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S L A V E R Y

NOT C R E D I T E D BY

S C R I P T U R E .

O R A D E F E N C E

O F T H E

W E S T - I N D I A P L A N T E R S ,

F R O M T H E A S P E R S I O N S T H R O W N O U T A G A I N S T  
T H E M , B Y T H E A U T H O R O F A P A M P H L E T , E N T I T L E D ,

“ A N A D D R E S S T O T H E I N H A B I T A N T S O F  
“ T H E B R I T I S H S E T T L E M E N T S I N A M E R I C A , U P O N  
“ S L A V E - K E E P I N G . ”

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B Y A W E S T - I N D I A N .

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*Who steals my Purse, steals trash, 'tis something, nothing;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;  
But he that filches from me my good Name,  
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed.*

SHAKESPEARE.

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P H I L A D E L P H I A .

P R I N T E D M , D C C , L X X I I I .

XH

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N635

*Handwritten signature*

WARRANT UNDER  
THE  
NOTES ACT

Nov. 30, 1903

A.

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# P R E F A C E.

CONSCIOUS of a want of abilities, and having very little time to spare at present, it distresses me, not a little, to write any thing that has a chance of being perused by the publick.

I never should have attempted to contradict the author of the address, merely from being a native of the West-Indies, for I hate national partiality; but as I have many valuable friends in that part of the world, I could not, patiently, bear them so unworthily traduced, without endeavouring to undeceive his readers.

I very well know, that slave keeping is thought inconsistent with religion, by great part of the people in this province, so that what I have said, concerning its legality, or the political necessity of admitting it, may be read with disgust by many.

*I have not vanity enough to think, that any thing I have mentioned, will incline them to change their opinions, or to look upon it with a more favourable eye. But I flatter myself, that every honest man, whatever his religious or political principles may be, will favour every attempt to crush the most malevolent slander, especially when it is exaggerated beyond the most distant bounds of probability. The inhabitants of this city will please to recollect, that the West-Indies form a considerable branch of their commerce, and that they ought therefore to listen to every thing that can be said in favour of its inhabitants. They will, likewise, remember that they lately received a genteel sum of money from that quarter, for the use of their college, for which act of generosity I heard the West Indians highly commended, by the Provost of that seminary, on a late publick occasion. Every one must suppose that he, likewise, spoke the sentiments of the other professors, and surely those gentlemen, equally remarkable for their piety and learning, would not have bestowed praises where they were not due, nor deigned to receive any donations, if they thought they were granted by monsters and barbarians.*

*I trust*

*I trust to facts, and the goodness of my cause, rather than elegant language and flowery declamation; and I must observe, that, though I am infinitely inferior to the author of the address, in the qualifications of a writer, yet I have many advantages over him.*

*Abuse levelled at an entire body of people, seems so contrary to reason, and every charitable maxim, that a man who undertakes it, though of the first rate genius, lays himself open to be refuted by every school boy. Such performances, unless supported by the poetick fire of a Churchill, cannot bear a second reading, and must soon sink into utter oblivion.*

W. R. B. W. R. C. H.

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*Wm Spower*

S L A V E R Y

NOT FORBIDDEN BY

S C R I P T U R E.

OR A DEFENCE, &c.

**M**ANY writers, who aim at the reformation of mankind, point out plans for their conduct, which it is impossible to follow. They make no allowance for our frailties, nor consider that we cannot attain a state of absolute perfection. Among the rest, the declaimers against slavery never recollect that there are faults in every human institution. Instead of advising some wholesome regulations and improvements, they spend their time in fruitless reproaches, and afterwards declare that slavery ought to be utterly abolished, as if their dictates were to be implicitly followed. Till self-interest ceases to have influence over the actions of men,

propofals

propofals that ftrike at the very root of their temporal concerns will never be purfued, and ferve no other purpofe, than to difplay the author's talents.

A MAN of a gloomy and difcontented turn of mind, who has no other view in offering his fentiments to the publick, than to make an oftentatious fhew of his abilities, may write numberlefs folios on the abufes that reign among us, and ftill find frefh fubject for complaint. Why does he not pour forth his eloquence againft the lawlefs ambition of kings, who, for a fpot of land, perhaps, not fit to defray half the expences of a campaign, often facrifice millions of their fellow creatures? The occupations of their fubjects, when viewed through the magnifying medium of a bigot's eye, are likewise equally deferving of cenfure. The fervants of the ftate, under colour of perquifites of office, confifcate the public money; Bifhops preach on humility and indifference to worldly enjoyments, yet pocket ten thoufand a year; lawyers are ready to engage on either fide of a caufe, perhaps, by their eloquence miflead the jury, and occafion the ruin of widows and orphans; phyficians take a fee from a patient, when they know his cure to be impoffible; and the efforts of a merchant to get the beft price for his commodities, muft appear an endlefs endeavour of one man to over-reach another. Moft of our favourite fports exhibit a continued fcene of bloodfhed and cruelty. What enjoyment can a rational mind feel in purfuing a timid hare, and feeing the poor animal worried by dogs; or in maiming a harmlefs partridge? Can there be any fatisfaction in torturing the worm and trout,

