofitable employment of dead capital, heretofore ne-

and obtain what either care or labour can accomplish. The drudgery and detail of business are readily undertaken by the Chinese; and they do at length acquire fortunes, which they value by the time and labour required to earn them. So gradual an acquisition makes no change in their disposition or mode of life; their industry is not diminished, nor their health impaired; though healthy, active, and as if quite at home, they readily obeyed a few emaciated Europeans.--*Embassy to China, by Sir George Staunton.*

On that side of the city of Batavia which is inland, the industrious Chinese carry on their various manufactures; their rice grounds, their sugar plantations, and their gardens well stocked with all kinds of vegetables, surround the city. In these gardens, as in their own country, they sink large tubs or earthen vessels into which are collected all sorts of animal and vegetable matter, to be converted by putrefactive fermentation into manure. That the Chinese should consent to the Mahomedan Malays and Javanese, exercising their devotions in the same temple, which they built at their own expence, and consecrated to the god of their own worship, is by no means an unfavourable feature in their character; but on the part of the Dutch, who enforce the measure, it is one of the greatest insults that can be offered: The Chinese hospital or infirmary, which was erected by voluntary contributions from their community, and is supported by legacies, by profits arising from theatrical exhibitions and fireworks, and by a small tax on marriages, funerals, and celebrations of public festivals, is equally open for the benefit and reception of those who have not contributed towards the establishment, and who do not belong to their society. Towards the support of the temple, and the infirmary, their contributions are voluntary; but, exclusive of these, their industry is severely taxed by the Dutch government. Every religious festival and public ceremony, every popular amusement, as well as every branch of

cessary for the purchase of slaves. In the present times of difficulty and distress, this of itself

individual industry, are subject to taxation; they are even obliged to pay for a licence to wear their hair in a long plaited tail, according to the custom of their country; for permission to bring their greens to market, and to sell their produce and manufactures in the street; yet to the industry and the exertions of these people, are the Dutch wholly indebted for the means of existing, with any tolerable degree of comfort, in Batavia; every species of vegetable for the table is raised by them in all seasons of the year, and at times when the most indefatigable attention and labour are required. They are masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, upholsterers, tailors, and shoemakers; they are employed in the arts of distilling, sugar refining, pottery, lime burning, and every other trade and profession that are indispensibly necessary for making the state of civilized society tolerably comfortable. They are moreover the contractors for supplying the various demands of the civil, military, and marine establishments in the settlement. They are the collectors of the rents, the customs, and the taxes*. Batavia is the worst of climates; the mortality of Europeans is far beyond what is known in any other settlement, exceeding in the best of times, the most fatal of the West-India islands. The following proportion of deaths may be considered as pretty nearly the truth—

Dutch ..	{ during the first year.....	160	in 100
	{ survivors after ditto	10½	do.
Slaves.....		7½	do.
Chinese.....		3½	do.†

Barrow's Voyage to Cochin China.

* Their mode of collecting the taxes is not undeserving of imitation:—On a signal being hoisted by the chief of the Chinese, every person carries the amount of his tax to the collector, by which the great expence of tax gatherers is avoided. In the countries of Europe the community not only raise a revenue for the state but an income for an unproductive horde of tax gatherers.

† The mortality of the Chinese at Batavia is exactly the average proportion of deaths that take place in towns and manufacturing parishes in England as given by sir F. M. Eden.

forms a most weighty and important consideration. Those planters who shall have sufficient discrimi-

In the island of Java, more particularly near Batavia, the culture of the cane, and manufacture of the sugar and arrack, is deserving of a particular description. The proprietor of the estate is generally a wealthy Dutchman, who has erected on it substantial mills, boiling and curing houses; he rents this estate to a Chinese, who resides on it as superintendent, and relets it to other Chinese or freemen in parcels of fifty or sixty acres, on condition that they shall plant it in canes, and receive so much per pecul of $133\frac{1}{3}$ lbs. for every pecul of sugar the canes produce. When crop time comes on, the superintendent collects a sufficient number of persons from the adjacent towns and villages, and takes off his crop as follows:—To one set of task men, who bring their carts and buffaloes, he agrees to give such a price per pecul to cut all his crop of canes, carry them to the mill, and grind them; a second set boil them, at per pecul; and a third, clay and basket the sugar for market, at per pecul. By this method the renter knows to a certainty what the produce will cost him, and has not any unnecessary expence of labour; for, when the crop is taken off, the taskmen return to their several pursuits in the towns and villages they come from, and these only remain, for seven months in the year, the cane planters who are preparing the next year's crop. This, like all complex arts, by being divided into several branches renders the labour cheaper, and the work more perfectly done. The price of common labour is from 9d. to 10d. per day, but by the preceding method the task-men gain considerably more, not only from working extra hours, but from being artists in their several branches. The culture of the cane is carried to the utmost perfection at Batavia by the Chinese; the hoe, almost the sole implement of the west, is there scarcely used; the lands are well ploughed by a light plough, with a single buffalo; a drill is then made by the plough as for sowing the field pea, and a person with two baskets filled with cane plants, which are suspended to an elastic bamboo across his shoulders, drops into the furrow, plants,

nation, spirit, and good-sense, to surmount the prejudices which this material change of system

alternately from each basket, covering them at the same time with earth, by the use of his feet*. The canes when young are kept frequently ploughed as a weeding, and the only use made of the hoe is to clear the weeds round the plant when very young, but of this there is little occasion, if the land has gone through a sufficient course of ploughing, and is thoroughly prepared. When the cane is ready to earth up, the space between the rows is ploughed deep, the cane tops tied up, and an instrument, made for the purpose like a broad shovel with teeth at the bottom, a spade handle, and two cords fixed to the body of the shovel, ending by a wooden handle for a purchase, is made use of by two persons to earth up the cane; the strongest of the two holding the handle of the shovel, pressing it into the ploughed earth, while the other on the opposite side of the plant, by a jerk of the cord, draws up to the stem of the cane plant, all the earth that the plough had loosened; two persons employed with this instrument will earth up more canes in the day than ten negroes using their hoes. The canes in India are much higher earthed than in the West Indies; in moist soils they with little labour earth them as high as the knee, answering at once the purpose of making a dry bed for the cane to grow in, and a drain for the water to go off in the excavated channel. The improvement in making the cane into sugar at Batavia, keeps pace with that in its culture; evaporation being in proportion to the surface, their boilers are set with as much of it as possible; the cane juice, with temper sufficient to throw up its impurities, is boiled down to the consistence of a syrup, it is then thrown up into vats, calculated to hold one boiling, then sprinkled with two buckets of water, to subside its foul parts; after standing six hours it is let off by three pegs of different heights into a single

* The natives of the east from early practice are enabled to make great use of their feet for many purpose: which an European would find impossible.

might probably have to encounter, will, by engaging for a term a sufficient number of Chinese labourers of a proper description for the cultivation of their plantations, be enabled to convert their unproductive capital of slaves into a fund, to be appropriated, either to the discharge of their debts, to the necessary improvements of their estates, or the more active purposes of commerce. By this means a supply of slaves will be provided for those planters, who (till they feel convinced by the successful example of others) may continue attached to the former system of cultiva-

copper with one fire, it is there tempered again, boiled up, and reduced to sugar by a gentle fire; it granulates, and the sugar boiler, dipping a wand into a copper, strikes it on the side, then drops the sugar remaining on it into a cup of water, scrapes it up with his thumb nail, and by this means is able to judge to the utmost nicety of the sugar having its proper degree of boiling. The vats or receivers I have mentioned, are placed at the left end of a set of coppers. After running off for boiling all that is clear, the remainder is passed through a strainer in the inside of the boiling house; what is fine is put into the copper for sugar, the lees reserved for distilling. They do not make spirits on the sugar estates, the molasses are sent for sale to Batavia, where one distillery may purchase the produce of one hundred estates. Here is a vast saving and reduction of the price of spirits; arrack is sold at Batavia for eight-pence a gallon, the proof of the spirit about five-tenths. The cane trash is not, as in our islands, carried into sheds, where it loses much of its strength before it is used, but it is laid out immediately on an esplanade to dry, then made into faggots with bamboo binders, about the size of the furnace mouth, set

tion. With respect to the expence of raising and manufacturing the present staple article, sugar, there can be no doubt, from the authorities here quoted, (the truth and justice of which the writer can positively speak to from long personal observation) that were the system of the East adopted in the West Indies, that article might be produced in much greater abundance, and at considerably less expence than at present. It has been already shewn that the actual cost of sugar to the planter in the West Indies, for labour, stock, and build-ings only, independent of every other expence, exceeds 40s. per cwt. whilst the price at Batavia amounts to only half that sum, including every expence; and with a soil, at least, equally well adapted for the growth of sugar, it is evident that, by pursuing the same mode of culture, the like benefits might be attained; besides, should the

up in cocks of four, and used immediately when dry; by this immediate use, its force of fire is much greater, and the labour of carrying to and from the trash house is saved.—*Mr. Botham's Paper to the Privy Council.*

In our own settlement of Prince of Wales's Island, the Chinese form one of the most numerous and useful classes of the inhabitants; they are in general a quiet, industrious people, and have proved a most valuable acquisition to the settlement; indeed without them it would have little or no cultivation.—*Sir George Leitch's Account of Prince of Wales's Island.*

proposed plan be adopted upon an extensive scale, the present unproductive and expensive establishments of white persons to oversee forced labour would be rendered totally unnecessary; and thus not only a considerable saving would take place in their salaries and maintenance, but these people might be made much more useful to themselves and the state, by becoming planters on their own account, which they would be enabled to do, as many of the things hereafter enumerated would require but a very trifling capital to cultivate*.

But the pecuniary advantages above stated are as a feather in the scale, when compared with the other benefits which would be derived from the proposed change of system. The state of dependance upon America for the very means of existence, which the West-India colonies are now in, is an evil of such magnitude, and of so alarming a nature, both in a political and commercial point of view, that to find a remedy for it is an object of the greatest national consequence.

* Those who are commonly distinguished by the appellation of managers, overseers, and plantation book-keepers, and they constitute a numerous body of people, are composed of men of all countries and characters.—*Bryan Edward.*

The adoption of the proposed plan would, it is submitted, completely effect this important object. In fact, it is scarcely possible, by any statement of political arithmetic, to estimate all the good which would result to this country, and its western colonies, from a judicious establishment in the latter, of a skilful and industrious colony of the agriculturists and artizans of the east, and from the introduction of the useful productions and manufactures of that country, many of which, from the great distance, and the consequent heavy expence of freight and charges, cannot with profit be imported into England, but which, if produced in the West Indies, would not only meliorate the condition, and secure the independence of those colonies, but would tend to increase, in an infinite degree, their commerce and resources, and proportionably to enhance their value to the mother country.

Hitherto sugar has been generally cultivated as the principal staple in most of our West India islands; in consequence of which, when the price has been low, or the markets in England glutted, and most particularly since the European market has been supplied by the Americans from our enemies settlements, this produce lies useless and unproductive, in the warehouse, or is sold, at

a considerable loss, to the absolute ruin of the planter, whose capital, (frequently not his own, but borrowed on usurious terms) being sunk in slaves, buildings, and machinery, leaves him unable, were he inclined, under the present system, to relieve himself from his embarrassments, by employing it in a more advantageous channel. Indeed, it has hitherto been considered impracticable to regulate the growth of sugar by the demand, from a supposed impossibility of changing the crops and the cultivation, according to the variation in the price, or in the consumption of tropical produce; and, perhaps, under the present system, there are obstacles to such a plan which may be found almost insurmountable. The introduction of free cultivators would obviate these difficulties, and by their means it will appear, not only that the expence of producing sugar, both with respect to capital and labour, may be greatly reduced, but the English market supplied with many articles from the West Indies, which might be cultivated with little capital, and for which we are now obliged to depend upon our rivals or our enemies.

We are now to consider the means by which these colonies may be rendered independant of the United States, as to supplies of provisions and

lumber. This will be effected by the cultivation of many of the articles of eastern produce in which the inhabitants of that part of the world are so eminently skilled. The most important of them are : the bread-fruit of Ceylon *,

* In Ceylon there are two sorts of trees which produce the bread-fruit, and both are found as well in a wild as uncultivated state. The one which yields smaller fruit without seed is known by the name of Maldivian sour sack, and its use is less universal than that of the other sort, which grows more plentifully, bears larger fruit, and is in greater request. The first sort bears fruit about the size of a child's head, and can only be propagated by the roots. The latter sort weighs from thirty to forty pounds, and contains from two to three hundred kernels, each of them four times the size of the almond, and may be propagated by seed. The trees of both sorts are replenished with a resinous milky juice, of such a viscid nature, that birds may be caught with it. The fruits are covered all over prickles, and with a thick and soft rind; the internal part of the fruit only is used for food by the human race. Both fruits have an unpleasant cardaverous smell, and the taste of the internal esculent part is not unlike that of a cabbage. The trees will flourish for whole centuries, and bear their fruit (which ripens by degrees) not only upon their thickest branches, but also upon the stem itself, for the space of eight months together, to the inestimable benefit and advantage of the islanders. When the larger sort of bread-fruit is perfectly ripe, it is called Wareka, the pulpy part is then fit for use, and that which environs the seed has a sweetish taste; is yellow, and, without any preparation, both eatable and relishing. The seeds may be eaten either alone like chesnuts, or together with the pulpy part of the fruit, prepared in different ways. They are used for food both boiled and roasted; the poorer sort generally boil and eat them with the scrapings of cocoa-nut and salt; the rich

melory, sago, dates, batataes, and rice, the valuable properties, and mode of cultivating which are so ably and clearly described in the authorities referred to, that it is thought better to give them in the words of the authors themselves.

The bread-fruit tree, or rather the smaller sort, called the *ARTOCARPUS incisa*, is produced at Otaheite, Guam, Java, &c. and owing to the munificence of his Majesty, and the unwearied exer-

fatten pigs as well as geese with them. *Fifteen different dishes may be prepared from this fruit*, and are more or less in use at Ceylon.

—*Thunberg's Travels.*

Dr. Foster says, on an acre of bread-fruit, eleven persons at Otaheite are computed to live eight months, which is the time it is in season.

The melory trees seem to grow wild at the Nicobar islands; they are as big as our large apple-trees and as high; they have a blackish rind, and pretty broad leaf; the fruit is as big as the bread-fruit at Guam; it is shaped like a pear, and hath a pretty tough smooth rind of a light green colour. The natives have great earthen pots to boil the melory fruit in, which will hold 12 or 14 gallons; these pots they fill with the fruit, and putting in a little water, they cover the mouth with leaves to keep the steam in whilst it boils; when the fruit is soft, they peel off the rind, scrape the pulp from the strings with a flat stick made like a knife, and make it up in great lumps as big as a holland cheese, it will keep six or seven days; it looks yellow, tastes well, and is their chief food.

Dampier's Voyage.

tions of Sir Joseph Banks, was introduced with some other plants into the West Indies in 1793. As two vessels were employed on the above service, and circumnavigated the globe, it is much to be regretted that the generous efforts of Sir Joseph Banks on the occasion, were not enabled to render so praise worthy an undertaking more extensive and complete. The larger species of the bread-fruit produced in Ceylon, and mentioned in Thunberg's Travels, would be a great acquisition in the West Indies.

