Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

THE LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
CLASS 326.4
BOOK P19

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Pamphlets on Slavery.

Contents of the Eight Volume.



33214

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# Letters

ON THE

NECESSITY OF A PROMPT EXTINCTION

OF

# BRITISH COLONIAL SLAVERY;

CHIEFLY ADDRESSED

TO THE MORE INFLUENTIAL CLASSES.

"WHATSOEVER THY HAND FINDETH TO DO, DO IT WITH ALL THY MIGHT."

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

## THOUGHTS ON COMPENSATION.

LONDON:

SOLD BY HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY,

AND BY

T. COMBE AND SON, LEICESTER.

MDCCCXXVI.

Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## ADVERTISEMENT.

SINCE the prospectus of the following work was issued, its title and contents have undergone considerable alteration, consequent upon the change produced in some of the writer's views of the subject, by a correspondence with one of the most able and devoted leaders of the Anti-slavery Society. From this privilege however, it is feared that the following pages will evince that the writer has profited but very partially.

*Printed by Combe and Son, Leicester.*

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.




FEB 8 '39 U OF M BINDERY

Digitized by Google

Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER IV.



## LETTER V.



## LETTER VI.



## THOUGHTS ON COMPENSATION, p. 183.



Digitized by Google

Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# LETTER I.

AN

# EARNEST APPEAL

TO THE

## *Great Leaders of the Anti-Slavery Society.*

---

In appealing to the great leaders of the Anti-Slavery Society, we appeal to the concentrated wisdom and virtue of the nation — consequently the language of great deference and respect is justly due.

None can appreciate more justly than we do, the talents and virtues of those whom we thus presume to address; their disinterested, persevering exertions, in the great cause of humanity and justice are beyond all praise; but no eminence in virtue or talent exclude a liability to error; imperfection is inseparable from humanity: —the ablest, the wisest, the best men, who in different ages have been an ornament and a blessing to society, have been partially wise, imperfectly good; on some important point of opinion



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

or practice, the most enlightened have been in the dark; the most acute and discerning, deceived; the most sincere and upright, opposed to the truth.

In the great conflict of right against might, you have borne the heat and burden of the day; you have stemmed the strong torrent of West-Indian interest and prejudice; you have rowed hard against wind and tide, "toiled all the night and (have, as yet) taken nothing." Ask yourselves *why* the persevering exertion of so much zeal, of so much talent, in a cause so just and so righteous, should have been so little availing.

The appalling "view of Negro slavery existing in the British Colonies," drawn up and circulated by your Committee, in April, 1823, is circulated again in 1825! Had any important change, any change worth noticing taken place in the system,—it would, of course, as a matter of justice, have been recorded. But notwithstanding the petitions to parliament, for its mitigation and gradual abolition; notwithstanding the Orders in Council, and meliorating measures, recommended two years ago, to the colonial legislators; still, the "view of Negro slavery," as it exists in 1825, is precisely the same as it existed in 1823—and such, without miraculous invention, will it, in all human probability, remain to the end of the century—unless some important change be effected in the sentiments and measures of the abolitionists;—unless there be a greater agreement between

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the evil they have exposed, and the remedy they propose for it.

The evil they have exposed is of the most enormous and flagitious nature; it involves, according to their own statement, the worst crimes which can disgrace, and the severest sufferings which can afflict our fellow-creatures;—"*It outrages every feeling of humanity, every recognised principle both of the British Constitution and of the Christian religion.*" The Abolitionists have informed us that the objects of their sympathy, have, "*themselves or their parents, been the victims of the Slave-trade. They were obtained by no* LAWFUL MEANS, *but by the most undisguised rapine, the most atrocious fraud. Torn from their homes, from every dear relation in life, barbarously manacled, or driven like herds of cattle to the sea-shore, crowded into the pestilential holds of slave-ships, transported to our colonies, where they are branded like cattle with hot irons;—separated and sold without regard to family ties, to the highest bidder;—compelled to labour, night as well as the day, for the sole benefit of their owners, from whom they receive no wages;—subjected, for any, or for no offence, at the caprice of their master or his delegate, to have their persons shamefully exposed and barbarously tortured, with the Cart Whip, an instrumeut of dreadful severity, which cruelly lacerates the flesh of the sufferer;—denied the means of legal redress, even in cases of the most atrocious*

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*barbarity, by the rejection of their evidence in the Colonial Courts," &c. &c.*[a] —*Therefore*, this system of barefaced injustice and merciless oppression, is only to be *mitigated* and *gradually* abolished!!—What agreement we ask, is there between such promises and such conclusions?

An impenetrable veil of mystery and delusion seems to envelope and screen this enormity from merited and prompt destruction. The wisest and the best seem to be withheld from applying to it, not their own superior wisdom and exalted principles merely, but that common sense and common justice which govern common mortals in their ordinary transactions. On the subject of West-Indian slavery, a theme in the abstract, so inexhaustibly fruitful of eloquent declamation and powerful argument, the wisest and the best, when they come to the practical application of their own cogent reasonings, seem to reverse their ordinary every day conclusions. "*No effectual steps* (the Abolitionists inform us) *have yet been taken*, since the extinction of the slave trade (eighteen years ago) *either by this country or the colonists for softening the rigour of Negro bondage*" —*or for putting an end to* "*a condition of society, which outrages every feeling of humanity,—every recognized principle both of the British constitution and the christian religion.*"—And therefore they

[a] See a "Brief view of the nature and effects of Negro slavery," published by the Anti-Slavery Society.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*still* propose only to *mitigate* and *gradually* to abolish it!!

Suffer, we entreat you, the word of serious and earnest remonstrance. Compel yourselves to examine afresh, the ground you have taken as *Gradual* Abolitionists,—and see whether it be such as affords any rational hope of success;—see whether it be not hollow and treacherous ground, which it is high time to abandon. Hollow and treacherous we are confident that it is—and dangerous also,—dangerous to your own principles, as well as treacherous to the cause you have embraced. The proposition for *Gradual* emancipation is, we are confident, secretly sapping the foundation of public virtue, paralizing its resolution, familiarizing and reconciling us to crime; rendering us a Nation of hypocrites,—empty preluders to humanity and justice, who expose and reprobate crime, not to extirpate but to tolerate and foster it;—who plead, for the oppressed and miserable, not to rescue, but to abandon them. This pusillanimous proposition is operating like a powerful opiate on our feelings and principles;—it is neutralizing our sympathy, palsying our exertion, and benumbing our charity in behalf of the poor Negro like the touch of the torpedo. Without the spirit of prophecy we confidently predict that the *mitigation* and *gradual* abolition of West-India slavery will, humanly speaking, never be obtained; and

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

moreover, that if the great leaders of the Anti-slavery Society, remain satisfied with no higher aim, they themselves, the most enlightened and humane, will find their feelings and their principles gradually, imperceptibly accommodated, like those of the Planters, to the existing state of things;—the wisest and the best, on this trite and hackneyed subject, will come to have "eyes that see not—ears that hear not—hearts that understand not." Such is the inevitable consequence of tampering with conviction; of familiar knowledge of abuses, long acquaintance with oppression and cruelty which are only partially and feebly resisted.

If West-India slavery be the monstrous injustice and atrocity which you have represented it, with what consistency can the friends of humanity and justice tolerate and tamper with it?

We wish to be temperate,—to reason rather than declaim on a business so momentous,—but the mysterious incongruity in the language and conduct of the Gradual Abolitionists, seems to justify some warmth of remonstrance. Their language has been in the highest degree, calculated to rouse, and stimulate, general indignation against slavery. They have represented it as involving crimes of the deepest die, as a concentration,—the very focal point of all crimes. Consistency requires that the disclosure of its enormity should be followed up, by determined and unremitting

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

exertions for its speedy and utter extinction.—It had been better never to have known the horrors of the system,—than having known, to tolerate and cherish it.—The exposure of its iniquity, so long as it is suffered to exist, only occasions an increase of crime and suffering;—an increase of crime in those, who passively sanction, as well as those who actively support it, in as much as sins against light and knowledge are greater than those of ignorance:—the sufferings of the slaves will be aggravated by the bitter disappointment of those hopes of redress which the public exposition of their wrongs excited, and the rigours of their bondage will be increased, so long as *Gradual* emancipation, is hanging, *in terrorem*, over the heads of the planters, who, exasperated by British interference and fearing more decided hostility, will determine to make the most of their slave property whilst they have it in possession, by extracting all the advantage they possibly can out of it.

The work of emancipation, if it be not vigourously pursued, had better never have been meddled with. Insurrections have increased in consequence of the knowledge obtained by the slaves of the public sympathy and of the interposition of the British Government in their favour;—they claimed the benefit of that interposition—and have been massacred or executed, or doomed to endure the protracted torture of a

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

thousand lashes—and to labour in chains during the residue of their lives, for their audacity. ! ! ![b]

After all that has been said and written about the shameful degradation, the enormous wrongs of the poor Negro, what has he gained by all our declamation against the atrocious injustice and cruelty of which he is the victim? Worse than nothing. His Tyrants have only strengthened their fortifications and entrenched themselves deeper against future attacks, by organizing a powerful body of supporters in this country, backed with a capital of two millions, whereby the ramifications of the slave-holding interest are greatly extended and the chains of the slave more strongly rivetted.

"But there must be time allowed for the seed sown in the cause of emancipation to take root." Yes, but it has had time to take root—and to bring forth abundantly,—and its produce has been suffered unprofitably to perish. By the information which has been so copiously diffused on the nature and effects of West Indian slavery, the public sympathy and indignation have been powerfully awakened—to no purpose—no right direction has been given to them and they are rapidly subsiding into the most torpid insensibility.

"But great moral revolutions must be effected

[b] See the sentences passed on the insurgents at Demerara.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

by slow degree." Why must they? There is a warmth of feeling and an energy of principle awakened by the first powerful conviction of the duty and necessity of such revolutions which would facilitate and expedite their accomplishment. But this warmth of feeling and energy of principle will gradually subside if not kept alive by those vigourous exertions to which they instinctively prompt; and when they *have* subsided, the work of reformation will indeed be effected by *slow* degrees. Reason, humanity, justice, religion in such a case as this, all unite in calling for dispatch, not delay. To keep up the spirit of an enterprise it must advance,—if it be a just and righteous one, the more rapidly, the better.

"But deeply rooted prejudices are not hastily eradicated;—long established interests, however unjust in their origin, are not violently to be destroyed." Why are they not? Deeply rooted prejudices, the longer they are suffered to grow, will strike their roots the deeper; and long established corrupt interests, ill-gotten, or ill-retained possessions, are never *voluntarily* relinquished. The futile and audacious claims of the slave-holders to the detention of their captives, or to remuneration for their loss, have been often exposed and indignantly repelled. It has been proved that the labour of the slave, on the lowest calculation of its value, replaces his cost, sup-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

posing it to have been so high as £140, in seven years.[c] This consideration however, let it ever be remembered, has no bearing whatever on the justice of the question. *The slave did not sell himself*,—consequently his purchaser has no *right* to an equivalent out of *his* labour.

"But the Planter will be ruined by the immediate liberation of his slaves." If, by the ruin of the Planter, is meant only his temporary embarrassment and humiliation;—we candidly say —"'tis a consumation devoutly to be wished."— 'tis the natural, the necessary means of his correction, and improvement,—the only cure for his pride and his insolence, his sordid selfishness and hardheartness. — When were long established habits of robbery, oppression and cruelty abandoned without humiliation and suffering?—when was vice cured without punishment?—On the *petty* robber it falls with unsparing hand. Is theft criminal only in the poor? Is the crime cancelled when committed by the rich on the persons of the poor? Shall the poor man, who steals a sheep, forfeit his life for it? And shall the rich man who steals his Brother, or (which is the same thing) detains him in unjust and cruel bondage (being stolen) shall he be held guiltless? Shall he be required to make no restitution till restitution be attended with no loss

[c] See "The West-Indies as they are," by the Rev. R. Bickell, p. 245.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

or inconvenience? Shall "the stolen captive" never be reclaimed,—the helpless prey never taken out of the hands of the robber,—till an equivalent be provided, till no loss accompany the restitution?

"But the Planters *purchased* their slaves, or they obtained them by *inheritance*, and therefore consider them as their rightful property." AND CAN THE PAYMENT OF ANY SUM, FOR AN ARTICLE OVER WHICH THE SELLER HAD NO RIGHT, IMPART ANY RIGHT TO THE PURCHASER? IMPOSSIBLE! IF JUSTICE BE ANY THING MORE THAN AN EMPTY NAME,—A MERE NOSE OF WAX, WHICH MAY BE MOULDED AND FITTED TO ANY FACE, THE HOLDER OF THE SLAVE, WHETHER HE OBTAINED HIM BY PURCHASE, OR BY INHERITANCE, IS AS GUILTY AS THE ORIGINAL THIEF. THE RIGHT OF THE SLAVE TO HIS OWN FREEDOM IS INHERENT IN HIMSELF;—HE DOES NOT LOSE HIS RIGHT BECAUSE A ROBBER AND A TYRANT WREST IT FROM HIM. GOD MADE HIM FREE—AND APPOINTED THE BOUNDS OF HIS HABITATION IN THE WILD REGIONS OF AFRICA. THE WRETCH WHO STOLE HIM THENCE, COULD, BY NO POSSIBLE MEANS, EITHER ACQUIRE, OR TRANSMIT, THE RIGHT TO MAKE A SLAVE OF HIM, OR TO KEEP HIM IN SLAVERY. HE HAS A RIGHT TO HIS LIBERTY; THROUGH WHATEVER NUMBER OF

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

TRANSFERS THE USURPATION OF IT MAY HAVE PASSED—HIS RIGHT IS UNDIMINSHED —AND SO IS THE CRIME OF WITHOLDING IT.

"But of what advantage is it to contend for his right, if he cannot obtain it? His possessor will not voluntarily restore it;—the law will not compel him,—and the slave himself has no power of reclaiming it." But though his possessor refuses voluntarily to liberate him;—though he be unable to assert his own liberty; though British law has hitherto declined to award it—because it has never yet been demanded;—it may yet be had for asking. It could not be withheld by the British Government from the united claims of humanity, justice and religion, if boldly and perseveringly urged. The Abolitionists have hitherto gained nothing for their poor clients, because they have asked too little.

"But *immediate* emancipation is regarded by the sober and dispassionate, as a wild and impracticable theory, scarcely entitled to a serious thought."—Wild and extravagant as it may appear in some quarters, in others, it is rapidly gaining ground—and we trust the time is not far distant when this startling proposition will cease to alarm the most sober and dispassionate, and be unanimously adopted by every friend of justice and humanity.

Negro slavery, being, (according to the declared convictions of the gradual abolitionists) "*an out-*

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*rage of every feeling of humanity, every recognized principle both of the British Constitution and of the Christian Religion*"—its existence on *British* ground, must be regarded by them as an open mockery of her laws, — an impious defiance of her religion ;—they must see it pointing with the finger of scorn and derision to her pretended equal administration of justice, — her high christian profession ; — writing on her criminal courts " Tyranny,"— on her christian temples " Hypocrisy ;" — displaying with insulting triumph, its broad license to commit injustice, robbery and sacrilege, in comparison of which the crimes which crowd our prisons and furnish the executioner with ceaseless occupation are slight and venial. For a long season the public were unacquainted with the real nature of this abomination; — it is an infernal birth, which has for ages, thriven in darkness ;—at length it has been dragged to light ; — rather, it has with blind and frantic infatuation, obtruded and forced itself into light. The frightful monster, with hideous hissings, has darted into public view, unfolded its enormous coils, stretched the full length of its horrid deformity in broad day-light. It has reared its brazen front, displayed its poisoned fangs — and has menaced and defied both earth and heaven.[d]

[d] Witness, the late transactions in Barbadoes and Demerara : Trial of the Missionary Smith ; Language of the Colonists on the receipt of the Orders in Counsel, &c. &c.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

And shall we suffer it to live to continue its ravages, — to taint the moral atmosphere around it with poisonous infection, — to blast with pestiferous breath every principle of justice, humanity and religion within its reach? Or shall we with cruel and imbecile lenity, instead of crushing it at once, condemn it to die by inches, doom it to *gradual* destruction, — to lingering torments? You admit that it is worthy of death, — that its protracted existence is protracted crime and misery, disgrace and infamy. And can crime and misery be too soon arrested? — can disgrace and infamy be too soon obliterated? Slavery is the one grand impediment to the moral renovation both of the Negro and his master. If the slaves are kept in bondage for another generation, they will not be at all better prepared for freedom than they now are, — nor will their tyrants be at all more willing to relinquish their pretended right to them. No good reason can be given for suffering slavery in the British colonies to exist for another year which cannot be given for its existence for interminable ages.

In the proposition for *Gradual* emancipation there is a manifest dereliction of the fundamental principle on which emancipation is grounded, a tacit denial of that *unqualified right* of the slave to freedom on which rests all the justice of his enfranchisement. By *acceding* to his remaining in slavery until he shall be better qualified for

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

freedom, or until, by a stipulated quantity of labour he shall, in a course of years, have worked out or purchased his own freedom,—the *right* of his possessor is recognised to hold him in bondage; and the same sort of reasoning which can justify the withstanding his liberty for a year or a day, will justify the witholding it for ever.

"But *Gradual* emancipation, is defended on the ground of *expediency* rather than that of strict justice." But by quitting the high ground of justice, for that of expediency, the impregnable bulwarks of the cause are surrounded, and its advocates, instead of struggling for eternal principles of right,—contend for a delusive phantom, —an ignis-fatuus which will perpetually elude their grasp. For *Gradual* emancipation, whatever may be said of its expediency, will be found utterly unattainable. The proposition *has* done nothing, and *will* do nothing but deceive and betray;—deceive its individual advocates with vain imaginations of the utility of their labours—and betray the cause of emancipation into the hands of its enemies. An emancipation *so* gradual as would have been attained by a law securing the freedom of all Negro children born after a specific time has been solicited in vain. We are bold enough to predict that the solicitation of a law for the prompt and complete extinction of slavery would meet a more successful issue. By the last discussion of the question in

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Parliament, the Planters are said to have gained a complete triumph. With insolent audacity they resist the authority of the British Legislature, and set at nought both its recommendations, and its laws. They assume the control of absolute monarchs, lawless tyrants,—they hold no party with justice,—make no concession to humanity. They have the power and are determined to surrender no modicum of it to treaty or remonstrance.

Had the best concerted measures for the mitigation and gradual abolition of colonial slavery been fully acceded to by the British Government, —and the Colonists, instead of openly resisting, had, from motives of policy, appeared to acquiesce; —still they would have contrived to evade their operation. No plans of melioration or gradual emancipation have any chance of taking effect in such a soil. What says the report of Mr. Cooper after a residence of three years on the estate of a Planter who invested him with full authority to improve the condition of his slaves? "HE COULD DO NOTHING.—The habits and prejudices of the Colonists, independently of their laws, rendered IMPROVEMENT IMPRACTICABLE." What says the journal of the martyred missionary Smith? "THE (slave) SYSTEM IS INCAPABLE OF IMPROVEMENT,—IT MUST BE ABOLISHED ALTOGETHER."

The proposition of *gradual* instead of immediate emancipation has utterly failed as far as

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

rgards the *conciliation of the Planters*, they having as vehemently protested against the one as the other. The exercise of unlimited power having so completely blinded their understandings, hardened their hearts and subjected them to the tyranny of their own lawless passions, that it will be found far more difficult to subject them, than their slaves, to the restraints of reason and justice. If conduct is ever to be regarded as the surest test of principle, how high, in the scale of morals does the poor Negro mount above his master! Patience, fortitude, magnanimity, boundless gratitude to his benefactor, — forgiveness of injuries;—are his ordinary characteristics:*—and

* The following anecdote is selected, from many others of a similar character, from the "West Indies as they are."

"In the city of Kingston, where there are eight or ten thousand slaves, and a greater number of free Blacks and free people of colour, there was a strong guard kept all the holidays, and fearful rumours were afloat, of the horrid and diabolical intentions of the slaves. It was said that they were all to rise on a certain night, to set fire to the city in ten places, and murder all the white people as they should come out of their dwellings. The free blacks and people of colour were also suspected of being inclined to join them. But an incident happened, just before the commencement of the holidays, which completely satisfied my mind that all those fears were idle dreams. A fire occurred within fifty yards of my own residence; it broke out about ten o'clock at night, and as I was retiring to my bed-chamber, I heard the exclamations of the mistress of the house, crying Fire! Fire! Soon after the drums beat, and the church bell struck out, giving the alarm. I ran up stairs, and from a back gallery could clearly perceive the fire, which was very alarming. Though



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

if in spite of the brutal ignorance, the heathen darkness in which his task-master would bind him, — he should happily hear and embrace the glad tidings of the Gospel—then might the highest professor of religion look to the slave for practical illustrations of its transforming efficacy. What though, whilst forcibly withheld, (as the far

I never gave full credit to the rumours of the horrid intentions of the Negroes, yet I was somewhat staggered, and hardly knew what to do, being the only white person in the house. I considered, however, that if the fire was not got under in half an hour, it would reach us, and we should be burnt out or perish in the flames; so that if a conspiracy were taking place I might as well be murdered as burnt; and that moreover, I should have some chance of my life by fighting for it; so I resolved to go out and do my best. Calling therefore my own black servant, and arming myself, I proceeded to the conflagration, and found very few whites indeed, but many people of colour and blacks, free persons as well as slaves, who were all busily employed in carrying water, and otherwise assisting to extinguish the burning mass. I remained there till the fire was got under, and I never saw people behave better than the free people of colour and the slaves did. It may be truly said, that they saved the city from much damage, for it was in great danger. They prevented the flames spreading before the firemen or soldiers arrived at the spot; for as to the few whites who were there, they did little or nothing. Had the slaves and people of colour then been inclined to mischief, they had an excellent opportunity, for there were no armed men to prevent their extending the fire. On the contrary, however, they and they only, put a stop to it, and by so doing, completely shewed that they were not deserving of the infamous insinuations spread abroad to the injury of their character."

The following anecdote was inserted in a respectable provincial paper, published a few weeks since. "When the late

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

greater proportion of them are) from all knowledge of the true religion, he be justly charged with propensities to theft and idleness,—how can such propensities, in his circumstances, be regarded as crime?

THE MASTER COMMITS A THEFT UPON THE PERSON OF THE SLAVE, IN HOLDING HIM IN UNJUST AND CRUEL BONDAGE, COMPARED TO THE ENORMITY OF WHICH, ALL OTHER THEFTS ARE SLIGHT AND VENIAL;—and it is preposterous to accuse a human being of idleness, from whom every stimulant to labour is withheld, but that of the cart-whip! It is the slave-owners (generally speaking) far more than the slaves, who have proved themselves unqualified for liberty who stand most in need of coercion —who are most deficient in religion and morals. The great majority not only reject religion themselves, but, like the dog in the manger, exclude their poor captives from all participation in its blessing. With a few honourable excep-

Edward Rushton, of Liverpool, early in life, was engaged in the sea service, he was one day detached with a boat's crew, of which Quimina, a negro, for whom he had contracted a friendship, and whom he had taught to read, was one. The boat upset, and Rushton attempted to reach a small water cask, a point of safety which Quimina had already attained. The poor African, with a warmth of generosity to which tutored minds would probably have been strangers, seeing that his benefactor was too much exhausted to reach the cask, pushed it from himself towards him, bade him 'Good bye,' and sunk to rise no more."



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

tions, the evidences are so palpable of the profligacy and impiety of slave-holders; — in Barbadoes and Demerara these evidences have recently been so infamously marked, in their outrage of all law and justice,—their malignant hostility to religion,—their bitter persecution of its ministers,—their savage and relentless barbarity towards the wretched victims of their lawless power, when feebly struggling, not for the recovery of their rightful possession, but merely for that little dole of charity, that modicum of mercy, which the British Government had dealt out to them,—that there can be no question, in the estimation of impartial justice, which of the two parties, the slave or his master, may be most safely entrusted with liberty.