trout, for hours, on the sharp-pointed hook? Is it not the height of barbarity to push the generous horse beyond his strength, and make him run over a course of some miles in a few minutes? In short, it would be endless to mention every circumstance that an enthusiast may lay hold of, to prove the degeneracy of human nature. He may always find subjects enough to exercise his declamatory powers, without having recourse to slavery. The man of a liberal and benevolent way of thinking, will see that there are faults in all employments, and that many of our amusements cannot be justified by the strict rules of humanity; but he will overlook such matters, seeing they are the necessary consequences of the imperfection of our nature. In his own department he will keep himself as free from blame as possible; and be of opinion, that the small portion of time every good member of society has to spare from his own concerns, is better employed in promoting the happiness of mankind, than in railing at their vices.

SLAVERY, like all other human institutions, may be attended with its particular abuses, but that is not sufficient totally to condemn it, and to reckon every one unworthy the society of men who owns a negro.

IF precedent constitutes law, surely it can be defended, for it has existed in all ages. The scriptures, instead of forbidding it, declare it lawful. The divine legislator, Moses, says—

“ B O T H thy bond-men and thy bond maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they beget in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession, they shall be your bond-men for ever. \*”

T H E Jews are not only allowed, in the clearest terms, to enslave the heathens for life, but likewise others, who were their countrymen, though of a different religious persuasion.

I N another place, † giving laws concerning servants, he says—

“ A N D if a man smite his servant or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand, he shall be surely punished; notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he is his money.”

K I L L I N G a servant on the spot it seems was punished, though not capitally: for, in the same chapter, he mentions six capital crimes, and always expresses in the most direct terms that the delinquent shall suffer death. We can not easily infer the same meaning from the  
word

\* *Levit.* xxv. 44, 45, 46. † *Exod.* xxi. 20.

word *punished*. He probably meant a pecuniary fine, especially, as in the verse that immediately follows, he uses the very same words, "he shall be surely punished," to express a forfeiture of money. § The words *his money*, plainly convey the idea of property, as if he were talking of an ox or an ass.

It must be observed, that these laws, which are so much in favour of the master, seem to have been applicable only to Hebrew servants. If they were so harshly dealt with, slaves for life, certainly, lay under still greater disadvantages. These were distinguished by the name of *Bondmen*, and I can find no laws in the Old Testament concerning them. The heathens and strangers appear to have been held in so small estimation, by Moses and the Jews, that it is likely he did not think it worth while to give any laws concerning them, and left it in the will of the master, to treat them as he thought proper. †

THE Author of the *Address* is of opinion, that slavery was not authorized by the patriarchs, because

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their

§ *If men strive and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow; he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judge determine.*—Exod. xxi. 22.

† *The Jews deserve censure for their illiberal partiality to their countrymen and fellow believers.*

their accounts of it are very short, just as if one could not understand an author's meaning in a few words. A good christian might as well pretend, that he ought not to pay any attention to the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," nor several of the others, because they are expressed in a brief manner. With the same sophistry he adds, that Providence kept the neighbouring nations in bondage, to prevent the jews from corrupting their national religion and, by intermarriages, altering the descent of Jesus from what was originally ordained.

COULD an eternal decree of God be overturned by the pitiful revolutions among men? or could not the same omnipotent being, who marked out the descent of the favour of the world, prevent the race of Abraham from being corrupted? This assertion can even be confuted from the situation of the Jews, since their overthrow by the Romans. They have been driven from their native country, and scattered among all the nations of the earth, many of whose manners and customs are more inviting than their own, yet they still remain a distinct people, in spite of persecution and all the disadvantages they labour under.

THE Jews are forbidden to detain their countrymen in servitude longer than seven years. ¶ We do the same, though

¶ *Hebrew servants were not allowed to carry their wives and children along with them if they belonged to their master, and, probably, from a reluctance to quit such tender*

though they should be wretches, guilty of the most flagrant violation of the laws. Neither are they to steal one another; a crime which we have no cause to be accused of. Kidnapping seems to have been common with

*der connections, they sometimes refused to go away at the end of seven years, and voluntarily became slaves for life. This was ratified in due form by a very cruel ceremony, namely, boring the servant's ear with an awl, and fastening him to a door or a post.—*

*“ If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her masters, and he shall go out by himself.*

*“ And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife and my children, I will not go out free :*

*“ Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post : And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever.”*

Exodus xxi. 4, 5, 6.