The melory tree is another most useful production of the east, and is a native of the Nicobar islands. Dampier has given a very particular description of this fruit, but he had no opportunity of ascertaining the period during which it continues in season. A loaf made of this fruit will keep pure for a week; this gives it, in some respects, a preference to the bread-fruit, which is sweet and pleasant to the taste, when fresh, but, if kept above twenty-four hours, becomes dry, and eats harshly.

The libby or sago tree, *CYCAS circinalis*, is perhaps the most valuable of all the productions of the east. It grows in Borneo, Mindanao, and other islands of the eastern Archipelago. To the inhabitants of the Spice Islands, it is of

much greater utility than their rich productions of cloves and nutmegs, being at Amboyna, and the adjacent islands, the universal article of food. An acre of land, planted with this valuable tree, will yield a greater quantity of sustenance* than any other vegetable production, and as the bread made from it will keep sweet and good for years, it has a great advantage over the bread fruit and the melory. Five people can, in a short time, prepare a sufficient quantity of sago bread for the consumption of 100 ; and by continually keeping twelve months stock, the inconveniences of want, arising, in the West Indies, from the effects of hurricanes, or other casualties, might, by this means, be effectually guarded against. When a sago tree has been felled, and the meal taken from it, the refuse is called *ela*, and is used to feed hogs, poultry, &c. A kind of mushroom, in high estimation, grows upon the heaps of this re-

* It is computed that an acre of ground will contain three hundred sago trees, which, at seven years growth, will produce, one with another, 3 cwt. of flour ; and that 9 cwt. is sufficient for the maintenance of one man for a year, therefore an acre would maintain one hundred men for the same time ; or, if one seventh part were cut in succession, an acre would yield subsistence for fourteen persons annually.

Sago bread, if properly baked, fresh from the oven, eats just like hot rolls, and will keep several years, but when hard, it requires to be soaked in water before eaten.—*Captain Forrester.*

fuse. Even in its decay, this invaluable production is not without its use, for when rotten, a sort of worms, very fat, and white, with brown heads, are formed in it, and are relished by the natives as a great delicacy*.

The leaf of this tree affords an excellent covering for houses, and is better, and more durable, for this purpose, than that of any other trees of the palm kind, remaining good for seven years.

The date tree *PHŒNIX dactylifera*, is well known to be preferred by the arabs to any other species of vegetable production; and the writer, having travelled through an extent of seven hundred miles of country, where dates were the universal article of food, has no hesitation in giving it as his opinion, from the appearance of the natives, that they are a much more nutritious food than rice, to which they would be a most excellent addition, not only as a variety, but as an agreeable relish. The negroes in Arabia are particularly fond of this fruit: as an article of profit, the tree is very productive; three hundred date trees will stand upon an acre, and

* The Editor of Stavorinus's Voyage.

the produce not only yields every nutritious food, but an excellent commodity for distillation and exportation.

The batatas, *CONVOLVULUS edulis* of Japan, are mealy, and much more agreeable to the taste, and easier of digestion, than potatoes*.

Rice, (*oryza*). The extensive and almost universal cultivation of this valuable grain in the east, has produced numerous varieties of two species, adapted to almost every circumstance of soil, climate, and seasons, from the lowest swamp to the summit of the highest mountain. It forms the common and favourite food of the Chinese, and other inhabitants of the east; and it is to be remarked, that those countries which abound in this grain, and where it is consequently cheap, are much more populous than any others in the world*.

The rice produced at Japan is the whitest, most glutinous, and nutritive, and, consequently, the best of any. The next in quality is produced in Java, where the mountain species is planted at

* Thunberg.

the commencement of the rains in November, and reaped in March; and the other sort being planted at the beginning of the dry season in May, two crops are produced in less than a year*.

The mountain rice is the driest, most nutritive, and the best keeping grain, and is sold at a higher price, but not being so productive as that grown upon low land, it is not so profitable, or so much in general use, as the common sort (*oryza sativa*) This might be cultivated upon the inundated lands in Trinidad, and other swamps in the West Indies, which are fit for no other purpose. The average produce of inundated rice is 24 cwt. per acre; and in South Carolina, where the cultivation is found to be more profitable than that of corn, and from whence it is imported into the West Indies and Europe. “† The common computation throughout the province, communibus annis, is, that each working hand, employed in a rice plantation, makes four barrels and a half of rice, each barrel weighing four or five hundred pounds,” which at a medium of 450 lbs. per barrel, gives 2025 lbs. or nearly 18 cwt. of rice, for each person, besides rearing a sufficient quantity of provender for the cattle and

* In Bengal, where, from the nature of the country, the cultivation is entirely confined to the common sort, the rice is some times scalded as a preservative.—*Thunberg*.

† American Husbandry.

stock. Therefore, if rice were cultivated in the West Indies by slaves, and the expence of a field negro's labour, £28 per annum, furnished 2025 lbs. of rice, it would cost the planter upwards of $3\frac{1}{4}$ d. per pound.

Now it is well known that, in the east, one man with one plough, and four buffaloes, or five bullocks, is equal, in the common management of husbandry, to cultivate at least five acres per annum, which, at the same proportion of produce as in Carolina, although the soil in the West Indies is better adapted for rice, would make the actual produce from the labour of one man 120 cwt.; and allowing one-third to the Chinese for labour, would leave 80 cwt. clear to the planter, which, at 1d. per pound on the spot, gives him a profit of £37 6s. on five acres of, otherwise, useless land; and, if sent to England, would produce, at 30s. per cwt., £120, from which, after deducting freight £40, and insurance, commission, and charges, about £20, it would leave a clear profit of £60; consequently by employing eighty-three Chinese in the cultivation of 415 acres of swamp, they would produce near 500 tons of rice, at a clear profit to the planter of near £5000 per annum (independent of the profit from the distillation of arrack) with the employment of no other capital than 332 head of cattle,

Handwritten notes:
 ... in the West Indies
 ... since 13 cwt. in 1790

and the trifling value of the land, the purchase of which at Jamaica is not at present worth more than 30s. per acre. Tobacco and opium might also, with a trifling capital, be raised in the same manner, and with proportional advantage. In America the produce of tobacco varies from 560 lbs. to 1307 lbs. per acre, and one negro is reckoned to cultivate three acres. In India, the produce is, by better management, from 861 lbs. to 1356 lbs. per acre. The cultivation of tobacco in our colonies is of great consideration to the state as an object of revenue, and yet it is a commodity for which we now depend entirely on America.

By the introduction of these industrious colonists, with the foregoing useful commodities, not only a plentiful subsistence would be furnished to the islands, and, thereby, the means and stimulus of an increasing population, but the value and resources of these colonies would be highly improved.

The foregoing, although the most useful and important of the productions of the east, as articles of food, which might be advantageously transplanted into the West Indies, form a small part of those for the growth of which the soil and climate are sufficiently well adapted. There are none of the following which might not be in-

roduced there with the Chinese, for general purposes, to the great profit of the planter, and to the increase of the comforts and convenience of the colonists, and of the trade, commerce, and manufactures, of Great Britain.

Cocoa Nut	{	Cocos Nucifera	{	Of Guam and the
				Maldives
		Borassus	{	Of the Maldives and
				Nicobars
Nutmeg		Myristica moschata ..		Of Banda
Clove		Caryophyllus	{	Of Machain and
				Hative
Clove Bark and Sas-	}		Of Amboyna.
safras				
Cinnamon		Laurus Cinnamomum		Of Ceylon
Cassia		Laurus Cassia		Ditto
Pea	{	Æschynomene Gran-		China
		diflora		
Swamp Pea		Ditto Aquatica		Ditto
Horse Radish		Guilandina Moringa..		
Benjamin		Styrax Benzoin		Japan and Sumatra
Wax and Insect	{	China and Cochin
				China
Tallow		Croton Sebiferum		China
Varnish		Rhus Vernix	{	China, Cochin
				China
				and Japan
Oil				
Camphor				
Cajeput		Melancuca lincadindra		
Boa-ati				
Betle				
China Root				
Cinnabar				
Calambar				
Japan Earth		Minora Catechu		

Sandal		
Sapan		
Dragon	{ Gum :... Blood :... }	ArtragalusTragacantha
Red Sanders		
Aquila.....		Cochin China
Firtam		China
Rose		Ditto
Ebony.....	Diospyrus Ebenus	
Teake		Of Malabar & Pegue
Tar Tree		Pulo Condore
Gumooty {	Cordage	Of the Phillipines
Avacca... }		
✓ Mango.....	Mangifera Indica Mazagon in Bombay
✓ Mangesteen	Georcinia Mangostana	Bantam
✓ Nancas or Jaack....	Artocarpus Integrifolia	Java
Durio		
Kirambola		
Namuams	Cynometra Cauliflora..	Java
✓ Bilimbing	Aventroa belimbi	
Amona		
Rambutan	Nepheelium lappaceum	Java
Li-chea	Sapindus Edulis China
Quince	Cretua Marmelos Bengal
Pasuringa		
Catappa	Terminalia Catappa	.. Java
Jamboo	{ Eugenia Malaccensis Eugenia Jambos } Ditto
Salac	CalamusRotangZalacca	Ditto
/ Bamboo	Arundo Bambos.....	CochinChina,China
Ratan	Rotang	Bornio
Ko-ling	Jatrofa clartica China
Tea	Thea	China
Mulberry and Silk }	Morus Nigra	
Worms		
/ Cotton	Gossypium herbaceum	Of Japan & Nankin

Mulberry.....	Morus Alba	
Coffee	Coffea Arabica	Moco
Aloes		
Cardamom	Amonium Repens....	Malabar Coast
Pepper		
Shrub	Tugara piperita	Japan
Areca	Arecha Catechu.....	Cochin China
Kyapooti		
Rhubarb	Rheum palmatum	China
Gin-sing		
Scammony	Convolvulus Scammaria	
Senna	Cania senna	
Saffron		
Turmeric.....	Curcuma Longa.....	Of China
Safflower		
Colombo Root		
Assafoetida		
Gamboge	Stalagmites Gambogioides	
Gum Senegal	Mimosa Senegal.....	Of Arabia
Gum Arabic	Mimosa Nilotica	Ditto
Gum Lac.....	Croton lacciferum....	Ceylon
Olibanum		
Liquorice		
Cam-wood		
Coculus Indicus		
Gum Ammo		
Gum Gambogium		
Copal		
OpoPONax	Pastinaca OpoPONax	
Musk		
Shell-lac		
Galls		
Myrrh		
Galangale	Kempferia galanga	
Opium-poppy	Papaver Somniferum	Bengal
Grass-cloth	Urtica Niva	Of China and Japan
Soy-bean.....	Dolichos Soja.....	Japan
Millett.....	Holcus sorghum.....	Ditto

l Oils.—Cadjan	Japan
* Scramium Seasmum Orientale ..	Japan and China
Mustard Sinapis	China and Bengal
Cole Brassica orientalis....	Japan
Rape	
Linseed	
Tsubaki Camallia Japonica....	Japan
ar cane	SaccharumOfficinarum { Of Malabar, Batavia, and Cochin China
lder	Rubia tinctorum
op	
ar	Cochin China
ck.....	Goa and Batavia
.....	China
ui	
kin cloth	China
ton ditto	Ditto
ss ditto	Ditto
ck fins	Malabar Coast
o Maws	Ditto
tle oil.....	{ Pulo Condore, and Cochin China
s skins	China
e jars.....	Hindustan
ffaloes	

In mentioning the above valuable articles, which might be introduced into the West from

The price of common seed oils, in India, is about £12 per

In England they sell for fifty guineas per ton. It is unnecessary to point out the advantage of introducing the seeds and ole into the West Indies.

Buffaloes are admirably adapted for the culture of common, not only from their immense strength and docility, but as

the East Indies, it would be unpardonable not to take particular notice of two of them, the valuable properties of which are either unknown, or totally neglected, in the West Indies, but in the knowledge and use of which the ingenuity of the Chinese and other natives of the East is most conspicuously displayed.

First. The cocoa nut, that bountiful production of nature, and great source of profit and revenue in the East. The unaccountable ignorance, or prejudice, which could occasion the almost total neglect of this most valuable fruit in the West Indies, can only be imputed to the present system of slavery, which deadens all the powers of invention. The various useful purposes, to which this valuable production is universally applied in the East, are well known to all who have visited that part of the world, and are

they delight in a muddy swamp, and prefer rank vegetation to cultivated pasture. Captain King, speaking of the powerful strength and docility of the buffaloes he purchased at Pulo Condore, for seven or eight dollars each, says—"They sometimes broke the trees to which they were fastened; but they had not been twenty-four hours on board, before they became the tamest of all creatures. Thinking that a breed of animals of such strength and size (some of them weighing when dressed seven hundred weight) would be a valuable acquisition, I was inclined to have brought a male and female to England, but my intention was frustrated by an incurable hurt that one of them received at sea."

so minutely, and so accurately, detailed by that most intelligent of voyagers, Dampier*, that it will be but justice to give the description in his own words. He says—"Beside the milk, or water, in the fruit, there is, also, a liquor drawn from the tree called toddy, which looks like whey. It is sweet and very pleasant, but it is to be drank within twenty-four hours after it is drawn, for afterwards it grows sour. The way of draining the toddy from the tree, is by cutting the top of a branch that would bear nuts, but before it has any fruit, and from thence the liquor which was to feed its fruit runs into the hole of a calabash (*cucurbita eagenaria*) that is hung upon it. This branch continues running almost

* These voyages contain such a fund of information of real utility, that it is to be lamented some person of capacity, equal to the task, has not revised the original, and reprinted it, with the additions and improvements rendered necessary by later occurrences and discoveries. The writer, though aware of his own incapacity for such an undertaking, is so deeply impressed with a sense of the valuable information it contains, that unless some person more equal to the task will undertake it, he fully intends to venture upon it himself.

At Merton, the happy residence of our departed hero, the ever to be lamented Lord Nelson, on his Lordship overhearing the writer, whilst speaking of these voyages, asked him who he was talking of.—"Dampier's Voyages, my Lord."—"Aye, I learnt more from them than any other book I ever read. If any body wants to know how to beat the Spaniards, let him peruse Dampier."

as long as the fruit would have been growing, and then it dries away. The tree has usually three fruitful branches which, if they are all tapped thus, then the tree bears no fruit that year; and if one or two only be tapped, the other will bear fruit all the while. The liquor which is thus drawn is emptied out of the calabash, duly morning and evening, so long as it continues running; and great gains are produced from it, even this way, but those that distil it make the greatest profit.

“ From the toddy* when sour is distilled the arrack. Arrack is distilled also from rice, and other things, but none is so much esteemed as this made of toddy. This sort of spirit is chiefly

* Toddy should be drank before sun-rise, when it is a simple, very pleasant, and refreshing beverage. After being exposed to the warmth of the day, it contracts great acidity and headiness. It is a practice with some of the lower classes of Europeans and natives, to counteract this acidity, and increase the inebriating quality of the liquor, by assisting the fermentation with capsicum.