We may as well close our ears and our hearts for ever to the deep groans of these 800,000 of our oppressed and abused fellow-creatures, as persist in pleading for their *gradual* emancipation. FROM THE FIRST MOMENT WHEN THE JUSTICE OF THEIR EMANCIPATION WAS ADMITTED, EVERY DAY'S DELAY IS DEDUCTING SOMETHING FROM THE CONVICTION OF ITS DUTY, AND ADDING SOMETHING TO THE DIFFICULTY OF ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT. Had the Colonists acceded to the meliorating measures recommended by the British Government, emancipation (humanly speaking) might for ever have been despaired of. For what is the present grand

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

opposing plea of the West Indians and their numerous partizans? That their slaves are more contented and happy than the British peasantry; —that emancipation would be cruelty instead of kindness! — How then would they exclaim against the aggravated barbarity of emancipation had the condition of slavery, by the adoption of the proposed improvements, been rendered still more felicitous? The true Friends of emancipation may congratulate themselves that the Colonists have resisted and scouted these same meliorating propositions, since their adoption would, in all human probability, have been fatal to their object.—At all events, they would greatly have retarded it by rendering the duty less obviously urgent.

We have seen in the conduct of France, what has been the result of the proposition of *gradual abolition*, as applied to the *slave trade;*—what consequences have followed a full recognition of the principles of justice without their immediate adoption,—a distinct avowal of guilt without its instant abandonment. The late King of France, in the definitive treaty of peace signed in 1814, (after the first fall of Bonaparte) admitted that the slave trade was "*repugnant to the principles of natural justice*"—and agreed to relinquish it in *five years* from the date of this admission!! The five years demanded by France, and granted by the British Ambassador to continue (or rather to

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

create a new slave trade; for France had not, at that time, a foot of ground on the habitable globe to be cultivated by the toil and blood of a single Negro:—she had no property embarked in that commerce of human misery; all her colonies had been conquered; and in them all, the slave trade had been abolished by the irreversible decree of Great Britain, the absolute possessor of them): the five years granted to France to pursue this new created traffic in the bones and muscles of living men, has long since expired, yet it is still pursued in full vigour. The fiend-like cruelty, with which it is carried on by that country is little known and less regarded by our own. Look at the 15th and 18th Reports of the African Institution, to see in what manner *his most Christian Majesty* carries on this merchandize in 'slaves and souls of men'—years after their sovereign had stipulated to abandon it![f]

Does the example of France in illustration of the principle of *gradual* abolition, as applied to the slave trade, afford no warning to us against its application to slavery? His late "Most Christian Majesty," in 1814, admitted the slave trade to be "*repugnant to the principles of natural justice*," and agreed to relinquish it in five years: —yet still it is carried on by France, with increased avidity and aggravated cruelty. Mr.

[f] See Montgomery's "Voyage of the Blind."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Canning, in 1823, admitted, " *That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures, for meliorating the condition of the slave population in His Majesty's Colonies, and preparing them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges, which are enjoyed by other classes of His Majesty's subjects.*"—Yet slavery, in unmitigated rigour still exists in the British Colonies. The Abolitionists are said to have gained *something*, by these concessions of France and of the British Minister. What have they gained—but the conviction that all their labours to disclose the enormities both of the slave trade and of slavery, have been utterly fruitless—worse than lost labour? The trade has been carried on with keener avidity, with more relentless barbarity *since* the concession of France than before. And may not similar results be anticipated from all the labours of the Anti-slavery Society, to disclose the enormities of slavery in the British Colonies, so long as they aim only at its *gradual* abolition? An action had better never have been proved and admitted to be criminal, if after having been so proved and admitted it is still to be publicly sanctioned and legalized. It is better to sin in ignorance, or by secret connivance, than to sin against conviction by public licence—better for the criminal—better for society—since by the latter course, the culprit is emboldened and rendered irreclaimable, and crime

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

instead of being winked at, is publicly authorized *as crime.*

Are we not fully warranted in the conclusion that *gradual* emancipation has no ground either of justice or expediency, to stand upon? May we not reasonably call for its abandonment on this ground, if on no other, (viz.) that it is making no progress, that it is literally *standing still*, that its supporters however earnest, however indefatigable, are labouring in vain,—spending precious time and precious talents to no purpose. From this delusion,—this "baseless fabric of a vision," it is devoutly to be hoped they will speedily awake.

The restoration of the poor Negroes' liberty must be the beginning of our colonial reform, the first act of justice, the pledge of our sincerity. It is the only solid foundation, on which the reformation of the slave, and the still more needful reformation of his usurping owner, can be built. Recent transactions prove incontestibly, that slavery has a far more malignant influence upon the latter,—in as much as moral degradation is worse than physical. The perversion of mind, hardness of heart, and moral depravity consequent on slave-holding;—its shocking effects on the higher and cultivated classes;—"on men of education and liberal attainments";—and even upon the softer sex, in obliterating their natural tender-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ness, and substituting in its place a disgusting and ferocious cruelty;—is delineated with temperate, yet dreadful accuracy, by the very intelligent and benevolent Adam Hodgson in his "Letters from North America.[g]

But the grand objection to immediate emancipation, that, which with the great leaders of the Anti-slavery society is said to outweigh all the rest, is *the interest of the slave himself.* Were he in a fit state to be intrusted with the full possession of his liberty, it is freely admitted that we have no right to withhold it a day—no, "not a single hour, on account of any intermediate advantage to be derived from his labour."[h] That he *is* in a fit state to be intrusted with the full possession of his liberty has been abundantly proved by the laborious investigations of one of the most cautious and dispassionate of your own body.[i] It is true indeed, that the avowed object of his indefatigable labours is to recommend *gradual* emancipation, but the facts which he has brought forward and the powerful reasoning which he has built upon them, fully establish the conviction that all apprehensions of danger from immediate

[g] See Letter 11th, pages 189 and 191.

[h] Such at least, is the declared conviction of the Member for Norwich.

[i] See "Thoughts on the necessity of improving the condition of the slave in the British Colonies, with a view to their ultimate emancipation," by T. Clarkson, Esq.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

emancipation are groundless and futile. Familiar as his important "Thoughts" upon the subject must be to every well informed Abolitionist, some passages present such irrefragable proof of the *safety* with which the slave may be entrusted with liberty, both as it regards himself and his master, that we cannot withhold their insertion.

"In examining a period comprehending the last forty years, I find no less than six or seven instances of the emancipation of African slaves *in bodies*. The first occurred at the close of the first American war. A number of slaves had run away from their North American masters and joined the British army. When peace arrived, their services were no longer wanted. To leave them behind to fall again into the hands of their former masters would have been great cruelty as well as injustice. It was therefore determined to *give them their liberty,* to disband them in Nova Scotia, and to settle them there upon grants of land as *British subjects* and as *free men.* The Nova Scotians on learning their destination were alarmed. They could not bear the thought of having such a number of free blacks among them, particularly as they understood the use of arms. Government however, persevering in its intention, distributed them into the country, to the amount of two thousand and upwards. To gain their livelihood, some worked upon little portions of land of their own; others worked as carpenters;

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

others became fishermen. In process of time they raised places of worship of their own, and had ministers of their own from their own body. They lead a harmless life, and gained the character of an industrious and honest people, from their white neighbours. A few years afterwards the climate being found too cold for their constitutions, a number of them, to the amount of between thirteen and fourteen hundred, volunteered to form a new colony, which was then first thought of, at Sierra Leone. And they are to be found there, they or their descendants, most of them in independent, and some in affluent circumstances, at the present day."

"The second case may be taken from what occurred at the close of the second, or last American war. Some hundreds of slaves joined the British standard, by invitation, in the southern states of America. When the campaign was over, the same difficulty occurred about disposing of these as in the former case. It was determined at length to ship them to Trinidad as *free labourers*. But here, an objection was started against receiving them, on a different ground from that which had been started in Nova Scotia. *The Planters of Trinidad were sure that no free Negroes would ever work*, and therefore that the slaves in question would, if made free and settled among them, *support themselves by plunder*. Sir Ralph Woodford, however, the Governor of the island,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

resisted the outcry of these prejudices. He received them into the island and settled them where he supposed the experiment would be most safely made. The result has shewn his discernment. These very men, formerly slaves in the Southern States of America and afterwards emancipated in a body at Trinidad, are now earning their own livelihood, and with so much industry and good conduct, that the calumnies originally spread against them have entirely died away."

"A third case comprehends those Negroes which composed our West-Indian black regiments. Certain of these regiments were transported to Sierra Leone and disbanded there, and the individuals composing them received their discharge *as free men.* This happened in the spring of 1819. *Many hundreds* of them were *set at liberty at once* upon this occasion. Some of these were afterwards marched into the interior, where they founded Waterloo, Hastings, and other villages. They were all settled by grants given them by Government. It appears from accounts received from Sir Charles M'Carthy, the Governor of Sierra Leone, that they have conducted themselves to his satisfaction, and that they will prove a valuable addition to that colony."

"A fourth case may comprehend what we call the captured Negroes in the colony last mentioned. These are totally distinct from those

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

either in the first or last cases which have been mentioned. These were taken out of slave ships captured at different times from the commencement of the abolition of the slave trade to the present moment, and on being landed *they were made free.* After having been recruited in their health they were marched in bodies into the interior, where they were taught to form villages and to cultivate land for themselves. They were *made free* as they were landed from the vessels, *from fifty to two or three hundred at a time.* They occupy at present twelve towns, in which they have both their churches and their schools. Regent's Town having been one of the first established, has become a pattern for industry and good example. The people there have now fallen entirely into the habits of English society. They are decently and respectably dressed. They attend divine worship regularly. They exhibit an orderly and moral conduct. Many of them after having supplied their own wants for the year, have a surplus produce in hand for the purchase of comforts or superfluities."

"Here then are four cases of slaves, either Africans or descendants of Africans, *emancipated in considerable bodies at a time.* I have kept them by themselves, because they are of a different complexion from those which I intend should follow. It will be said that the three first cases are not strictly analogous to that of our West

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Indian slaves, whose emancipation we are seeking. It will be contended that the slaves in our West Indian colonies have been constantly in an abject and degraded state. Their faculties are benumbed. They have contracted all the vices of slavery. They are become habitually thieves and liars. Their bosoms burn with revenge against the Whites. How then can persons in such a state be fit to receive their freedom? The slaves, comprehended in the three cases above mentioned, found in the British army a school which fitted them by degrees for making a good use of their liberty. While there, they were never out of the reach of discipline, and yet were daily left to act as free men. They obtained also in this preparatory school some knowledge of the customs of civilized life. Hence it will be said, they were in a state much more favourable for undergoing a change in their condition than the West Indian slaves. I admit the difference between the two situations. But as a comparison has been instituted it must not be forgotten, that if there was *less* danger in emancipating the other slaves, because they had received something like a preparatory education for the change, there was *far more* in another point of view, because *they were all acquainted with the use of arms.* This is a consideration of great importance. Would our West Indian Planters be as much at their ease as they now are, if their slaves had acquired a know-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ledge of the use of arms? Would they think them on this account *more* or *less* fit for emancipation?"

"It will be said again, that the fourth case, consisting of the Sierra Leone captured negroes, is not strictly analogous to the one in point. These had probably been slaves but a short time, when they were returned to the rank of free men. Little or no change therefore could have been effected in their disposition and character; and as they were never carried to the West Indies, they never contracted the bad habits, or degrading vices of slavery there. It will therefore be contended, that they were better, or less hazardous subjects for emancipation, than the slaves in our colonies. I admit this objection, I give it its full weight. I admit it to be less hazardous to emancipate a new than an old slave. Yet the case of the Sierra Leone captured negroes is a very strong one. They were all Africans. They were all slaves. They must have contracted *as mortal a hatred of the Whites* from their sufferings on board ship, by fetters, whips, and suffocation in the hold, as the West Indian slaves from those severities which are attached to their bondage upon shore. Under these circumstances then we find them *made free;*—not after any preparatory disicipline, but almost *suddenly*,—not singly, but in bodies at a time. We find them also settled or made to live under the *unnatural* government of the whites;—

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and what is more extraordinary, we find their present number as compared with that of the whites in the same colony, nearly as one hundred and fifty to one."

"It will be said, lastly, that all the four cases put together prove nothing. They give us nothing like a *positive assurance,* that the negro slaves in our colonies would pass through the ordeal of emancipation without danger to their masters or the community at large, Certainly not. Nor if these instances had been far more numerous than they are, could they, in this world of accidents, have given us a MORAL CERTAINTY OF THIS. They afford however a HOPE, that emancipation is practicable without danger. They afford ground for believing, that there is a peculiar softness, plasticity, and pliability in the African character."

"The fifth case may comprehend the slaves of St. Domingo, as they were made free at different intervals in the course of the French revolution. To do justice to this case I must give a brief history of the circumstances connected with it. When the French Revolution which decreed equality of rights to all citizens, had taken place, the free people of colour in St. Domingo, many of whom were persons of large property and liberal education, petitioned the national assembly, that they might enjoy the same privileges as the whites there. At length their petition was

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

granted, but in terms so ambiguous as to occasion disturbances and bloodshed between the whites and people of colour. In 1791, the people of colour petitioned the assembly again, the result of which was a more explicit decree, determining that the people of colour in all the French Islands were entitled to all the rights of citizenship, provided they were born of free parents. The news of this decree had no sooner arrived at the Cape, than it produced an indignation almost amounting to phrenzy among the whites. They trampled under foot the national cockade, and with difficulty were prevented from seizing all the French merchant-ships in the roads. The two parties armed against each other. Horrible massacres and conflagrations followed, the reports of which, when brought to the mother country, were so terrible, that the Assembly abolished the decree in favour of the free people of colour in the sme year. The news of the rescinding of this decree produced as much irritation among the people of colour, as the news of the passing of it had done among the whites, and hostilities were renewed between them. New battles, massacres, and burnings, took place. When these events became known in France, the Conventional Assembly knew not what other course to take than to do justice, whatever might be the consequences. They resolved accordingly that the decree of 1791, which had been both made and reversed



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

by the preceding Assembly in the same year, should stand good, and appointed Santhonax and Polverel to repair in person to St. Domingo, to act as commissioners, to enforce the decree, and to keep the peace. In 1793, the same divisions and bad blood continuing, the commissioners, who had little more power than the authority which their commission gave them, resolved to call in the Negro slaves in the neighbourhood to their assistance, and issued a proclamation, *promising freedom to all the blacks who were willing to range themselves under the banners of the Republic.* The result was, that a considerable number of slaves came in and were enfranchised. Soon after this transaction Polverel left his colleague at the Cape, and visited the capital of the South, where, finding the minds of the slaves to be in an unsettled state, in consequence of their having become acquainted with the riots at the Cape, and the proclamation of Santhonax, and being convinced that emancipation could neither be stopped nor retarded, and that it was absolutely necessary for the personal safety of the white Planters, that it should be extended to the whole island, drew up a proclamation to that effect, and exhorted the planters to patronize it, they having become pretty generally convinced by this time that their own personal safety was concerned in the measure. In 1794, the Conventional Assembly of France passed a decree for the abolition

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

of slavery throughout the whole of the French Colonies."

"I shall now inquire how those who were liberated on these several occasions conducted themselves after this change in their situation,—whether they used their freedom properly, or whether they abused it. With respect to those emancipated in the North, we have nothing to communicate. They were made free for military purposes only; and we have no clue whereby to find what became of them afterwards. Respecting those emancipated in the South, and those directly afterwards in the West, by the proclamation of Polverel, we are able to give a very pleasing account. Fortunately for our views, Colonel Malenfant, who was resident in the island at the time, has made us acquainted with their general conduct and character. His account, though short, is quite sufficient for our purpose. 'After this public act of emancipation (says he) by Polverel, the Negroes remained quiet both in the South and the West, and they continued to work upon all the plantations. There were estates, indeed, which had neither owners nor managers residing upon them, for some had been put in prison, and others, fearing the same fate, had fled. Yet upon these estates, though abandoned, the Negroes continued their labours, where there were any inferior agents to guide them; and on those estates where no white men were left to



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

direct them they planted provisions; but upon all the plantations where the whites resided, the blacks *continued to labour as quietly as before.*' Ridiculing the notion entertained in France, that the Negroes would not work without compulsion, he alludes to others who had been liberated by the same proclamation, more immediately under his own cognizance. 'If (says he) you will take care not to speak to them of their return to slavery, but talk to them about their liberty, you may with this little word chain them down to their labour. How did Toussaint succeed? How did I succeed before his time in the plain of the Cul de Sac, and on the plantation Gourand, more than eight months after liberty had been granted by Polverel to the slaves? Let those who knew me at that time be asked. They will all reply, that *not a single Negro* upon that plantation, consisting of more than four hundred and fifty labourers, *refused to work;* and yet this plantation was thought to be under the worst discipline, and the slaves the most idle of any in the plain. I, myself, inspired the same activity into three other plantations, of which I had the management.' Such was the conduct of the Negroes for the first nine months after their liberation, or up to the middle of 1794. Let us pursue the subject, and see how they conducted themselves after this period."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

"During the year 1795 and part of 1796, I learn nothing about them, good, bad, or indifferent, though I have ransacked the French historians for this purpose. Had there, however, been any thing in the way of *outrage*, I should have heard of it: and let me take this opportunity of setting my readers right, if, for want of knowing the dates of occurrences, they should have connected certain outrages, which assuredly took place in St. Domingo, *with the emancipation of the slaves*. The great massacres and conflagrations, which have made so frightful a picture in the history or this unhappy island, had been all effected *before* the proclamations of Santhonax and Polverel. They had all taken place *in the days of slavery*. They had been occasioned, too, not originally by the slaves, but by quarrels between the white and coloured planters, and between the royalist and the revolutionists, who, for the purpose of reeking their vengeance upon each other, called in the aid of their respective slaves. I repeat, then, that during the years 1795 and 1796, I find nothing wherewith to reproach the emancipated Negroes in the way of outrage. There is every reason to believe, that they conducted themselves, during this period, in as orderly a manner as before."

"I come now to the latter part of the year 1796; here, happily, a clue is furnished, by which I have an opportunity of pursuing my inquiry

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

with pleasure. We shall find, that from this time there was no want of industry in those who had been emancipated, no want of obedience in them as hired servants: they maintained a respectable character. Let us first appeal to Malenfant. 'The colony (says he) was flourishing under Toussaint. The whites lived happily and in peace on their estates, and the Negroes continued to work for them.' Now, Toussaint became General-in-Chief of the armies of St. Domingo, a little before the end of 1796, and remained in power till 1802, or till the invasion of the island by the French expedition of Buonaparte, under Le Clerc. Malenfant means therefore to state, that from the latter end of 1796 to 1802, a period of *six* years, the planters kept possession of their estates; that they lived upon them peaceably; and finally, that the Negroes, though they had been all set free, continued to be their labourers. Can there be any account more favourable to our views than this, after so SUDDEN an emancipation?"

"I appeal next to General Lacroix, who published his 'Memoirs for a History of St. Domingo,' at Paris, in 1819. He informs us, that when Santhonax, who had been recalled to France, returned to the colony in 1796, he was astonished at the state in which he found it on his return. The same author tells us, that in the next year (1797) the most wonderful progress had been made in agriculture. 'The colony

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

(says he) marched, as by enchantment, towards its ancient splendour; cultivation prospered; every day produced perceptible proofs of its progress. The city of the Cape, and the plantations of the North, rose up again visibly to the eye!' Now I am far from wishing to attribute all this wonderful improvement to the mere act of the emancipation of the slaves. But I must be allowed to maintain, that unless the Negroes, who were made free, had done their part as labourers, both by working regularly and industriously, and by obeying the directions of their superintendants, the colony could never have gone on, as relates to cultivation, with the rapidity described."

"The next witness to whom I shall appeal, is the estimable General Vincent, who lives now at Paris, though at an advanced age. He was stationed in St. Domingo during the time both of Santhonax and Toussaint. He was also a proprietor of estates in the island. He was the man who planned the renovation of its agriculture after the abolition of slavery, and one of the great instruments in bringing it to the perfection mentioned by Lacroix. In the year 1801, he was called upon by Toussaint to repair to Paris, to lay before the Directory the new constitution, which had been agreed upon in St. Domingo. He obeyed the summons. He arrived in France just at the moment of the peace of Amiens, and found, to his inexpressible surprise and grief, that Buo-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

naparte was preparing an immense armament, to be commanded by Le Clerc, for the purpose of *restoring slavery in St. Domingo.* He lost no time in seeing the First Consul, and he had the courage to say at this interview, what, perhaps no other man in France would have dared to say at this particular moment. He remonstrated against the expedition;—he told him to his face, that though the army destined for this purpose was composed of the brilliant conquerors of Europe, it could do nothing in the Antilles. He stated that the expedition was totally unnecessary, and therefore criminal; for every thing was going on well in St. Domingo. *The proprietors were in peaceable possession of their estates; cultivation was making rapid progress; the blacks were industrious, and beyond example happy.* He conjured him therefore in the name of humanity, not to reverse this beautiful state of shings. But, alas! his efforts were ineffectual. The die had been cast: and the only reward which he received from Buonaparte for his manly and faithful representations, *was banishment to the Isle of Elba.*"

"Having carried my examination into the conduct of the Negroes after their liberation to 1802, or to the invasion of the island by Le Clerc, I must leave a blank of nearly two years. It cannot be expected during a war, in which every man was called to arms to defend his own personal liberty, and that of every individual of his

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

family, that he should see plantations cultivated as quietly as before, or even cultivated at all. But this was not the fault of the emancipated Negroes, but of THEIR FORMER MASTERS. It was owing to the prejudices of the latter, that this frightful invasion took place;—prejudices, indeed, COMMON TO ALL PLANTERS WHERE SLAVERY OBTAINS. Accustomed to the use of arbitrary power, they could no longer brook the loss of their whips. Accustomed to look down upon the Negroes as an inferior race of beings, or as the reptiles of the earth, they could not bear, peaceably as these had conducted themselves, to come into that familiar contact with them, as *free labourers*, which the change of their situation required. They considered them, too, as property lost, but which was to be recovered. In an evil hour, they prevailed upon Buonaparte, by false representations and promises of pecuniary support, to restore things to their former state. The hellish expedition at length arrived upon the shores of St. Domingo:—a scene of blood and torture followed, such as history had never before disclosed;—THOUGH PLANNED AND EXECUTED BY THE WHITES. But the French were not the authors of tearing to pieces the Negroes alive by bloodhounds,—or of suffocating them by hundreds at a time in the holds of ships,—or of drowning them, whole cargoes, by scuttling and sinking the vessels;—but the—

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Planters. TILL THAT TIME THE PLANTERS RETAINED THEIR PROPERTY,—AND THEN IT WAS,—BUT NOT TILL THEN, THAT THEY LOST THEIR ALL. In fine, the French were driven from the island, and in 1804, Dessalines was proclaimed emperor of this fine territory. In process of time; the Negro troops were disbanded except such as were retained for the peace-establishment of the army. They who were disbanded, returned to cultivation. As they were free when they became soldiers, so they continued to be free when they became labourers again. From that time to this, there has been no want of subordination or industry among them. They or their descendants are still the persons, by whom the plains and valleys of St. Domingo are still cultivated, and they are reported to follow their occupations still, and with as fair a character as other free labourers in any other quarter of the globe. We have now seen, that the emancipated Negroes never abused their liberty, from the year 1793, (the era of their general emancipation) to the present day,—a period of THIRTY YEARS."

Let the conviction which this brief narrative must force upon every unprejudiced reader be carefully cherished,—let it be honestly and boldly avowed. Let every tongue give expression to the judgment of his understanding and the feelings of his heart, and declare that the oppressed and calumniated Negroes in our own colonies,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

are not only *entitled* to present liberty;—may not only be *safely* entrusted with;—but that it is injustice and cruelty (not prudence and humanity) to withhold it for a day, or, (to use the expression of the worthy member for Norwich), for "a single hour."