*“ And it shall be if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee ( because he loveth thee and thine house ; because he is well with thee )*

*“ Then thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever : And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise.*

Deut. xv. 16, 17.

with the Jews, for Moses denounces his vengeance against it in more places than one. \*

O U R Saviour's general maxims of charity and benevolence, cannot be mentioned as proofs against slavery. If the custom had been held in abhorrence by Christ and his disciples, they would, no doubt, have preached against it in direct terms. They were remarkable for the boldness † of their discourses, and intrepidity of conduct, which brought on them persecutions, imprisonment, and even death itself. However, the Addresser is so wicked as to accuse our Saviour of the meanest dissimulation, by saying, that he forbore to mention any thing that might seem contrary to the Roman or Jewish laws. This Gentleman, attempting to be religious, becomes blasphemous. Enough, I believe, has been said, to shew his inability to prove that slavery is contrary to scripture.

I F this writer had confined himself to the impropriety of slavery in this, and some of the other colonies, and treated the subject in an unprejudiced manner, his labours might have been useful. In the northern parts of America there are now, numbers of industrious white inhabitants, and when that is the case, the importation of Negroes will cease, without any interposition of the legislature. No man who pays attention to his interest and peace of mind, will ever employ slaves to do his work, when he can get freemen at a moderate price. But

\* *Exod.* xxi. 16. *Deut.* xxiv. 7.

† *Witness Paul's behaviour before Agrippa.*



But his proposal of settling the West-Indies entirely with whites, and giving the Negroes their liberty, could never come from a man of common sense. \* The Author of the Address has, certainly, never been in the sugar islands, and consequently, whatever he mentions, concerning them, must be from a confused hear-say, not from experience.

I M A G I N E there are above four-hundred thousand Negroes in the British islands: Can he point out a plan to procure the same number of whites in their stead? Or, if they could be got, would not there be a necessity for vast reinforcements, to supply the place of those cut off by disease? Where is the money to be raised to make satisfaction to the Planters for the loss of their property? † The people in Britain already complain, that emigrators, from the mother country, are become too numerous;

\* *To prove that negroes earn their freedom, our Author rates the profits of their yearly labour, at ten pound sterling, and their expences, forty shillings, but, including taxes, food, cloathing, doctors fees and the interest of the original cost of a Negro, it is well known that his yearly charges will amount to near eight pound. Besides, how can he be certain that the Negro will labour twenty years, when the life of a healthy person can only be valued seven years. I mention this, to shew that he is totally unacquainted with his subject.*

† *Fifty-two millions would be required; twenty-two millions for the Negroes, and thirty in consideration of the lands, buildings, &c.*

numerous; and when they take the resolution of going abroad, they will certainly prefer the interior parts of America to the rugged rocks of the West-Indies, or the swamps of Carolina, as more likely to secure them every comfort of life. Many articles of subsistence, very necessary to families that come from Europe, such as, milk, butter and cheese, can hardly be procured in the West-Indies, and no kind of grain, can be raised, except Guinea and Indian corn, with which they are totally unacquainted.

WITH regard to the Africans, they meet with few inconveniences of that nature, as the climate and productions of the two countries are so nearly alike.

THIS writer confesses, that hard labour within the tropics shortens human life, and that the colour of the negroes qualifies them for hot countries, yet he is desirous, that our white fellow subjects should toil in these sultry climates, that the Africans might indulge their natural laziness in their own country. The former are, no doubt, much obliged to him for his kind intentions.

To support his benevolent scheme of abolishing slavery in the Islands, he makes use of a very specious argument, that agriculture can never flourish where slavery is tolerated. If he means the slavery of arbitrary states, he may be right, but with regard to the British West-Indies, where the proprietors are under a free government, and only the manual labour performed by slaves,  
his

his observation will not hold good, for there are few, or no lands, better cultivated any where. The little island of St. Kitts, is not above eighty miles square, and yet, its annual produce amounts to half a million sterling, which is not, perhaps, to be equalled in the whole universe.