The mode of obtaining the toddy without a ladder is very simple and ingenious; as the trunk of the tree is thirty or forty feet to the branches, it would be difficult to climb it in the usual way. The natives, therefore, by means of a shackle of rough coir between their feet, are enabled to secure the progress they make by the exertion of their arms, which are also sometimes shackled, thus raising and shifting the shackles alternately.

used about Goa *, and therefore has the name of Goa Arrack.

“ There is also great profit made of the fruit, both of the nut and the shell.

“ The kernel is much used in making broth: when the nut is dry they take off the husk, and giving two good blows in the middle of the nut, it breaks in two equal parts, the water falling on the ground; then, with a small iron rasp made for the purpose, the kernel is rasped out clean, and on being put into a little fresh water, it becomes white as milk. In this milky water they boil a fowl, or any other sort of flesh, and it makes very savory broth. English seamen put this water into boiled rice, which they eat instead of rice milk, carrying nuts purposely to sea with them. This they learn from the natives. But the greatest use of the kernel is to make oil †,

* Owing to the indolence of the modern Portuguese, and the industry of the Chinese, Batavia has for many years been the principal manufactory for arrack.

† When this oil is quite fresh it is transparent, and perfectly sweet, and may then be used for ordinary culinary purposes. When old, it becomes discoloured, and too rancid to be eaten by Europeans.

The general mode of extracting the oil from the kernel of the cocoa nut, is between two cylinders.

From the elasticity of the fibrous husk of the cocoa nut, it is not a bad substitute for horse hair in stuffing mattresses, &c.

both for burning and for frying. The way to make the oil is to grate or rasp the kernel, and steep it in fresh water; then boil it, and scum off the oil at top as it rises. But the nuts that make the oil ought to be a long time gathered, so as the kernel may turn soft and oily.

“ The shell of this nut is used in the East Indies for cups, dishes, ladles, spoons, and, in a manner, for all eating, and drinking vessels. The husk is full of small strings and threads, which, being beaten, become soft, and the other substance, which was mixt among them, falls away like saw-dust, leaving only the strings. These are afterwards spun into long yarns, and rolled up into balls. This manufactory is chiefly used at the Maldivé islands, and the threads are sent in balls into all places that trade thither, purposely to make cordage; those yarns make good cables. I made a cable at Achin with some of them. These are called coir cables*, and will last very well; but there is another sort, the black coir †, more strong and lasting, and made of

* Coir cables will last longer in salt water than hemp, but are not calculated for fresh water. The elasticity of coir cables give them an advantage, when the ship pitches much at anchor. For hawsers, in warping, this cordage has a decided superiority from its buoyancy.

† The gumooty of the Phillipines.

strings that grow like horse hair at the heads of certain trees, almost like the cocoa tree. The Spaniards make oakum, to chaulk their ships, with the husk of the cocoa nut, which is more serviceable than that made of hemp, and they say it will never rot.

“ I have been the longer on this subject, to give the reader a particular account of the use and profit of a vegetable, which is, possibly, of all others, the most generally serviceable to the conveniences, as well as the necessities, of human life. *Yet this tree, that is of such great use, and esteemed so much in the East, is scarce regarded in the West Indies, for want of the knowledge of the benefit which it may produce.* And 'tis, partly for the sake of my countrymen in our American plantations that I have spoken so largely of it, for the climate and soil there is very proper for it: and indeed it is so hardy, both in the raising and when grown, that it will thrive as well in dry sandy ground as in rich land. I have found the cocoa nut grow very well in low sandy islands on the west coast of Sumatra, that are overflowed with the sea every spring tide; and though the nuts there are not very big, yet this is no loss, for the kernel is thick and sweet, and the milk or water in the inside is more pleasant and sweet than the nuts that grow in rich ground.” In

fact, they thrive best near the sea shore, in a sandy soil; and at the Maldives, where the best are produced, many of the low islands are overflowed by the sea, and are such bare sands, that not a single blade of grass will grow on them.

Allowing these trees to be planted 10 feet from each other, an acre would contain 435; but suppose 400 bearing trees. The yearly profit may be fairly estimated at 1s. 3d. per tree, the amount of which will be £25 *per acre per annum*, from this production alone.

Second. The bamboo. Of this singularly useful and beautiful cane there are several species, and from the quickness of its growth, and the lightness, size, strength, pliability, elasticity, durability, and fibrosity of its stem, it is applied in the East, more *particularly by the Chinese*, to a greater variety of useful and elegant purposes than any other production of the earth.

The largest and thickest species, commonly called the male bamboo, is used for building houses; the whole stems serve for the sides, where the greatest strength is required; for roofing it is divided into two equal parts, which being placed, concave and convex, into each other form a most simple, tight, and lasting covering;

and being split into several parts it is used for flooring. Bedsteads, tables, sofas, chairs, stools, every article of household furniture, and cabinet ware of the lightest and most elegant description, are made of a smaller kind of this plant, with the utmost possible ease and expedition *, and the shavings are converted into very good wadding for beds, sofas, and cushions. It is also manufactured into hats, fans, pencil-sticks, hoops, baskets, and packing cases of the neatest kind; and the fibrous part of the stem, when divested of its wood, is made into cloth of various kinds, into cordage and candle-wicks.

In agriculture, the bamboo is used by the Chinese in the construction of the most simple, ingenious, and useful hydraulic machine in the world, which (except the axis) is entirely composed of this cane, without a single piece of iron; and the making of it, from the peculiar form and

* Of the expedition with which a house may be built and furnished with this useful production, a modern traveller of great estimation, Dr. Thunberg, when near Tund-ang, in Java, says—
 “ We had a hut built for ourselves. This was completed with such incredible dispatch, that before we could alight from and unsaddle our horses and unpack our things, not only our house was entirely finished, but it was likewise furnished with a couch, three stools, and a table, all which was manufactured on the spot. I stood quite astonished at this new edifice, and entered with the greatest amazement under its friendly shade.”

lightness of this material, is rendered so easy, as to be performed by the peasants themselves, at a very trifling cost: when set in motion, this admirable contrivance will, without attendance, lift to the height of forty feet one hundred and fifty tons of water in twenty-four hours, which is readily conveyed to irrigate the fields, or to any other place or purpose that may be required. The introduction of this improvement in the agriculture of the West Indies would of itself produce most important benefits. The bamboo is also used for carts, wheelbarrows, shafts, ladders, fences, and for almost every implement of husbandry.

For maritime purposes. Most of the Chinese junks are fitted with sails, cables, rigging, and cordage, and are caulked, all from the bamboo. In small vessels it is used for masts, yards, &c.

The West Indies are much more plentifully supplied with wood for the purposes of lumber than China. And when we consider the ingenuity and resources of the Chinese in the manufacture, and economy in the use, of materials for buildings; their uncommonly compact and superior packages for ships' cargoes* (which are always

* The writer has seen various cargoes of ships in different

lashed with split rattans) with the numerous useful purposes to which, as it has already been shown, they appropriate the bamboo; their great industry and skill in agriculture in general, and particularly in the cultivation and management of the various and important articles of food, which it has been stated may without difficulty be transplanted into the West Indies, it is presumed nothing further need be said to convince every candid and unprejudiced mind, that, should the proposed change of system be adopted upon a sufficiently extensive scale, the new settlers would very soon produce sufficient provisions in the West Indies for the subsistence of the islands, and would render them wholly independent of America for those supplies, for which, at present, they lie entirely at their mercy. This object is of itself (were no other advantage likely to attend the introduction of Chinese) of sufficient importance to justify, and render prudent, the adoption of the plan; for it is easy to foresee, and it is a threat daily held out by our transatlantic rivals, that the American States will, at some future period, have a commercial intercourse with our West India colonies, *upon their own*

countries, but by far the best he ever saw in point of quality, package, and stowage, was in a ship laden with sugar, &c. at Manilla, and bound for Hamburgh. The cargo was principally manufactured and packed by Chinese.

terms, if not the territory itself, unless effectual means are speedily taken by Great Britain to rescue them from their present state of dependence.

From a consideration of the subject matter contained in the foregoing pages, it is presumed, that it may fairly be inferred as the necessary result of the enquiry, (even upon a supposition that the slave market, and the sources for its supply, were still open,) that it would be highly for the interest of the West-India planter, were it practicable, to cultivate his estate by free labourers instead of slaves. But the act for the abolition of the slave trade having given a death blow to the system, and the further importation of slaves being absolutely prohibited, the *only* means left for keeping up the stock of cultivators, will be the introduction of free labourers, or the breeding of slaves. The impossibility of effecting this object by the latter mode, is well known to those best acquainted with the subject; but admitting, for a moment, that it were physically possible, in spite of the great disproportion of females, (which cannot now be remedied,) of the licentious habits of intercourse between the sexes, and of the numerous other causes which have hitherto prevented any considerable increase in the population, it has been already shown that the

expence of rearing cultivators, which, for obvious reasons, cannot in future be diminished, is too great to admit of this mode of keeping up the stock. The adoption of the former plan, therefore, appears to be the only alternative; it is fortunate, indeed, for this country, that such an one is to be found! And in the choice of persons for this purpose, it may confidently be presumed, that none can be thought of so admirably calculated as the ingenious and indefatigable people who have formed the chief subject of this work. The next thing, therefore, to be considered is the practicability of procuring a sufficient and constant supply of them.

China may be justly termed the native land of industry; and in consequence of its having always been the policy of the government to encourage agriculture in preference to manufactures or commerce, that country has long been the most fertilized on the face of the globe. From this, and other causes, the population has become so redundant as to constitute a positive evil to the state; for the price of labour being low, and the means of subsistence difficult to be procured, the smallest failure of the rice crop occasions vast numbers constantly to perish with hunger. The consequence of this superabundant population is a constant and very consider-

able emigration, which, like the horrid practice of infanticide,* although not immediately authorized by law, is tacitly sanctioned, or rather connived at, by the government as a means of lessening the evil. The authorities before quoted are of themselves conclusive (did not daily observation unequivocally confirm them) as to the spirit of emigration, which, under every difficulty and disadvantage†, is seen to induce the Chinese to distribute themselves throughout all the islands of the eastern seas, in search of employment, and the means of subsistence. And it is not improbable that the number of those who thus, even without solicitation, annually exile themselves from their native country, added to that of the infants who are annually destroyed, is more than equal to that of the African negroes, who by force, fraud, or purchase, are yearly torn from their

* In Peking carts are sent, at an early hour in the morning, by the police, to pick up such bodies of infants as may have been thrown into the streets during the night, which, on an average, amount in that city only to twenty-four daily, and alive or dead are indiscriminately thrown into the pit of death, except a few of the most lively, chosen by the roman catholic missionaries, to make future proselytes.—*Barrow's Travels in China.*

† The junks in which Chinese chiefly emigrate are so ill-constructed, and so unfit to contend with the boisterous element in the China seas, that it is computed not less than from 10 to 12,000 of these people perish by shipwreck annually, from the port of Canton only.—*Barrow.*

homes against their will, and plunged into hopeless and irredeemable slavery. The only doubt, therefore, which can arise, will be, whether the distance of the West-India colonies, the consequent length of the passage, and the hitherto want of communication between those islands and their own country, or any of the settlements in the east, with which they are in constant habits of intercourse, will not present objections and difficulties which no prospect of encouragement or advantage will enable them to surmount. A consideration of the general character of the Chinese will enable us to form a pretty correct judgment as to the weight of the preceding objection. There is certainly nothing in their general habits or disposition which can at all justify the presumption, that those who are disposed to emigrate at all, would forego the prospect of an advantageous and comfortable settlement, merely from apprehension of the trifling inconvenience which might attend a passage little more protracted than they have been accustomed to. The hope of gain is a China-man's ruling passion; for this, we have already shewn, he will patiently disregard exactions and oppressions against which the feelings of any other people would revolt; and it would, therefore, be completely shutting our eyes against the evidence of facts, to suppose that consideration of per-

sonal inconvenience would ever be put by him in competition with those of pecuniary advantage. The strongest objection of these people to emigrate to the west would certainly be the want of that constant intercourse with their countrymen, which, if settled in the east, they would not be deprived of, and a desire for which, however we may be divested of national prejudice, it is so difficult to be weaned from. This objection, although it might at first operate in some measure as a discouragement, would apply only to the infancy of the system, and would of course cease with its cause; and, giving it all possible weight, could not operate as any material obstacle to the progress of the plan; in short, every day's experience shews that, upon a European vessel leaving the coast of China, the natives, whenever they can meet with an opportunity, are anxious to be engaged, without even enquiring to what part of the world she may be destined; and if any thing further need be urged, the late introduction of a cargo of Chinese settlers into Trinidad (the propriety, conduct, and probable effect of which undertaking will hereafter be noticed) can leave no doubt, on the mind of any person capable of judging, of the practicability of the plan. It now, therefore, remains to explain the most eligible means of carrying it into execution.

In forming the arrangements necessary for this purpose, it will be highly necessary to be particularly cautious against giving jealousy or offence to the Chinese government; for although emigration is doubtless connived at, yet any avowed purpose of procuring settlers in China, might be deemed such an interference with their internal polity as to induce the government to put a stop to the undertaking. To prevent this it would be proper to fix upon a depot so near to the coast of China, that, by proper encouragement, the Chinese, with their wives and families, might be induced to resort to it in the craft of their own country. In several communications made to Government by the writer, he had pointed out the harbour of Hansan or Turon, on the coast of Cochin China, as admirably adapted in every point of view for this purpose, could it have been possible to have obtained it from the king of that country by negotiation. This port and territory with the adjacent islands, were, by a treaty concluded at Paris in 1789, agreed to be ceded in perpetuity to France, with permission to admit resident French consuls in every part of the coast of Cochin China, to build ships, and to fell such timber in any of the ports as might be found convenient and suitable. All proceedings under this treaty seem to have been suspended in consequence of the revolution. It would have

been an object, perhaps, worthy the attempt of this country, by gaining a settlement on this coast; not only to have obtained a most eligible depot for the procuring of Chinese settlers, but to have counteracted the influence and designs of the French in that quarter, the accomplishment of which would place our eastern possessions, as well as our trade to China, in great jeopardy. In case government should not have deemed it advisable to adopt this step, or should Caung Shung, the king of Cochin China, and the Alfred of the East, (after a suitable overture) not have been disposed, on the principle of mutual advantage, to have granted us a port in his dominions, it was proposed, as a substitute, to establish the depot at Pulo Condore, an island a few leagues from the coast of Cochin China, and uninhabited, except by a few fugitives from that country. It is an excellent station for cultivating a trade with the Chinese, as well as for refreshing and refitting our ships on their voyage to and from China, having an excellent harbour, and lying commodiously in the track for that country, whether passing through the streights of Sunda, or of Sumatra; but, as it has no resources within itself, and as the French have been permitted to gain a decided ascendancy on the coast of Cochin China, it is conceived, (after giving the subject every possible consideration), that no

situation affords greater prospect of advantage than the fertile and healthy island of Magindanao, one of the Phillipines, and, next to Leuconia, the most considerable of them. It abounds with excellent harbours, and navigable rivers. Although, nominally, with the rest of this cluster, under the dominion of the Crown of Spain, it is, in point of fact, an independent kingdom, under the government of a sultan, who is so well affected towards the English, that in 1776 a voluntary grant of the island of Bunwoot, with an offer of Pollock harbour in Magindanao, was made to them by a letter addressed to his present Majesty.