We do not follow our author in the statement of his two succeeding cases because they do not directly bear upon the subject in question—that of complete emancipation. We make no apology for these long, though somewhat abreviated quotations from these important "Thoughts." Much as they have been read and applauded for the strong sense, powerful argument and striking facts which they exhibit, it is evident they have been read and applauded too superficially. We cannot but believe that their benevolent author *intended* them to produce convictions in the minds of his readers far beyond those which he professes to establish. When they were first published the public mind would have revolted at the *avowed* project of immediate emancipation; but subsequent events have been preparing the way for its reception—have been *forcing* the conviction of its expediency and necessity. The writer of the work from which we have made these large extracts, must, we doubt not, have designed to bring the public indirectly and unsuspectingly to this conviction. He must have cast these lucubrations like "bread upon the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

waters," trusting that it would be "found after many days;" trusting that his occult meaning would, in time, be developed;—that the evidence of his facts and the force of his reasoning would, at length, be fully admitted,—and that IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION would, be seen to be both SAFE AND EXPEDIENT AND NECESSARY.

Let such as still contend for a *preparatory school of moral discipline*, enquire who are to be its superintendents;—where is to be found the requisite authority for carrying its provisions into execution? The persons to whose absolute controul the pupils must be intrusted, during the interval of their probation, have proved themselves NOT TRUST-WORTHY. Judging from experience, we may, without breach of charity, expect as a matter of course, that the slave masters would do their utmost to defeat the object of this preparatory discipline, and to render it abortive. They have, it is now apparent, THEMSELVES DEVISED PLOTS AND INSTIGATED INSURRECTIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF EVADING THE ORDERS IN COUNCIL AND MELIORATING MEASURES RECOMMENDED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.[k] And may they not reasonably be expected to devise fresh plots, to instigate fresh insurrections for the purpose of defeating a measure

[k] See the article Jamaica, in the pamphlet entitled "The Slave Colonies of Great Britain."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

still more abhorrent to their prejudices and supposed interests—that of forthwith preparing their captives for liberty? Are men who can persecute to the death the disinterested and devoted ministers of religion;—who can, in open day, pull down places of worship;—who TRAMPLE BIBLES UNDER FOOT;[1] who defy and menace all authority;—who triumph and exult, like maniacs, in their devastations and outrages;—who punish in their slaves, the most exalted virtues, as the most atrocious crimes;—who immure in dungeons the noble minded Negroes, who, in despite both of bribes and threatnings, firmly refuse to bear false witness—to criminate the guiltless;[m] are such men proper superintendants of a system of moral and religious education designed to prepare their slaves for freedom? We need not enumerate all the frightful items in the long catalogue of crimes with which the slave-masters stand accused and convicted. We only protest against the farther delegation of absolute power to hands which have so tremendously abused it.

But were it otherwise. Did slave-holding produce fruits of a less malignant, less virulently poisonous quality;—did it present no decided hostility to this preparatory school for slave eman-

[1] See an authentic report of the Debate on Mr. Buxton's motion relative to the demolition of the Methodist Chapel." page 25.

[m] See the "Anti-Slavery Reporter." No, 4. page 31.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

cipation; did it even accede to, and shew a disposition to *favour* the design—*still*, must we protest against it, as a farther violation of the rights of justice;—as a farther protraction of our cruel aggressions;—as an arbitrary assumption, or rather retention of power, which we have no right to exercise.

"But, if we have reason to believe that the liberated slave would abuse the sudden restoration of his liberty, it would surely be right and just and humane *not* to restore it to him suddenly." No, we cannot accede to the justice even of this assumption. It leads to the invasion of a province which does not belong to us,—that of futurity. Prescience is no human attribute. Man is a very limited, short-sighted creature, and it is well both for individuals and for society, that very precise and explicit laws have been promulgated for the regulation of his conduct;—that the language of the Decalogue is express and imperative, and that the christian exposition of it is express and imperative also. "Thou shalt not steal," includes a prohibition of all kinds and degrees of injustice, however modified, by whatever pretexts recommended. It does not admit the suspension of a clearly defined obligation, until we can ascertain what will be its precise consequences;—it does not admit of our withholding from a fellow-creature his just right, until we can positively assure ourselves what use he will make of it;—it

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

does not admit of our *detaining* a fellow-creature in slavery who has once had the calamity to be unjustly deprived of his liberty, until we are *sure* that he will not abuse its restoration. It requires us to do our own duty and to leave the consequences, — guarding of course, as carefully as we can, against anticipated evil, —but not suspending the discharge of our own obligation on any uncertain contingencies involved in its performance.

The indefatigable Philanthropist from whose "Thoughts" we have made such copious extracts, has (happily for our views) so arranged his own powerful arguments as to make them prove (as we have already observed) much more than he professes to establish. He has proved, as far as reasoning from facts and experience can prove, that the injured creatures whose cause he so ably advocates, may not only be safely intrusted with liberty *after* passing through a preparatory school of discipline, but that they may be safely intrusted with it before.

In short, he has proved too much for *gradual* Abolitionists—he has proved that the slaves in our own colonies may NOW safely be intrusted with liberty,—consequently that they OUGHT now to be intrusted with it,—and that every additional day and hour that it is withheld, aggravates the guilt of those who have the power to restore it, and refuse its exertion. Nevertheless, had all these very important and satisfactory proofs been

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

withheld of the safety with which immediate emancipation may be effected; still we should have contended with equal confidence for the justice and urgent necessity of the measure. The power we possess to hold them in slavery having been unjustly acquired, must of necessity be unjustly retained.

The public understanding has been sufficiently enlightened to see the impolicy of slavery; — the public feeling has been sufficiently awakened to revolt at its barbarity; public virtue has admitted that it stands impiously opposed to the laws of God—insolently defying the laws of the land:— it has been arraigned and condemned at the bar of justice and policy, of humanity and religion. What is it then which upholds and cherishes the pest? It is *gradual* abolition. But for this proposition, sentence of death would, long since, have been executed. Neither the Government nor the people of England could have endured its existence, after having been so tried and so convicted, had not HUMANITY TO THE SLAVE,—HIS PRESENT SUPPOSED INCAPACITY FOR FREEDOM, been admitted in bar of speedy—instant execution.

We never for a moment suspected the sincerity with which the Abolitionists have advanced this plea;—we believe them to be most sincere, but on this one point, most mistaken. We believe them to be most upright and earnest in the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

cause they have so disinterestedly and nobly espoused, — but most deluded as to the means of obtaining a successful issue.

We do not forget who they are to whom we have the temerity to apply this language; — that they are, many of them, persons of exalted rank, preeminent talent, distinguished virtue; — that they are the wise and the good; — the wisest and the best: — and we are aware that by applying such language to such characters we must incur the charge of extreme ignorance and extreme arrogance; — nevertheless, we dare not withhold it.

Happily for the world, the laws of humanity and justice are clearly defined; — the requisitions of religion and conscience are intelligible to the simplest understanding. "The way-faring man though a fool" need not "err therein." Such, may be less liable to err on the subject in question, than those who are accustomed to deep reasoning and subtile argumentation, to look at all the bearings aud connexions of a simple proposition, till the plainest truths become invovled in intricate mazes of uncertainty, and the most obvious duties suspended or evaded by doubtful casuistry.

The Gradual Abolitionists, though perfectly sincere in the belief that our West Indian slaves are not in a fit state for immediate emancipation, may, nevertheless, have been unconsciously misled by the prejudices, the misrepresentations, the



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

artful glosses, the palpable falshoods of the West Indian party. Our readers, we trust, will not forget, in the short sketch with which we have presented them of the invasion, by Leclerc, of St. Domingo, to what tremendous mistakes and destructive consequences the prejudices of slave-holders may lead. Many of the leading Abolitionists are personally acquainted with West-Indian proprietors who are "men of education and liberal attainments"—of humanity—and religion; by which means their judgments are insensibly biassed. These accomplished, humane, and pious slave-holders assert that their slaves are incapable of making a right use of their freedom; —that immediate emancipation would be destructive of their own happiness, as well as the property and lives of their masters;—and men of such high character *must* be believed;—those who are in habits of intimacy with them *cannot* withhold their assent:—but *we can*—and *we do*, withhold ours.

We would neither assert nor insinuate that these gentlemen are aware of the falsehood of their own representations. Many of them, we have no doubt, are themselves deceived;—they believe the lie which they so industriously propagate. Prejudice and interest have so blinded their understandings and perverted their judgment as to render their minds, on this subject, inaccessible to truth. They are not impartial

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

witnesses,—consequently their evidence is not to be relied upon;—the evidence we have quoted above, PROVES THAT IT IS NOT.

"We owe these poor victims of our rapacious avarice and cruel injustice a debt,"—truly, the debt is an appalling one;—and every year, every month, every day, that we delay to do our utmost to discharge this debt, we are adding largely to its extent.

The righteous law of our Creator has not been impressed on our hearts;—promulgated in thunder and flame from Mount Sinai;—illustrated and enforced by the express word, the solemn injunctions of the Son of God himself,—to be cast behind the back, or trifled with, with impunity. We may neglect the warnings, forget the denunciations of Divine justice;—we may lull our consciences asleep, and say in our infidel hearts, because judgment is not speedily executed upon the oppressor, "God doth not regard." But the decree has passed the lip of TRUTH—"WITH WHAT MEASURE YE METE IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN." And He hath solemnly pronounced—"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Though we forget or neglect the warning, its execution will not be thereby rendered the less certain.

Who then, who believes in Divine Revelation,—who that is convinced that the globe we inhabit



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

is constantly subject to Omniscient inspection;—that all the varied actors in its busy fluctuating scenes, will individually appear at the tribunal of Divine justice, there to "give account of their stewardship;"—to receive everlastingly "according to the deeds done in the body;"—to await the fulfilment of the unchangeable decree, above cited; who, that really believes these solemn truths, but must tremble at the dreadful individual responsibility which every one of us is incurring by withholding our utmost exertions for the *immediate* emancipation of our West-Indian slaves?

"What, (says the objector) would you let them loose upon their masters?—turn them adrift upon society without resources,—without any means of support but depredation and plunder?" No, certainly. The measure we so earnestly urge would most effectually obviate a catastrophe so dreadful—the near approach of which, from a general insurrection of the slaves, should they much longer be suffered to remain such, cannot but be anticipated. It is not a violent but a *legal* emancipation, for which we contend; accompanied as it would be, by wise and effectual provisional restraints and regulations. The requisitions of justice on behalf of our West-Indian Negroes would not be satisfied by the simple act of immediate emancipation. We owe them a deep debt, for having so long withheld from them their just rights, for subjecting them to so long a

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

course of shameful degradation and bitter suffering. We owe them GUARDIANHIP, PROTECTION, AND PROVISION, (where necessary) as well as LIBERTY. "As some compensation for injuries committed, we owe them the attempt to confer upon them every benefit in our power. We owe them especially, instruction in the doctrines and morals of christianity. But still, should we fail to bring one single slave to the profession of the truths of christianity, or to the enjoyment of its blessings,—not one iota the less do we owe freedom to every slave we possess. His right to himself does not depend on his conversion; nor although he should continue a Heathen to the day of his death, would the injustice of our detaining him in slavery be at all diminished."[n]

The liberty of the slave being his UNQUALIFIED RIGHT,—it must, of necessity, be an UNQUALIFIED WRONG to withold it. Let this simple obvious inference of common sense and common justice unite all the friends of humanity in one common object—that of a SPEEDY and COMPLETE EMANCIPATION.

[n] See the Speech of W. Smith, Esq. at the General Meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, June, 25, 1824.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER II.

*To those who are tired of the subject of West-Indian Slavery.*

---

Those, to whom the following appeal is particularly directed, are not, we lament to say, exclusively confined to the selfish unfeeling multitude, nor to the heterogeneous mass of mere nominal christians. Many who stand high in general estimation for benevolence and piety;—many who have joined the Anti-slavery standard; who have pleaded with such forcible eloquence the cause of the oppressed Negro as to have blown the slumbering embers of pity, in other bosoms, into a fervid glow,—have suffered them to be extinguished in their own.

Many who have been awakened to the enormous guilt of human slavery,—who have been roused into a just sense of the disgraceful hypocrisy of suffering it to exist in a christian country, —who have been alarmed by fearful anticipations of the retributive justice, the righteous vengeance impending over a nation whose practice, in this respect, so impiously opposes and mocks its pro-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

fession,—appear to have sunk into a deep slumber of selfish insensibility, of cruel apathy to crimes and sufferings in which they imagine they have no immediate share. From this slumber so reproachful to their hearts, their understandings and their principles, we must endeavour to rouse them.

You are tired of the subject of West Indian-slavery ;—you are wearied and disgusted with reiterated details of atrocities and miseries which you imagine you have no power to redress ; unexpected difficulties and delays have arisen in the way of emancipation—and its attainment appears so remote and uncertain that you abandon it in despair ;—it ceases to interest—and is at length become an object of disgust.

West Indian slavery, is, it is true, a trite and hackneyed subject, but it must become more trite and hackneyed before it can be suffered to rest. After all the disclosures of the enormity of the system, of its wretched impolicy as well as wickedness—the crime and disgrace of suffering it to continue are inexpressibly aggravated. The knowledge obtained of this execrable tyranny, would, one should have imagined, in a civilized and christian country, have been followed up by earnest enquiries after the most certain means of putting a speedy end to it. If one expedient failed, another, we might confidently have expected, would have been promptly resorted to;—

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

acquiescence or indifference under such an accumulation of guilty responsibility—one would have imagined impossible;—but that we should not only continue passively to acquiesce in this atrocious system—but actively to support it at an enormous expense out of our own pockets of upwards 2,000,000, annually,!! is an unsolvable paradox.

What a humiliating picture of apathy and imbecility, of inconsistency and hypocrisy does such conduct exhibit! We have exhausted all the powers of language in expressions of abhorrence of slavery—we petition Parliament for its abolition—whilst we are actively as well as passively supporting it at the expense of our money, our character and our principles. We pretend to commisserate the wretched condition of the enslaved Negro, whilst by our daily habits we are riveting his chains;—gratifying our appetite with the very luxury, the cultivation of which constitutes the most barbarous severity of his oppression.

After all that has been said and written upon this inhuman business, it is evident that the public mind has never yet been properly impressed with it. Our understandings have been informed and our feelings excited—but the crime of making or of holding slaves in an enlightened, a free and a christian country has never yet been properly felt—has never yet sufficiently penetrated our hearts or taken hold of our consciences. We

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

acknowledge it to be a national crime, but have not felt it to be an *individual* crime;—though its shame and its guilt rest with all who suffer themselves to be indifferent or supine;—with all who employ not their *best* exertions to put a speedy end to it. We execrate the injustice and cruelty of West Indian slave-holders, but perceive not that we are in fact more guilty than they—because, with less temptation,—with less excuse, we are confederates in the crime. The West Indians have large property embarked in slavery, —they imagine that its destruction would involve them in ruin;—but we, who consume its produce, are its chief abettors and supporters.

We must remind you who are tired of the subject of West Indian slavery, that the emancipation of its wretched victims is not a matter of option in which a *christian* may engage or decline, and be equally innocent. By withdrawing his interest from this arduous work, he betrays a solemn trust, disgraces his christian principles, and deserts a cause peculiarly his own.

"THE LORD EXECUTETH RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT FOR ALL THAT ARE OPPRESSED". He invited you to become some of the honoured instruments of executing His righteousness and judgment for the most oppressed of His creatures. He caused you to become acquainted with their oppression, their hard and cruel bondage. He touched your hearts with

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

sympathy for their bitter sufferings. He gave you zeal and ability to plead their cause,—to stir up the hearts of the people, to excite a general insurrection of feeling and principle in their behalf,—which, had it been kept alive, must shortly have insured their deliverance. But you have suffered the very considerations which should have braced your resolution and stimulated your exertion to relax and infeeble them. You have allowed your familiarity with West Indian enormities to end in indifference; your confirmed knowledge of the most barbarous oppression, to extinguish your sympathy for its helpless victims. No longer urged on by impetuous feeling, by the ardour of a new enterprize, you have grown languid and weary. You have been so effeminately delicate, so fastidiously selfish, as to shut your ears to the enormous wrongs and sufferings of 800,000, of your fellow creatures, because there is no novelty in the relation, because the sound has become monotonous. But we must, in spite of your weariness and disgust, do our utmost to force back your attention and to fix it upon the crimes and miseries of slavery, until the means are not only discovered, but vigourously applied, for putting an end to them. We must, to the utmost of our power, ring changes upon this subject of weariness and disgust, until the sound and the sense shall have reached every ear and every understanding—penetrated all hearts, made of "penetra-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ble stuff,"—all consciences, but such as are "seared, as with a hot iron;"—till the duty of immediate emancipation, is not only admitted in general terms, but its promotion, by every means in our power, is felt, individually, to be of imperative and urgent obligation;—in short, until all who have any pretensions to religion and humanity are actually engaged in it, with all their heart and with all their soul. By so doing, we are confident we shall render essential service to our country;—we shall give practical efficacy to its best principles, exalt its moral character and thereby enlarge and secure its prosperity and happiness.

By fixing general and individual attention upon this great and righteous work, until it be finally accomplished, we are persuaded that we shall be doing more for the cause of morality and religion, more for the best interests of society, than was ever effected by the most impressive dissertations on abstract principles of virtue. One instance of practical righteousness outweighs all the mere speculative knowledge in the world. It is better to *do* one good action, than merely to admit the propriety of a thousand. It is better *thoroughly* to discharge *one* paramount obligation of christian charity, than to be *superficially* occupied with the whole range. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." Thus the way of duty will be cleared, the path farther opened,—increased light will shine upon

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

it,—greater strength and alacrity will be found in pursuing it.

For want of such a method, many "disquiet themselves in vain,"—"toil all the night (and day also) and take nothing;"—build upon their high christian profession "hay and stubble"—abortive schemes, unsubstantial purposes of good, instead of those solid works of righteousness, of justice and mercy, which would follow them to that tribunal where they will be "judged according to their works."

And therefore, on this trite and hackneyed subject of slavery, though we want no more knowledge,—we want a great deal more conviction, to prevent our being the worse for our knowledge. We are the worse for our knowledge, so long as it urges us to condemn this inhuman system in *words* only, and leaves us at liberty *practically* to encourage it. All our fine reasoning and pathetic declamation against slavery in the abstract, whilst we decline to put forth a finger to liberate the slave,—only prove us to be eloquent hypocrites. With christians, whose hearts are true to their principles, their acquaintance with the nature of West-Indian slavery would have been immediately succeeded by earnest inquiries for the most speedy and effectual means of its extinction;—the discovery of those means would have been instantly followed up by their vigorous

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

application: — this would be the natural — the necessary consequence.

There is a lesson of deep and solemn import in that emphatic injunction, "Take heed how ye hear; for unto him that hath shall be given, but, from him that hath not, shall be taken away that which he hath." This admonitory warning applies to every perception of truth, every conviction of duty, every glow of benevolence, every pleading of compassion. These are not imparted as graceful embellishments of our nature, to kindle self-complacent satisfaction, but to stimulate to useful and beneficent exertion, — to render us willing agents of the Divine purposes,—"fellow workers with God." They are implanted for use, not for ornament; — if their purpose be not answered they will be withdrawn:—the mind once divinely illuminated will become darkened, — the heart once divinely tendered, will become insensibly obdurated;—from those who trifle with convictions of duty, — who suffer their compassion for sufferings which they have the power to redress, to evaporate in useless declamation; — who, when empowered to arrest the arm of injustice, to rescue the victims of oppression, decline to interpose; — from these, on whom the evidences of truth, the convictions of duty, the requisitions of justice and the pleadings of humanity have operated in vain; — from these will be "taken away that which they have."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

There are times and seasons in the moral as well as natural world of which it is our wisdom and our interest to take advantage, — which it is dangerous—often fatal to neglect. As surely as suffering the appointed season for ploughing and sowing to pass idly over, will be followed by famine, so surely will the neglect of the appointed season and prescribed means of moral renovation be followed by corresponding consequences. "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin,"—sin, for which he must suffer the just punishment, — punishment proportioned to the magnitude of the evil which his cruel indifference or procrastination is the means of perpetuating.

For all the information which has been so widely diffused on the subject of colonial slavery; —for all the sympathy which its wretched victims have excited—we are accountable. It is at our own peril that we trifle with our knowledge and convictions respecting it.

For sins of ignorance there is mercy; — for patient suffering there is rich recompense. A glorious redemption in eternity, if not in time, may await the meek and unresisting victims of oppression. But upon sins against light and knowledge punishment will fall in heavy inflictions. "He who knew his Lord's will and did it not, will be beaten with many stripes." That it is the DIVINE WILL that this abomination should be

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

swept away, that the time is fully come for its *utter extirpation*, may be clearly ascertained by the full blaze of truth which has been made to shine upon it;—by the strong evidence which has been forced upon the public mind of its miserable impolicy and wasteful prodigality, as well as horrid injustice. It was not without design that so many great and good men have been called to devote their time and talents to the detection and exposure of that "refuge of lies'( behind which it has endeavoured to screen itself from public indignation;)—to drag it forth from all its dark hiding places of fraud and artifice, to strip it of every disguise, and to expose every feature of its horrid deformity to the broad day-light of truth;—it was not merely to gratify curiosity, to fill the imagination with horrid images, to appal and overwhelm every feeling mind with unavailing grief and shame and indignation, that the real nature of West-Indian slavery has been so clearly exposed.—No,—it was to excite our abhorrence for the purpose of rousing and stimulating our best exertions for its speedy and utter extinction.

But though our eyes have been wide opened to this enormity;—though we have revolted with horror at the frightful mass of crime and misery which it has presented;—though we have shuddered at the dreadful extremes of depravity at which human nature has arrived under its malign influence;—though we have admitted that it is as

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

impolitic as wicked—as repugnant to every maxim of enlightened interest as to every feeling of compassion, every principle of religion and justice; —though we have the means put into our own hands of expelling from our country this scourge of humanity, of obliterating this foul blot, this brand of infamy from our national character, —there it still remains, deepened and aggravated a hundred-fold by our empty professions of guilt, our fruitless professions of repentance. On this appalling subject, the convictions of judgment, the compunctions of conscience, the tender feelings of pity, the stern requisitions of justice, the solemn obligations of religion—have hitherto been admitted in vain. Surely, no force of language can justly portray the odious combination of vices, the imbecility, cruelty and hypocricy which must stamp our character, if we continue supinely to suffer the 800,000, victims of West Indian injustice, to remain in slavery—in aggravated slavery—tantalized with hope, which is to be extinguished in despair.

"There is a time (a right time) for every thing under the sun." We believe that the right time is fully come for the extinction of British slavery. We believe, moreover, that the present moments are critical,—that the right time *being come* for the execution of this righteous work—it is dangerous to trifle with it, We believe it must be *now, or never*, as far as our agency is concerned. The



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

work lies straight before us, — we are *invited*, but not *compelled* to it. The purposes of Divine mercy towards the despised outcasts of the great family will not be frustrated, but other means may be employed in their accomplishment, — and we may be left to abide the fate of unprofitable, disobedient servants. We are invited by every argument which can convince, every motive which can persuade, every consideration which can stimulate the exertion of moral agents, accountable creatures—Christians, most especially, — but we are not *forced* upon the work. We may know our obligations, and feel their weight — yet refuse to discharge them,—but it is at our peril that we do so.