THE history of the West-Indies, shews, that sugar colonies can never be brought to any perfection, by dividing the lands among a number of people. When the islands were first taken under the protection of government, numbers of people settled there, who made a shift to support themselves, by planting a little cotton and tobacco, very little sugar or rum being then made. Such people can afford to consume but very few manufactures, and those of the cheapest sort. Some of them more ambitious and possessed of greater industry than the rest, assisted with accidental supplies of money, purchased the lands of many of these inconsiderable proprietors. This increase of property enabled them to become sugar planters, by which means they soon acquired riches, and the islands, from being of little or no use to government, greatly increased its revenue. It is in vain to think of making sugar, by dividing the land into small lots among poor settlers. Unless a plantation yields above fifty hogheads of that commodity, it will hardly defray the expence of building a set of works, buying cattle, and a variety of necessary utensils; in short, to commence sugar planter, a man must have the command of a very considerable sum of money; and a  
small

small estate being attended with a much greater proportional expence than a large one, no person can expect to become independent, unless his landed property is pretty extensive.

IN this country, when the peasant reaps and thrashes his grain, the labour is over, and he can keep it several months, till he meets with a purchaser. But the case is widely different with the cane planter; when the cane is cut it is useless, unless he has the necessary apparatus to manufacture it, which cannot be procured without a great sum of money. He must quickly resolve, for the cane will perish in a few hours, a circumstance that deprives him of an opportunity to transport it by water carriage, or of carrying it far by land, to find a buyer.

By the property in the islands falling into fewer hands, the state has lost some subjects in her colonies, but it has received full compensation, by the additional value of produce sent to the mother country.\* I know  
estates

\* I believe it will admit of dispute, whether Great-Britain has suffered a decrease of subjects on the whole, by the property in the islands falling into fewer hands. For the additional quantity of sugar, &c. thereby made and sent home, by giving employment to the refiners of sugar, sailors, ship-builders, and, in short, giving business to people in a thousand different occupations, must create an increase of inhabitants at home; so that, upon the whole, the state can hardly be said to be a loser in that respect.

estates which formerly afforded only a scanty subsistence to a few families, that now yield five thousand pounds sterling, per annum, to the proprietor, and fifteen hundred to the revenue, which is infinitely more than an estate in England of the same income. The British empire is one vast machine, and every particular district and colony, may be compared to separate wheels that give motion to the whole. Some aggrandize the state by commerce; others by furnishing useful subjects; and it may be said in favour of those affording wealth, that money can command soldiers, but that soldiers without money can never prove serviceable.

It is now time to indulge, for a moment, the chimerical supposition, that government were to listen to the complaints of the Author of the Address, and such visionary enthusiasts, and by act of parliament, declare all the negroes free; many of the richest British subjects must immediately become beggars, and the sugar colonies (not to mention those that produce rice and indigo) will be deserted. The nation must consequently pay above four millions † a year, to foreigners, for that commodity,\* the  
revenue

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† *The sugar annually exported from the British West-Indies, is computed to be above four millions, sterling value.*

\* *If we include the value of the rum, coffee, cocoa, cotton, rice, indigo, and tobacco, made in the British colonies.*

revenue will be reduced more than another million, and the surest vent for our manufactures would be lost. By such terrible drains, Britain would be rendered quite defenceless, and she must soon fall an easy prey to France, or some of her other powerful neighbours; and thus, by freeing the Africans, Britons, themselves, must become abject slaves to despotick power.

I AM surprized these advocates for human liberty, do not undertake the cause of our brave soldiers and invincible sailors, in preference to that of the negroes; certainly every body will excuse them for so harmless a partiality. They ought to advise the ministry to abolish the inhuman custom of pressing, and to allow the soldiers to quit their regiments when they had a mind, instead of being detained during life. If they received an answer, they would, probably, be told, that the wisest statesmen had never discovered any other method of manning the navy, especially on a sudden emergency; and that the army could not be maintained, if the time of serving were left in the will of the soldiers. They would, likewise, be told, that private considerations must

*nies, there must be a loss of some millions more: Besides, we must consider the loss of freight, the number of sailors, and others, that would have no employment, and the check that the usual circulation, in the mother country, would receive, by the proprietors in the colonies, having no money to spend. It would be endless to trace the consequences; and every one must confess that Britain, without her Southern and West-India colonies, must be a mere cypher.*

must always give way to the publick good; and that the safety of the state required these extraordinary exertions of power. Will not the same reason oblige government to allow slavery to continue in the colonies? By listening to one petition, Britain must be conquered by force of arms; by granting the other, she must be undone by losing her commerce. The cause would be different, but the effect the same.

I SHOULD have allowed the Author of the Address, and his associates, to enjoy the imaginary triumph of proving the iniquity of slavery, and quietly heard of their petition being presented to government, to prohibit the African trade, without feeling the smallest desire to combat their opinions; but he has gone farther. He has represented the West-India planters as a set of hardened monsters, who, whip their slaves without any cause—ravish their women—torment both sexes with melted wax and fire—suspend them in the air by the thumbs, and wantonly indulge themselves in every species of cruelty. He says these pictures are taken from real life. I should be glad to know his authority.