The peculiar recommendations of this island, as a depot, are, 1st. That it lies nearly in the direct track of the Chinese junks trading from China to and from Batavia, (which is a most important consideration) at about one-third of the distance, and there being already a considerable number of their countrymen settled at this place, they would be easily induced to touch there*, and ultimately, on finding themselves free from the exactions and duties which are levied upon them

* It is possible for an English vessel to make a passage from India to the West Indies in as short a period as some of the Chinese junks, from their ill-construction, equipment, and management, consume in a voyage from China to Prince of Wales's Island.

by the Dutch, added to the decrease in the length of their voyage, and in the consequent risk from pirates, would establish a regular intercourse, by which we might be supplied with any number of colonists for our West-India islands, and a fresh source would be opened for the sale of our own manufactures, besides occasioning a considerable demand for those of our Indian possessions. But, besides the advantages of establishing a settlement at Magindanao for the above purpose, it would be attended with other benefits of the first importance to this country in a political and commercial point of view, arising from the nature of its soil, situation, and productions, and particularly from its growth of naval supplies, which will be particularly described in another work, now in the press, relating to the maritime strength of Great Britain, and the dangers to which it is exposed, and which will be touched upon here, only as far as the subject is connected with the mode of conveying the colonists to the West Indies.

As the success of the measure would be attended with the most important and beneficial results to the country at large, it seems reasonable and proper that government should take upon itself, in the first instance, the risk and expence of the procuring, conveying, and settling a colony of

Chinese in the West Indies. The arrangements for which must be connected with a regular and pre-concerted plan for their reception, establishment, and employment, upon their arrival there. It will, therefore, be necessary to secure beforehand, the decided and zealous support of some opulent and public-spirited planters, proprietors, or of a company.

The benefits of this system being once fairly demonstrated by example, no further assistance on the part of government will be necessary, for the exertions of individuals will readily discover and employ means of obtaining a supply of these colonists, as soon as their doubts and prejudices against the plan shall be removed by a conviction of its utility. It is, therefore, proposed that a ship of war should be employed upon this service, and as the success of the measure will entirely depend upon the negotiation and management of the commander, it is indispensibly necessary that he should possess a full knowledge of the subject, with the object and views of government, and of the means of carrying them into execution. This vessel should proceed to the proposed depot, take possession of the island of Bunwoot in his Majesty's name, and immediately make overtures for a friendly correspondence with the sultan, who, as before observed, is parti-

cularly well inclined towards the English. The commander should then take the necessary measures for inviting an intercourse with the junks, and for visiting such settlements in India, not in possession of the enemy, as are colonized with Chinese, as well with the view of collecting the valuable productions before enumerated, as of obtaining proper Chinese agents to negotiate the engagement of free colonists for the West Indies; he must also use means for keeping open the communication of the junks with the depot, should it be attempted to be obstructed by Spanish gun-boats, or Malay pirates*.

The ultimate success of the proposed scheme must, in a great measure, depend upon the selection of a proper *description of cultivators*; the

* The Spaniards have a settlement or two on the north-west part of this island, the principal of which is Samboangan, where the force, when Forrester was there in 1775, consisted only of 40 or 50 American Spaniards, 100 Natives of the Phillipines, and a few European Spaniards.

The only reason which has hitherto prevented a direct intercourse between the Chinese and the inhabitants of Mindanao, has been, the Spaniards preventing the junks from passing between the island of Basselun and Samboangan. It is scarcely necessary to add that effectual means must be taken to correct this by dispossessing them of the latter place, as at present the Mindanoans have no other means of trading with the Chinese but through Soloo.

ability and exertions of the person to whom the undertaking may, in the first instance, be confided, must be, therefore, particularly directed to this point. The engagement of any vagabond, who may feel inclined to seek his fortune from home, without regard to his habits of life, or his qualifications for future employment, would be, not only an idle waste of expence, but a direct means of the destruction of every good effect to be expected from the introduction of these people. The procuring the Chinese involves in it a number of details, the particulars of which it would be here needless to enter into. In this part of the plan much must be left to the judgment, zeal, and experience of the commander, but it is proper to add that, the less it interferes with the common and usual routine and system of emigration (consistently with the great object, a proper selection) the more likely it will be to succeed to the wished for extent.

There is, however, one point in the execution of this project of such prominent importance, that it will be highly proper to say a few words upon it. This relates to the necessity of a proper proportion of the intended colonists being composed of women, without which the plan would, indeed, fall very far short of its proposed advantages. Notwithstanding the objections

which have been started upon this head, and the supposed impossibility of succeeding in this material object, it is probable that more difficulty has been imputed to it, than the facts; upon which such objections have been founded, will warrant. Every man who has had much intercourse with China *, or Cochin China, is aware of the ease with which, at least, the temporary services of the females are purchased; if any difficulties present themselves to their getting on board the European ships, such difficulties are very easily surmounted. The readiness and composure with which parents are accustomed to barter away the persons of their daughters for money, are striking proofs that no other object is so dear to them, and these circumstances certainly afford no proof of any material vigilance on the part of the government respecting their women. The fact of its not being the custom for females to emigrate is, perhaps, the only ground for supposing, that the laws against emi-

* Dampier speaking of the inhabitants of Pulo Condore, says, "they are very civil people, and so free of their women, that they would bring them aboard, and offer them for a small matter."

In Cochin China the women are quite as gay and unrestrained as the men. Of the facility with which they are disposed to transfer their women to strangers our party had several curious instances.—*Barrow's Voyage to Cochin China.*

gration, (if any such there be) are more strictly enforced with respect to this sex than the other. It is an indisputable fact that there exist no provisions against women * and children accompanying their husbands, fathers, and relations, in junks, from one part to another; and, as all foreign trade is prohibited, it is only by the evasion of this law, which, like emigration, is openly connived at, that any intercourse whatever takes place with the eastern islands, we must, therefore, seek some other explanation of the cause of emigration having been hitherto entirely confined to the male sex.

In China, females are invariably considered as the property of the parents, and are never parted with, even upon their marriage, but for a pecuniary consideration. It is obvious that the Chinese emigrants are principally composed of those, who, for want of the means of subsistence in their own country, are induced to seek it elsewhere. To collect people of this description together, and to carry them to the several eastern settlements where there exists a demand for cultiva-

* Dampier says, " Being near the west-end of Borneo, we saw a brigantine; I sent the yawl aboard; she was a Chinese vessel laden with rice, arrack, tea, procelain, and other commodities. They had *their wives and children aboard*, and probably came to settle in some new Dutch factory."

tors, is become a regular system of commerce, in which a great number of junks is continually employed. These settlers are of the most indigent description, and the only method by which the owners of the junks can be remunerated for their passage, when they have arrived at their destination, is by an advance from their employer, with whom they engage to work for a limited time, and which advance is afterwards repaid by a stoppage out of their wages; now as the labour of women in the works of agriculture, is not required either in Batavia or any of the islands to which the Chinese emigrate, and as there is no want of females for domestic purposes, or for keeping up the population, the junk-owners and masters (whose profit is one great spring of this trade) have no inducement to procure them; for, independent of there being no demand, females could not be obtained without an advance of money, for the return of which, with the expence of their passage, and a reasonable profit, no expectation could be reasonably entertained.

It, therefore, seems fair to conclude that, by making it the interest of the junk-owners to procure women, there would be no difficulty in obtaining a sufficient supply for the purposes of the West-India colonies, but should any obstacles

arise, the number of women required may be readily obtained at Magindanao.

The mode of conveying them to the West Indies is, therefore, now to be considered. For this purpose the following appears to be a very desirable plan, as it would be attended with little or no expence to the public, and would not interfere with any existing laws. It is proposed that the ships to be employed to convey the colonists, from the depot, should be freighted by government to Port Jackson with convicts, being ready fitted for the conveyance of people they would be well adapted to the purpose; and the depot lying nearly in the usual returning track, they should be ordered to touch there, and take on board the colonists with their stores and provisions, all which might be procured readily, and at a comparatively trifling expence, at the Phillipines. The voyage ought to be timed so as to leave the depot in November, by which means the ship would be certain of a fair wind and fine weather to the West Indies, and it is a consideration of great importance, that the Chinese would be landed in the most favourable season, and settled before the rains commenced. From the West Indies the ship should proceed with a cargo to England.

The following is a statement of the expences

which would attend the carrying this measure into execution upon the plan proposed, independent of the employment of one of his Majesty's ships in the first instance, which, in an object of such great national importance, ought not to be considered.

DISBURSEMENTS.		£	s.	d.	RECEIPTS.	
Cost of an old Indiaman of 800 tons, with repairs, and outfit for sea	11,000	0	0		Freight of 800 tons from England to Port Jackson, as paid to the William Pitt, at 1 <i>l.</i> 7 <i>s.</i> per ton	1
Wages and provisions for 56 men, at 5 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> per man per month, is for 22 months ..	6,776	0	0		Value of 300 tons of rice in the West Indies	
Purchase of 300 tons of cargo rice, at the depôt*	1,300	0	0		Freight from the West Indies 1,000 tons, at 10 <i>l.</i> per ton..1	
Expence of procuring advance and provisioning 400 Chinese, at 16 <i>l.</i> per head.....	6,400	0	0		Value of ship and stores on return, allowing for wear and tear	
Expence of settling 400 Chinese in the West Indies....	1,600	0	0		Repayment of advance to Chinese, by instalments ..	
Insurance	£					
By the hull for the voyage 6,000 <i>l.</i> at 20 <i>l.</i> per cent.	1,200					
On the unpaid part of the freight to Port Jackson 9,500 <i>l.</i> at 8 <i>l.</i> per cent.	602					
On the Chinese and Rice from the depôt to the West Indies 5,000 <i>l.</i> at 10 per cent.	500					
On freight from the West Indies 10,000 <i>l.</i> at 7 <i>l.</i> per cwt.	735					
	3,037	0	0			
Balance in favour of the voyage	1,467	0	0			
	£32,080	0	0			£32

* The ship not to be permitted to carry any cargo further than provisions and lumber, which allowed from America.

In the plan which ought to be preconcerted between government and the public-spirited West-India proprietors or company, who may be inclined to take the lead in carrying this project into execution, it is an essential point to be agreed upon, that the Chinese to be imported in the first instance, should not be separated from each other on their arrival in the West Indies, but should be enabled to settle on the same spot, so as to form a separate and independent colony, and thus become, as it were, the germ and foundation of a new and distinct population. With this view, and to enable them without delay to put their industry in motion, an estate or plantation of sufficient extent, and already in cultivation, with all necessary buildings and machinery, and a sufficient stock of cattle and canes, should be made ready for their reception, immediately on their landing, by the removal of the negroes to some other plantation. This arrangement will form one of the strongest inducements to the Chinese to engage in so novel an undertaking, and will be the most certain means of ensuring its ultimate success. By thus forming, as it were, a separate community, they will not feel themselves, as they otherwise would do, strangers in a foreign land, and will be enabled to maintain amongst themselves those internal regulations of civil polity, to which by habit and prejudice they are

so much attached, and which, perhaps, tend more than any other cause, to keep up those national and peculiar habits which would render those people so valuable an acquisition to the British colonies.

It would be highly proper, and indeed absolutely necessary, that upon this subject, some previous understanding and arrangement should take place between his Majesty's government, and that of the colony into which these new settlers are at first to be introduced, in order that, as far as regards their moral, civil, and religious conduct, with respect to each other, they may be left as much as possible to the undisturbed enjoyment of their own laws and customs.

It ought also, after the first importation, to be agreed between the government and the proprietors or company, that upon the landing of the Chinese, the employers should repay the advances made; in consideration of which, the settlers are to bind themselves to the planter, for a certain term, to work on the plantation, and to receive for their wages a sum proportioned to the produce of their labour and their industry.

This, as we have already seen, is the mode practised at Batavia, where clayed sugars are sold

on the estates at 15*s.* *per* cwt., which is a convincing proof of the advantages attending this method of employing cultivators.

The proportion given to the Chinese, should depend on the soil and local circumstances of the plantation, but, in general, should be calculated upon the principle, that a man by moderate exertion may be able to earn about £18 *per annum*, which is equal to the price of those Chinese labourers who are engaged by monthly hire at our own settlement of Prince of Wales Island. Now, as it is calculated that throughout the island of Jamaica, the neat annual proceeds of a working negro's labour are about $27\frac{3}{16}$ cwt. of sugar, and 113 gallons of rum, this rate of labour would consequently be less than 10*s.* *per* cwt. on sugar, and 10*d.* *per* gallon on rum, which is less than half the expence of slave-labour.

A small spot of land, with a proper proportion of stock, should also be allotted to each settler, sufficient to furnish subsistence for himself and family; and till the first crop be produced, an allowance should be made of two pounds of rice, and a proportion of salt fish, for each person *per* day, the expence of which, as well as the original advance made for their passage, and the price of the stock on their allotments, should be deducted

from their wages by instalments. No grants of land ought to be made in the first instance beyond what may be necessary for their subsistence, unless to such as may migrate at their own expence. But as an excitement to industry, economy, and good conduct, an option of becoming proprietors or renters of land, upon fair and reasonable terms, ought to be held out to those who shall faithfully fulfil their contracts, by completing the terms for which they were engaged, and reimbursing the advances made for them, and who, by their industry and frugality, shall have acquired the means of stocking and cultivating a small plantation.

But the most profitable mode for the planter to pursue, after the plan was thoroughly established, would be to adopt the method practised by the proprietors at Batavia, of renting their estate to the Chinese, and receiving for the rent the same proportion of produce as is usual in that settlement; by which means the owner would derive an infinitely greater income than under the present system, without any trouble, and at little or no risk.

The valuable collection of trees, plants, and other useful productions of the East, which it is proposed to import with the Chinese, ought to be planted upon the same estates, and put under

their sole care and management, for the benefit of the public-spirited proprietors or company, who may offer their plantations for the establishment of the new colony, not to be treated as exotics, and objects of curiosity, but with a view to their general propagation, and a diffusion of the knowledge of their various admirable properties and uses.

The new colony being completely settled and established under the immediate sanction and protection of the government, and the industry of the colonists being put in motion under the regulations above referred to, the great advantages which would in a short time be derived by the proprietors of the estates, would, it is not doubted, soon prompt the West-India planters in general to take the most active and spirited measures for following an example fraught with such numerous and important benefits; and thus, that strongest of all human motives, *self interest*, supported upon the soundest principles of humanity and policy, would lead (and not by slow degrees) to the extension and general adoption of the proposed system, and to the suppression and final extinction of that of slavery.

Having in the preceding pages endeavoured to point out the advantages which would attend the

introduction of Chinese colonists into our West-India islands, as far as relates to the cultivation of them, compared with the evils attending the present system, it now remains to offer a few observations upon the further benefits which would result from the proposed plan, as connected with the security and defence of those islands, against internal commotion or hostile attack.