That an institution so repugnant to every principle of humanity and justice, — so impiously opposed both to natural and revealed religion, should have been suffered to exist for so many ages, unknown or disregarded by the christian world, is an inscrutable mystery ; — but the long-continued existence of every other moral and physical evil is an inscrutable mystery also. Infinite power, wisdom and goodness, could, doubtless, by the simple volition of His will, expel from the universe, evil, of every description —and this we are assured will be the final issue of His dispensations. In the mean time, the permission of evil is essentially connected with our present probationary state — and instead of inquiring

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*why* Almighty power and goodness are not miraculously exerted in extirpating slavery and every other species of oppression and suffering from the face of the earth, let us rather inquire into our own duties, and learn how we ourselves are required to act in relation to that mighty mass of moral and physical evil with which we are surrounded;—especially towards that which is concentrated with such dreadful force in the British West Indies. "Woe unto the world because of offences; for offences must come; but woe unto them by whom they come"—and *by whom they are perpetuated.*

Some well-meaning persons have not scrupled to declare, that the evil in question, is too gigantic for human encounter,—that it can be vanquished by no power but that of Omnipotence;—the hitherto unsuccessful issue of the Anti-slavery exertions has been presumptuously referred to the Divine will;—the time for accomplishing their object, it has been said, has not yet arrived—and instead of ascribing their failure to a deficiency of general interest and co-operation, impiously call in question the Divine goodness—and expect the intervention of miracles to supply the place of the right exertion of the various talents and capacities with which we have been entrusted. What great reformations were ever effected without the strenuous exertion of human means? Though it be true, that "the good that is done in the earth,



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

"the Lord doeth it," — He doeth it nevertheless, through human instrumentality,—by enlightening the understanding and influencing the will of His intelligent creatures. To supply the millions of the human race with food produced from the ground on which we tread, is, we are sure, the work of Omnipotence; but we do not therefore conclude that the puny labours of man, the operations of ploughing and sowing, may therefore be dispensed with. Rich harvests in the moral as in the natural world, are the result of diligent, well-directed, persevering exertion,—though it be God alone, in both, who "giveth the increase."

The difficulties which obstruct the work of emancipation furnish no just cause of discouragement; they ought rather to be considered as tests of sincerity. *Abhorrence* of slavery is an *involuntary* consequence of its exposure; but its *extinction* must be a work of labour and difficulty proportioned to its strength and deeply-rooted tenacity. Shall we therefore abandon it, because it is connected with no present interest of our own? —because there is nothing to bind us to it but the generous sympathies of nature, the tender pleadings of pity, the strong ties of christian obligation?

Why the Divine image, in these oppressed Africans, has been so long suffered to be trodden under foot,—why their sufferings have been hitherto so little known and so little regarded—is no concern of ours. The veil of ignorance being

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

now withdrawn—the horrid "secrets of their prison house" being now disclosed — it is at our peril that we make light of them. The arm that governs the universe, let us remember, is an Almighty arm; — it lifteth up and casteth down nations as well as individuals. The Father of all the families of the earth "will do right"—He is a God of justice and judgment as well as mercy. All the powers of nature are His obedient ministers. — "He speaketh, and it is done; He commandeth and it standeth fast." How soon may our vaunted pre-eminence among the nations be lost. How soon may we exchange the proud station of command for that of subserviency,—the character of masters for that of slaves. From a quarter the most unexpected — at a moment the least thought of, the instruments of our humiliation and punishment may arrive. To dispel our infatuated dreams of endless prosperity and security, Divine judgments may be commissioned to break in upon us, (as formerly upon the secure and voluptuous Chaldeans) in a moment, without warning; — or they may proceed by silent, unperceived, yet unerring progress towards the certain accomplishment of their unsuspected purpose.

But though national judgments may be long suspended or averted, — not an individual can escape the visitations of retributive justice in that eternal world to which we are hastening. *There*, "Judgment will be laid to the line, and justice to the plummet;"—*there*, if not here—we must ex-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

perience the strict fulfilment of the Divine warning—" With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." And from the awful parable of Dives and Lazarus, we may derivep rofitable notice of the kind and degree of punishment which will hereafter fall, not on the tyrant and the oppressor alone, but on such as have been *regardless* or *negligent* of the sufferings of the afflicted and destitute. This parable may have a much wider application than we are generally aware. It may unfold the future destiny not only of the slave and the slave-holder,—but its design may not be at all distorted by supposing, it may also indicate the separate abodes of the cultivator and the careless unfeeling *consumer* of West-Indian produce. The first idea may be offensive and revolting, but a little reflection will prove that there is nothing fanatical or extravagant in the supposition. For what were the different characteristics of Dives and Lazarus, which placed such an impassable gulph between them? No greater crime, no more palpable offence is charged or insinuated against the former, but those of selfish indulgence, thoughtless insensibility, or unfeeling neglect of a fellow creature's privations and sufferings; nor is any virtue exhibited in the latter, but that of patient endurance of those privations and sufferings:—yet is Divine Justice represented as placing these two characters, in the next life, at an infinite distance from each other,—the one in torments—the other, in

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

blessedness. The Omniscient Arbiter, judgeth not as man judgeth. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh at the heart."—"That which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God." He acquits where man condemns,—He condemns where man acquits. A poor outcast from society,—a loathsome beggar,—(whom modern refinement regards as a public nuisance,—whom modern justice suffers not to beg at the rich man's gate, for the crumbs which fall from his table, but sentences to prison as a criminal)—is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom;—the rich man, on the contrary,—respected, applauded, probably, by his contemporaries for his hospitality, his generosity,—his splendid and costly entertainment of his rich friends and neighbours;—who had a conscience, it might be too scrupulously tender to *encourage beggars*,—who was too observant of his social duties to suffer even the crumbs which fell from his table to be given a poor Lazarus—he lifts up his eyes in torments!

That Omniscient eye, which, with ineffable tenderness, and compassion, wept over Jerusalem, foreseeing the awful impending consequence of her obdurate impenitence,—taking into account the eternal duration of human existence, the transitory nature of time, the comparatively short duration of the most protracted corporeal sufferings,—the strict responsibility of man for every talent entrusted to him;—for light and knowledge,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

for mental, moral, and christian cultivation ;—for all the discoveries of duty, all the capacities and means of doing good ;—ordaining that to whom much is given, of him will much be required :—that Omniscient eye, may discern in the free-born, illuminated, highly favoured sons of Britain, more than in the enslaved, benighted, afflicted children of Africa, to call for compassion, for mourning and lamentation.

Possibly, those to whom this appeal is particularly directed may regard it in no other light than that of a declamatory invective, uncalled for and unmerited by the parties addressed, who, having expressed their abhorrence of slavery, and petitioned Parliament for its mitigation and gradual abolition, imagine that they have fully discharged their consciences and done all respecting it which duty requires of them.

But the slavery against which they have petitioned still exists in unmitigated rigour. The voice of the people has, as yet been very partially and feebly exerted against this enormity ;—so partially and so feebly, that its supporters have argued from thence, that the sense of the country is with, and not against them.

"But the people (it may be said) the great mass of society, admitting they have the power, by the reiterated and more unanimous expression of their abhorrence of slavery, to put an end to it, have not the principle to exert that power ;—they are not to be wrought upon by abstract con-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

siderations of humanity and justice;—they are governed by custom and interest." The great mass of society inherit the same intelligent nature, the same capacities and feelings with the more enlightened and conscientious—and may be wrought upon by the same motives and principles of action. The people, the great mass of society, who appear so inert, so little accessible to any appeals but those of passion or interest, are nevertheless *capable* of a much higher and better influence. They may be moved, powerfully moved, by a sense of justice, by feelings of compassion, by motives of moral and religious obligation,—were proper means employed to bring these feelings and motives into exercise. Were persons of ability and influence,—such as we are now addressing,—who have been qualified to labour in the great vineyard,—to enlighten the ignorant, to teach the thoughtless to reflect;—were such as these faithfully occupying the five and ten talents with which they have been entrusted, such a general and deep abhorrence of this baneful institution might soon be excited and expressed, as could not fail to be decisive with the British Legislature. Such is the preponderating weight of West Indian influence, that without such a strong expression of public feeling and public principle, no radical change of Colonial policy is to be expected. But besides the incitement of more general and earnest petitions and remonstrances to Parliament against slavery, there

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

is one simple and obvious means of discountenancing it which lies within the reach of every individual,—which every individual of common humanity is bound to adopt and to urge upon all within the reach of his influence, (viz) the substitution of the produce of *free* for that of *slave* labour. But whilst this simple and obvious means of undermining and extirpating slavery is so generally neglected by the more influential class, and so little exertion is made, even by such as adopt it themselves, to bring it into general operation — we believe they are incurring a heavy weight of guilty responsibility.

How much of the bitter sufferings of their enslaved fellow creatures, they will have to answer for, who have the power thus to excite and to keep alive the public feeling in their behalf and neglect to exert it, is not for us to ascertain; —but we are forewarned that we are in the strictest sense responsible for *neglected* as well as abused talents,—for the good which we have ability to do, and leave undone, as well as for the positive evil which we do.

Sloth and infidelity often assume the guise of humility. "How little (they exclaim) can human effort accomplish with regard to the wide extent and appalling magnitude of crime and misery which have from age to age deformed and afflicted the world! How perplexing is the attempt to reconcile the present state of things with the Divine attributes — with the infinite goodness and

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

love, as well as wisdom and power of the great Governor of the universe! He hath all power in Heaven and in earth. He doeth his own pleasure—none can resist His will: "He turneth the hearts of the people like rivers of water." But what can the puny efforts of man effect with regard to that mighty mass of sin and suffering which seems to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea? To the few whose hearts have been in some degree softened by the tendering influences of religion, that sin and that suffering are the occasion of mourning and painful sympathy:—they are anxiously solicitous to restrain the one and to heal the other. A love of rectitude, the awakened sensibilities of humanity, as well as a sense of duty, stimulate their exertions; —but alas! what do they atchieve? Here and there, they do a little—a very little;—the reformation they effect, the relief they administer, is but deducting, drops as it were, from the overwhelming flood of moral and physical evil:—and yet, a single effort of the Divine will—a word, from the mouth of him, who "speaks and it is done," would restore virtue and happiness through all the bounds of the creation! We stand appalled at the frightful accumulation of crime on the one hand, we weep over the heart-rending extent and variety of suffering on the other, yet it is little, almost nothing which *human* effort can do towards the diminution of either! In reference to this terrible evil of slavery, the most prolific source of crime

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and misery;—what has been accomplished by years of persevering unremitted labour? Our compassion for the wretched slave can bear no proportion to that of his Heavenly Father,—his Divine Redeemer;—yet still he is suffered to remain in hopeless bondage—still he is suffered to be disinherited of his birthright, and degraded below the level of the brute!"

Probably there are few minds, accustomed to reflection, in which thoughts like these do not occasionally pass—and what is their practical tendency? A folding of the hands in slothful apathy, or in hopeless despair. But what will the humble-minded believing Christian say to such reasonings? He will say, "Get thee behind me Satan," —he will resist them. He sees that their tendency is to negligence, to unbelief, to atheism. He knows that "here we see through a glass darkly"—that the dispensations of Providence are to us, in our present state, veiled in clouds and darkness,—nevertheless, he has the fullest assurance that "the Judge of all the earth will do right,"—and a ray of Heavenly light clearly points out his own path of duty. The course he is to follow has been illuminated by the footsteps of his Lord and Master;—pursuing that radiant track, he is certain to join the triumphs of his glorious Leader, who, though invisible, is "going on conquering and to conquer;"—who "reigns King of Kings and Lord of Lords,"—who "must reign, until all things are subdued under Him,"—

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

until "all things that offend" are gathered out of his kingdom;—till sin is vanquished, and "death swallowed up of life." In the mean time, for purposes inscrutable to finite comprehension, the tares are suffered to grow with the wheat,—sin and suffering are both permitted;—and the business of His humble followers is, to "eschew evil and to do good;"—their duty and high privilege is to become "co-workers with God." To instruct the ignorant—to reform the vicious—to feed the hungry—to clothe the naked—to relieve the stranger—to visit the prisoner—and to redeem the captive, are, according to their ability, their chosen and happiest employments. They will not withhold their hand because they can do so little, but will faithfully employ their one, or their ten talents in promoting the cause of righteousness upon earth;—and however slow its apparent progress—whatever powers of earth or hell may resist it—they will go right onward in the path of duty, well knowing, that whilst they are so engaged—stronger is He that is for them than all which can combine against them.

Those whom we are now especially addressing, may still object to the particular exertions which we so earnestly recommend, that they are confidently persuaded their great object will never be by such means accomplished. Certainly it will not;—if those means are not brought into operation;—if the exertion of them continues to be generally discouraged. But we rejoice in the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

conviction that this will not be the case, for should the more influential classes remain inert or opposed to the measures in question; others, we doubt not, will be raised up to supply their "lack of service;"—"if they hold their peace, the very stones will cry out:"—humbler, but more devoted and laborious agents will take the places which they ought to occupy.

Uncertainty, must, of necessity, ever attach to human efforts;—nevertheless, in the great work of emancipation we are bound to exert them to the uttermost, in dependence on that power which alone can render them successful. To use the fervid language of one of the most able and devoted Leaders in this righteous cause;—"EVERY HEART AND HAND AND TONGUE AND PEN SHOULD UNITE IN PROMOTING PUBLIC MEETINGS;—IN EXHIBITING BEFORE THEM SLAVERY IN ITS TRUE AND HORRIFIC COLOURS;—AND IN MULTIPLYING PETITIONS TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, UNTIL PARLIAMENT AND GOVERNMENT ARE CONVINCED, WHICH THEY ARE NOT AT PRESENT, THAT THE PUBLIC VOICE IS DECIDEDLY IN FAVOR OF EXTINGUISHING SLAVERY:"—we must add,—of extinguishing it PROMPTLY.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER III.

*To the more influential Classes of the Christian Public.*

In appealing to the christian public on the subject of West Indian slavery, we have no adequate medium through which to convey our convictions of its urgent claims to a deeper attention in this quarter than has hitherto been bestowed upon it. "Argument and eloquence have been employed to exhaustion" in the exposure of its impolicy and wickedness,—its hostility to every recognised principle of the British Constitution,—its impious violation of the laws of nature and of God. Yet the crime and disgrace so broadly exposed, so eloquently deplored, so generally execrated;—against which we have protested and petitioned—still exists. And we believe it will continue to exist until christian feeling is more deeply interested, until christian principle is more earnestly exerted for its extinc-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

tion. If slavery in the British colonies be ever eradicated without violence and blood-shed, it must be through the awakened energy, the constraining force of christian obligation; through the authority of Laws which have been long since promulgated;—which are as old as the world;—which were impressed upon the very frame and constitution of man, written on "fleshly tables of the heart" by the Supreme Lawgiver, before they were written on tables of stone. In the christian code, their obligations are extended and enforced by considerations the most persuasive and solemn by which the human mind can be affected. These laws are uncompromising and peremptory. This is their explicit imperative language—"THOU SHALT NOT KILL."—"THOU SHALT NOT STEAL."—And how are these prohibitions interpreted to the christian? "THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR AS THYSELF."—"BY THIS SHALL ALL MEN KNOW THAT YE ARE MY DISCIPLES IF YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER." Of what kind and of what degree is the love which constitutes this infallible criterion? It is no other in kind,—no other in degree, than that which thou bearest thyself. "ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO UNTO YOU, DO YE, EVEN SO UNTO THEM," Must it not follow then, of necessity, that the Christian,—he to whom the name truly belongs,—he who would be acknowledged as such on the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

great day of distinction, of final separation between the sheep and the goats, must take a deeper interest than he has hitherto done, in the cause of the enslaved African?— must, in short, *make it is own?* —keep alive his compassionate sympathy,—exert himself in his behalf, with such zeal and perseverance as he would implore for himself were he to exchange places with the slave?

With the nature of his slavery we are but too familiarly acquainted. We have heard of his cruel wrongs and bitter sufferings till we cease to be affected by them. The numberless well authenticated details of West Indian barbarity may produce upon their hearers similar results to those which a long residence in the country almost invariably effects,—a lowering of the standard both of feeling and of principle,—a searing of the conscience and a hardening of the heart. But no such consequence would ensue were the knowledge of these enormities followed up by determined and persevering exertions to destroy their prolific root. Our interest in the arduous work would deepen in proportion to the earnestness of our labours. We are become so cold and heartless in the cause of emancipation because we are so idle. Having once been awakened to a just sense of the enormity of the individual as well as national crime of slavery;—having seen the complicated injury, the dreadful extent of suffering which it entails on one party, the appal-



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ling depth of guilt into which it plunges the other;—that it degrades the image of God on one hand into a brute animal—transforms it on the other, into a fiend;—that it obliterates in the more immediate agents of this infernal system, every vestige of humanity, extirpates every feeling of compassion,—converts the "milk of human kindness" into gall and wormwood—into corrosive and deadly moral poison—and renders man to his fellow man a monster of cruelty more fell and remorseless than the tiger or hyena:—having seen that it dooms hundreds of thousands to hopeless misery in the present life;—that it plunges countless multitudes into final perdition:—it might have been expected as a matter of course—of necessity, that every christian would combine his best exertions to put the speediest termination to a system so terribly destructive of human virtue and happiness. But hitherto they seem only to have contemplated the evil as a frightful *phantasmagoria*, a scenic representation of horrors exhibited for stage effect,—for the mere purpose of strong and transient excitement. At most, they seem to have consideration the pictures presented by it of human degradation, crime and misery, as a history of past enormities, of scarcely credible brutalities which marked the long gone by ages of ignorance and barbarism. They never yet seem to have beheld them as faithful representations of the present actually existing state of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

things in the British Empire, in the very heart of Christendom;—much less, do they seem ever to have suspected that they are all individually implicated in their wilful encouragement and support;—otherwise, how could so profound an apathy have prevaded the more conscientious portion of the community on a subject so calculated to rouse and to keep alive its intense interest?

Where their own interest is at stake, they can reason wisely, act consistently, vigourously, perseveringly,—consequently, with the reasonable prospect of a successful issue. But, where the interest temporal and eternal, of 800,000 of their enslaved fellow creatures, whom they are bound by their christian profession to love as themselves, is at issue—then, though they have most eloquently pleaded their cause in public meetings, described them as degraded below the brutes,—subjected to a tyranny so severe, to outrages so barbarous, that every feeling of humanity has recoiled at the relation,—the heart has sickened at the horrid catalogue "of ills which man inflicts upon his fellow man"—and the listener has blushed and hung his head, to think himself a man."—Yet, when from declamation, they come to action,—when from appaling descriptions of oppression and cruelty—duty calls to administer relief—then, what a reproachful contrast do their reasonings and actions present to those of which self-interest is the object. Instead of pursuing



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the natural, obvious, and certain method of destroying this inhuman tyranny, by ceasing to encourage it themselves, and by using their best exertions to engage all within the reach of their influence in the same resolution of withdrawing its support by refusing its produce; — instead of striving by every possible means to keep alive and to increase the public interest in the cause of emancipation, by inciting the people to renewed and more earnest petitions to Parliament, for justice, strict, impartial justice, to all the subjects of British Government, without distinction of colour;—to rescue, as it becomes a *christian* Legislature, the weak and helpless from the grasp of oppression;—instead of this, too many, even of the high professing christian world, seem to have closed their eyes, and gone to sleep over the dreadful history of West-Indian barbarity, and left its wretched victims carelessly to their fate. Alas! how grossly may we flatter ourselves with the imaginary possession of virtues to which we have no real pretension, by mistaking feeling for principle — transient impulses of humanity for the virtue of charity.

We know that human nature is versatile, selfish, indolent; — that however eagerly it may start in the cause of suffering humanity, when spurred on by indignant abhorrence of oppression and involuntary sympathy with the oppressed, that it will soon relax when those impulses are

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

withdrawn. We know how powerfully it is wrought upon by novelty, and how difficult it is to prevent familiarity with crime and suffering from begetting indifference: and we also know that no important good can be secured without thwarting and overcoming this natural instability. We know that all the great momentous objects of our regard — death, judgment, eternity, are familiar themes, — and that neither our own true interest nor that of our fellow-creatures, can be promoted, unless *principle* be made to supply the transient ebullitions of passion and feeling. And we know that the poor Negro, after all the eloquent commiseration which his enormous wrongs have called forth, — will, notwithstanding, be left, from generation to generation, in the grasp of his ruthless oppressor, unless violence be done to this selfish supineness; — unless *christian principle* rekindle our zeal in his cause, and quicken our tardy humanity.

The enfranchisement of eight hundred thousand of our fellow-creatures from the galling yoke of West-Indian bondage will be found no easy atchievement. All who are really in earnest in the cause of these defenceless outcasts, will prove it by their conduct as well as their language. We have no rational ground to expect that their deliverance will ever be accomplished, without laborious persevering effort. The double chain which binds them in moral and corporeal slavery,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

will not fall off of itself,—its strong rivets will not be loosened by declamatory invectives. The great and difficult work of emancipation must be effected, like all other great and difficult works, by the diligent application of rational and appropriate means.

By the conduct and language of some professed enemies of slavery, one would imagine they expected this mighty revolution would be effected without effort,—by magic,—by some self-moving mysterious process in direct contradiction to the established order of things. "The work (they tell us) is in progress, and will be accomplished by the gradual advance of knowledge and moral improvement." Though they take no active interest in it themselves, but, on the contrary, do their utmost to retard it, by continuing to consume the productions of slavery, and to discourage those who are using their utmost exertions to prevent that consumption, The same mode of reasoning and acting applied to the common business of life, would lead the farmer to sit still in the confident expectation of a plentiful harvest, though he neither ploughed his fields, nor sowed them with grain;—they would lead the sick man to presume on the recovery of his health by persisting in those very courses which had engendered his disease;—they would lead the man whose house was on fire to expect the conflagration would be stopped by fanning, instead of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

throwing water on the flame. It is vain to urge in their excuse that they are not *convinced* that abstinence from the productions of slavery will ever effect its destruction. It is *one* important means which it is the duty of every man of common humanity to exert to the uttermost as a testimony of his own abhorrence of the system, and his determination to do *all in his own power* to destroy it. And though the operation of this single means, however generally exerted, might fail in itself, to effect its *speedy* and complete destruction, yet, in conjunction with stronger remonstrances, more earnest petitions to the Legislature, we may reasonably hope that another session of Parliament would not be suffered to pass without its accomplishment.

We have heard the insolent contempt with which the orders in council, the recommendations and the *commands* of Government, have been received by the colonists;—and we have seen that their language of insult and threatened rebellion, instead of meeting with its deserved chastisement, has, on the contrary, been succeeded by additional concessions in their favour, and by a reduction of the duties on West Indian produce!!!

By what other means then, but the rejection of that produce, and by earnest appeal to Parliament for the assertion of its own dignity; for the establishment of national honour and security, by the administration of equal law and equal jus-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

tice through all the bounds of the British Empire, —can we expect that West Indian slavery will ever be extinguished? Is it by commercial speculations?—By more enlightened and accurate calculations of interest?—By the establishment of a "*Tropical free labour company*"?—Are we to leave 800,000, of our fellow creatures in the hands of their merciless task-masters, until their liberation becomes the inevitable result of mercantile competition?—Would this be to do justice and to love mercy, on christian principles?—Speculations on the comparative profitableness of free and slave labour, may *ultimately* effect the destruction of slavery,—but christian charity will not wait the tardy uncertain result;—she will employ the best means in her power for its *speediest* destruction,—and as abstinence from slave produce is the *only means* over which the people have absolute control, this, she will use her utmost exertions to bring into prompt and vigorous operation. The formation of a Society which inlists the all controling principle of *interest* on the side of humanity, shews something, it is true, of "the wisdom of the serpent,"—but true christian charity will far outstrip even the rapid motion of self-interest, and secure its object by a more direct course. She will hail such establishments as that of the "Tropical free labour company" as auxiliaries and secondaries, but will not suffer them to usurp the place, or supersede the exer-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

tion of moral and religious principle. The laws which guide her operations are quick and spontaneous, and prompt to the same exertions for the relief of others sufferings as for her own. She regards the dreadful disclosures of the real nature of colonial bondage as affording a test, a certain test of the sincerity or spuriousness of christian profession. "If a man love me (said our Lord) he will keep my commandments." What commandments? How readest thou? What was the reply to the enquiry—"which is the first and great commandment"?—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. (But *mark the sequel.)* The second is like unto it. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* On these two commandments hang all the Law and Prophets."