No gentleman could pay so little regard to truth, as to say, that such horrid scenes are frequently to be met with. His information must have been received from an obscure writer, unworthy of credit; or some gloomy, discontented wretch, somewhat disordered in his understanding. For my part, I never knew a single instance of such shocking barbarities, and every West-Indian with whom I have conversed on the subject, has made the same declaration.

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THE West-Indies has, now, been settled above a hundred years, during which time, no doubt, many men, guilty of every vice, have existed in that country, and a few instances have happened of the cruelties he mentions: But is that a reason to stigmatize every West-Indian, with the name of murderer and monster, and represent him as dead to every kind of feeling? †

MOST of the natives, of the West-Indies, are sent to England, in the early part of their life, where they receive a liberal education, and imbibe those sentiments of liberty and independence, which are every where to be met with in that happy country. Is it to be supposed, that a few years residence in the West-India islands, will make them, totally, forget humanity, that first and noblest characteristick of Englishmen? Or will not that powerful advocate, self-interest, persuade them to preserve their slaves in life and health, though their hearts should become totally callous? This writer endeavours to prove them destitute of common sense, as well as compassion. The West-Indies, I believe, is as remarkable as any of the other colonies, for giving birth to men of a generous and merciful disposition; and those guilty of unusual severity are, there,

† *This writer talks much of slave-keeping and breaking the eighth commandment, but he certainly ought to have perused the ninth with attention, before he favoured the world with such specimens of his skill in the assassination of characters.*



there, held in the same abhorrence, as they would be in any other part of the world.

I HAVE no intentions to insinuate, that the planters do not bestow proper correction when it is necessary. If they were totally neglectful in this particular, they would neither be lovers of justice, nor consult the happiness of their slaves; for nobody would ever wish the bad to enjoy the same advantages as the good. The negroes of a very indulgent, easy master, for the most part, become compleat villains. They not only injure their master's property, but likewise are a nuisance to the neighbourhood, and for their flagrant crimes are often punished by the laws; which might have been prevented if they had been checked in proper time. You have no chance to acquire the esteem of negroes by never correcting them for a fault; they are sure to laugh at your folly. It is a universal remark, that almost every insurrection in the West-Indies, has been hatched on the estates of over-indulgent masters, and ten to one, his favourite servants are the ringleaders, and strike the first blow.

THE planter who lays down a resolution, never to let a fault pass unobserved, will soon find that there is seldom occasion to exert his authority. The deserving part of his negroes will maintain their good behaviour, and the worthless, from motives of fear, take care never to merit punishment.

OVERSEERS are never allowed to chastise negroes, without acquainting the proprietor, or (if he resides in England) the manager, who is generally a gentleman by birth and education. His business is, only to observe that the slaves do not idle away their time, and to inform against those that have misbehaved.

THE Addresser would make us believe, that negroes are often put to death, by the laws, for such a trifling transgression as stealing a bit of bread. ¶ It is strange that he will discover his ignorance in every line. They  
are

¶ *Many of the penal laws of the islands, relating to slaves, may, at first sight, appear harsh, and give an unfavourable idea of the clemency of our legislatures; but on examination, they will appear excusable and absolutely necessary to the safety and good government of the islands. The disproportion of white and black inhabitants, is there very great; and self-preservation, that first and ruling principle of human nature, alarming our fears, has made us jealous, and perhaps severe in our threats against delinquents. Besides, if we attend to the history of our penal laws relating to slaves, I believe we shall generally find, that they took their rise from some very atrocious attempts made by the negroes, on the properties of their masters, or after some insurrection or commotion, which struck at the very being of the colonies. Under those circumstances it may very justly be supposed, that our legislatures when convened were a good deal inflamed, and might be induced for the preservation of their persons and properties, to pass many severe laws, which they might hold over their heads, to terrify*

are never capitally punished, except for the most flagrant crimes—none condemned without the clearest proofs—notorious acts of theft, which in England would bring any person to the gallows, are only punished with a few stripes; and upon enquiry it will be found, that there are fewer capital punishments in the West-Indies, than in any other part of the world, among the same number of inhabitants. Once in a dozen of years, perhaps, a negro has been *burnt* or *gibbeted* for an atrocious murder: But have not there been instances of people suffering the former punishment in England; and much severer tortures than either, are common among the most civilized nations in Europe. \* The accusation of their being *starved*, is equally groundless. A planter will deny himself the common necessaries of life, rather than let his negroes want, for he cannot expect them to work, unless they are properly fed. He had rather support them at the yearly expence of half their worth, than by starving them, have his land improperly cultivated, and endanger the losing of them altogether. There is no fixed allowance for new negroes; as they will always get the most expensive food rather than they should appear meagre. However, they are in common allowed much more than any person can