With the example of the French islands before us, and what we have, in some degree, experienced in our own, it is not to be doubted but the spirit of freedom is implanted in the breast of every human being, be his complexion what it may, and that, whenever degraded and oppressed by slavery, although fear may repress the open display of his feelings, he will still have recourse to cunning to supply the want of power, and assume a veil of dissimulation to hide those indignant workings of his mind, which meditate in secret the destruction of his task master, as the only means of recovering his freedom. This is human nature, and what every Englishman would do were he a slave, and, yet, when practised by the oppressed negro, is called ungrateful, cruel, and perfidious conduct.

Without entering into the common-place arguments upon the immorality and inhumanity of

this system, which in the warmth of controversy have, perhaps, been carried by both parties beyond their fair bearing, it seems scarcely possible not to feel a conviction, that the sanguinary horrors and devastations which have so lately stained and laid waste the fertile plains of Saint Domingo *, originating in principles and opinions which there is but too much reason to fear have taken root in many of the neighbouring colonies, and which, ere long, may blaze out in a most ruinous and destructive flame, to be extinguished only with the blood of its victims, are of themselves a sufficient warning, that a radical change of system is most devoutly to be wished for, and cannot but form the most reasonable grounds of apprehension in the mind of every man interested in, or connected with, our western colonies. These apprehensions are not likely to be done away by its being proclaimed to the negroes by a legislative decision of the British Parliament, (however indisputable may be the truth of it,) that the condition of slaves is altogether contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and policy.

To avert the evil of rebellion or revolution,

* In 1806, it was stated by Mr. Fox in the House of Commons, that at Saint Domingo there were a less number of imported slaves in proportion, than in any other part of the West Indies.

and prevent the dreadful effects which may arise from a sudden transition from slavery to freedom, from dependance to authority, is an object well worth the consideration and attention of the legislature, and cannot, it is submitted, be effected with such certainty of success, and safety of execution, as by the proposed plan of introducing a race of free Chinese cultivators. The Chinese husbandman, indeed, seems fitted by Providence to be the humble means of qualifying the hitherto ignorant and oppressed African for the enjoyment of rational liberty, by setting him a practical example of the blessings to be derived from the application of free and honest industry, and of leading the West-India planter, by that strongest of human motives, *self interest*, to a full conviction of the policy of granting to his slave, at some future period, when thus fitted for the inestimable boon, that liberty for which God and nature designed him.

With a view to the attainment of this most important object, so necessary for insuring the security of the colonies, the interest of the planter, and the happiness of the negroes, it would be adviseable to adopt the method pursued at the Havannah, and other Spanish settlements; namely, that as Sunday is, proverbially, a negro's holiday, the owner is to be considered as entitled to but six days work in the week.

Every slave to be publicly registered, with his value, and whenever he shall be enabled to raise one-sixth part of such value, the planter to be compelled to accept it, and to grant and insure to him by law, a remission of the Saturday's work, or one-sixth part of his liberty, upon condition that he should continue to work on the estate on the same terms as the Chinese, *viz.* in proportion to the value of their labour; and so on till his whole freedom should be redeemed: thus every negro's liberty would be within his own reach, but to be attained only by means of habitual industry and economy, and, consequently, by a course of life which would render him worthy of the precious purchase.

This flattering prospect of freedom, with the comforts and enjoyments of the Chinese before them, would be such an excitement to labour, that the most indolent would soon be roused to activity. And thus the population of these colonies, instead of being as at present, composed of owners and slaves, jealous and distrustful of each other, would become a band of freemen, all interested for the welfare and security of the society of which they formed a part.

Exclusive of the force of good example which a proper description of Chinese would hold out to

the negroes, they would from continual importations, and the means of increase, soon form a material part of the population distinct from the slaves, and from their general character for subordination, they would always be disposed to resist and discourage all attempts at insurrection. The introduction of the variety of valuable productions from the East, and the consequent extension of cultivation, would be the means of clearing the hitherto impenetrable woods, which have always proved a shelter and protection to the runaway and insurgent negroes, who would thus be deprived of their fastnesses, at the same time that the country would be rendered more healthy; and, as many of the above productions might be cultivated to advantage with a very trifling capital, while the Chinese, as well as negroes, would be continually becoming their own masters, the first by completing the terms of their contracts, and the latter by purchasing their freedom, (with the opportunities which would be afforded for the present overseers becoming proprietors,) there would be a constant and perpetual increase in the number of small and independent settlers; thereby adding to the force of the militia, and the strength of the colonies, and tending to supersede the necessity of employing a military force for internal security, which is a measure not only radically bad in

principle, but expensive and ruinous to the planter.

It now remains to offer a few suggestions for the better defence of the West-India colonies.

The dreadful mortality of English troops in the West Indies, is a subject of the deepest interest to the happiness of individuals, the safety of those colonies, and the welfare of the state*.

From this cause it has been found necessary to embody the slaves into regular regiments, and they at present constitute a considerable part of the military force in all the islands, except Jamaica, but it is well known that the colonial governments cannot but look upon these troops with great jealousy and distrust.

There is something in the temper and constitution of this negro corps, which ever has been, and not unreasonably, a matter of distrust and jealousy to the colonists.

They cannot be intrusted with a fortress, and the defence of an island should in no case be

* From 1796 to 1802 inclusive, out of 19,676 European soldiers in the West Indies, there died 17,173.

Sir W. Young.

left exclusively to them ; they must be held and kept subordinate to, and have before them, the example of British troops*. A British force is thus rendered necessary, not only for the defence of the islands against hostile attacks, but for keeping our own troops in subjection.

To remedy this evil, the writer took the liberty of suggesting to government in 1802, that, as the courage of the African is superior to his industry, and he consequently makes a much better soldier than husbandman, the negro corps might be employed to great advantage in our eastern possessions.

Soon after the province of Malabar was ceded by Tippoo Saib to the English, it was found that a considerable military force would be necessary to keep the disaffected rajahs in subjection. The European troops employed on this service, suffered more from the jungle, or wood fever, than from the enemy, and it was intended to raise two regiments of natives ; but, as neither the Nyars nor the Moplars would enlist, the officers appointed were without men, and the project was given up.

* Sir William Young.

It would, therefore, be highly advantageous to this country, that, instead of this drain upon our population, by sending out English troops on this hazardous service, the African corps, (who from being natives of a similar climate are not so obnoxious to the diseases peculiar to it) should be employed in the jungles of Malabar, Ceylon, and other like service in India. The military force proposed not only as a substitute for the negro corps, but as a much more secure defence for the West Indies, are the seapoys of the East, who have been too long distinguished for their courage and discipline to require a description here, and whose constitution and habits render them infinitely fitter than British troops to resist the effects of the climate. The religious prejudices of these people, although great, are not unsurmountable, and as far as they would tend to prevent any assimilation with the negroes would be attended with the greatest advantage. And it is conceived that, by judicious arrangements, and the selection of able officers, and proper people, the measure might be effected without difficulty, and the families of the Seapoys embarked with them, by which means a population of hereditary soldiers might be planted in our western islands as well as in the east.

Having thus stated, as was proposed, the substance and some of the details of the plan ori-

ginally submitted to the consideration of government, for the better cultivation, security, and defence of our West Indian colonies, it will, perhaps, not be deemed improper to guard the public against being prejudiced or misled in their judgments against the measure by the event of an experiment, which has already been made, of importing a cargo of Chinese into Trinidad. Perhaps a concerted plan for the discouragement of the present project, could not have been laid down more likely to have defeated the object, than the mistaken and ill-judged manner in which it was attempted to be put in execution. It has already been shewn that to the success of this undertaking several things are absolutely necessary. First, That the intended colonists should be properly selected, as to their habits and acquirements, with a view to their future employments. Secondly, That a proper proportion of women should be procured to insure the means of increase. Thirdly, That they should not be separated from each other on their arrival in the West Indies, but settled on the same spot, so as to form a distinct colony, and by that means be enabled to retain their own manners, customs, civil regulations, and police, without which it would be almost impossible to preserve their peculiar habits, which fit them so admirably for the purposes pro-

posed. And lastly, That they should be employed on the principle of receiving a compensation, in proportion only to the labour performed, and the produce raised by them. A short review of the manner in which these people were procured and employed will serve to shew how far these necessary points were attended to. It was in the year 1803, whilst the writer's original suggestions were under the consideration of government, that without any communication to him, a private agent of the name of Mc. Queen, was sent out by the then ministers to Prince of Wales's Island, with orders founded upon those suggestions, for the procuring a number of Chinese cultivators, and sending them to Trinidad. By means of a Portuguese agent at Macao, about two hundred China men (without a single female) were procured, having nothing of Chinese about them but the name, and obtained from the diseased and profligate refuse of the indolent and degraded population of a Portuguese town, unaccustomed to the habits of their industrious countrymen, and total strangers to the qualifications requisite for their future employments in the West Indies. These people were conveyed from Macao to Prince of Wales's Island in a Portuguese vessel, and from thence were sent to Bengal, where they were obliged to remain till

they were cured of the leprosy, and other diseases which they had contracted, and from thence were embarked in the *Fortitude*, a ship freighted for £7500 *, to carry them, with a contraband cargo of piece goods, to Trinidad, where the ship and cargo were seized by our cruisers on that station. On the landing of these people, no pre-concerted plan having been arranged by government for their establishment and employment, instead of being settled together, so as to form one colony (which, in consequence of their being without women, was scarcely practicable †) they were hawked and distributed about to various planters, who were to engage to pay them at the rate of six dollars per month (exclusive of provisions) without any inducement or excitement to industry by making their remuneration depend upon the produce of their labour. Thus, not united in one community, total strangers in a foreign land, without females, and consequently without any domestic

* £7,500 for 193 Chinese, (which was the number landed in Trinidad) is near £40 for the conveyance of each person from Bengal only.

† So far from an arrangement being made with these people to encourage a spirit of colonization, they were engaged to the planters for the short period of six months only; and by their original agreement were to have the option of returning to China at the expence of government, after the expiration of twelve months.

establishments—freed from every restraint to which they might before have been accustomed as to their moral and civil conduct, and not only without any excitement to industry, but with every inducement to idleness and dissipation, which extravagant allowances could hold out to them, it would have been little short of miraculous, if men, even the most judiciously selected, for their necessary habits and qualifications had not under these circumstances, disappointed the hopes which might have been formed of them. Still more wonderful would it have been if the people above described, under such circumstances, had not given occasion to the planters, already deeply prejudiced in favour of the slave system, to condemn the experiment, and to judge of the Chinese character from this ill-selected and ill-managed assortment*.

It is most anxiously to be hoped that this premature and abortive attempt will have no other

* It is but justice to his Majesty's ministers, as well as to the Governor of Trinidad, to acknowledge, that the proclamation issued at that island after the landing of the Chinese, contains many judicious observations and regulations, and shows the best intentions and wishes for the success of the experiment; but no exertions could possibly countervail the radical errors which had been committed in the whole progress of the undertaking.

effect upon the government, and the great body of intelligent and respectable West-India proprietors, than to operate as a caution against committing those errors which must obviously tend to render every effort towards the attainment of so desirable an object, unsuccessful. The necessity of a radical and immediate change in the system of West-India cultivation is too obvious; and too pressing, to admit of those, who are most interested in the question, being discouraged by trifling considerations from pursuing a plan which promises such very material benefits. The proposed measure, it is submitted, holds out advantages of the highest and most interesting description, in a moral, political, and commercial point of view. The *data* upon which it is founded are supported by the experience of ages, and the opinions of the most intelligent writers, as well as by the personal observations, of all who have visited the countries referred to, and the means of carrying it into execution after the road is once made, are obvious, easy, and very far from expensive. It is a subject totally unconnected with party, the best interests of the country are involved in it. Nearly £100,000,000 sterling of capital are at stake, exclusive of the danger to be apprehended to the principal source of our naval strength, and of the public revenue, and the

serious loss to our manufacturers and commerce, unless effectual measures are adopted for meliorating the miserable condition of our West-India colonies.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Page 28	line 20	in note for theft	read there.
31	-- 21	after staple	read article.
35	-- 2	in note for uncultivated	read cultivated.
..	-- 15	in same note for cardaverous	read cadaverous.
40	-- 1	for every	read a.
49	-- 14	for eagenaria	read lagenaria.
71	-- 6	for part	read port.
73	-- 26	for ship	read ships.
74	-- 15	under disbursements for by	read on.
..	-- 28	ditto for <i>g</i>	read guinea.
86	-- 25	leave out	conduct.

Speedily will be published,

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ON THE
MARITIME STRENGTH
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,
AS CONNECTED WITH THE
POLITICAL, FINANCIAL, AGRICULTURAL,
AND
COMMERCIAL INTERESTS
OF THE
United Kingdom and its Provinces;

SHEWING

The alarming danger to be apprehended from depending on Foreign
Nations for the means of supporting our Naval Power;

WITH

SUGGESTIONS

FOR PRESERVING

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE BRITISH NAVY,

By providing effectual means to secure an ample and permanent
supply for its maintenance.

BY

CAPTAIN LAYMAN,

OF THE

Royal Navy.

1307.

A

LETTER

ADDRESSED TO

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE REGENT.

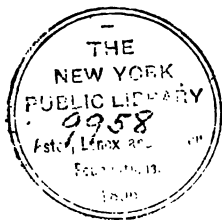
BY

A BRITISH PLANTER.

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1811.



TO
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE REGENT.

SIR,

IN presuming to address Your Royal Highness, I feel the less diffidence from the conviction that whatever tends to the advantage or amelioration of the empire now placed under your rule, must be an object of the first consideration in Your Royal Highness's mind. And as the empire is made up of many parts, so if any suggestion, which has the benefit of a large portion of people in direct view, without militating against the general interests of the whole, or rather assisting and in unison with those general interests, can be offered, it will not be considered

a presumptuous undertaking—still less an useless one,—if in any manner by exposing their distress it can accelerate relief to a numerous class of sufferers.

Impressed with this idea, these few pages are submitted in the hope that the subject may leave a more favourable opinion in Your Royal Highness's mind of the value of the West India colonies to the mother country than some statesmen seem willing to allow; and consequently draw forth from Your Royal Highness's government a protective care to the colonies—an efficient relief to the planters.

That Great Britain cannot exist as a powerful, nay even as an independent nation, without commerce, is an assertion which common sense will support, and which the evidence of facts would prove, in opposition to the sophistry of theorists. If Great Britain ceased to exist as a powerful nation, her independence must soon follow. Commerce yields money, supports the revenue, affords the means of carrying on an expensive war;—without money, no arms—without pay, no soldiers to wield them—without revenue, no sailors to man our fleets, no fleets to

command the ocean. Commerce has brought this nation to the power she enjoys: by commerce we are enabled to carry on the war, and by commerce we shall be enabled to defray the expenses it has created. Our enemy knows it—he feels it. “Give me ships, colonies, and commerce,” he cries: Yes, because he knows with them would come wealth and the means of coping with us on that element where we must have no rival. Baffled in this expectation, deprived of foreign trade, and sorely feeling its effects, his thoughts turn to inflict the same evil on others he feels himself; but with this difference, that if effected it must fall ten times heavier. In the rancour of his heart he cries, “I will destroy the trade of that nation of shopkeepers, though I ruin my own—their revenue gone, the people shall be my slaves.” Vain hope! While unanimity prevails under a wise government, and our own resources for commerce are cherished and nursed with a judicious hand, England can never fall. But the trial is to be made: Nothing less will satisfy the tyrant, who, whether in open war or disguised peace, aims at our de-

struction, as being the sure, the only means of attaining the object nearest his heart—universal empire. Accordingly he has issued decrees prohibitive of commerce, which in other times and from another man would have been thought no less the work of a lunatic, than a folly to suppose they could ever be acted on. Yet we see his power is such that they are enforced, and commerce to the continent assumes the form of contraband trade.