"If we love not our Brother whom we have seen, how can we love God whom we have not seen?" If we so love not our degraded and oppressed fellow creatures, of whose nature we so intimately partake, and with whom the spontaneous sympathies of humanity compel us to feel; —if we so love them not as to exert every means in our power of rescuing them, from the merciless thieves among whom they are fallen;—how can we love God,—their Father as well as ours? By the fruit alone is the nature of the tree ascertained. By "works of mercy and labours of love" are

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

genuine christians to be distinguished from the promiscuous throng of empty professors. "Herein, is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit". —Do we ask, what fruit? Let us turn to the divine sermon on the mount,—to the awful disclosures of the day of Judgment, and see, what are the fruits,—the different course of life, which mark the difference between the ransomed and the reprobate.

Can it possibly be imagined after the affecting enumeration of acts of kindness and mercy recorded in the close of the 25th chapter of St. Matthew, which our Lord represents himself as accepting and rewarding as *done unto Himself*, because done unto one of the least of his family; —can we possibly imagine that acts of justice and mercy to those wretched captives who stand so much in need of our sympathy and assistance, will not be equally accepted?

Let such as have not yet ascertained the precise line of duty between the two propositions of immediate and gradual emancipation, refer their doubts to the divine records for solution. "ALL THINGS, whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do EVEN SO unto them". Mark the precision, the commanding force of the lang uag . Here is no room for evasions or exceptions;—no admission for cold procrastinating delays. The rule is short, intelligible and decisive —and requires us to pursue that precise line of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

conduct towards all men, which we ourselves would reasonably desire were we in their circumstances. The enquiry therefore, what line of conduct a christian should pursue respecting the subject in question, resolves itself into a very small compass. He must put himself in the place of the slave—think of the torture of his galling chains, his ulcerated wounds ;—the premature exhaustion of his powers, from over-strained exertions, under the most barbarous coercion ;—the painful consumption of his life in hopeless despair. He must remember, that the poor Negro, has no one in the land of his oppression, to plead his cause or to avenge his wrongs ;—he must remember the strong arm of power with which every feeble struggle for his own relief is borne down; —the inhuman chastisement with which his unavailing complaints are silenced;—then, let him ask his own heart if he would not, above all earthly blessings, above life itself, desire, groan, for *immediate* liberation from the horrors of such a bondage?[m]

We have then the express authority of a DIVINE COMMAND, to stimulate and combine all our exertions for his prompt emancipation. Then, let all who humbly hope for Divine approval, en-

[m] Let it ever be remembered that emancipation from *slavery* is not emancipation from *law*,—does not preclude such wise provisional regulations and restraints as so sudden a change of condition might render expedient.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

gage without delay, and with all their hearts, in the arduous work. Let them no longer deal treacherously with their own principles, and keep back any of the price which they demand. Let those who have leisure and influence make it their business to diffuse more general information of the horrors of West Indian slavery; to incite a deeper and more general sympathy for its wretched victims, and (as the British legislature can alone effect their *speedy* and *complete* emancipation) to incite throughout the nation the most earnest and pressing appeals to Parliament no longer to withhold from these despised outcasts their FULL RIGHTS, because they are themselves too feeble to demand them, because they are so crushed by oppression that they dare not even beg for them;—no longer to listen to the cruel suggestions, which procrastinating selfishness is ever insinuating,—that because they have been so long the victims of lawless power,—because their necks have so long been accustomed to the yoke,—because they have never participated in the rights of humanity and justice,—because the image of their Creator has, in these His abused creatures, been so long trampled underfoot,—that therefore there need be no haste to rescue their bodies from lacerating whips and galling chains—and their minds from brutish ignorance and Pagan darkness. And let none of us any longer mock the sacred name of truth by

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

calling those slow reluctant feeble concessions, implied in the principle of *gradual* emancipation, just, reasonable, merciful,—when, in fact, they are only new modifications, more disguised and subtile modes of oppression.

"LET MY PEOPLE GO,"—is the authoritative language of the great Parent of the Universe, to all who have ears to hear the voice of reason, of conscience, of revelation;—to all who keep aloof from the confused Babel of sordid interest and political expediency;—who turn a deaf ear to those artful glosses, those selfish evasions, those "vain traditions," whereby the Divine command is rendered "of none effect." "LET MY PEOPLE GO,"—is as clearly the Divine command respecting these poor despised outcasts, as it was respecting the oppressed Israelites. In their case, it is true, the command was express and audible,—enforced by great signs and wonders—and its resistance attended by immediate and supernatural punishments. But in the case of the poor Negro, the command is not less intelligible, in a Christian's ear, because conveyed by the spirit, instead of the letter, of the Divine injunction—and the punishment of disobedience, though it do not immediately follow, will, he is sufficiently warned, fall in heavier inflictions upon Christian, than upon Egyptian slave-holders. And who are so emphatically slave-holders as the consumers of slave produce? Is not he who

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

bribes another to commit a robbery or a murder, the greater criminal of the two, though he shed no blood and commit no violence?

He who kidnaps and forces away the defenceless Negro from his friends and country, and puts him in irons on board a slave-ship;—he who buys him of the slave merchant,—who stamps brand marks into his flesh with hot irons;—who compels him to labour all the days of his wretched existence, without wages, under the lash of the cart-whip;—who, if he attempt to escape, or make any resistance, hunts him down like a beast of prey,—chains and flogs him without mercy,—shoots and gibbets him at his pleasure;—who seizes upon his children also, from generation to generation, as his lawful prey;—all these,—he who steals and makes merchandize of his fellow man;—he who buys the stolen merchandize,—and he, who inheriting such ill-gotten property, lays impious claim to it as a rightful possession;—all these, guilty as they are, are not the *most* guilty parties in these transactions of iniquity;—they have employers, who make it worth their while,—who bribe them to commit these atrocities.

It is a true adage,—"if there were no receivers of stolen goods, there would be no thieves." For what are those poor Negroes stolen away from their native country? For what are they bought and sold like cattle? For what are they

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

chained and branded and forced to labour, night as well as day under the most brutal coercion?—BECAUSE THE PRODUCE OF ALL THIS OPPRESSION AND CRUELTY—FINDS WITH ENLIGHTENED CHRISTIANS, A PROFITABLE MARKET!!

Heretofore, we sinned in thoughtless ignorance;—we knew little of the dreadful price at which our West Indian luxuries were procured;—now, the veil of ignorance is removed. The enormous crimes and sufferings inseparable from the system of slave cultivation, have at length, been fully exposed;—henceforth the guilty responsibility of slave holding rests with the consumers of slave produce. Let conscience therefore do her office and fix the conviction of blood-guiltiness in our own bosoms. Let us seek no ingenious palliations or self justifying evasions, but confess that "we are verely guilty concerning our (captive) Brother,"—and determine to make all possible atonement for past criminal carelessness of his wrongs, not only by conscientiously abstaining from all farther consumption of the produce of his inhuman oppression, but by determining, henceforward, to make his cause our own, and resolving never to desert it until the rights of humanity are restored to him,—till he is raised from the condition of a brute to that of a man and a Christian.

Henceforward, let us "remember those that

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

are in bonds, as bound with them." Let the speedy redemption of the captive Negro be the object of our fervent prayers, of our earnest persevering labours,—of prayers so fervent, of labours so earnest and persevering as may bear some resemblance to those which we ourselves should desire, were our own enfranchisement suspended on their issue. Our prayers will then be heard; —the Divine blessing will crown our exertions—and British slavery will be annihilated. And though our *power* to liberate the captive sons of Africa, be restrained within the bounds of our own territory—our *example*, when it becomes CONSISTENT, will not be so limited. It is CONSISTENCY alone which gives force either to individual or national example. Why has no greater efficacy hitherto attended our tardy example in the relinquishment of the African slave trade?—Because it has wanted this essential virtue;—because when we relinquished the traffic, we retained its guilty perquisites;—because we not only detained the living victims of the slave trade in cruel bondage, but doomed their children also, and their children's children to the same dreadful inheritance;—because, whilst we persist in so doing, we appear to surrounding nations, with polluted hands, and a *Janus face*, consequently disqualified for successful pleaders against a system of iniquity which we have so reluctantly and partially renounced.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Had christians continued to adorn the doctrine they profess with those living fruits, those works of mercy and labours of love with which it was at first ornamented;—had the extended knowledge and profession of the Gospel been accompanied by a practical conformity to its righteous precepts,—slavery, with all its attendant crimes and miseries, must long since have been abolished throughout the world. But the separating the profession of christianity from its righteous and beneficent practice, has rendered it, comparatively, of none effect; — has occasioned its glorious light to be "hid under a bushel,"—the "salt," given to counteract moral corruption, to "lose its savour,"—to be, in great measure, "trodden under foot,"—calumniated and despised, as a thing of little worth.

Yet this Gospel, whose lustre has been so tarnished by modern professors, is the only means appointed for salvation, to the ends of the earth. No new revelation is to be expected;—by no other power will that grand prophetic renovation be accomplished which shall "fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The stone, "cut without hands," seen in the vision of Daniel, which "brake in pieces the iron, the clay, the silver and the gold;"—which subdued every opposing power and "became a great Mountain which filled the whole earth,"—



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

is no other than that Gospel which, with us is held in such unprofitableness and unrighteousness.

The world around us does not retain its present disordered miserable condition for want of light and information,—for want of the means of its restoration to order and happiness. No, ample provision has been made for recovering the lost harmony of this discordant world. It would not remain as it is, waste and deserted of good,—fruitful and rank in evil, were those who have been called to work in this great vineyard, diligently labouring in their respective allotments; —were "the children of light as wise (and as active) in their generation as the children of this world."

We can imagine nothing better calculated to rouse their slumbering zeal, to give new life and vigour to their torpid principles, than the consideration of the dreadful state of moral and physical wretchedness in which 800,000, immortal beings are held on British ground, chiefly by the thoughtless consumption of the produce of their slavery by professing christians; who, from the time when the real condition of slavery was first made known, must be accountable for every day's unnecessary prolongation of so inhuman an institution—and for all the crimes and miseries from which it is inseparable, whilst they neglect the use of any means in their power for its speedy and complete destruction.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Time flies swiftly—so does conviction of duty, —so does the inclination and the power to obey it, from those who trifle or procrastinate. Neglected capacities and opportunities of doing good, are not only withdrawn, but *avenged*, by leaving in their place the curse of increased insensibility, —and those who have been most abhorrent of slavery, may, by remaining quiescent, imperceptibly become as reckless of its sufferings as the West Indians themselves.

Then let us "work whilst it is yet day"—remembering that it is a short one,—that, with many of us, "it is far spent;"—and therefore "whatsoever our hand findeth to do (whereby the double bonds of these our oppressed and benighted fellow creatures may be broken) let us do it with all our might."—Let our zeal and diligence bear some proportion to the magnitude of the work and the strength and resolution of its opposers. The interests of slavery have hitherto stood firm, have, thus far, resisted and defied all attack, because they have been supported with pertinacious and determined courage—and when the interests of humanity and justice are supported with equal zeal and resolution, they will not only prevail, but triumph gloriously. There is in their nature a spirit of ascendency and dominion. Oppression would tremble and fall prostrate before them, were their professed friends and supporters but half as zealous and persevereing as their enemies.

We may appear to have laid a very undue

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

stress upon the single duty of emancipation, since it regards only the temporal condition of the slaves. We have been thus earnest in pressing this duty because we consider it as a necessary preparation for one of still greater obligation. We may not violate the established order. We must *first* "Do JUSTICE *(then)* love mercy".—We must do justice before we obtain a capacity to love mercy. To plead for the instruction of the poor Negro and to oppose his emancipation ;—to keep his body in slavery that we may deliver his mind from bondage, is to "do evil that good may come;" —to lay the foundation of charity in oppression. We have been thus earnest in pressing the duty of emancipation, because we consider it as having an important bearing on the whole of our christian conduct and character. The various exertions which a hearty engagement in this cause would call forth, would lead to the detection and counteraction of that inherent selfishness which is the origin and support of slavery, the *spirit* of which manifests itself in our own country—in our hearts—in various other forms of injustice, oppression and cruelty, which are of the same nature if not of the same extent. An earnest engagement in this cause, would not, as some imagine, withdraw our attention from objects of nearer interest ;—it would, on the contrary, open our eyes to see, and expand our hearts to undertake various other works of justice and mercy which are at present overlooked. Christian charity is an in-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

exhaustible mine, whose treasures accumulate in proportion as they are drawn forth. It is not like gold, of which, if we are lavish in one quarter, we must be proportionably parsimonious in another. This wealth, on the contrary, the more it is used, the more it increases.

But we have said enough, it may be, much more than enough, to prove, that it is an imperative christian duty to employ, to the uttermost, every means in our power for the speedy and complete extinction of West Indian slavery. To the most efficacious of those means we have already adverted. In themselves, they are simple and obvious, but to bring them into effective operation, is acknowledged to be a work of labour and difficulty.

These pages will probably fall into the hands of some who have already renounced the use of West Indian produce, for the sake of christian consistency,—to preserve a conscience void of offence,—an exemption from all participation or encouragement of crime; though they have no hope that their example will in the slightest degree, weaken the interests of slavery, which, they are well aware, are too firmly rooted to be shaken by a few such scattered instances of conscientiousness. But, being morally certain, that the whole system, root and branch, must of necessity be destroyed by the *general extension of such an example*, they feel impelled to *do their part*. But

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

what is that part? Surely it is the *christian's* part, his privilege, as well as duty, to do all, in such a cause, which he has the power to do. Let him reflect—that he is at present literally *doing nothing* to lighten the burdens of slavery;—that his own example, and that of his conscientious coadjutors, will produce no sensible effect on the condition of a single slave,—will be utterly useless—a mere waste of principle as far as he is the object. To effect any important charge in his condition;—to prove that slavery is abhorrent to the Nation;—to give weight and efficacy to our petitions against it, the example *must become general*—and how can it become general without exertion and labour?—and from what quarter is the requisite exertion and labour to be expected—but from *real christians?*—from such as have time and talents to devote to the cause?

The consideration of the utter helplessness of these objects of our sympathy,—that they cannot plead for themselves,—that they have none in the land of their captivity to plead for them,—that their tears are unobserved,—that their sighs and groans reach us by no audible sounds,—that their lacerated, disfigured and mutilated bodies are unexposed to our view,—that they stretch out to us no imploring hands—utter no piercing cries for deliverance,—that all is *silent, enduring, uncomplaining suffering*—should, on feeling, generous minds, operate as the most eloquent and urgent of all

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

claims to sympathy and assistance. To whom must we look for availing help,—for the *substantial* compassion of the good Samaritan? From whence can it be most reasonably expected, but from real christians of the more influential classes, whose elevated station gives them a persuasive influence over the sentiments and practice of those around them? From whence can it be most reasonably expected, but from those to whom it is given richly to enjoy the life that now is, as well as the glorious hope of that which is to come; —from those, to whom much has been given, and of whom much will be therefore required? From whom, but from those who must be often inquiring, what they are rendering to the Lord for all His goodness? How they are occupying the talents with which He has entrusted them? What account they will have to render of their Stewardship? We want words to express our own conviction of the extent and importance of the benefits which you have the ability to confer upon the most oppressed and abused of the human family. You admit that abstinence from West Indian produce *must become general* in order to accomplish its object—And to You we must look *to make it general—to bring it into fashion.* Who else, but those who have time and talents at their own disposal, rather, at the disposal of the great Giver, can be expected to devote them to a cause to which there is no attraction

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

of ambition or interest, and for the most laborious and successful exertions in which, no reward is to be hoped for, but from Him who seeth in secret?

To be exempt from the crime of encouraging and perpetuating slavery, and to make atonement for past negligence, we must not only abstain ourselves from all farther consumption of its produce, but determine, to the utmost of our power, to engage others in a similar resolution. We must make it a business, by every means of argument and persuasion, to engage the cooperation of all around us, high and low, rich and poor,—not regarding opposition and ridicule, but making the best of our talents and influence, whatever they be, to extend the resolution far and wide, until it pervades the whole kingdom,—until the use of slave produce shall become a mark of reproach, and those who have not renounced it upon principle, shall be constrained to do it for their credit's sake. A resolution and zeal short of this, will effect nothing; we shall only trifle with the subject,—trifle with our christian obligations, and do nothing effectual towards discharging the heavy debt we owe to our enslaved brother.

Christian charity, implies in its very nature, the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial. What costs us little, is, in general, of little worth. But what sacrifice (it may be asked) or self-denial, deserving the name, is implied in the rejection of slave pro-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

duce where the same articles may be obtained by free labour? Certainly there is no sacrifice in the individual substitution, but such a substitution can never be expected to become general without exertions which involve considerable sacrifices. West Indian slavery has been so often discussed, has become so trite and hackneyed a subject that it seems by tacit agreement to be excluded from common conversation, and it requires no little courage to encounter the evident coldness or disgust with which it is generally received. There is a great deal of prejudice and hostility among a large proportion of the higher and middle ranks, against the measure in question, occasioned by the extensive ramifications of West Indian influence, and a prevailing notion, among such as pride themselves on their loyalty, that it is an officious interference with the business of Government.

It is highly desirable that the friends of emancipation, should, as much as possible, for the sake of consistency, abstain from the consumption of *all* slave cultivated produce. But as the cultivation of *sugar* is the most lucrative, and by far the most oppressive of West Indian slave labours;—as the Planter derives his chief emolument from the sale of this article, and his monopoly of the British market;—it is *against this article especially, that we must endeavour to close that market.* But before entering upon the consideration of the best

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

means of securing that object, we will briefly advert to the objections most frequently urged against it.

The zealous advocates for the substitution of East for West Indian sugar, are on all sides admonished, that their attempts to dissuade the British public from the consumption of the latter until the former becomes the preferable article, are altogether Utopian and visionary.

They are also assured, that were the British Public to adopt such a resolution it would be utterly futile as it regards its object; since the sugar rejected by us would be exported to the continent.

It is also confidently asserted, that a general disuse of West Indian sugar would be alike injurious to the slave and his master, inasmuch as it would occasion a fall of price, which by impoverishing the latter would oblige him to diminish the support and comforts of the former; and also, that it would be highly injurious to the commercial interests of this country.

In reply to the first objection, we beg to propose the following questions :—

Have the British public any just pretensions to the character of humanity and benevolence? Have they any true sense of moral justice? Does any thing but the empty name belong to the great bulk of christian professors? Do any higher principles than that of the most sordid selfish-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ness and cruel indifference to other's sufferings influence their actions? If these questions can be answered affirmatively, then, certainly, after an acquaintance with the shocking process of West India *sugar* cultivation, there is nothing Utopian or visionary in expecting that every individual possessed of common humanity, to say nothing of religion, should abstain from its consumption, were East India double the price, or even if there were no other sugar to be substituted.[n] The attention of those who are not thoroughly acquainted with that process, is particularly requested to the following compressed description of "*the driving system*," which, in the West Indies, is chiefly confined to sugar cultivation.

"In holeing a cane-piece, or turning up the ground into parallel trenches, for the reception of the cane-plants, the slaves of both sexes, are

[n] Some persons object to the substitution of East for West Indian sugar, nnder the notion that the former is dearer than the latter. The objection, though a very sordid one, ought to be noticed. A correspondent, well acquainted with the fact, says—"There is, in London, no difference whatever in the price of East and West India raw sugar, consequently, there ought to be none in the Country. The East India *refined* sugar was considerably dearer, when first offered to the public, on account of the difficulty and expense attending the commencement of the refining process; but now, the difference of price between East and West India *lump* sugar is not more than one penny or three-half-pence per pound."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

drawn out in a line, like troops on a parade, each with a hoe in the hand; and close, in the rear, are stationed the drivers, in number duly proportioned to that of the gang. Each of these drivers, has a long, thick, and strongly plaited whip, the report of which is as loud, and the lash as severe as those of the whips in common use with our waggoners, and which he has authority to apply the instant, he perceives occasion, without previous warning. Thus disposed, their work begins, and continues without interruption for a certain number of hours, during which, at the peril of the driver, an adequate portion of the land must be holed. As the trenches are generally rectilinear, and the whole line of holers advance together, it is necessary that every section of the trench should be finished in equal time with the rest; if any were allowed to throw in the hoe with less rapidity or energy than their companions, the trench would be imperfectly formed; it is therefore the business of the drivers not only to urge forward the whole gang with sufficient speed, but to watch that all in the line, whether male or female, old or young, strong or feeble, work, as nearly as possible, in equal time and with equal effect; the tardy stroke must be quickened, and the languid invigorated; and the whole line made to dress, in the military phrase, as it advances; no breathing time, no resting on the hoe, no pause of langour to be repaid by brisker action, can be allowed to individuals

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

(however exhausted): all must work or repose together."[o] The labourers, having no motive for exertion but the fear of punishment, are impelled to their daily task in the cultivation of the sugar-cane, on a burning glebe, beneath a vertical sun, by the stimulant of the whip, which Dr. Collins, an experienced planter, and able apologist for slavery, admits, "is usually left to the discretion of the driver, and is of course administered neither with impartiality or judgment; but is generally bestowed *with rigour on the weakest of the gang*, and those who are so unfortunate as not to be in favour with the subdespot, on any part of the naked body or head, by which means *the weaker Negroes are over-wrought and compelled to resort to the sick-house*"[p] Let it be remembered also, that in addition to this severe and exhausting day-process, in the cultivation of the sugar cane, there is the aggravated oppression of alternate *night* labour, during nearly half the year in grinding at the sugar-mills, &c.

Surely there is nothing Utopian or visionary in expecting that every person of common humanity, not immediately interested in the support of slavery, will desist from the consumption of

[o] See "Slavery of the West Indies delineated" by James Stephen, Esq. vol. 1. p. 46.

[p] See "Practical rules, &c. for the treatment of slaves in the sugar colonies." p. 201, 201. 267.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

a luxury cultivated under such a system as this;—a system so exhausting and destructive of human life in those Islands where it is most cultivated, as would, were the same mortality generally to prevail,—"unpeople the earth in half a century"!!![q] Surely there is nothing Utopian or visionary in expecting that all who retain any sense of moral justice, will renounce the consumption of sugar thus cultivated, were there no other substitute to be obtained for it; more especially when acquainted with the fact (which all may be by referring to the last-mentioned Anti-slavery Report) that this horrid system will be mitigated or aggravated in exact proportion as the demand for this luxury increases or diminishes.

To the second objection, that the substitution of East, for West India sugar would be utterly futile as it regards the destruction of West Indian slavery; since the sugar rejected by us would be exported to the continent; we imagine the West Indians themselves have furnished a complete confutation. For to what do their violent protestations against the equalization of the duties on East and West Indian sugar,—their virulent invectives against those who attempt to promote the substitution of the former for the latter, amount?—but to so many proofs that they regard

[q] See the "second report of the committee of the Anti-Slavery society."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

these measures as attacks upon the very vitals of their system. One of their ablest champions, having asserted in so many words, that—"the continent can be, and is supplied with sugar at a cheaper rate than it can be grown by the British Planter." [r]—And in a small tract recently issued by the West Indian party, addressed "*to the consumers of sugar*," the public are admonished not to be the "dupes of the humbug of interested people, who would persuade them to substitute East for West India sugar, and by that means involve the colonies in utter ruin." They are warned against the "selfish designs of interested cunning persons, who, regardless of the sacred obligations of truth, would, if they could, sacrifice the West Indian colonies to their own narrow interests, which, whilst they assume the gloss of humanity to the negroes, would disable their masters from feeding, clothing, *protecting*, and *imparting religious instruction to them*; and condemn to ruin an integral part of the British empire."