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*rify and restrain them.*

\* To have an idea of tortures, it will be necessary to read an account of those inflicted upon Damien (who attempted to assassinate the King of France) and the conspirators against the life of the present King of Portugal.

be supposed to eat. The allowance of country born healthy negroes is considerably less, and at first sight, may appear a scanty provision, but in fact, the greatest part could maintain themselves most part of the year, without any assistance from their master. By the constant and regular vegetation in the West-Indies, they have always abundance of yams, potatoes, pompions, bananas, plantains, and a variety of food of the same kind. They even dispose of considerable quantities, after supplying themselves. There are many negroes, who never have occasion to consume any of the corn received from their masters; it is employed in raising hogs and poultry, which they sell, and with the money purchase rum, fine clothes, and a variety of luxuries.

WHEN we see such contradictory accounts published, of the manners of the people in Europe, one ought to be cautious in trusting to the relations of voyagers into distant countries. There are very few authentick histories of the west coast of Africa; and the inland parts, I believe, have hardly ever been visited by an European. *Some people*, with a view to palliate the beastly customs and gross stupidity of the natives, give us an account of the nations contiguous to the Moors, and a few on the Gold coast, who may be somewhat more civilized than the rest. They must be pretty much at a loss, when they have recourse to the Hottentots, to prove the civilization of the Africans. Their brutality, nastiness, and indolence, can never be counterbalanced by their giving a few necessaries to strangers. Other writers represent the

the Africans in different, and probably their real colours. Though one cannot talk with any degree of certainty, with regard to the situation of the Africans, in their own country, yet, very just notions can be formed concerning their dispositions, from the numbers which are brought to the West-Indies from every quarter of that extensive continent. It is impossible to determine, with accuracy, whether their intellects or ours are superior, as individuals, no doubt, have not the same opportunities of improving as we have: However, on the whole, it seems probable, that they are a much inferior race of men to the whites, in every respect.\* We have no other method of judging, but by considering their genius and government in their native country. Africa, except the small part of it inhabited by those of our own

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colour,

*\* I am apt to suspect the negroes, and in general, all the other species of man (for there are four or five different kinds) to be naturally inferior to the whites. There never was a civilized nation of any other complexion than white, nor ever any individual, eminent either in action or speculation. No ingenious manufactures among them, no arts, no sciences. On the other hand, the most rude and barbarous of the whites, such as the Ancient Germans, the present Tartars, have still something eminent about them, in their valour, form of government, or some other particular. Such a uniform and constant difference could not happen, in so many countries and ages, if nature had not made an original distinction, betwixt these breeds of men.*

Not

colour, is totally over-run with barbarism. There is not a kingdom of any eminence; it chiefly consisting of a number of petty monarchies, perpetually at war with each other; and the sovereigns, are said to have the lives and properties of their subjects, at their absolute disposal. They are, in their own country, said to be utterly unacquainted with arts, letters, manufactures, and every thing which constitutes civilized life. I never could observe the Africans have the most distant idea of a supreme Being, or that they paid him the smallest worship. they have a confused notion of an evil spirit, called a *Jumbee*, who is able to do them mischief, and it is a custom among them, to hang a broken bottle, a bit of rag, or any thing else, by way of a charm, near their small spots of ground, which they name *Oby*. When their property is thus guarded, few negroes will have the boldness to steal any part of it. This, together with a few ceremonies, used at funerals, is all the religion they may be said to possess. They seem to be utterly unacquainted with friendship, gratitude, and every tie of the same kind. Great pains are taken

*Not to mention our colonies, there are negro slaves dispersed all over Europe, of which, none ever discovered any symptoms of ingenuity; though low people, without education, will start up among us, and distinguish themselves in every profession. In Jamaica, indeed, they talk of one negro, as a man of parts and learning; but it is likely he is admired for very slender accomplishments, like a parrot, who speaks a few words plainly.*

taken to give a high colouring to the affecting scenes between relations when parted at a sale;\* but I appeal to every one who has ever been present, at the disposal of a cargo, if he has not seen these creatures, separated from their nearest relations without looking after them, or wishing them farewell. A few instances may be found, of African negroes possessing virtues and becoming ingenious; but still, what I have said, with regard to their general character, I dare say, most people acquainted with them, will agree to. †

WHAT is the reason that the vast continent of Africa remains in the same state of barbarism, as if it had been created yesterday? It must, in all probability, be owing to a want of genius in the people; for it has had more chances of improving than Europe, from its vast superiority in numbers of inhabitants. The stupidity of the natives cannot be attributed to *climate*, for the Moors, who are situated at no great distance from the blacks, have always made a figure in history, and the Egyptians were one of the first nations that became eminent

\* A gentleman of my acquaintance assures me, that he attended most of the sales this year at Charlestown, and only saw two instances of a reluctance at parting; and another of my friends, who was a clerk two years in one of the first Guinea houses, in Grenada, assures me, that he never saw a single instance of the kind.