The ruin of the West India colonies appears to be amongst the first grand objects of his attack: because he is aware of their value, and knows, if he effects their ruin, he inflicts a deadly wound on the parent state. That he has injured the colonists is undoubted; but the malignancy of his scheme must break, unless aided by the ignorance or cold policy of statesmen at home.

The great benefits which England derives from the West Indies, consist in the immense revenue she draws from them; in the great encouragement they give to the exportation of her manufactures; as a nursery for her navy,—though this latter

point is controverted by some. But surely two or three voyages to the West Indies and back again would not be thought a bad finishing school to Buonaparte's little dabblers in bays and harbours. Nor is it less so to our more hardy boys. It inures them to the wide sea, to navigate in large fleets. It induces many to enter that line who would otherwise never think of it. The return of a West India fleet is a resource for the impress; its departure an opportunity for every sailor to return to his profession.

To form an idea of this revenue, the quantity and nature of the produce brought to this country is to be considered, with the duties directly laid on them, and the taxes *indirectly* paid by them. The nature of the produce is too well known to require enumeration.

The revenue derived from direct taxation may be estimated at between five and six millions annually:—of which, sugar produces £3,000,000, as given in evidence to a committee of the house of commons; and rum, £1,244,100.

But this by no means forms the whole revenue which the mother country de-

rives from her colonies; for most of the considerable planters reside in Great Britain, and therefore contribute as much to the general taxes of the empire as any other class of individuals of equal income, and this independent of all the taxes they pay as colonists on their produce.

In regard to the encouragement which the colonies give to our manufactures, some idea may be formed by imagining the supplies and stores which every plantation, in itself resembling a little colony, must require. Cloth to clothe the negroes, herrings, salt beef, &c, to feed them, implements of all kinds for tilling the land, iron work and coppers for the stills; nay even coals, lime, and bricks, and various other articles, all sent out from this country; which form an export of manufactures estimated at the amount of six millions annually.

After this brief statement, the question comes to be, Whether the West Indies are a valuable acquisition, or not. That they are, can, I think, require no further proof to the *unprejudiced* mind; and on this assumption I shall proceed to show that, if justice did not demand the mo-

ther country to relieve her suffering colonies, yet policy, her own internal advantage, would require it. At a crisis like the present, every source of revenue is to be cherished as of vital importance, every care to be taken that the channels are not closed up, either by the artifices and decrees of our enemy, or by our own remissness in adopting counteractive measures.

The ruin of our West Indies is among the schemes of our enemy ; and to prevent it, those means which we possess within ourselves must be called into action : or should they not, should motives which fairly might be challenged for interestedness prevail, the colonies may perish. But it will not be France that has destroyed them : it will be that state whose duty it was to support them.

Justice requires that every tax which is not optional, unless it is meant to be prohibitive, should be imposed in such a manner as not to bear down the object or person taxed : policy requires it ; for otherwise it must defeat itself ; and when this becomes threatened, it is prudent to sacrifice a little present gain by lowering

the duty, rather than, by continuing it for a while, endanger the permanency of it altogether.

The taxes on West India produce are oppressive. They are found so, because that price or profit is no longer obtained which relatively made them not felt. And therefore the best thing the parent state can do, is to adopt those measures which shall afford them the means of obtaining this price, in order that her revenue may be as little deteriorated as possible: for, as it is justly observed by Sir W. Young, "the business cannot long continue on such terms of partnership between government and any description of its subjects: the planter may for a time struggle to maintain his share, but must ultimately fail; and losing its active partner, the state will have the dead and unprofitable stock on hand, of islands poorly cultivated, and of works and manufacture in decay. This is no extravagant speculation; let the reader examine the tables of produce, charges, and sale, contained in this chapter; observe the results, and compute the consequences!"

A committee was appointed by the

house of commons to examine the subject of West India sufferings, and into the means of relieving them. They report as follows:—"It appears from accounts laid before your committee, that the price of sugar has greatly diminished since the year 1799: the average price of 1800 was 65s. per cwt; the average price of 1807 was 34s. per cwt., both exclusive of duty. In consequence of that depreciation, and of the increased expense attendant on the cultivation of the article, the situation of the sugar-planter has been rapidly declining, till at length the value of the produce is on an average barely equal to the charges of production, leaving no rent for the land, and no interest for the large capital employed upon it."

It appears that the obstacles opposed to the exportation of colonial produce, added to its forced accumulation in the market from the conquered colonies, have been the principal causes of its depreciation. While the planter has remained subject to a monopoly in favour of British produce and navigation, his exclusive possession of the home market has been interfered with; and while the British con-

sumption has been increasing, the efforts he has made to meet it have turned entirely to his own disadvantage.

It appears that the planter cannot so withdraw his capital, diminish the extent or change the object of his cultivation, as to procure for himself any adequate relief; and without *legislative* intervention there is no prospect of his being extricated from his distress. Annuitants dependent on West India property for their provision, have in many instances been totally deprived of that income.

The increased price of all the usual articles of supply, added to the depreciation of colonial produce, has deprived a great proportion of the owners of the resources wherewith to furnish the accustomed stores of food and clothing for their negroes, and of duly providing for their superintendance; and if relief be not speedily applied, these stores must be actually diminished or withheld; whereby much painful privation will be suffered by the negroes, and discontent if not commotion among them may be seriously apprehended.

In the report of the committee of the

assembly of Jamaica, it is stated that "there are 115 sugar estates respecting which suits are depending in the court of chancery: from which and from other evidence it appears, that foreclosures of securities on property are become unusually frequent in that island, which will deprive many owners of their estates for sums quite disproportioned to their value. Another effect from this cause will be, much individual distress to the negroes, who, in consequence of such foreclosures, will in many instances be separated from their families.

"From all these considerations your committee submit, that the cause of distress thus made out is as urgent as it is severe; that therefore it is not only necessary to adopt measures of permanent relief, but also such as may have an early operation."

Every cause above mentioned continues in full force, and is only kept from breaking out with increased violence by that measure having been adopted which was recommended; namely, the prohibition of distilling from grain, and substituting sugar in its place.

This measure, however reviled and cried

down by what is called the Landed Interest, has been of great service to the nation at large, as well as to the planter individually. And its continuation is of great importance to the people in general. First, because it may be one means of keeping down the exorbitant price of grain. Secondly and lastly, because it is of relief to the planter; for, if he is ruined, the people must be taxed to make up for the deficiency which would be created in the revenue that is to say, they must be taxed to the amount of four millions annually, probably more, in addition to what they already pay. And the manufacturing interest would lose an export of about six millions a year, which in their present state would be a shock they could with difficulty sustain—a shock of itself truly alarming to the country.

If the planter is reduced to that state that he no longer cultivates to his own profit, can it be supposed that he would cultivate for the sake of supporting the revenue? What would a British landholder think, if he were told he should have no relief, although the value of the produce of his farm should barely equal the

charges of production, leaving no rent for the land, and no interest for the capital employed on it!

That this is the case with the West India planter, appears clearly from the reports and examinations of the above-mentioned committee: and although since that time the price of sugar has somewhat improved, yet, were the distillation of grain to be allowed, their sufferings would be as great as ever; nay greater, since every article, many of which are indispensable to them, has increased in price except their own. And the assertion is not true,—it is utterly unfounded,—when the landed interest assert, that this measure is only an encouragement to the planters to increase their produce, and thereby involve themselves in fresh difficulties. Plain matter of fact denies it: for no new plantations are formed, but many old ones are given up. And recent accounts from Jamaica confirm the assertion, and state the prosperity of that island to be sadly declining.

It may not be amiss to state briefly the expenses attending a sugar-work, that the

situation of the planter may be appreciated. The average charges in the island of making one cwt. of sugar, as taken in evidence before the committee, were in the year 1807 estimated at 20s. 10d. independent of interest on capital; and the charges for bringing it home, including insurance, brokerage, &c. 16s. The island charges of 20s. 10d. consist of white people's salaries and commissions; taxes paid in the island; lumber and staves from America for the erection and repair of buildings, and for making casks to bring home the produce; flour and other provisions from America; purchase of cattle and mules; medical attendance on negroes; hired labour; stores from Great Britain and Ireland, the principal articles of which are woollen and linen clothing, and hats for the negroes.

Both these charges of 20s. 10d. and 16s. have increased: so that the making of every cwt. of sugar brought to this country costs the planter at least 37s.: and on every cwt. he has moreover to pay a duty from 27 to 30s.; a duty which is oppressive, and which cannot continue

without ruinous effects, *unless* means are devised for raising and maintaining that commodity at a fair profitable price.

In the year 1793, the duty was only 12s. 4d. per cwt. and the mercantile charges 12s.

The interest, say the committee, which has been stated as what should be the fair profit upon a capital of such a nature as that of a sugar-estate, consisting not merely of land and negroes, but of buildings of great extent and cost, necessary for the carrying on of such a manufacture, and subject to various and peculiar risks and vicissitudes, is not less than ten per cent. During the period of prosperity previous to 1800, it is stated that in general the profits did not exceed that sum; and that from that period they have gradually diminished to two-and-a-half and one-and-a-half per cent.

Should a profit of ten per cent. appear high, it is to be recollected, that when a planter borrows money, which to keep up his stock he is frequently obliged to do, he pays six per cent.; and four per cent. for wear and tear of lands, plantation utensils, loss of negroes, loss of stock,

and various other risks, is but a moderate allowance.

By comparing these charges with the price of sugar, the profit of the planter, if it can be called profit, may be ascertained; but the interest of his capital still remains to be balanced against it. The committee on this point observe: "Calculations have been laid before your committee from the accounts of estates both in Jamaica and other islands; by which it appears that the British supplies and island expenses amount to 20s. 10d. in the former, and 19s. 6d. in the latter, on the hundred weight of sugar, after accounting and giving credit for the amount received for the sale of rum. As these calculations are formed upon an average of years, and upon estates of the ordinary scale, and in no respects unusually circumstanced, it appears to your committee that these sums per cwt. of sugar may be taken as the average expense of cultivation, independent of interest upon the capital: and your committee are confirmed in this opinion, by finding a similar calculation in the report made by the sugar distillery committee in the last parliament.

The distressed situation of the planter being thus proved,—a situation from which he cannot extricate himself without the intervention of the mother country,—it is but justice that she should afford him at all times a market for his commodity, and, if the usual market fails from any cause, that she should create one. But if the planter had to depend for relief solely on the justice of his case, I greatly fear he would find justice tardy, and ruin sure; at least if he were obliged to direct his applications to a certain class of men. But, fortunately for him, the policy of the country in relieving him is involved as well as the justice. Every unbiassed mind must see it. The country has seen it, has acted on it, and under Your Royal Highness's government it is to be hoped it will be persevered in.

Setting justice on one side,—and Heaven forbid that such should ever be the case in British councils! I contend that it is policy in the country to continue the prohibition of distilling grain. Because by that means we are obliged to buy as much less grain from our enemy as the distillers would consume: For we see, notwithstanding

the prohibition of distilling grain, that large importations are constantly made from the enemy—paid for by British money, by those guineas which we lament the disappearance of. Because we should be otherwise encouraging the agriculture of our enemy, in buying his grain to supply the place of our own consumed in forming spirits. Because by this means we benefit our enemy to our own injury; inasmuch as we give his farmers the preference to our own West India planters—than which nothing can be more unjust or impolitic. The value of corn, grain, and flour imported into Great Britain during the last year has been stated at £.7,077,865 sterling.

But the Landed Interest, as they are called, cry out against the use of sugar in the distilleries as injurious to agriculture. Under the present circumstances of the country, this clamour is unreasonable and unfounded. It may possibly check the great price of grain; and if it does, it does good. But the Landed Interest and the Agricultural Interest are two *distinct* things. This, perhaps, people at large have not sufficiently considered, but have confused the

two together, being led away by the specious manner in which they always appear united. The Landed Interest is the individual interest of every great land-owner; the Agricultural Interest is the collective interest of the people at large in the agriculture of the country. The first is private interest, the latter public interest. The former (the land-owner) wishes to raise the price of grain as much as possible; it is his interest to do so. The latter (that is, the mass of people) wish to have grain cheap and reasonable; it is their interest to have it so. This is the agricultural interest of the nation, and the agricultural prosperity of the nation.

But this distinction would not suit the money-making views of the Landed Interest, and therefore they add to themselves the title of Agricultural Interest, that people may be led to conceive they are but one and the same; whereas the ends of each are widely different.

These Agricultural Interest men, instead of conferring any benefit, have done a real injury to the nation; for they have been one great means of raising the price of all things: they have done and may do more.

in this way than even the taxes we labour under. They have increased their own profits at the expense of the mass of the people, the commercial, the manufacturing, the mechanical, by raising the price of labour throughout every trade and occupation, not even excepting the husbandman. And if it goes on so, the price of labour may bring our manufactured articles to such a price as to endanger, or rather ensure, our being undersold in the foreign market: For the price of labour must always bear a proportion to the price of provisions. A man must earn sufficient to support himself and a child or two. For if the manufacturer cannot afford to give such wages as to enable a man to maintain himself and buy bread for his children, owing to the great price which the farmer demands for his grain, that certainly cannot be called national agricultural prosperity. But it may happen, as I shall presently show, that the ordinary farmer will be brought to such a state that he cannot afford to sell for less. But this will be owing to the artificial value which these agriculturists first gave their land, and which for the good of the nation,

that is the people, ought, so far from being encouraged, to be discountenanced.

A short digression may perhaps be of service, as tending to place the matter in its true light. Suppose a Norfolk land-owner—I say Norfolk, as being shrewd and keen after self-interest—is asked from what scale he fixes the value of his farm on a new lease; he will say,—that after having endeavoured to ascertain the produce which the farmer has obtained, he calculates how much it must have sold for, and raises his rent accordingly. At the first glimpse this mode may appear just and fair: but on a little closer examination its pernicious tendency will be discovered. But this is the tendency of that agricultural improvement which the Landed Interest have pursued. Because from this mode of raising rents it is obvious, that if the farmer from any succession of casual causes should make a greater profit than was to be expected, by selling his grain at a higher price than usual, this casual cause will shortly operate against him, and become permanent against the public: for he will be obliged as soon as his lease is out,—and it is part of the pre-

present system to give short leases,—and that his rent is increased, ever afterwards to sell at this, or rather at a still further enhanced price; otherwise, after paying his rent, he would have little or no profit. This is the tendency of the present system of our agricultural improvers; and it is pretty evident, that as soon as their improvements shall have spread over the country, that is to say, as soon as the generality of farms shall be let at the improved scale, the farmer, although he may sell his produce at a great price, yet he will make little profit; the great profit, made at the expense of the public, going into the pockets of the large land proprietor. The public must then no longer expect a reduction in the prices of the first articles of life, without the leasehold farmer, who in general is the true and real agriculturist, being ruined. On the contrary, increased prices would be the probable result, unless kept down by the importation of foreign grain, which for the good of the country ought only to be resorted to when other measures fail.