It is evident that the measure in question is regarded by the colonists with the utmost alarm

[r] See a masterly pamphlet entitled "East and West Indian sugar, or a refutation of the claims of the West Indian colonists to a protecting duty &c." (page 3) to which also we refer our readers for a complete exposure of the fallacy of the objection that the commercial interests of the country would be injured by the substitution of East for West India sugar.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and dismay, consequently, it cannot be of that nugatory, insignificant nature which the objector would represent. But the production adverted to, insignificant and contemptible as it may appear, must not pass without farther comment. It is, an important document, full of " pith and argument,"—exhibiting, in narrow compass, the wretched shifts and miserable extremities to which the upholders of slavery are driven. It revives and puts into popular, wholesale circulation the often confuted falshood of the assertion that East India sugar is *not* the production of free labour, but of a system of slavery *more severe* than that of the West Indies—many respectable authorities being brought forward to prove that such slavery exists in the *Lower Carnatic*. The author of this precious document miscalculated in supposing that it would meet the eye of none but casual unreflecting readers, who were too ignorant or too thoughtless to consider that the Lower Carnatic is a thousand miles distant from the Province of Bengal, where the sugar brought from the East Indies into this country is cultivated. We refer the reader to a very sensible reply to the insinuation that East India sugar is not the production of free labour, in a small tract, bearing the same title,—" *To the consumers of sugar*, " by the eloquent author of "the Rights of man in the West Indies"—But as this writer has entirely passed over the objections of the West Iudian

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

declaimer against the substitution of East for West Indian sugar, on account of the cruel effect it would have upon the *slave*, as well as his Master, (thinking it, no doubt, too contemptible to deserve a reply, its fallacy having been so often exposed)—yet, being aware that many are still under this delusion, we quote the following brief passages from the "second report of the committee of the Anti-slavery society," as a complete answer to the last mentioned objection.

"The West Indians assert that if prices (of sugar) should fall, *the slaves must starve;* but in what way are low prices to produce this effect? The food of the field slaves in Jamaica is raised entirely by their own hands, on the portion of ground allotted to them for that purpose, and cultivated during that fragment of their time specifically assigned them by law. Is it then by depriving the slaves of the land which has been set apart for their subsistence, and which the owner himself has now less temptation than ever to occupy, that starvation is to ensue? Or is it by depriving them, without any assignable object for so doing, of the scanty portion of time which the law allows them for cultivating their allotments? If not, how is it possible for them to starve"? "The tendency of a low price of sugar is obviously to direct a larger share both of land and labour to the growth of provisions, or of some other article of exportable produce than sugar;—*and*,



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

*whatever article may be substituted for it, the change must operate as a relief to the slaves;* the culture of sugar being by far the most oppressive branch of colonial husbandry." "The Bahamas grow no sugar. *There, the increase of the population is very considerably greater than in any other colony.* The only other colony of Great Britain, in which there is any increase of the slaves, is Barbadoes; and that is the colony (with one exception) which makes the smallest quantity of sugar in proportion to its numbers." "IN ST. VINCENT, GRENADA, TOBAGO, AND DEMERARA, WHERE THE PROPORTION OF SUGAR IS THE LARGEST,—THERE THE DECREASE PROCEEDS AT A RAPID RATE; AT A RATE, IN SOME OF THEM, WHICH WOULD UNPEOPLE THE EARTH IN HALF A CENTURY"!!!

These, let it be remembered, are not vague unsupported assertions;—they are grounded on authentic documents, on accurate calculation, on notorious facts, which no ingenuity can evade or confute. From these documents are we not fully warranted in urging all who have heads to think and hearts to feel, to the conscious rejection of West India sugar and rum?—For should such a resolution fail to become sufficiently general to accomplish its ultimate object, yet, it is evident that it would essentially mitigate the sufferings of the slave, sugar cultivation being the most dreadfully oppressive and destructive of all his labours.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

But we have not quite done with this West India sugar tract. If the British public substitute East for West India sugar—then, "their masters (we are told) will be *disabled from imparting religious instruction to their Negroes.*" Here is a "*humbug*," to which there is surely no parallel! In this wretched effort of imposture, we know not whether audacity or imbecility are most conspicuous. Can the writer possibly imagine after the notorious opposition made by the great body of Planters to the religious instruction of the Negroes;—after the dreadful tragedies so recently acted in Barbadoes and Demerara, that the people of England can be deluded by such miserable cant as this?

It were endless to enumerate all the objections which may be urged against the measure in question. We trust enough has been said to prove that it is neither a Utopian, a useless, or pernicious project to endeavour to dissuade the British Public (all, at least, who have any real sense of religion, of hnmanity, or moral justice) from the consumption of slave cultivated sugar, when once acquainted with the object and tendency of its rejection. We should shudder at the idea of being ourselves the immediate agents of the horrid system of oppression above described,—but voluntarily to sanction and encourage that oppression in others, is, in effect, equally criminal.

This remark will be said to imply a sweeping

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

condemnation of all who entertain different opinions from those here expressed of the measure in question, and who are consequently not disposed to adopt it. We certainly do consider the consumption of West India sugar, under the present system of cultivation, as absolutely interdicted by the laws of religion, humanity and justice. That many highly respectable, humane, and truly religious persons persist in the use of it, we are quite aware; but that circumstance does not in the least alter the moral character of the practice. They who do persist in it after being acquainted with its tendency, do so at the expense of their principles. That the practice is attended with no feeling of compunction, is no proof of its innocence. It is possible, let us never forget, for the very worst crimes to be perpetrated without any consciousness of their guilt. It is well, disposed as we all are to self complacent indulgence in any habit to which prejudice custom, or interest incite us, that we are not left to the uncertain, capricious guidance of individual opinion, but that we have an explicit, intelligible, immutable rule, A DIVINE COMMAND, applicable to every variety of circumstance and character, to restrain and direct our conduct, (viz)—TO DO UNTO ALL MEN, WHATSOEVER WE WOULD THAT THEY SHOULD DO UNTO US.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER IV.

*On the most efficient means of deepening and extending the public interest in the speedy extinction of West Indian Slavery.*

In enumerating the various means by which an increased interest in the speedy extinction of West Indian slavery can be most speedily and widely extended, is it possible to overlook the christian Pulpit? To Whom but the professed Ambassadors of Him who came to "undo the heavy burdens—to bind up the broken hearted—to preach deliverance to the captives"—to break every yoke but that of his own mild and benignant sway;—to whom but to those who are regarded as the delegated shepherds of the flock, who profess to watch for souls as they that must give an account";—to whom but to conscientious christian Ministers, of all denominations, can we so reasonably look for deepening and widening the public interest in the speedy extinction of this Anti-christian institution?—by making it a subject of pulpit admonition.

Should any object, that it would be a lowering

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

of the dignity, a desecration of the sacredness of the christian pulpit to employ it in the discussion of secular or political questions;—we would ask, whether the present wretchedly degraded and oppressed condition of 800,000 immortal beings,—the brutish ignorance and heathen darkness consequent upon and necessarily connected with their cruel bondage;—whether an enquiry into the best means whereby the restoration of those natural rights which they have never forfeited, and the enjoyment of those civil and religious privileges to which they have an equal claim with ourselves, may be best secured to them,—can be regarded as mere secular or political considerations? If they can, then are a large portion of the instructions of our Great Lord and Master of the same secular and political character. For on what themes did he chiefly discourse with the Scribes and Pharisees and with his own disciples, in his divine sermon on the Mount, but on those of justice and mercy—of compassion and kindness?—and what were the objects of his severest maledictions but injustice, oppression and cruelty—above all, hypocrisy—the combination of high religious profession with the violation of its righteous precepts;—long prayers and sanctimonious observances with the "devouring of widows houses"—extortion and oppression? What was the chief aim of his instructive parables, of Dives and Lazarus,—of the good Samaritan,—of the relentless fellow ser-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

vant,—and of his awful illustrations of the day of Judgment, but to inculcate lessons of compassion and sympathy—to incite to works of justice and mercy?

But we need not labour to obviate objections which have no real existence. The Pulpit *is* every where employed in pressing themes of an exactly similar nature, though of less urgent necessity than that in question;—in recommending the establishment and support of infirmaries and hospitals for the relief of temporal want and the mitigation of bodily suffering.

We would not merely contend that the best ways and means of abolishing slavery *may* with the strictest propriety and accordance with established precedent be pointed out and recommended from the Pulpit; but that such an employment of it would be peculiarly appropriate. If righteousness, justice and mercy be essential parts of the christian character;—if "all the law and the prophets be comprehended in the two commandments of loving God with all the heart soul and strength, and our Neighbour as ourselves;—if Christ himself hath said, that this *second* is like unto the first and great commandment"—in its comprehensive nature and extensive requirements;—then, it is both expedient and necessary to dilate and expatiate upon this also;—to extend and apply it to existing circumstances;—to bring the habits and conduct of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

professors to this unvarying standard and touchstone of christian rectitude.

"I say unto you, for every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment,"—is one of those deeply signifieant and comprehensive sentences in which is revealed the awful nature and extent of our accountability. In this concise declaration is condensed, information of immense importance, connected with consequences the most momentous. Every word in this emphatic sentence has a deep and weighty signification. "I say unto you,"—What simple majesty, what solemn import in the introduction! The Saviour and final Judge of the world is the speaker,—he who is himself THE TRUTH,—who hath said "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"—the Son of God makes the awful declaration, that "for every idle word men shall give account in the day of judgment." The all-pervading presence of the invisible Judge—the all-controling nature of his religion — the imperishable book of remembrance preserved by him of the whole tenor, the minutiæ, of the conduct of his intelligent creatures—and their certain and strict accountability to him, are all directly implied in this concise communication. If then, for every idle (thoughtless) word we shall give an account in the day of judgment, is it not a necessary inference that for every *injurious action*

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

we shall be equally accountable? What infatuated self-deceivers we are! With what foolish, mad presumption we say to our souls, "Peace, when there is no peace!" We lose the recollection of the daily tenor of our own thoughts, words and actions,—even of the most guilty we retain but vague and transient remembrance;—we soon forgive and forget our own transgressions—and presumptuously and impiously imagine, even respecting those which are unrepented of—unannealed, that they are also forgiven and forgotten by our Omniscient Judge;—though he hath with solemn emphasis declared that "for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." How much more of their deliberate actions! These, will not only be remembered, but a far different estimate to our own, will be made of them. In assigning their respective places in the book of Divine remembrance, "righteousness will be laid to the line and judgment to the plummet," actions, many of which we regard as indifferent or innocent, will be ranged in the column of crimes, when their motives and consequences are taken into account. And will the encouragement given to human slavery (that most frightful complication of crime and misery) be overlooked? Will the part we have taken respecting the poor Negro be left out of the estimate? Will those be held guiltless who from

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

thoughtlessness or carelessness, continue to consume the produce of his slavery with their eyes wide open to the nature of that slavery which such consumption tends to perpetuate? Can any thing be more in character with a christian Minister than to warn his hearers against such a delusion? —more especially, because the practice is so general and is therefore regarded as innocent. Christians are enjoined to be "holy and harmless,—separate from sinners;"—to "keep themselves pure;"—to "have no fellowship with works of darkness;"—not to be "partakers of other men's sins." But by the consumption of slave produce all these injunctions are violated.

"Ye are the salt of the earth;"—"Ye are the light of the world," said our Lord to the first preachers of the Gospel. "Ye are the salt of the earth;"—to keep it from corruption, from becoming a mass of moral putrefaction;—to preserve the purity of christian doctrine, the righteousness of christian practice. "Ye are the light of the world,"—to illuminate its dark corners—to detect and reprove all unrighteousness.

Had such continued to be the character of preachers of the Gospel, could human slavery, that horrid compound of all injustice, cruelty, and impiety, still support and exalt itself in this land of high christian profession, this age of preeminent benevolence and refinement? Could it be possible, that a system comprising every cala-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

mity and outrage which man has power to inflict upon his fellow man, should exist in a country where Christianity is not only tolerated, but established;—where temples for christian worship are profusely scattered over the empire;—where its ministers have free access to all ranks of the community;—where religion "lifts her mitred head in Courts and Parliaments;"—is suffered to raise her voice in the Palace as well as the Church;—to admonish the Legislature and the Monarch as well as the People?

Why the deepest crime and foulest national disgrace should, with a few noble exceptions, have hitherto escaped the reprobation, and been imagined to lie out of the sphere of the christian pulpit—it were useless to inquire. We rejoice in the hope that the illusion is rapidly dissipating, and that the time is at hand when the righteous cause of Negro emancipation will be advocated in the right place,—with the boldness and fidelity becoming christian ministers. We remember that a wild fanatic, Peter the Hermit, by his single preaching, lighted up the flames of war all over Europe, and we doubt not that equal fervency and extent of zeal may be kindled by conscientious ministers of the true religion, in a war against oppression and impiety which have no parallel in the civilized world;—in a war rightly denominated a *holy* one, in which every indivi-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

dual, possessing any just pretensions to the christian name, ought to engage with all his might.

Some of the most distinguished dissenting ministers have already set the example, and we are anxiously desiring that those of the establishment may follow the noble precedent; — not merely by giving their respective hearers a single sermon on the subject of slavery and then dismissing it;—not merely by describing the horrors of the system and exciting the sympathy of their hearers for its unhappy victims; but by pointing out and pressing the adoption of the most effectual means of putting a speedy end to it;—by shewing that every individual, however obscure his station, or humble his talents, may render important assistance, may do much by his own example and influence towards its final destruction.

We entreat all who are conscious of being but partially informed of the *present* character of West Indian Slavery, and are consequently deficient in arguments and facts wherewith to repel the artful misrepresentations and gross falsehoods by which it is attempted, but too successfully, to delude the British public into a persuasion that the present actual condition of colonial bondage is not only as little oppressive, but is, in fact, more comfortable than that of the Irish, or even British peasantry;—we entreat all such to acquaint themselves without delay, with one of the most im-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

portant documents (just published) which has yet appeared upon the subject, viz. the abridged substance of some highly interesting papers recently laid before Parliament, entitled "The slave colonies of Great Britain; or a picture of Negro slavery drawn by the Colonists themselves;" with the very appropriate motto, "*out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.*"

"The picture which it exhibits of slavery is so fearful and revolting, that we might hesitate to credit the existence of the reality, were it not that the statements are official, and emanate from the colonial authorities themselves. This is not a narrative of past and long forgotten atrocities, furbished up anew to excite the feelings of the British public, but a delineation of *the actual state of our own slave colonies, at the present moment;* a narrative which tells us *of stripes yet unhealed; of groans which still echo around our plantations; of tyranny to this moment unchecked in its deeds of cruelty and crime*; of injustice, oppression and inhumanity both private and *legislative*, bearing date not in dark ages or Pagan lands, but in *British* colonies, and with the ink scarcely dry upon the record. The first impression which its perusal is calculated to produce, is a feeling of surprise and horror at the extraordinary state of society which it developes. In this analysis, the colonists are made to describe their own system; the proofs of its iniquity being drawn from the

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

colonial laws, from other colonial records of unquestionable authority, or from the evidence of colonial proprietors. In the *ameliorated* slave-codes here brought before them, the public will find the proof, the irrefragable proof, of the determined pertinacity with which the colonists still cleave to the worst, the most revolting deformities of their system; and the utter worthlessness of all the pretended improvements adopted by the colonial assemblies."*

In the postscript to these official documents, an analysis is given of the report of the constituted *guardians* and *protectors* of the slaves, by which we are admitted into the interior, the very penetralia of the slave system," from whence, among other horrific disclosures, it will be seen what are its brutalizing effects on the female character—what refined barbarities it can train and habituate "*Ladies*" to exercise upon their slaves.

In these documents the public will see that "demoralizing and murderous system" accurately portrayed for the maintenance of which they are burdened with imposts to the amount of annnal millions; for the maintenance of which the lives of two thousand British soldiers are annually sacrificed;—for the maintenance of which British commerce is fettered by impolitic and injurious restrictions;—the population of Ireland kept in

*See "the Christian Observer, Oct. 1825"—pages 655—657.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

idleness and beggary ;—the interests of one hundred million of British subjects in India surrendered to those of about two thousand West Indian Planters and Merchants!!![1]

But to return to the christian pulpit. The preacher, having once thoroughly acquainted himself with the subject of West Indian slavery, having convinced himself of the unexceptionable nature and authority of the evidence on which the horrid enormities of the system are asserted, will find it no theme of barren speculation or casual invective, but one of deep and wide interest, fruitful of instruction and bearing with important weight on the grand fundamental truths and essential duties of christianity. He will perceive, in the modern history of slavery, in the British dominions,—in its effects especially upon the white colonists—the free-born sons and *daughters* also, of British christendom, the most appalling illustrations of human depravity;—he will perceive the hardened callosity to which the human heart may arrive under the petrifying influence of unrestrained avarice;—the profound depths of wickedness into which man may plunge when invested with unlimited power;—the tremendous extent of suffering which he has the will to

[1] See the luminous expositions of the impolitic and baneful effects of slavery, in the public speeches of the enlightened and philanthropic James Cropper, of Liverpool, as reported in various provincial papers.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

inflict on his fellow man ;—the extremes of corporeal and mental anguish to which he can remorselessly consign his Brother ;—the monster of cruelty and oppression, the abhorred instrument of pure mischief which he may become, when abandoned to himself,—emancipated from the restraints of religion,—unawed by fear, unsoftened by love of the righteous Governor of the universe. In the conduct of these White tyrants, he will see terrific illustration of the natural tendency of human interests and human passions ;—he will see awful demonstration that man, in his natural state, is indeed "a child of wrath"—a fit object of the vengeance of a holy God—even, of a God of love —and will consequently obtain clearer perceptions of the necessity and infinite value of a Redeemer and a Saviour ;—of a new birth and complete renovation of nature. He will see that "every good and perfect gift cometh from above;"—that all the virtues and all the graces which have ever adorned and beautified the human character, are implanted by the Divine spirit alone ;—that every fruit of righteousness which has ever appeared in this degenerate soil ; from its earliest blossom to maturity, has been the production alone of the Sun of Righteousness.

We earnestly hope that conscientious Ministers of the Gospel, of every denomination, will no longer withhold their earnest attention from this momentous subject, from an apprehension that it

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

lies beyond the sphere of their influence. We are fully persuaded that they may, in a very short space of time, become the honoured instruments of ridding their country of its foulest abomination, by instigating the people of all ranks, through the most quiet and unexceptionable means, to throw down the altars of the bloody Moloc of slavery, to expel from British ground every vestige of its impious worship. We cannot, therefore, but earnestly hope they will lose no more time in exerting the great influence they possess over the people; —that they will suspend, for a season, their accustomed course of instruction;—deviate a little from the beaten track,—call the attention of their hearers for a time, from the principles, the groundwork of religion, to the contemplation of its beautiful superstructure,— that just, and righteous and benificent *practice* to which those principles incite. Let them remind their hearers that He whom they preach, "gave himself for them that he might purify to himself a peculiar people *zealous of good works*;"—that christians are commanded *not to* "*touch the unclean thing*;"—and that if Gentile converts were expressly enjoined by Apostolic authority, under divine direction, to "abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood," it can be no strained unnatural inference to conclude that the spirit of this prohibition must *necessarily* extend to an absolute interdiction of the voluntary consumption of the produce of slavery. When



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

christian Ministers have once entered on the subject, they will find it no barren and circumscribed theme;—it will afford ample illustration of christian duty, strong and varied appeals to the hearts and consciences of their hearers, especially to those of the higher and more influential classes, to whom a wide field of interesting labour may be presented, in endeavouring to spread and to keep alive a general interest and sympathy, for the most deeply injured of the human race, among their friends and neighbours,—and in shewing by what means, relief may be most effectually administered. Thus would a fresh and powerful impulse be imparted to benevolence and the warm glow of christian charity circulated from bosom to bosom. Thus would the rich, according to apostolic injunction, be admonished to "do good, —to be rich in good works;"—new sources of pure satisfaction would be opened to them, in exciting fellow feeling and brotherly kindness in all around them, in tasting the luxury of beneficence,—in proving that the pleasures of sympathy far surpass those of selfish enjoyment;—that their own happiness is augmented in proportion as they are earnestly engaged in promoting the welfare of others; not that of their own neighbourhood and country alone, but that of the stranger, the poor captive in a distant land, of him who seems to have no human helper—and thus, inheriting "the blessing of those who are ready to perish"—and

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the richer blessing of Him who hath declared that a cup of cold water alone, imparted in christian charity, shall not lose its reward.

The preacher, by directing the moral perceptions and religious principles of his hearers to the subject of West Indian slavery, will shew them a great work of righteousness, of justice and mercy in which all may engage, from the highest to the lowest and thereby afford substantial proof that there is life and power in the religion they profess; that it is an active vigorous principle, a faith that works by love, which may be mighty, even in feeble hands, to the pulling down this strong hold of Satan, and setting at liberty eight hundred thousand immortal beings, the wretched victims of a two-fold bondage, bondage of soul as well as body, withheld alike (as by far the greater proportion of them are) from moral and spiritual as well as corporeal freedom; kept back from the sound of the liberty of the Gospel, lest they should become more deeply sensible of their cruel wrongs, lest the iron yoke of oppression, the chains of ignorance and mental darkness, should become still more intolerable.

We are aware that great offence may be taken at such an employment of the christian pulpit; at such an exposure, in such a place, of a system in which many persons of the first consequence and allowed respectability, "men of education and



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

liberal attainments," are concerned. But that can be no solid ground of objection to those who consider the great offence excited by the preaching of their Lord and Master on a similar occasion; in detecting, exposing and reprobating "wickedness in high places,"—the injustice, extortion and cruelty of scribes and pharisees, persons, in their day of great eminence and distinction. It will be no solid ground of objection to those who remember that the disciples were forewarned that the servant was not greater than his Lord, that those who had persecuted him would persecute them also; that if they were of the world, the world would love its own, but because they were not of the world, therefore the world would hate them. The offence therefore which may be taken by men of the world against such a proceeding, is rather a confirmation of its consistency and propriety.

Under existing circumstances, we can imagine no subject which can more worthily engage the constituted guardians of the public virtue, its morals and religion, than the denouncing of that anti-christian, execrable tyranny, which obliterates all sense of natural justice, every feeling of humanity, every principle of religion; which hardens the hearts and sears the consciences of its active agents and abettors, and subjects them to a more dreadful and hopeless bondage than that of its

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

poor victims, in as much as there is reason to dread its extension beyond the period of their present existence.

We can imagine nothing more truly in character with ministers of that religion which lays the axe to the root of every corrupt tree, than to protest, to make open war against, and to resist with all their might, this bold and malignant "enemy of all righteousness;" since it is apparent that the Gospel can have no "free course," can be glorified by none of those "mighty works,"—those great extensive moral transformations which it is destined to accomplish, in any nation where this Anti-christ is suffered to reign.