† The Author of the Address gives a single example of a negro girl writing a few silly poems, to prove that the blacks are not deficient to us in understanding.

ment for their progress in the arts. I might, likewise, mention the ingenious turn of many of the Asiatics, in the same latitudes: And if we look at the Chinese, we may observe what improvements, a single nation of whites, can make in every thing that is useful and elegant.

IT is no small disgrace to our ancestors, the ancient Britons, to be compared with the modern Africans. It is even probable, that they were not so barbarous as represented by the Roman authors, who, generally, gave an exaggerated picture, of the manners of the people with whom they were at war, that they might have an excuse for their lawless ambition. The Britons were remarkable for their intrepidity and warlike disposition, and it is likely, that if the different kingdoms had been united, Julius Cæsar never could have conquered them. Their *Druids* are said to have possessed some share of learning; and the songs of the *bards* are, likewise, worthy of attention: The instances of magnanimity among their chiefs, attract our admiration. When did we ever hear of a *Caractacus* or a *Boadicea* existing in Africa?

EVEN the *Aborigines* of *America*, have shewn their superiority over the Africans. The vast empires of Mexico and Peru, their government, the magnificence of the emperors, the grandeur of the temples and publick buildings, the uncommon situation of the city of Mexico, built upon piles in the middle of a lake: These, and a variety of other circumstances, make us entertain a high opinion of their genius.



I T is somewhat strange, that there is a great difference between the negroes imported from Africa, and those born in the West-Indies. The greatest part of the former are to the last degree stupid, lazy, and forbidding in their persons: The latter have much superior intellects, and are by far more inclinable to work. They may likewise, be distinguished at first sight, from the former, by the superior robustness of their persons, their vivacity of aspect, smoothness of skin, and regularity of features. When an estate is sold, they are appraised much higher than the natives of Africa; yet it is endeavoured to make us believe, that negroes pine and degenerate in our part of the world.

I A M little acquainted with the method of carrying on the slave trade, and, therefore, shall say little on the subject. It appears plain, however, that slaves are bought in the fair course of trade, and that the Europeans have seldom, or never, an opportunity of carrying them off by stealth, though they were inclinable. It is, likewise, certain, that these creatures, by being sold to the Europeans, are often saved from the most cruel deaths, or more wretched slavery to their fellow barbarians.

I A M at a loss to know, by what authority the Author of the Address asserts, that wars were uncommon among the negroes, till their intercourse began with the whites. The conduct of savages in every other part of the world, and of several tribes of blacks, among whom there

there is no slave trade, convinces us, that all uncivilized nations are frequently fighting against one another.

WHEN negroes are exposed to sale, instead of being dispirited, they often shew signs of mirth. When individuals seem attached to their relations, they are seldom or never separated; as no person would be foolish enough to buy a negroe that appeared distressed, since he must run no small risque of losing him.

WHEN a planter takes home a parcel of new slaves, it is not to be imagined that he will endanger the loss of great part of his fortune, by forcing them to work before they are able. They are attended with the same care as if they were infants, and many of them, who turn out well afterwards, will not be able to do the smallest service for above a twelvemonth. Others, though they may have no visible disorder, in spite of every care, can never be persuaded to work, and remain, for many years, a dead burthen to the proprietors. Many of *these useless negroes* have been purchased by masters of vessels, and carried to North America; by change of air they sometimes recover, and help to confirm the idle reports of cruel treatment in the West-Indies.

THERE is always abundance of easy work about a sugar plantation, for the weakly negroes, such as weeding and taking care of the live stock. The employment of the more robust is moderate, and not more severe than the labour of peasants in other countries.

THE common accusation, that the West-Indies are obliged to have supplies from Africa, to keep up their numbers is very unjust.\* No doubt great numbers, have been imported within these twenty or thirty years, but that is owing to the improvements that have been carried on in all the islands, not from any decrease. They have almost doubled their quantity of produce within the time I mention, which could not have been accomplished without a proportional addition of slaves. Many estates have at present, even more than twice the number of negroes that belonged to them ten years ago. The ceded islands have, likewise, created a vast demand since the late general peace. It must be observed, however, that if a planter settles an estate entirely with *new negroes*, his gang will rather diminish? but if it consists chiefly of *Creoles*, the contrary will be the case.

I SUPPOSE that many more negroes would be born in the West-Indies, than are at present, if their increase was not checked by the irregularities of both sexes, and their carelessness in preserving their health. They frequently assemble, after their work is over, and dance great part of the night. Instead of going home they often sleep in the open air, which exposes them to numberless disorders. I may add, that the misfortunes they meet with are mostly of their own seeking.

A NEGRO may be said to have fewer cares, and less reason to be anxious about to-morrow, than any other

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individual

\* *It is impossible to determine what quantity of negroes is purchased by the English planters for their own use, by learning the numbers imported from Africa, as the English, not only supply themselves but, likewise, in a great measure, the French, Dutch, and Spaniards.*

individual of our species. A savage may be unsuccessful against his enemies, and in the chase. The former may expose him and all his family to a miserable death, and the latter to the horrors of famine. It is a very rare instance indeed, when the negro does not receive his usual quantity of provisions; and he is entirely unacquainted with all the distresses attendant upon war. The negro, it is true, cannot easily change his master, but to make amends for this inconvenience, he enjoys the singular advantage, over his brother in freedom, of being attended with care during sickness, and of having the same provision in old age, as in the days of his youth. Instead of being oppressed to feed a large family, like the labourer in Europe, the more children he has, the richer he becomes; for the moment a child is born, the parents receive the same quantity of food for its support, as if it were a grown person; and in case of their own death, if they have any reflection, they will quit the world with the certainty, of their children being brought up with the same care they formerly experienced themselves.

I SHOULD trespass too much on the patience of my readers, if I were to give a minute detail of the manner of living of the negroes; but from what I have already mentioned, I dare say it will appear, that they do not suffer the hardships that are so pathetically represented by many people, who are totally unacquainted with the West-Indies.\* I repeat that self interest (which generally

\* *Before this treatise was made public, I shewed it to several of my friends, now in this place, many of whom had spent a great number of years in the West-Indies, they agreed that every thing mentioned, relative to that part of the world, was just, and they are, likewise, ready to give their names if required.*

generally overpowers the most violent of our passions) will secure them ease and plenty, though their owners should be deaf to the calls of humanity; and when people are assured by well attested facts, that they seldom are destitute of both these protectors, every one must acknowledge they ought to be envied, rather than pitied, by the poor of other countries. They may be pronounced happier than the common people of many of the arbitrary governments in Europe,† and even several of the peasants in Scotland and Ireland. Our happiness is in a great measure comparative. The negroes may experience some inconveniences which their white brethren are not exposed to, but in their turn they enjoy advantages not known to the others; and at any rate, if it should be granted, that they have not so great a share of the good things of this life, as the vulgar of some other countries; yet they by no means deserve to be painted out, as a people that endure more hardships than many of our other fellow creatures, who are infinitely their superiors in every thing that constitutes genius,

I SHALL take my leave of the Addresser and others who have written in the same stile, with wishing, that they may, for the future, employ their talents on more useful subjects. They will find that their labours will have a much better chance of reforming the abuses they complain of, by offering rational proposals of improvement, than by indulging themselves in such idle chimeras. What advises *the ruin* of a number of individuals, cannot be called a scheme of publick utility. These gentlemen, perhaps, think it meritorious, to give the twentieth, or even fiftieth, part of their income to the poor,  
yet

† *The Polish peasants, 'tis said, are sold along with an estate, in the same manner as negroes.*

yet they gravely desire a numerous body of British subjects, to beggar themselves and families, to gratify their caprice. All the while too, they profess *humanity, christian charity, and brotherly love.*—God defend me from *these virtues*, if they could produce such effects!

IF the Author of the Address were to become owner of a West-India estate, by the death of a relation, or some other unexpected means, can he lay his hand on his heart, and, with a safe conscience, say that he would instantly free all his slaves and destroy his sugar-works? I am afraid he would hesitate, if we may judge from the conduct of others. Many of the firmest supporters of religion, in England, both clergy and laity (whose names I could mention) have no scruples to be masters of West-India plantations. Until the Addresser reduces to practice, what he points out to others, people must suspect that he writes from *selfish motives*, and that he advises, what is foreign to his real opinion. I even imagine that he may miss his aim, if he has interested views; for, though he may ingratiate himself with many gloomy *fanatics*, yet he must lose the esteem of men of sense, and of a rational way of thinking.

I SHALL, lastly, observe, that a person can hardly err so grossly, as not to be able to make atonement. I flatter myself that, upon mature reflection, the Author of the Address, will candidly confess, that his treatise was hastily written, without having sufficient proofs for what he advanced, and be sorry for his ungenerous abuse of a set of men, whom he never had an opportunity of knowing, and who, I dare say, never injured him.