In this scheme of improving agriculture, or rather of raising rents, the Landed Inter-

est have been wonderfully assisted by the multiplicity of country banks. By their means, the farmer who possessed any share of opulence easily obtained credit with them, and consequently the command of money ; of course he was enabled to outbid his no less industrious but less moneyed neighbour, and at the same time to indemnify himself by holding back his produce until it sold at a remunerative price.

If the societies for the improvement of agriculture would recommend œconomical husbandry, and would devise means of breaking the present monopolizing system, of reducing the number of large farms and greatly increasing the number of small ones, they would deserve the name which they assume, and merit the thanks of the nation. But this would not suit the views of their promoters and directors, the great land owners. It would break in on their profits. An abundant harvest must no longer be followed by a cheap loaf. It therefore suits the Landed Interest to raise a clamour against the admission of sugar in the distilleries. For, unquestionably, so long as foreign grain is required or allowed to be imported, the

English farmer can have no just reason to complain of the use of sugar in the distilleries, which may fairly be considered as a mere substitute for an equal quantity of foreign grain which would otherwise be imported.

“When it is considered,” say the committee, “how very small a portion of the barley grown in this kingdom is consumed by the distillers, it is scarcely possible to think that the proposed measure itself (the substitution of sugar in the distilleries) can bear very hard upon the grower. It is calculated that 1,200,000 acres are used for that purpose, of which about 80,000, or *one-sixteenth*, are sufficient to grow the whole quantity from which the spirits consumed in England are produced. The quantity of barley and bere grown in Scotland does not, in all probability, bear a much less proportion to that consumed in a similar manner. There are doubtless many parts of the country in which the substitution of a different crop could be attended with no disadvantage, and might eventually be attended with profit. In the most cultivated parts of Scotland, in which a practical knowledge of agricul-

ture exists in as great perfection as any where, such a substitution has been found actually to answer. It is to be remarked, that although it may be deemed disadvantageous to substitute any other grain in the room of barley, yet that the prices of grain mutually operate upon each other, and that a rise or fall in the price of any one kind must have a corresponding influence on the prices of the rest."

It is not difficult to ascertain the true cause of all the clamour and complaint made by the Norfolk farmer. It is simply this: He derives a greater profit from the cultivation of barley on much of his land than he does from other grain. And, therefore, whatever militates against that profit prompts him to complain. But it by no means follows that what shall reduce his gain must be of national disadvantage. On the contrary, it may be of national benefit: and under present circumstances unquestionably it would be— for this plain reason, That the more independent we make ourselves of other countries, by cultivating our own resources, and drawing from our own soil the crops we want, the better. So the Norfolk farmer

ought to grow oats sufficient to feed his horses, instead of buying that grain from a foreign country, to the benefit of the enemy and our own loss of gold.

For the year ending 5th January 1810, the import of foreign oats into England, as laid before the house of lords, amounted to two hundred and eighty-eight thousand nine hundred and thirty-eight quarters; and into Scotland, for the like period, to four thousand one hundred and twelve quarters. Moreover, this pernicious effect attends the present system of agricultural improvers; That large tracts of indifferent land are brought into cultivation for the most part by opulent speculatists, or farmers of considerable capital, who, in order to make a profit, must sell their produce at advanced prices, and that in proportion as their land is bad; for it is natural to suppose, that the worse the land the greater the expense, and more capital employed to make it good. Consequently the present mode of cultivating waste lands has the direct tendency of fixing increased prices on the public.

Now if the societies for improving the agriculture of the country were to adopt

a different mode, a very different result, and a very beneficial one, would no doubt be the consequence. Instead of dividing a common amongst a few large landed proprietors, let it be divided among the labourers of the parish or district, in the proportion of one, two, or three acres to each. An act of parliament might then fix the tithes at a modus to the amount of whatever the common produced in tithes before its cultivation. The clergy could have no right to complain of this, because they would still receive as much from the land as they ever had. The natural consequences would be, that these labourers would gradually bring the land into cultivation; they would build huts or cottages, plant potatoes, keep poultry, pigs, in a word, produce provisions sufficient to supply themselves and families, and of course reduce the poor rates. It might be attended with the further good consequence of breaking monopolies, and keeping the price of grain at a fair level.—But these are not palatable objects to the improvers of rents.

Casual checks in the price of grain, that

is in the profits of the farmer, may be of national benefit,—on this principle, that it will make the rich farmer less anxious of outbidding the poorer one. Consequently the rents of land will keep more steady, will increase less at every new lease; and consequently the renter can afford to sell at less price. For, as already observed, when once the mass of leaseholders are fixed at high rents, great prices will be kept up. And further, because whatever tends to prevent a monopoly in the market of grain will be of advantage to the public.

I am aware the committee before alluded to reported, They would not recommend the permanent adoption of sugar in the distilleries in lieu of grain, lest it might injure the farming interest. Such a recommendation was no doubt wise in the first stage of the experiment, lest improvident clamour should be raised, and ungrounded fears excited among the farmers. The measure has been tried, and has been found to succeed. It has given considerable relief to the planter, and caused no injury to the farmer; since his barley has

been selling at 40s. per quarter on the average, and it is well known 36s. affords him a very fair profit.

It may, therefore, now be made a permanent measure with advantage to the country; that is, permanent so long as existing causes continue. And the farmer need not be apprehensive of his barley falling to an unprofitable price; because he may in a moment be relieved by an act of the legislature, which shall prohibit the import of barley, and shall allow him freely to export his grain in any quantity to the colonies. For, by the present laws, the grain allowed to be exported from this country to the West India islands is very considerably less than what they would take if they were allowed. The farmer, therefore, need not fear a want of market.

Hitherto I have only considered the relief which the distressed planter experiences from the use of his sugar in the distilleries: but he wants much more than such relief to afford him any thing like prosperity,—a prosperity he has every right to ask and expect from the mother country when it is in her power to grant it,—since her prosperity, particularly in-

cluding the landed interest, is most intimately connected with his.

When the planter had a free export market, and prices that afforded a return for his capital; he cheerfully bore the heavy taxes laid on his produce, and was happy to contribute an ample share towards the exigencies of the state: but when his produce sinks beneath its value, scarcely making any return for his labour and capital, he grievously feels the weight of those duties, and can no longer be expected to contribute without reluctance his over proportion of taxes. For that taxes fall on him, and are felt by him, in greater proportion than any other class of subjects, is too evident to require proof.

The planter then may hold this language to the parent state:—The nature of your wants may compel you to tax us immoderately; but do not at the same time preclude us from the means of living, otherwise you will ruin us; and recollect, when we are crushed none will feel it more than yourself.

When the planter perceives a combination of causes at present existing and working his annihilation; when he sees ruin

staring him in the face and advancing in rapid strides, surely he may complain if measures are not taken to avert these evils; and certainly he may murmur, without the fear of being charged with ungrounded discontent or selfish views, at every law, however sanctioned by time or custom, which now operates to his disadvantage, and adds to his sufferings.

The spirit of monopoly, which the mother country acts on in regard to her West India colonies, becomes the friendly assistant of the great tyrant in his schemes for the ruin of the British colonists.

The planter complains that he is not allowed to manufacture sugar, the staple article of his growth, in the manner he thinks most conducive to his advantage; in being obliged to send his sugar home in such a state as to lose from one to two hundred-weight from every hogshead in its transit to this country; which loss is the part that, unfortunately, was to form his profit.

“The circumstance that presses with the greatest weight on the British planters in the West Indies,” says Mr. Bryan Edwards in his History of the same, “is that branch

of the monopoly which, reserving for the manufacturers in Great Britain all such improvements as the colonial produce is capable of receiving beyond its raw state, or first stage of manufacture, prohibits the colonists from refining their great staple commodity, sugar, for exportation. This is effected by the heavy duty of *4l. 18s. 8d.* the cwt. on all refined or loaf sugar imported. (Since increased to *8l. 8s.*)

“The great hardship on the planters in this case is, that the loss to them by the prohibition is far more than proportionate to the gain acquired by Great Britain. As this circumstance is not fully understood, I shall point out a few of the many advantages which the planters are deprived of by this restriction.

“The first advantage would be an entire saving of the loss which is now sustained in the quantity of raw sugar, between the time of shipping in the West Indies and the day of sale in Great Britain, arising chiefly from unavoidable waste at sea by drainage. To ascertain this loss with all possible exactness, I have compared in a great many instances the invoice weights taken at the time of shipping, with the

sale weights of the same goods in the merchants' books in London; and I will venture to fix the loss on the average of good and bad sugar at one-eighth part. In other words, A hogshead of sugar weighing net 16 cwt. when shipped in Jamaica, shall when sold in London be found to weigh 14 cwt. only.

“ But the great and decisive advantage that would accrue to the planter from refining his own sugar in the colonies, arises from the circumstance that his capital or stock is already provided to his hands. I mean not only that he possesses the raw material, but also that the buildings and apparatus of all kinds which are requisite for the manufacture of muscavado sugar are, with a very small addition, all that are wanted for the business of refining.”

On this subject, the committee of the house of commons above alluded to state as follows in their fourth report :

“ Your committee next proceeded to inquire whether any and what relief might be afforded to the colonies, by reducing the prohibitory duty on the importation of refined sugar, to a duty which should be merely equivalent to that on raw sugar.

“ It may be proper to premise, that is a process called *claying*, which does there not subject the sugar to the prohibitory duty, and makes it liable only to an additional duty of 4s. per cwt., which is not more than proportionate to its additional value. This is, however, not what is meant by *refined*; which is, properly speaking, sugar that has undergone solution and a fresh granulation, and such sugar is charged with a duty of £8: 8s. per cwt., which acts as an absolute prohibition of its import.

“ The advantages which the planter would derive from refining his sugar before he imports it are these :

“ First, the immense loss would be avoided which now arises from the drainage in the passage, amounting to nearly one-eighth of the whole. This loss to the planter, if sugar be estimated at its shipment at the low rate of 25s. per cwt., is not less on the whole importation than six hundred thousand pounds per annum.

“ Another benefit to the planter would arise from the great increase of his distillery ; for every hundred weight of sugar refined would furnish materials for the

distillation of nearly three gallons of rum, and this additional distillation would be attended with no additional expense.

“ A third benefit to be expected by the planter would be the reduction of his home freight. At present the ships on an average obtain barely one-third of a freight out, and are therefore obliged to charge two-thirds of their freight out on their freight home. Should the refinery take place to any considerable extent, there would be a large export of coals and utensils. Besides, as the freight home is paid not on the sugar that is taken on board, but on what is landed, it follows that the freight of that eighth of the sugar that is lost on the passage must be charged on the remainder. Were this waste avoided, it is obvious that, on this account only, the freight home might be reduced one-eighth, without loss to the ship-owner; and this would be, at the present rate of freight, a saving to the planter of about £300,000 on his whole import.

“ Lastly, a benefit of no small importance may arise to the colonies from the number of Europeans which would be

wanted in various capacities for the refinery; and by this means would be obviated the alarming decrease of white population, which the present distress of the colonies cannot fail to accelerate. To this may be added, that the refinery would furnish to a considerable number of the negroes an employment superior to that of field labour, and thereby contribute to that gradation among them on which their improvement and well-being so much depend.

“To the shipping interest it does not appear that any injury could possibly occur. Instead of a hundred weight of raw sugar, the freight home would be 56lbs. of refined, 22lbs. of bastard sugar, and three gallons of rum, which is at least equivalent.

“With regard to the revenue, it is clear that if the duty laid on the refined sugar and the bastard should equal in amount that of the raw sugar which produced it, no loss could arise. In some other points of view the alteration would be beneficial to the revenue. The waste being avoided, a greater quantity would arrive; and arriving at no additional expense, it might

be afforded cheaper. The consumption thereby promoted, the duties must also increase. The revenue would also gain in another way. It has been found impossible to prevent the molasses produced in the refinery from getting illegally into distillation, by which the revenue is materially injured. No such consequence could result from molasses produced in the West Indies, as the article is not of sufficient value to pay the charge of importation.

“ It has been observed, that the planter loses one-eighth of his produce: one-eighth of his capital may therefore be regarded as unproductive. The same remark applies to the shipping: being obliged to take on board a quantity of sugar equal to one-eighth, which does not arrive, it follows that one-eighth of the West India shipping is also unproductive. Capital, under such circumstances, not only detracts from the income of individuals, but is so much loss of national stock; and in this light must be regarded the two sums before stated, making an aggregate loss to individuals and to the nation of nine hundred thousand pounds annually.”

A note in Mr. Bryan Edwards's second volume may be placed here very appositely. "Such is the sacrifice made by the planters of the West Indies and the public of Great Britain, in supporting the private interests of that useless intermediate body of people the sugar refiners in England. It may not be useless to add, that those people are, in a proportion unknown in any other branch of trade, foreigners; who live in the most frugal way in England (about one thousand in the whole), and retire with their savings to their own country. There are few operations more simple, or which require a less expensive apparatus, than that of refining sugar. Can it then be just or reasonable to sacrifice to a manufacture, thus subordinate in its nature and limited in its extent, the essential interests of 65,000 British subjects in the West Indies, and half a million of money, which is now annually lost to Great Britain, that this manufacture may be supported? It is remarkable that the same observation occurred to Davenant, who wrote soon after the Revolution of 1688. Speaking of the impropriety of laying heavy duties on the produce of

the British West Indies, he proceeds in these words: 'And here it may not be improper to take notice particularly of the high imposition laid upon refined sugars imported hither, upon a wrong notion of advancing our manufactures; whereas, in truth, it only turns to the account of about fifty families, (for the refiners of England are no more,) and is greatly prejudicial and a bar to the industry of at least fourteen thousand persons; which are about the number of those who inhabit our islands producing sugar.' (Davenant, discourse 3d, on the Plantation Trade.) What would this author have said, had he known the facts stated above?"

There can be no doubt then, but that the refining of sugar in the islands would, generally speaking, be beneficial to the planter; yet it would be some time before it came at all in universal practice. From local circumstances many would continue in the simple manufacture of raw sugar; others would wait to see the result of what would at first be deemed experiment; so that no serious injury would occur to the refiners in this country from being suddenly thrown out of the market.

on the contrary, they would have timely notice to withdraw their capitals to some other trade, unless they could manufacture at as low a price as the planter. But after all, it is the opinion of those capable from experience of forming a correct opinion, that the colonist would in preference send home his sugar in simply a coarse refined state, so that employment would still be left for the refiners in England for double and treble refining.