What says the very temperate and candid Author of "Negro Slavery," in his *fairest* example of West Indian society (that of Jamiaca)? "No virtuous man ought to trust his own character, or that of his children, to the demoralizing effects produced by slave keeping. The state of morals and religion, is as bad as can be imagined. It is well known that the morals of nineteen out of twenty white men are ruined before they have been a month on the Island, and every idea of religion vanishes."[u] And what says a respectable Clergyman, nearly five years resident on the same Island? "I shall never forget the horror and disgust which I felt on going on shore, for the first time, in Kingston, August, 1819: it

[u] See "Negro Slavery," p. 27.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

was on a Sunday and I had to pass the Negro Market, where several thousands of human beings, of various nations and colours, chiefly Negroes, instead of worshiping their Maker on his holy day, were busily employed in all kinds of traffic in the open streets. The different noises and barbarous tongues recalled the confusion of Babel, but the drunkenness of some, with the imprecations and licentiousness of others, put me in mind rather of a pandemonium, or residence of devils. I have resided nearly five years in Jamaica, and have preached two or three sermons almost every Sunday; many other clergymen have also exerted themselves, but to very little purpose, as these horrid legalized scenes are just the same, and most of the churches in the Island are nearly empty. I am aware there is a law in the Island, imposing a fine on proprietors or overseers, for compelling the Negroes to do certain kinds of labour on the Sabbath; but it is notorious that this law is altogether a dead letter, and in Jamaica, the largest West Indian colony of highly favoured Christian Britain, the Sabbath is worse kept than by Turks themselves. It is not enough that the poor Negroes are compelled, on that day, to cultivate their own provision grounds to preserve life, (not having sufficient time otherwise allowed them) but to add to the abomination, a Sunday market must also be kept, which is the only market they have, to which they trudge, like mules, with

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

heavy loads, five, ten, or even twenty miles. In other colonies, where the abundant fatness of the soil has augmented the cupidity of the planters, the hardships of the poor Negroes are even greater than in Jamaica, they are very much overworked; especially the jobbing gangs (out of whose labour fortunes have been made in a short time.) These gangs have been compared, very aptly, to *over driven horses:* the poor slaves composing them, may certainly, without exaggeration, be compared to the *London hacks.* A double price is paid for them, and they are worked so very much, that they do not last long. It is *gold versus life.*"

"Were the colonists inclined to make any material beneficial changes in the slave code, neither the British Government nor British people would think of interfering; but experience teaches that their professions with respect to their slaves, are unmeaning and empty, and that even the few concessions that have been wrung from them are not bona fide fulfilled. Witness *their not allowing them time to attend places of worship on Sundays.* Witness the non-redress of their just complaints, for severity and cruelty of punishment. Witness *the preventing those of the curates who wished to attend on some of the estates, to preach and to catechise, from doing so, and thereby shutting the door of instruction on the poor slaves altogether.*"

"It must indeed be plain to every impartial person, that the colonists do not intend to lighten

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the hardships of their slaves. Their principal object is *to keep them in total ignorance, and to compel them to raise the greatest possible quantity of produce;* for they calculate thus—*if we do away with the Sunday market, there must be more time given to the slaves, and our own crops will fall short; if we allow them to be instructed, it will take a little more time, and the Negroes will also know too much to be content!* They *therefore do, and will, oppose all interference by the British Parliament because they wish, and intend, at all hazards, to keep the slaves and their descendants in perpetual bondage.*"*

This writer farther observes, that "many colonial clergymen are anxious to advance the knowledge of religion, but are prevented through the general profanation of the Sabbath, and the labouring and marketing of the Negroes on that day. Some who have attempted to introduce reforms have been stigmatised as Methodists; and it is scarcely *safe* for them to venture to preach against gross immorality, Sabbath breaking," &c.

Let it be remembered that this is the report of an impartial resident eye witness of the existing state of things in the Island of Jamaica. The striking illustrations given by this conscious writer (in addition to the ferocious transactions at Barbadoes and Demerara) of the determined and malignant hostility which the slave system bears

*See The West Indies as they are." by the Rev. R. Bickell. pages 64, 67, 68, 71, 137, 138.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

to religion, is a loud call upon its conscientious ministers to interpose their influence, to use their utmost exertions to purify the British atmosphere from this moral pestilence, which sheds a blight and a mildew upon every opening blossom of virtue, and forces into rapid and monstrous growth every poisonous shoot of vice. So active and insinuating is the demoralizing contagion engendered by slavery, that it seems to operate by a kind of magic;—virtue becomes vice;—even piety herself becomes impious on breathing the tainted atmosphere; or, if she be firm and hardy enough to resist the malignant contagion, she then becomes the object of *persecution unto death*. How has the Christian standard been lowered and degraded which has from time to time been raised in the land of slavery! How have evil communications corrupted good manners in certain Methodist missionaries, who, through the tamperings of interest or the blandishments of flattery, have been disinherited of their reason, shorn of their strength,—have suffered their shield, the awful egis of christian truth, to be basely cast away, and instead of denouncing woes against the worshippers, instead of "crying out against the altars" of this most impious of all the idol gods of satanic devotion, have dared to arraign and condemn the veteran band of abolitionists, have traduced and blasphemed the sacred cause they engaged to advocate, by asserting that christianity has no

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

hostility to slavery; have themselves, joined the Priests of this Baal,—have become the apologists and defenders of the execrable system of West Indian tyranny,—and have impiously dared to assert its compatibility with the divine will. How deep then, must be the poison of that moral infection which can transform *christian missionaries into priests of Baal?*—the "salt of the earth", into the means of its corruption? For the honour of the Methodist body, it is to be hoped that these accommodating, time serving missionaries have been expelled from its membership. But we cannot withhold from our readers the following short extract from a sermon recently addressed by a Missionary (said to be in that connexion) to a slave audience, *in presence, no doubt, of their taskmasters*, with which the advocates of West Indian slavery have presented the public,[7] illustrative of the blessings of slavery.

"It ought to be remembered that the situation of life in which Providence has placed you, is not without its comforts; for when you have performed your appointed work, you are happily delivered from all anxiety and tormenting care, and can return to your humble cabins with confidence, being assured that no creditor will be there claiming the little property you possess;—no sick wife or child will be there, without the aid

[7] See the small tract before adverted to, addressed "To the Consumers of sugar."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

of medicine, and if required, of a nurse;—neither will your children meet you at your doors with looks expressive of starvation, and pierce your hearts with cries of hunger. No, such scenes of misery are not to be found in *your* dwellings, "*for your bread is given you, and your water is sure.*"[z]

Was there ever a more shocking profanation of the sacred text, than thus to employ it in confirmation of a *lie?* For can there be a lie more palpable than the inference which is made to follow this exordium, that the comforts and blessings of slavery are greater than those of the free-born British peasantry? Of what kind is *the bread that is given,* and *the waters that are sure,* to the West Indian slave? Is it not bread of affliction and water of affliction? Are not their lives embittered with hard bondage? Are not their bodies lacerated with whips and galling chains? disfigured with brand-marks? Are they not bought and sold like cattle? Are they not considered and treated in all respects like beasts of burden? And what are the comforts of their "humble cabins"? What is the care they experience in sickness? What food is provided them in health? The Author of "The West Indies as they are," has informed us, "of the great care taken of the slaves in sickness, and of the boasted frequent attendance of medical men on the different properties. I have (says he) never seen

[z] Isaiah xxxiii. 16.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

any very flattering specimens, though I have been on a great many plantations, and have seen plenty of doctors. Their hospitals, or *hot-houses* (as they are very aptly styled) are, generally speaking, filthy receptacles. On most estates the hospital consists of a confined room with an earthen floor; on which is a platform of boards, upon which the sick lie down in their clothes. The hot-house is often the place where the Negroes are also *confined in the stocks;* so that it is both hospital and gaol. They have not the comfortable cottage of the English peasant, which no one dares to enter without permission. No, in his mud built hut, without a window or a chimney, on two or three boards, or on the floor itself, the Negro slave lies down on his mat, very often uncovered; and if he wants a little fire, as in the mountains he sometimes will, he must light his few sticks in the open air, and sit upon his heels shivering by them. As to food, the quantity in most cases is sufficient, (were it otherwise, they would be unable to perform the labour required of them) but in the quality, none but a bigotted low minded planter, or some interested professional resident, would compare the coarse yams and cocoas, and stringy indigestible plantains, with a few bad or rotten herrings, to the wholesome bread, potatoes, and other fine vegetables which the English cottager enjoys. I have seen a good deal of the English poor and can conscientiously say, that I never saw any

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

one *even a pauper*, who lived in the mean hoggish way that the slaves in the West Indies do; and moreover, that if such course food as the negroes generally eat, were offered them, they would reject it as unfit for human beings; English stomachs could not well digest it."

Such are the *bodily* "comforts" of slavery; what are its spiritual blessings we have before enquired. But we return to the peculiar hostility which the system bears to christianity. We are told, that in spite of all the great obstacles with which it is surrounded in the West Indies, it is now making rapid progress, and English liberality is appealed to, in various directions, to enable the *Moravians* to extend their settlements on several estates to which the proprietors have invited them. It is a matter of heart-felt rejoicing that the preaching of theGospel in the land where "Satan's sect (preeminently) is," should not be unaccompanied with its renovating power. — We have listened with delight to the unvarnished histories of its transforming efficacy upon the hearts and lives of the despised Negro, but we consider such particular instances of its success as no argument against the general hostility which the system of slavery bears to christianity.

Even the Moravians, who stand so deservedly high in the devoted bands of christian Missionaries, whose patient, judicious, self-denying labours are more tolerated, more encouraged by the Plan-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ters, than those of any other persuasion,—"*because of advantage,*"—because of the evident benefit which the slave owner thereby derives in the increased value of his slave property; because his vassals thereby become more profitable, more patient of toil, more trust worthy;—because they have thereby learnt the divine art of returning good for evil;—even these devoted messengers of the Gospel escape not unhurt by the infectious atmotphere of slavery. They imagine themselves under the sad necessity of exhibiting the glorious luminary of the Gospel, as "the sun, shorn of his beams,—seen through a horizontal gloomy mist;"—they imagine themselves under the sad necessity—though not of "handling the word of life deceitfully"—yet of administering it *partially;* inculcating upon the oppressed slave, its gentleness, meekness and long-suffering, but witholding from his *oppressor* the terrible woes which it denounces against injustice and oppression.

The first messengers of the Gospel who bore its glad tidings to a benighted enslaved world, were forewarned that they should be brought before rulers. Their commission was to preach repentance *to all;*—to declare the *whole* counsel of God;—to lay the axe to the root of every corrupt tree; to "pull down wickedness in high (as well as low) places." The incestuous Herod was boldly reproved by the Baptist;—Peter and John, when forbidden by the Jewish priests and rulers to

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

preach the new doctrine, replied with holy magnanimity—"whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye;" and they waxed bolder and bolder from the opposition they encountered. But though the same courage and zeal have directed many devoted Missionaries to our West Indian shores, the air is so tainted, so heavily surcharged with moral poison, that the nerves even of christian courage relax;—the truth, instead of being preached to all, without respect of persons, must, in this land of civilized barbarians, (more fiercely hostile to christianity than Pagan savages)—be preached to the poor Negro alone, and that by stealth, or connivance. To preach the pure doctrines of the Gospel to *slave-holders*—to speak to *them* even of the rights of common justice and humanity, would seem to be rushing into the very jaws of destruction. Yet, had these Missionaries relied less on human prudence and more upon "the God of Daniel," who shut the lion's mouths;—who, in former ages (and His power is ever the same) caused his devoted servants, "out of weakness to be made strong," to "wax valiant in fight"—and, though few in number "to turn to flight the armies of the aliens;" —who disarmed the flames of their power to burn;—who caused His servants to walk unhurt in the midst of the burning fiery furnace, "heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated": —peradventure, the horrid Moloc of slavery had

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

long since been abandoned—its bloody altars thrown down—and a decree, passed under the force of irresistible conviction, had gone forth from the colonial legislators themselves, announcing the year of jubilee,—proclaiming christian, instead of martial law,—the reign of justice, of righteousness and peace. But "the fear of man bringeth a snare"—a dangerous, a fatal snare. Our modern Missionaries, with the timidity as well as harmlessness of the dove;—restrict themselves by certain laws and prudential resolutions, not to be found in the scriptural directory, not to meddle with the established order of things;—not at all to interfere between the master and the slave;—to confine themselves wholly to the spiritual concerns of the latter:—never attempting to arrest the arm of lawless power, or to restrain its merciless inflictions;—to say to the cruel tyrant—"it is not lawful for thee" thus to degrade, to oppress, to torture thy fellow creature,—thy brother:—never reminding the lordly usurper that it is not lawful for him to make merchandize of human beings,—to treat immortal intelligences as brute animals;—never warning him that it is at his own peril that he scourges and chains his over laboured defenceless victims;—that he is thereby "heaping to himself wrath against the day of wrath;"—that "he shall have judgment without mercy who hath shewn no mercy;"—that "the same measure" which he is now meting to the slave,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

will certainly be "meted to him again." No, the Missionary says nothing of all this to the slave-holder. "No, it would be imprudent, it would be madness to do so;—it would utterly defeat the object of his mission and involve himself in certain ruin." But is not this "reasoning with flesh and blood"? Is not this "the fear of man (which) bringeth a snare"? A snare indeed it hath brought;—"Israel flees before his enemies;"—"the ark is taken;"—"the Philistines triumph." In one British colony, a christian temple is rased to the ground—its Minister made to fly for his life and proclamation issued to forbid his return on pain of instant destruction;—in another, an exemplary Missionary is arraigned for treason, tried by court Martial, condemned—and left to perish in prison!!—Persecution more fierce or cruel than this, could hardly have been anticipated had the Gospel been preached to the *slave-holder*, as well as the slave.

What an imperfect mutilated picture of christianity is exhibited, when its obligations are inforced upon the poor slave alone! The commission of its Divine author was, to "preach the Gospel *to every creature.*"—That Gospel preaches to the afflicted and the oppressed, patience and submission;—it imparts blessings to the poor, the meek and the persecuted;—but its preaching is also "to humble the pride, to abase the haughtiness of man";—to disarm the tyrant of his power;—to



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

break the rod of oppression;—"to bring down the mountains and to exalt the vallies;"—to establish justice, righteousness and mercy in the earth.

But the unmutilated Gospel, in *this* highly privileged portion of the British dominions may still be preached without hazard to the highest as well as lowest of the community, none daring to make the boldest asserters of its uncompromising requirements afraid. *Here* slavery, the most daring and impious of all contemnors of the laws both of God and man, may be safely attacked from the christian pulpit—from thence also it may be *successfully* attacked and have its death blow speedily administered.

"*Thirty-six years* have elasped since the rights of the slave have occupied the anxious attention of the people of England;—*twenty years since* the British Legislature distinctly warned the slave owners that it was resolved to better their condition;—*seventeen years since* the Law lifted up its voice to *command* that right and justice be done them."

"NOT ONE STEP, however, has yet been made towards a compliance with these warnings, or an obedience to this command. How much longer then are we to wait in the expectation of these infatuated men listening to us, and rousing themselves from that implicit reliance upon our carelessness, or timidity, or INSINCERITY, which it

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

must be owned our conduct has been too well calculated to engender?"[a]

Is it not high time to resort to other more decisive and effective measures? Is it not high time that christians, (those to whom the name truly belongs) should combine all their efforts—should concentrate all the force of their moral and christian principles in the strenuous use of every means whereby themselves and their country may be soonest purged of this deep pollution? Is it not, most especially high time for "the Priests, the Ministers of the Lord," to interpose, that this moral plague, may be stayed, before this highly favoured land be smitten with a curse, with a worse than Egyptian blindness and obduracy? of which indeed there are already alarming symptoms.

Let the worshippers of Mammon, propose a league with this "enemy of all righteousness"—try to modify and restrain and accommodate its operations to political interests and state expediency, —but let christian Ministers give it no quarter, but like Samuel, of old, hew this impious Agag in pieces, which, exults as he did, in the confidence that "the bitterness of death is over."

[a] See the Edinburgh Review, for March 1825, p. 214.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER V.

*On the importance of Associations for the purpose of obtaining the cooperation of the humbler classes.*

We proceed to the recommendation of an expedient for exciting a deeper and more general interest in the extinction of slavery, which is of no doubtful or mere imaginary utility. We have positive proof that it is no romantic fruitless attempt to persuade people to substitute East for West India sugar *before* the equalization of the duties upon both articles shall have rendered the former the cheaper of the two.

It must be distinctly stated, that the experiment has been already made, to a sufficient extent to justify, and as far as it has been tried, to exceed the expectations of its most sanguine advocates.

In one large manufacturing town, a very few individuals, in the course of a few weeks, by the employment of only a few hours in the day in personal visits among their neighbours, obtained the willing promises of about two thousand families entirely to abstain, from that time forward,

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

from all farther consumption of West Indian sugar so long as West Indian slavery continued to exist. Similar visits have been made with similar success in other towns and villages, but the zeal of the visitors has been not a little damped by the consideration, that unless such a plan of operation becomes general,—they may devote every hour of every day of their lives to this occupation, and yet, the labour, with regard to its ultimate object, prove altogether vain; since the subtraction of a few thousands from fourteen million consumers of British plantation sugar in the united Kingdom, would produce no perceptible change in the condition of its wretched cultivators. It seems however sufficiently evident, from the above experiment, that the extension of these personal visits, especially among the humbler classes, for the purpose of conveying information on the subject of West Indian slavery and on the support it derives from our consumption of its produce, would effect an important change in the condition of the cultiyators—and prove also, that there is yet among us a large portion of moral principle, right feeling, and christian charity. But, for the prompt exercise of that moral principle, right feeling, and christian charity, with regard to the great object in question, truth obliges us to confess that they will be sought for most successfully among the poor and labouring classes. Their superiors in station and

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

intelligence should blush to hear, that whilst they themselves are unfeelingly or thoughtlessly gratifying their appetite with slave produce,—objecting, as many of the more *opulent* do, to the substitution of East for West India sugar, because they consider it a *little more expensive*,—that not one in ten of their poor neighbours, who has been informed upon the subject, hesitates to declare the resolution to take no more slave cultivated sugar, though the sacrifice of a penny is much more to them than that of a pound to the rich economist;—to hear moreover that *many of them express an entire willingness to abstain from sugar altogether*, should the supply of East India ever fall short of the demand, rather than contribute in ever so small a degree to the encouragement of slavery. To this class of consumers, whose bill of fare is so scanty, it should be remembered that the relinquishment of sugar would be no inconsiderable privation, and the paying only a *penny* per pound more for East India, than they have been accustomed to pay for West India sugar (though of an inferior quality) is no contemptible sacrifice to principle on their part. Of the value of a *penny* to thousands and tens of thousands, in this land of opulence, many of the higher and middle ranks have little idea. It may appear both cruel and absurd to engage the poor in this confederacy against West India sugar, especially as their individual consumption is comparatively so trifling;

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

but the apathy which so generally prevails among the higher and middle ranks has forced the determined advocates for a speedy extinction of slavery upon this expedient, quite satisfied that there is nothing in it either cruel or absurd, since it is to them perfectly clear, from the common principles of justice, that we have none of us any *right* to retain our gratifications, our comforts, or even our health, at the expense of the comfort, the health, the liberty and the lives of our unoffending fellow-creatures.

Nothing but personal observation can fully demonstrate the efficacy of these personal appeals to the humanity of the humbler classes in the cause of Negro emancipation. It would be too much implicitly to rely on *all* the engagements made in this quarter, for ever to renounce the use of slave-cultivated sugar, though they were perfectly voluntary; but on the greater proportion, the visitors cannot hesitate to depend, they were made with such evident sincerity and earnestness. Those who have heartily engaged in this work, find no draw-back from the great satisfaction with which it is attended, but that arising from the want of general cooperation, and the coldness and opposition they have to encounter where encouragement and support might most reasonably have been expected. But coldness and opposition in one quarter, should incite to greater zeal and perseverance in another.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

It seems evident to demonstration, to those who have made this experiment, that a general extension of these simple missionary labours among the humbler classes, would do much to expedite the great work of emancipation. By this means, the consumption of slave-cultivated sugar might be greatly diminished, and the resistance of self-interest to the extinction of slavery would necessarily diminish in exact proportion to the diminution of its profits;—by this means the people might be more generally incited to more earnest petitions for a speedy emancipation; and should the *present* Parliament fail to accomplish the work, the exertions in question would do much to prepare the way, at the next general Election, for the choice of a Parliament more unanimous and devoted to the cause;—they would do much towards deciding the great body of electors to withhold their suffrages from every candidate who refused to *pledge* himself to vote for a prompt and complete extinction of British colonial slavery. How then can those who attach such important consequences to the extension of these simple exertions, refrain from inviting those who are themselves surrounded with all the bounties of a kind Providence,—blessed with hearts to sympathize with the oppressed and miserable,—with leisure and ability to plead their cause;—how can they refrain from soliciting such, earnestly to engage in this pro-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

fitable and delightful employment?—profitable and delightful they will certainly find it. Those who enter heartily into it, will find it attended by an abundant reward,—will feel the force of that divine benediction—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

To a few individuals, the labour of visiting every family in a large town, for the purpose of communicating information on the subject of slavery, (whether by the dissemination of tracts or by verbal intelligence), may appear insurmountable; but the most difficult work is rendered easy by methodical arrangement, and a proper division of labour. Were large towns divided into districts, on the plan of the Auxiliary Bible Societies, the field for individual exertion might be circumscribed within easy limits, and were proper means employed by such as are most interested in the cause in their own respective neighbourhoods, a sufficient number of willing agents would doubtless present themselves. There is no novelty to object to in this mode of proceeding. When people are in earnest—when the business is urgent, *canvassing* is commonly resorted to. And what business, to a christian philanthropist, can be imagined more urgent than that of putting a speedy end to the crimes and miseries of West-Indian slavery—of rescuing eight hundred thousand fellow-creatures and fellow-subjects from the lowest abyss of moral and physical degradation

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and wretchedness? This great deliverance, it is evident, *may* be accelerated by simple means, were they brought into general operation. It does not appear to be the Divine will that this work should be accomplished without human agency. Human agency *strenuously resists* this righteous undertaking, and human agency must *strenuously counteract that resistance.* Instead, therefore, of entering into nice calculations to ascertain what exact proportion of diminished consumption of West India sugar, would effect its object, let us rather strive to secure such a general rejection of it, as shall at once carry full conviction to the slave-holder, that there is no longer a market, on British ground, for that luxury, the consumption of which constitutes the main prop of his execrable tyranny, against which, British feeling and British virtue are at length up in arms, determined to give it no quarter.

Information to the humbler classes, on the subject in question, is not lost labour, like too much of that bestowed on their superiors in knowledge and station. They do not admit the strong claims of justice, the clear rights of humanity, without making any rational exertions to enforce them;—they do not listen to powerful arguments, eloquent appeals in behalf of the poor Negro, without putting forth a finger to lighten his heavy burdens. No, the simple story of his aggravated wrongs is sufficient to excite their sympathy,—

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the simple information of the means whereby those wrongs may be redressed, is sufficient, with them, to determine their prompt and earnest adoption.

On this rough but impressible ground, every touch of the moral artist will tell;—a very few skilful strokes will produce an effect more striking and durable than those which with greater labour and ingenuity are impressed upon a smoother and more polished surface.

Besides the evident tendency of the work we so earnestly recommend, to promote its immediate object, it is profitable on other accounts. It dispels misapprehension and prejudice from the minds of the visitors, opens them to conviction, reveals the true character of the humbler ranks of the community, of which so unworthy and false an estimate is often drawn by those who keep aloof from their habitations, and too often condemn a whole class for the misconduct of a few individuals. It enables the visitors to estimate more justly their own characters,—to weigh their own great advantages against the great disadvantages of their poor neighbours—and to blush at the comparison, when they see, as they often will, that the one talent entrusted to the poor, is often turned to better account than the five or the ten committed to their superiors in station and education. These visits are, of course, sometimes painfully as well as pleasurably interesting. The

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

varied pictures they present of humble life have their dark as well as light shades. They reveal scenes of privation and suffering little suspected by the prosperous to exist in this favoured country; sometimes, doubtless, the consequence of vice, or improvidence,—often, of inevitable misfortune, borne with edifying patience and resignation. These visits, have also this great recommendation, that they excite a kindly feeling of sympathy and mutual good-will, which ought to subsist between all the gradations of a christian community from the highest to the lowest. They improve the moral perceptions, enlarge the field of christian benevolence, expand the breast of christian charity, open fresh channels of usefulness, and shew how much more may be done in this portion of the vineyard than many imagine. They tend moreover to abate that pride and self-complacency so common and so natural to those who are raised ever so little above the common level. They are a practical conformity to the apostolic injunction, not to mind high things, but to condescend to men of low estate. Those who are incredulous respecting the efficacy of these visits, have only to make the experiment themselves, in order to be convinced that this is no exaggerated statement of their utility.