Many people think, from the price they pay for their loaf sugar, the planter cannot labour under the distress he complains of: but they do not reflect, nor is it generally considered, that the losses of the planter contribute to the profits of the refiners; who take this lesson from the depreciation of raw or muscavado sugar, that seeing its low price is owing to a want of market and a forced accumulation, they only manufacture refined sugar sufficient to supply the demand at their own prices; thus forming a sort of monopoly injurious to the planter. It is not just that this intermediate class should benefit at the planter's expense. And certainly it would be advantageous as well as honour-

able to the country, that the planter should be allowed to enter into fair competition with the refiner at home ; that he should be allowed the privilege which has natural justice for its basis—the privilege of manufacturing his produce to any stage of perfection he pleases.

The planter has also reason to complain that sufficient encouragement is not given to his rum ; although, latterly, in this article he has received some relief, from greater quantities being contracted for by the victualling department. But it may be said, Why not use rum altogether? why contract for foreign brandies at all? Can it be sufficient to say that French brandy may be procured a little cheaper, and that it thereby economizes the expenses of government? Surely this cannot be a good national reason. It directly benefits the French vintner at the loss of the West India distiller. It gives English gold to our enemy for an article we are under no necessity of importing, since a sufficient quantity of rum and British spirits may at all times be procured. Moreover, the government supplies of brandy have this pernicious effect, that they not

merely diminish the consumption of rum in the navy, but greatly assist in diffusing throughout the country a general taste for brandy.—Taste is affected by habit; and when use has accustomed the palate to brandy, the consumption of rum will diminish. In general use it has diminished. An increased consumption is therefore what the planter wishes; and as it is in the power of the mother country to procure it, he has reason to expect it.

On this subject the committee observe: “As this trade (that of importing foreign brandy and geneva) affords great encouragement to one of the chief staples of the enemy, without promoting in the smallest degree the welfare of the shipping, manufacturing or colonial interests of this country, it is evidently the policy, as we are led to believe it is the practice, of the French government, to connive at its continuance, and to protect it. The sound policy of this country would seem to require the prohibition, or discouragement, of a trade in which the advantage is reaped by the enemy; particularly as by doing so the produce of our own colonies, and spirits the manufacture of our own coun-

try, would replace those so withdrawn from the market."

It may perhaps be urged, that a considerable revenue is obtained from the importation of foreign spirits, which by a prohibition of importing them would be lost. True: but the natural consequence would be a greater consumption of rum and British spirits, consequently an increase of revenue from the duties on those two articles, which probably would make up the deficiency apprehended. But admitting that it should not, and that it was attended with a loss to the revenue, yet that loss would in great measure be counterbalanced to the nation by the injury it would cause our enemy: for it would deprive his brandy of a most advantageous market, which consequently creating him a loss would be a positive benefit to Great Britain.

The best relief, however, which could be afforded the planter, in regard to the sale of his rum, by encouraging the consumption of it, would be to equalize the duties on this article and that of home-made spirits: a fair competition would then be

allowed the planter without the least injury to the revenue.

On the subject of the abolition of the slave-trade I would not touch, were it not that it may produce indirect effects, or rather effects which might be directly foreseen, and which the planter will have great reason to apprehend, unless counteracted by measures adopted by the mother country. If it were an act of humanity to prevent negroes being brought to our colonies, it was an act worthy of a generous nation. But if it is an act enforced solely at the cost of the colonies, it may be compared to an ostentatious man who performs a charitable action at his neighbour's expense. The mother country therefore has her part to act towards the planters, who under her faith first embarked their fortunes in colonial enterprises. She has at least to act the part of justice, if she will not that of liberality, and bear her share in this proclaimed act of humanity. Its obvious effect, and which indeed is already felt in the islands, is that of diminishing the white population. In order therefore that

the security of the islands may not be endangered, a much greater proportion of European troops must be kept up; and that absurd insane plan of having negro soldiers utterly abolished. Could a negro soldier be trusted in the day of open revolt?—and if he could, what would it prove to the rebel but his own power, and that it was not a black skin which made a coward? Whatever tends to keep the white population from diminishing must be of importance to the planter: and therefore in this point of view alone the permission of refining sugar would be serviceable, as in this case at least one white refiner must be employed on every plantation.

There are, however, some who feel so kindly towards the planters, as to think that the prohibition of importing negroes must be serviceable to them, and therefore very liberally grant this privilege. The proprietors of small estates will no doubt be very thankful for this favour, in relieving them from prospective ruin. And the large proprietor, while he weathers the storm and reaps the benefit, will doubt-

less cry—Heaven preserve me from such friends!

The planters, however, can fortunately point out a much more satisfactory mode of relief: and as their welfare is of no ordinary importance to the parent state—their impending distress of no common magnitude—and the situation of the world of no paralleled crisis—measures which heretofore might be deemed inadmissible seem now imperiously required; and the partial departure from a system may produce a national and individual benefit, which its rigid observance under existing circumstances cannot fail of deteriorating.

Navigation and naval power, says Mr. Bryan Edwards, are the *children*, not the *parents*, of commerce; for if agriculture and manufactures, and mutual wants, did not furnish the subject matter of intercourse between distant countries, there must be an end to navigation. The remark therefore of a very distinguished senator (Mr. Burke) concerning that branch of our commercial system of which we are now treating, appears to be undoubtedly true—“that if the navigation

act be suffered to run the full length of its principle, and is not changed and modified, according to the change of times and fluctuation of circumstances, it must do great mischief, and frequently even defeat its own purpose."

The relief I allude to is a repeal of those restrictive laws which prevent the British planters from exporting their produce to any ports but those of the mother country; which has been the cause of producing in these unexampled times of commerce that forced superabundance of colonial products in the home market which at present exists, and the consequent distressing low prices which have prevailed, and which are felt even in a greater degree by the coffee- than the sugar-grower; for the accumulation of the former article has become so enormous that nothing but an export can afford relief.

If a free and unconfined trade were allowed between America and the old British West India islands *exclusively*, it would afford a most decided and invaluable relief to the British planters. Like every other public measure, objection

may be started ; but where the advantages are decisive, the measure must be good. Such a measure cannot be considered in the light of what shall enrich the planter, but what shall prevent his ruin—that ruin which would recoil on the parent state, be felt by every individual, and in a particular degree by the land-holders.

A measure of this nature was once on the eve of being adopted. A precedent not inept can be adduced,

At the termination of the American war, the chancellor of the exchequer (Mr. Pitt) brought in a bill, March 1783, entitled, “ A bill for the provisional establishment and regulation of trade and intercourse between the subjects of Great Britain and those of the United States of North America,” which amongst other clauses recites—“ Whereas by the several laws now existing, for regulation of the trade and commerce of Great Britain with foreign states, the subjects of the latter are, as aliens, liable to various commercial restrictions, and also to various duties and customs at the ports of Great Britain, which hitherto have not been applicable to, or demandable from, the inhabi-

tants of the several provinces now composing the said United States of America :

“ And whereas it is highly expedient that the intercourse between Great Britain and the said United States should be established on *the most enlarged principles of reciprocal benefit* to both countries ; but from the distance between Great Britain and America, it must be a considerable time before any convention or treaty for establishing and regulating the trade and intercourse between Great Britain and the said United States of America upon a permanent foundation can be concluded :

“ Now for the purpose of making a temporary regulation of the commerce and intercourse between Great Britain and the said United States of America, and in order to *evinced the disposition* of Great Britain to be on terms of the most perfect amity with the said United States of America, and in confidence of a like friendly disposition on the part of the said United States of America towards Great Britain, Be it further enacted, That from and after the....the ships and vessels of the subjects and citizens of the said United States of America, with the merchandizes and goods

on board the same, shall be admitted into all the ports of Great Britain in the same manner as the ships and vessels of the subjects of other independent sovereign states: but the merchandizes and goods on board such ships or vessels of the subjects or citizens of the said United States, being of the growth, produce, or manufacture of the said United States, shall be liable to the same duties and charges only, as the same merchandizes and goods would be subject to if they were the property of British subjects, and imported in British-built ships or vessels navigated by British natural-born subjects.

“ And be it further enacted, That during the time aforesaid, the ships and vessels of the subjects and citizens of the said United States shall be admitted into the ports of His Majesty’s islands, colonies, or plantations in America, with any merchandizes or goods of the growth, produce, or manufacture, of the territories of the aforesaid United States, with liberty to export from His Majesty’s said islands, colonies, or plantations in America, to the said territories of the said United States, any merchandizes or goods whatsoever;

and such merchandizes or goods, which shall be so imported into, or exported from, the said British islands, colonies, or plantations, in America, shall be liable to the same duties and charges only as the same merchandizes and goods would be subject to if they were the property of British natural-born subjects, and imported or exported in British-built ships or vessels navigated by British seamen.

“ And be it further enacted, That during all the time hereinbefore limited, there shall be the same drawbacks, exemptions and bounties, on merchandizes and goods exported from Great Britain into the territories of the said United States of America, as are allowed in the case of exportation to the islands, plantations or colonies now remaining or belonging to the crown of Great Britain in America.

“ And be it further enacted, That all ships and vessels belonging to any of the citizens or subjects of the said United States of America, which shall have come into any port of Great Britain since the together with the goods and merchandizes on board the same ships and vessels, shall have the full benefit of this act.”

A change of ministry taking place, the bill unfortunately was not carried into effect:—Party clamour prevailed.

As a precedent of allowing colonial produce to be exported from the West India islands to foreign parts, 12 Geo. II. c. 30, may be quoted not ineptly: entitled “An Act for granting a liberty to carry sugars of the growth, produce or manufacture, of any of His Majesty’s sugar colonies in America, from the said colonies directly to foreign parts, in ships built in Great Britain and navigated according to law.” It recites—“And whereas His Majesty’s sugar colonies in America are of great importance to the trade, navigation, and strength of this kingdom: And whereas the planters of the said sugar colonies are unable to improve or carry on the sugar trade on an equal footing with foreign sugar colonies, without some advantages and relief be given them from Great Britain: And whereas it is reasonable to expect that not only the produce of the said commodity in the said colonies, but also the exportation thereof, would be greatly increased, for the mutual benefit of this kingdom and the said

colonies, if (notwithstanding the laws relating to navigation and trade to and from the plantations) liberty or license were granted for ships built in and sailing from Great Britain, and chiefly owned by the subjects of His Majesty residing in Great Britain, to load sugars in the said colonies, and to carry the same directly to any foreign ports in Europe, first touching at some port or ports in Great Britain (except when such ship goes to the southward of Cape Finisterre), whereby the said sugars will arrive at such ports sooner, with less charge, and in better condition for the consumption thereof— Be it enacted," &c.

This act continued in force several years; and it is certain that if the principles of these two acts were now adopted and acted on, they would afford the British planters a decided and invaluable service.

Great Britain also possesses within herself another mode of relief, although at present a speculative one. It is well known that sugar is of a very nutritious and fattening quality. The cattle in the West Indies never thrive so much as while

the mill is at work, when they are partially fed with molasses and scummings. If therefore the use of sugar were adopted in fattening cattle in this country, it would, by opening a new source of consumption, considerably relieve the planter; and at the same time benefit the farmer, by affording him an increased advantageous means of fattening his stock. But the degree of advantage which this method would afford must depend on knowledge deduced from experience in the proper mode of apportioning and employing the sugar. And this experience must be best obtained from actual experiments made on different cattle.

If therefore the societies for the improvement of farming and agriculture were to offer *adequate* premiums for this purpose, and to establish its excellence, they would confer as great a benefit to the farmer as they ever yet have—with this further advantage, that it would pervade the whole country, and extend across the Atlantic.

That it would be found to succeed will admit of little doubt. The only question then on the part of the legislature could

be, in what manner to prevent the sugar destined for the food of cattle (the duties being remitted on all such sugar) from being clandestinely applied to other purposes, with the intent of defrauding the revenue. To this effect various satisfactory experiments have been made, which prove that different articles may be mixed with sugar, so as to prevent its being brought into use for man without making it less proper for cattle; and consequently proving that the impossibility of defrauding the revenue may be easily secured.

Having now shown the distressed state of the planter—a distress too notorious to require any detailed proof;—having asserted the great value of the West India colonies to the mother country,—an assertion which will stand uncontested by all, except those who vainly think Great Britain can exist independent of commerce;—having asserted that our inveterate enemy aims at the ruin of our West India islands, as a prelude to his schemes of our annihilation;—an assertion that requires no further verification than the witness of our eyes to events now passing;—and having

maintained, that as a nation we possess within ourselves the means not only of counteracting those schemes, but even the power of bringing back prosperity to the half-ruined planters;—the question simply comes to this—Whether those measures shall be adopted which will insure relief to the planter; or whether things shall be allowed to go on in their present course, the evident tendency of which is West India ruin—Whether, by making a sacrifice of revenue derived from an over-charged tax, the planter shall be enabled to stem the storm,—or whether, by rigidly enforcing the monopolizing laws and draining the uttermost farthing, the planter shall sink beneath his accumulated woe;—whether at least four millions of revenue, with a trade of at least six millions of exported British produce, shall thus be lost; or whether partial clamour and the views of an interested class be silenced, and subverted to the public good. We are a commercial people, nor can agriculture supply its loss. Commerce gone—agriculture would palsy and wither. From commerce our power has sprung, by com-

merce it must be maintained. Evil must be the counsellor who can persuade a contrary belief:

“*Quem Deus vult perdere primum dementat.*”

In this awful crisis of the world; amid the subversion of established customs, and the overthrow of nations, we hitherto have stood unshaken, nobly opposing a barrier to universal aggression. Engaged in no common cause, fighting for our very existence, every resource of the nation is called for. Our own internal resources being brought into action, distress relieved where distress can be relieved, with wisdom at the helm of state and unanimity in our conduct, we may defy the tyrant: and our harps and our lions, or leopards if he pleases, shall proudly triumph over his boasted eagles.

That prosperity may attend Your Royal Highness, that it may pervade the whole country, and that its benign influence may be radically felt in the *British West Indies*, is the ardent desire of every

BRITISH PLANTER.

An Account of the Number of Vessels, with the Amount of their Tonnage, and the Number of Men and Boys usually employed in navigating the same, which belonged to the several Ports of the British Empire on the 30th of September in the Years 1807, 1808 and 1809, distinguishing Great Britain, Ireland, the British Plantations in America, and the West Indies,—as laid before the House of Commons in 1810.—Whereby the Naval Value of the Plantations will be seen.

	In the year 1807.			In the year 1808.			In the year 1809.		
	Ships.	Tons.	Men.	Ships.	Tons.	Men.	Ships.	Tons.	Men.
England . . .	15,067	1,797,182	119,631	15,327	1,883,971	119,981	15,687	1,875,224	122,815
Guernsey . . .	106	9,927	993	110	10,860	1,061	112	10,503	912
Jersey . . .	77	6,891	552	66	5,429	500	58	5,451	576
Isle of Man . . .	390	9,373	2,259	381	9,237	2,216	372	8,989	2,158
Plantations . . .	2,917	184,794	13,505	3,066	194,423	13,081	3,188	201,247	13,857
Scotland . . .	2,615	216,553	15,658	2,592	211,950	15,042	2,534	206,075	14,720
Ireland . . .	1,098	56,901	5,217	1,104	58,959	5,324	1,119	60,979	5,560
Total	22,290	2,281,621	157,875	22,646	2,324,819	157,105	23,070	2,368,468	160,598

THE END.