Let those among the higher and middle ranks who persist in the use of West India sugar, reflect for a moment, how much their resistance obstructs

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the motion of that simple yet powerful machinery which humanity has constructed for accelerating her great object. Those wheels which seem to drag and move so heavily, would run with easy and rapid motion towards the accomplishment of their design, were this clog of opposition withdrawn. Until it is withdrawn, the machinery will have to encounter much wear and tear, and a double portion of energy will be requisite in its main-springs and chief movers; in order to counteract this resistance.

The arduous, though interesting and profitable employment of canvassing, on this important business, from house to house, which it is to be hoped will soon become general throughout the kingdom,—may be encountered with many a sneer of contempt or ridicule by such as can be patient, laborious and persevering in nothing but their own interest or pleasure;—but the true Christian, though he may not himself have time, or opportunity to join this little band of humble pedestrians, will be careful to throw no discouragement in their way. He will remember how many great effects have resulted from apparently slight causes. He will remember that it is "not by might or by power" but often by very humble instruments, that the great work of righteousness is promoted. He knows that the "still small voice" of compassion and fellow feeling which is scarcely audible to the ambitious and

Digitized by Google
Original from
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the mercenary, is distinctly heard by many who are of little account either in their own or in others estimation. He knows that "foolish things,—things that are not,—are (sometimes) chosen to confound the wise, and to bring to nought things that are."

The cause of emancipation, has been pleaded in the Senate by the wise, the eloquent, the noble. Now, it is pleaded in the workshop and the cottage, by women and children.[b] And if it please the Great Controller of all things,—who accomplishes His purposes "by many or by few,"—by weak as well as by mighty instruments;—if it please Him to accompany these feeble efforts, these apparently inadequate and trifling exertions with His blessing,—doubtless, they will prosper.

Here is a frightful monster, of enormous magnitude and strength to be destroyed, which has for ages desolated some of the fairest portions of the earth; blasted with malignant breath the virtue and the happiness of millions of human beings:

[b] In the course of these missionary visits, *children* have been observed to pay particular attention to the unvarnished story of West Indian oppression, and in some instances, to encourage their parents not to use the produce of that oppression. A correspondent says, "The little son of a Clergyman (warmly interested in the cause,) collected subscriptions for the "Female Negro Society;" —his sister, only seven years of age, would go, if permitted by her Parents, to every Cottage in the neighbourhood to persuade the people to leave off slave sugar."

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

—hitherto, like the great Leviathan, it has scorned and derided all the attacks of its adversaries. "Its heart is hard as the nether mill-stone;"—darts are counted as stubble; it laugheth at the shaking of a spear;"—it marketh derision of the strong shafts of truth, the arrows of conscience. "It esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood;"—the force of reason, the claims of justice, the authority of revelation, it setteth utterly at naught. But the monster does not live upon air; —though he keeps in his strong holds, he cannot subsist without nourishment,—and of that the weakest of his adversaries may help to deprive him. Though he is invulnerable to direct attack, scorns alike the declamation of the orator, the argument of the moralist, and the authority of religion,—he may yet be subdued and vanquished *by fasting;* by this means the most savage and destructive monsters have been rendered tame and innoxious;—and thus, the most savage and destructive of all monsters, brute or human, if vanquished by no other means, may be *starved to death.*

The People have combined to nourish and to pamper this pest of civilized society; this impious contemnor of the laws both of God and man;—and the People must combine in its destruction.

Hitherto, it has subsisted upon the unremunerated toil, the tears, the groans, and the blood of millions of human beings. The chief production

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and support of all that oppression and suffering (the sweet juice of the sugar cane) has hitherto been thoughtlessly consumed by a People calling themselves christians,—boasting of their refinement, their humanity,—proud of their own liberty. But they can thoughtlessly consume it no longer; the faithful delineation of the horrid system of slave cultivation precludes for ever the *thoughtless* consumption of its produce;—and those who persist in its consumption prove their pretensions to superior refinement and humanity, to be vain boasting,—their vaunted love of freedom, to be mere selfish exultation in the possession of their own rights, and cruel indifference to the rights of others.

But though the majority of the higher and middle ranks of society should continue to discourage the exertions which it is the object of these pages to recommend;—it is evident, from the experiment adverted to, that there is a wide field in which they may nevertheless be successfully made.

The result of personal visits, among the poor and labouring classes especially, has been, that more than nine out of ten families have cheerfully adopted the resolution, entirely to abstain from the consumption of West India sugar.

We rejoice in the intelligence that associations for carrying this object into more extensive execution are rapidly spreading in various parts of the Kingdom. In Birmingham and its neigh-



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

bourhood, in Worcester, in Sheffield, in Colchester, Wednesbury, Calne, &c. and we cannot more effectually promote their extension than by presenting the public with the following copy of the resolutions passed at the last mentioned Town, originating with the wife of a highly respectable Clergyman, which express a tenderness of feeling, fervour of zeal and enlightened philanthropy, which *should*, in such a cause, animate every christian bosom.

"At a Meeting of Ladies, held in Calne, the 11th of August, 1825, the following resolutions were proposed and approved.

1st.—That we form ourselves into a society for aiding the cause of Negro emancipation, and for procuring the protection of the British law for all of the African race who are living under the British dominion, and who in 1825 are permitted, by ENLIGHTENED CHRISTIAN BRITAIN to taste of whatever is most painful and dishonouring in the bitterness of slavery.

2nd.—That all persons subscribing from 5s. to 12s. and upwards yearly, or two guineas at one time, be members of this association, and be entitled to receive one copy of the Anti-slavery Reporter.

3rd.—That the business of this society be conducted by a Treasurer, two Secretaries and a Committee of eight district collectors, who shall have power to add to their number; and three of whom shall be competent to act: and that the Treasurer and Secretaries be members of the Committee in virtue of their office.



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

4th.—That the Committee shall meet once a quarter on a day to be fixed by themselves; and that there be an annual meeting of this society, when the accounts shall be presented, the proceedings of the last year reported, and the Treasurer, Secretaries, Committee and assistant Visitors be chosen for the ensuing year.

5th.—That the Members of this society will encourage by their example, as well as by their influence, the use of the produce of free labour in preference to that of slave labour; and that the collectors, and visitors, be requested to recommend to the inhabitants of the several districts into which this Town and Neighbourhood shall be divided, to adopt the same measure.

6th.—That it be the special business of the Committee to disseminate throughout this place and neighbourhood, and wherever their influence shall extend, authentic information respecting the nature and baneful effects of the present system of slavery, particularly in our own West India Colonies; and that they are authorized (subject to the approval of a general meeting) to adopt such farther measures as shall appear to them to be calculated to forward the objects of this society.

7th.—That every Member of this society be furnished with the Supplement and Postscript to the Royal Jamaica Gazette of the 21st of June, 1823, and with Mr. Clarkson's Arguments founded on the same, and from time to time with such other documents as may serve to shew the evils of slavery, and the guilt of England in continuing a system, the parent of so many crimes.

8th.—That deeply impressed with the extremity of wretchedness endured by the deserted Negro Slaves who are worn out with labour or incurable disease, this association will apply some portion of its funds to the alleviation of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

their distress through the medium, in the first instance of the association for the relief of distressed Negroes in Antigua.

9th.—That this society will continue its exertions in aid of the cause of Negro Emancipation, till the time may come when the unhappy children of Africa, shall no longer be treated as beasts, no longer be bought and sold and branded like cattle; and when the torturing and degrading cart whip shall no longer fall on the persons of helpless Negro Slaves: and when the Negro Mother, living under British Government, shall press a free born infant in her arms."

Lest the zealous originator of these admirable resolutions should be mistaken for an advocate of *gradual* emancipation, we will venture to quote her own words on the subject, in a letter to a Friend. "Men may propose only *gradually* to abolish the worst of crimes, and only mitigate the most cruel bondage, but why should *we* countenance such enormities by speaking of them in such acquiescing, unscriptural, heartless terms? — If we hope for the blessing of God on our undertaking, we must not talk of *gradually* abolishing murder, licentiousness, cruelty, tyranny, keeping stolen men, parting husbands and wives, &c, &c. *I trust no Ladies' association will ever be found with such words attached to it.*"

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

## LETTER VI.

*To the Friends of Immediate Emancipation.*

Finally, we call upon all whose judgments are convinced, whose heads and hearts approve the proposition of immediate emancipation, to be *bold* in advocating it;—to beware of that spurious candour, that pusillanimous courtesy which compromises principle, and betrays weakness or insincerity. A cause so righteous and so urgent should be supported with dignity and firmness, as well as zeal. If the encouragement of slavery by the voluntary consumption of its produce be criminal in you, it is also criminal in others: if they are unconscious of its guilt, it is your duty by every means in your power to awaken the conviction.

When the consequences of this practice are taken into the account, we can imagine few more directly opposed to the sacred rule of doing to others as we would they should do unto us, consequently, few more criminal. Those who contend for its innocence, after being acquainted with the real nature of that iniquitous system which it tends directly to encourage and perpetuate, must

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

substitute vain imaginations in the place of realities; — must behold the awful characters of Justice and Righteousness in masquerade, their inflexible aspect and unbending attitude exchanged for indiscriminating smiles and unbounded accommodation.

After the broad exposure of the complicated wickedness of slavery, we cannot but regard the consumption of its produce as a wilful aiding and abetting of that complicated wickedness; we cannot but regard the exhibition of that produce for sale, in this enlightened and christian country as a mark of barbarism, a reproach and stigma upon the national character. We have no *moral right* to the productions of slavery; they are, in the very worst sense, *stolen* goods, and the receiver or purchaser, *knowing* them to be stolen, is as guilty as the thief.

This language may be considered as intemperate and offensive, but truth requires it. By a misplaced liberality, an unwillingness to sit in judgment upon others, with regard to the practice in question, the requisitions of humanity and justice are compromised to politeness, to the arbitrary claims of what is falsely called *good manners*. The *best* manners taught in the christian school, are those which on a subject so important, teach every man to "speak the truth to his neighbour." It is cowardice and treachery, in such a cause, to withhold it. It is better to offend than to flatter where

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

there is no alternative. Those who have seen the consumption of slave produce to be criminal, are bound, by consistency, to protest against it, as such, by every method of temperate reasoning and gentle remonstrance which is best calculated to convince.

The consistent friends of immediate emancipation will not pusillanimously yield to the prevailing disposition to keep the subject in the back ground, but will watch for opportunities of introducing it, "In season, out of season." Those who are *sincere* in this righteous cause will be *earnest*;—their earnestness is the only test of their sincerity. To say to the destitute, "Be ye warmed and be ye clothed," without affording the means of relief, is the language of cant and hypocrisy—and to be professed advocates for immediate emancipation, without making the necessary exertions for its accomplishment, is equally canting and hypocritical.

We have endeavoured to shew that the final extinction of British colonial slavery may be greatly accelerated by very simple means, but to bring those simple means into effectual operation will be an arduous task. The comparative smallness of the numbers at present engaged in it must be supplied by individual energy and determined perseverance.

In one decisive, consistent, *immediate* abolition-

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

ist there may be the concentrated force of thousands of timid, passive, *gradual* abolitionists. In the evident *right*, the manifest justice of immediate emancipation, there is every thing to inspire hope and confidence, to give heart and soul to the enterprise. The day, we trust, is not far distant when the great leaders of the anti-slavery society will transfer all the weight of their talents and influence from the weak and hopeless cause of *gradual* to that of immediate emancipation. In the mean time, let its present advocates put forth all their strength, make the best of their resources and take every rational means of augmenting their numbers. Above all, let them constantly recur to those divine principles, those solemn christian obligations which can alone sustain those disinterested, energetic and persevering exertions which the cause so urgently demands.

Let it never be forgotten, that the crimes and miseries inseparable from slavery are in no degree diminished because they cease to excite the shuddering horror produced by their first recital. In the cause of the poor Negro, feeling may fluctuate, natural sympathy may decline, but *exertion* need not; *that* may be uniformly sustained by the unvarying principle of christian duty. The Friends of immediate emancipation, know and are *sure* that the object for which they contend is a righteous one, they may therefore

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

contend for it confidently. They have an invisible but unerring leader, whose word of command,—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," is their sufficient warrant, and they fear no consequences; —they have no painful drawbacks to anticipate from the triumphs of victory;—for theirs, will not only be a bloodless triumph, but will ultimately entail blessings upon the vanquished as well as the victors.

The profession of christianity, having, for a long course of years, been made at a cheap rate, without any of those heroic and painful sacrifices by which in former ages it was inevitably attended, its professors have multiplied till christianity seems to be the *broad* instead of the *narrow* way; but the arduous work now in hand, will divide this promiscuous crowd, and separate the *dooers* from the mere hearers of the word. We trust that the former will prove that there is still nerve and sinew enough in christian arms to pull down the strong holds of slavery,—to shake the pillars of this Dagon-temple—and to raze it to its foundation.

But it should ever be remembered that as this is a contest of right against might,—of humanity and justice against sordid interest and lawless power;—as it is a christian not a political struggle —it must therefore be maintained by christian exertions;—that as the crime of slavery owes its

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

origin and support to unrestrained selfishness (the most relentless and cruel of all human propensities) it can only be expelled by the opposite virtue of disinterested christian charity.

It has subsisted hitherto upon the connivance and support of the British public—and will (humanly speaking) continue to subsist until that connivance and support are withdrawn—and no longer. No bounties, or protecting duties, or military force can uphold this execrable tyranny when the people refuse its produce. And though its *immediate* extinction can alone be effected by an act of the Legislature, such an Act could not be withheld were the people loud and unanimous in calling for it. Hitherto, there has been no such call;—even for its *gradual* extinction, the voice of the people has hitherto been very partially and feebly raised. It is a remarkable and reproachful fact, that the ample disclosures of the horrid nature of West Indian slavery, have not, hitherto, produced one third of the number of petitions against it which appeared against Lord Sidmouth's bill for fettering the Dissenters. This disgraceful apathy, the immediate abolitionists must labour to dispel;—they must strive to arouse and to keep alive the public interest in the speedy extinction of slavery;—to incite without delay, such general, reiterated and strong petitions upon the subject to both Houses of Parliament as shall convince Government that the petitioners are in

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

good earnest;—they must employ every means in their power to discourage the consumption of slave produce, *sugar*, more especially;—they must caution the public against the various attempts to practice upon their credulity by the imposition of sugar, cultivated under the worst system of slavery, for that of free labour.*

A very able and indefatigable advocate for the extinction of slavery, in a printed Address to the Society of Friends, (alluding to the important benefits which the Anti-slavery cause would derive from the abolition of the restrictive duties on the productions of free labour) says, "*An entire abstinence from the use of slave-grown produce would be equally, or even more effectual.*" If so great be the importance of such abstinence, it is surely an urgent duty earnestly to recommend and promote it. And in order effectually to guard against imposition and to prove that the Abolitionists are at length in good earnest,—strongly principled against all lukewarm, pusillanimous, half measures; we would suggest the expediency of endeavouring, without delay, to prevail on the Grocers in their respective neighbourhoods, to pledge themselves to abandon the sale of slave-cultivated sugar (such pledge, if general, would involve no pecuniary sacrifice)—

* That of the MAURITIUS is of this description, and is very generally imposed upon the unwary public as free grown East-India sugar.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

and in every town where no such pledge could be obtained of them, to secure, as speedily as possible, some other agent who shall engage to supply the public with *no sugar but what is the genuine produce of free labour.*

The zealous *consistent* advocates of a speedy emancipation will adopt every rational expedient for accelerating its accomplishment. Their abhorrence of slavery will be strongly marked. They will especially discourage, by every means in their power, the consumption of that luxury by which the inhuman system is mainly upheld. They will endeavour to fix a stigma upon its merchandize;—to withdraw, as much as possible, the public countenance and support from those shops where it is exhibited for sale and give every encouragement to those from which it is conscientiously excluded.

Measures so decisive, would probably draw upon their supporters no stinted share of censure and opposition, which, in such a cause, will be cheerfully encountered. Charity, true christian charity, is not a mere passive sentiment of kindness and general good-will;—it is an active, courageous, self-denying principle, and its exertions will be proportioned to the importance and urgency of the claims which are made upon it. It will be difficult to sustain that steady and earnest interest required for the support of these various continued

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

exertions, in a cause where no personal interest is at stake. It will be difficult, we admit, but not impossible. It will require effort, strenuous effort, to make christian principle supply the place of self-interest and evanescent feeling. But in the consideration of our strict responsibility,—in the spirit-stirring motives of the Gospel,—in the recollection that we are "compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses,"—that the eyes of Angels, and of God Himself, are upon us,—there is enough to stimulate our languishing zeal, to incite us to do violence to that natural indolence and selfishness, without which it is utterly impossible to be his disciples who requires his followers to take their daily cross. And let it ever be remembered, that the most arduous toils of christian duty are not unattended, even in the actual performance, with a sweet recompense of reward. The faithful labourer in his Lord's vineyard, receives "*a hundred fold, now, in the present time.*" In the hardest conflicts in a righteous cause, there is more satisfaction than in inglorious rest. And it is animating to think that the success of the great contest between the supporters and opposers of slavery, depends not on the physical or political strength of the combatants, but that its decision rests with the "God of battle,"—who enables *one*, in a righteous cause, "to chase a thousand."

Had it been the Divine will, (as some who

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

bear the name of christian ministers have impiously asserted [e]) that the slavery of the unhappy African race should be perpetuated,—would such a general sympathy have been awakened for their sufferings?—would such an ardent zeal have been kindled for their emancipation?—Would the wisest and best men in the nation have been constrained to devote themselves, as they have done, to the Anti-slavery cause?—No, certainly. The great Lord of the household does not call his servants to work, and direct their operations, where their labour shall prove fruitless. If it be not crowned with immediate success, it is to exercise their patience, to stimulate, not to relax their exertions,—assured, as they ought to be, that their labours shall not, ultimately, be in vain. Why was the command to love one another, so often reiterated by Christ to his Disciples? Not that the principle should lie dormant and inactive, that it should exist only as a sentiment or a feeling,—but to urge them to labour, arduous persevering labour for each other's welfare.

The speedy liberation of eight hundred thousand captives from the strong grasp of West Indian slavery, is a different but not impracticable work; the resistance though great is not insurmountable;—it may be permitted to try the sincerity, zeal and constancy of the abolitionists. In

[e] See "The House of Bondage," by B. Baily, A. M.

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

the mean time, whilst earnestly endeavouring to do their own part, they may cheerfully commit these unresisting victims of the most inhuman oppression to the parental care of Him whose "tender mercies are over all his works;"—who "heareth the sighing of the prisoner;"—who "feedeth the young ravens that cry unto him;" and without whom, "not a sparrow falleth to the ground:"—who *can*, and doubtless *does* afford, by means not subject to human inspection or comprehension, mitigation and support under oppresion and suffering, when all human resources fail.

This great deliverance could, we know, be wrought in a moment, by a single volition of the Sovereign will:—but that Sovereign will has ordained that the great purposes of his moral Government shall be accomplished by moral agents. In the moral as in the natural world, a regular succession of cause and effect are established. For the manifestation of Divine omnipotence, to prove that nothing can resist His will, He sometimes breaks that connexion,—interrupts the general order of His providence,—works alone,—accomplishes his designs by miraculous intervention. But these are rare deviations from the established course of things,—are not to be expected,—do not, in the least, exonerate us from labour,—from the diligent use of the appointed means;—though

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

it be God alone that giveth increase,—yet Paul must plant and Apollos water.

The friends, even of *gradual* emancipation, are accused of intemperate zeal, of precipitant haste; but the most zealous and urgent may, with more justice, upon christian principles, be accused of langour and tardiness. A variety of worldly maxims and arbitrary assumptions are suffered to pass current even with them, which chill the warm glow of christian benevolence, and enfeeble its exertions. "Long established abuses do not admit of sudden remedies;"—"Great reformations must be accomplished by slow degrees;"—"Time must be allowed for the change of public opinion;" &c. &c. These maxims are allowed to have a prospective as well as retrospective application:—thus, time and opportunity imperceptibly steal away, and—"All purpose, is poor dilatory man."

The maxims of the Gospel breathe a different language. "Work whilst it is day, for the night cometh in which no man can work."—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." So far from being justly charged with intemperate zeal and precipitant haste, the conduct of many professed friends of Negro emancipation, more resembles that of persons who have been *dreaming* of such a state of existence as that of West Indian slavery;—who shuddered

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

with horror at the frightful representation,—but they awoke, "and behold it was a dream." Really to believe and to know, that our fellow-creatures are actually suffering under the iron yoke of so inhuman a bondage—and to rest satisfied with cold prudential plans for the *mitigation* of their sufferings,—for their *gradual* emancipation;—calculating that their enfranchisement will ultimately be wrought out by the slow operation of natural causes,—by the more enlightened speculations of the self-same principle of selfish, sordid interest, which first tore them from their home and country, and has, ever since, held them in bondage!—exclaiming, that it is premature to call upon their neighbours to refuse the luxury produced by the over-strained sinews, the groans and the blood of the poor Negro, until they can obtain an adequate supply of the same luxury on *cheaper* terms by free labour!—is not to act the *christian's part;*—is not to obey the injunctions of their Divine Lawgiver. No it is to trifle with the sublime precepts of his religion,—as well as with the wretched objects of their pretended commiseration.

We cannot but regard with great jealousy and distrust all expedients for the extinction of slavery, which are suffered, in *any degree*, to *supersede* the prompt exertions of christian duty;—to direct the public attention to remote causes for the accomplishment of a change which ought immediately



Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

to be effected. We must solemnly protest against all unnecessary delay;—against all farther procrastinating propositions which would defer a present duty to a future opportunity;—which would overlook the obvious and certain means of its accomplishment, in quest of remote and uncertain ones. The deep crime and broad stigma of British slavery, (humanly speaking) might long since have been eradicated but for this pleading for time,—for prudence and caution;—this deprecation of precipitancy;—the exclusion of passion and feeling from the anti-slavery councils and the admission of cold calculating policy in their stead. On the atrocious injustice and cruelty of slavery, passion and feeling have a right to be heard; on such a business, they properly belong to the executive department, and are essentially necessary to carry the requisitions of humanity, religion and justice into prompt execution. On such a subject, a christian, how meekly soever duty requires him to bear his own personal injuries, may justify the utmost fervour of zeal; he may "*do well to be angry*"—that the natural, civil, and religious rights of the poor Negro are so long, so cruelly, so reproachfully withheld from him, *after* having been so fully recognized.

We would in no degree discourage such establishments as that of the "Tropical free labour company,"—far otherwise;—they seem admirably adapted, (in subserviency to the operation of

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

higher principles) to promote the grand design of their enlightened and philanthropic projectors,—that of the extinction of slavery throughout the world. We are only anxious that the friends of Negro emancipation should not build too confidently on their result;—that the sanguine expectation of their final success, should induce no relaxation in the exertion of other means more *directly* appropriate and of quicker operation. We can discern no shadow of reason why the emancipation of our own slaves should be suffered to hang at all in suspense on the success of any such experiments. On the principles of eternal justice, they have a PRESENT RIGHT to emancipation;—by the express commands of our Supreme Lawgiver we are bound to impart it. With that right, and those commands, we have trifled too long;—emancipation has already been too long withheld;—by every principle of religion, humanity and justice, we are bound to withhold it no longer; we are bound to enforce it by the prompt and earnest exertions of christian charity, without waiting till it is wrought out in the common course of events by the gradual operation of natural causes or commercial speculations.

In the course of an animated speech delivered by Lord Calthorpe, at the last Anniversary Meeting of the Anti-slavery Society, he observed, that, "Whoever reflected for a moment upon the vast results which public opinion can produce, could

Digitized by Google Original from UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA