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**DISCOURSE**

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

**AFRICAN SOCIETY IN BOSTON,**

15TH OF JULY, 1822,

ON THE

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

OF THE

**Abolition of the Slave Trade.**

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BOSTON:

PRINTED BY PHELPS AND FARNHAM,

No. 5, Court Street.

.....  
1822.

## DISCOURSE.

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### ACTS XVII. 26.

GOD HATH MADE OF ONE BLOOD ALL NATIONS TO DWELL UPON THE FACE OF THE EARTH, AND HATH DETERMINED THE TIMES BEFORE APPOINTED, AND THE BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION.

WE are here taught that the human race have a common Creator, a common origin, and a common nature. They are "made of one blood;" a kindred fluid circulates through their veins. "Their hearts are fashioned alike." However they may be distinguished by outward circumstances, or differ in complexion, they possess the same affections, passions, and sensibilities. In the exercise of these *affections*, they become endeared to each other. In the regulation and due government of these *passions*, they respect each others' rights, and avoid whatever would be injurious to the individual, or disturb the social state. And, by cherishing their *sensibilities*, they are disposed to take a kind interest in each others' welfare, and prompted to constant endeavours to promote it. "They are to dwell upon the face of the earth," as joint inheritors of the soil, and sharers in its productions. "God hath determined for them the times before appointed," that there should be a succession of generations: and as, by the increase of mankind, families multiply to

tribes, and tribes to nations, Divine Providence prescribed "the bounds of their habitation;" so that the respective territories of each are designated, that they might not be encroached upon nor invaded.\*

With all this provision for social order and happiness, mankind ought to live together as members of one large family; though separating from each other as they settle in the world, yet not disunited nor estranged; and, having a common interest, zealously engaged in promoting it. But the history of our species discovers to us how little this has been regarded by them. Instead of continuing to prove "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," they became selfish, sought to monopolize the bounties of nature, and aimed more at private gratification than the general benefit. Those who had obtained but a small share of what were considered the goods of life, grew envious of those who had more. Hence arose cupidity; and, to obtain what was coveted, resort was had to fraud or rapine. This occasioned contention. Those who possessed most power, or could bring the greater number to share with them as freebooters, were enabled to plunder the feeble and make a spoil of the unresisting. Where opposition was attempted, it served only to increase the contest with those who suffered wrong. Sometimes injuries provoked retaliation. Invasion of each others' rights led to oppression, and incensed the passions to war. Such as were not slain in the conflict were taken captives, and subjugated to their conquerors, or sold as slaves to others.—Such was the origin of **SLAVERY** in ancient times. **WAR** was its hateful parent, **TYRANNY** its cruel master, and **DEGRADATION** and **SUFFERING** its remorseless lot,

If the claims of **HUMANITY** were disregarded, it might have been supposed that, when the injunctions of **RELIGION**

\* Compare Deuteronomy xxxii. 8.



were added, they would have proved of avail to subdue "those inordinate lusts and passions whence come wars and fightings," especially that the mild and gracious system of CHRISTIANITY would have restrained men from those excesses which had prevailed among heathen and uncivilized nations, and have rendered those who became its converts as much superior to other men in benignity and tenderness, as the benevolence of the gospel was to that of every other religious institution in the world. And certain it is that, through the prevalence of our blessed religion, the condition of those who were kept in bondage was greatly improved; and that, in compliance with its principles, the Christian emperors enacted many laws to check the licentiousness of masters, and require them to treat their slaves with lenity and kindness.\* An eminent historian, discussing the causes which weakened the feudal system and finally abolished slavery in Europe in the XIVth century, observes, "The gentle spirit of the Christian religion, together with the doctrines which it teaches concerning the original equality of mankind, as well as the impartial eye with which the Almighty regards men of every condition, and admits them to a participation of his benefits, are inconsistent with servitude. But in this, as in many other instances, considerations of interest and the maxims of false policy, led men to a conduct inconsistent with their principles. They were so sensible, however, of the inconsistency, that to set their fellow Christians at liberty from servitude was deemed an act of piety highly meritorious and acceptable to heaven. The humane spirit of the Christian religion struggled long in this respect with the maxims and manners of the world, and contributed more than

\* See Instit. lib. I. tit. VIII. Digest. lib. I. tit. VI. 12. lib. XLVIII. tit. VIII. XI. Novell. XXII. c. VII. &c. See, also, Univ. Hist. vol. XV. p. 574—577.

any other circumstance to introduce the practice of manumission.”\*

In the XVth century slavery had ceased throughout Europe; but, at the commencement of the XVIth century, the discovery of America and of the western and eastern coasts of Africa, gave occasion to the introduction of *a new species of slavery*. It took its rise from the Portuguese, who, in order to supply the Spaniards with persons able to sustain the fatigue of cultivating their possessions in America, particularly the islands, opened a trade between Africa and America for the sale of negroes as slaves.†

The expedient of employing Africans for labour upon the plantations was not long peculiar to the Spaniards, being afterwards adopted by other nations, as they acquired possessions in the West Indies; and, to supply the demand, the trade in slaves was undertaken by all the maritime nations in Europe. Thousands of both sexes and of all ages,‡ acquired by stratagem or force, and retained by compulsion and violence, were torn away from their relations and friends, from their fields and flocks, from their home and country, from every connection that was dear to them, and every thing that was valuable in life, to be carried into unsparing and hopeless captivity, interminable exile and bondage. These unoffending victims to rapacity and avarice were “compelled to labour, without wages or any kind of remuneration, for those to whom they were under no obligation by any law, human or divine, to submit;” and were reduced to the most abject and humiliating state of degradation and misery in which it is possible for human beings to exist.

On the cruel treatment connected with the capture, the transportation, and the sale of those who were thus wrongf-

\* ROBERTSON'S View of the State of Europe, Introd. to his History of Charles V. Note XX. See also DU CANGE. Glossar. “*Manumissio*.”

† See Note A.

‡ Note B.

ly deprived of their liberty, no good mind can reflect but with sentiments of commiseration and horror. I stop not to state how inconsistent the infliction of such wrongs and sufferings is, not merely with the common principles of humanity, but with the decencies of civilization; nor how truly astonishing it is that the perpetration of such enormities should have been suffered among nations calling themselves Christians. We can account for it only by supposing that "the nature of the trade and of the slavery was but little known, except to those immediately concerned in them; and it is obvious that these would neither endanger their own interest nor proclaim their own guilt by exposing it."

At length the inhumanity, the rapacity, the sordid avarice, and the callous barbarity of those who engaged in procuring and vending slaves were exposed; and a moral abhorrence of the nefarious traffic has been universally excited in the public mind. Men of benevolent principles, who had influence in society, used their endeavours to have these atrocities prevented, and were indefatigable and persevering in their exertions to procure the enactment of laws, first for the restriction of the inhuman commerce, and eventually for its abolition. You have often been reminded, my friends, of the result of these exertions in Great Britain; and in their success have felt the most animating joy. You have been informed, too, of the endeavours of the British government by treaties with other nations to engage *them* to desist from the trade;\* as also, that the Congress at Vienna, composed of plenipotentiaries from five of the principal powers of Europe, on the 8th of February, 1815, made a solemn engagement in the face of mankind, "to effect the universal abolition of the slave trade," which they denounce as "a scourge which has so long desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted humanity."†

\* Note C.

† Note D.

Spain, though not a party in the original engagement, yet soon after, in a treaty with England, stipulated for the immediate abolition to the north of the equator, and for its final and universal abolition on the 30th of May, 1820.

Portugal, likewise, has stipulated that the Portuguese slave trade on the coast of Africa should entirely cease to the northward of the equator, and engaged that it should be unlawful for her subjects to purchase or trade in slaves except to the southward of the line. The precise period at which the entire abolition is to take place in Portugal does not appear to be finally fixed; but the Portuguese ambassador, in the presence of the Congress at Vienna, declared that Portugal, faithful to her principles, would not refuse to adopt the term of eight years,—which term will expire in the year 1823.

The result of this triumph of justice over oppression is, that at this time, among the European states, there is not a flag that can lawfully cover this inhuman traffic to the north of the equator. It is deeply to be lamented, however, that in some most flagrant instances, these various laws and regulations have been evaded, and the groans of the oppressed Africans have been heard mingling with the winds that pass over the murmuring waves.\* But be not disheartened, my friends. Think not that your race are always to be victims to the rapacity and cupidity of desperate and lawless men. No! God will vindicate their wrongs; and, under his merciful and favouring providence, effectual measures will be taken, not only to prevent the recurrence of these atrocities, but to convey peace, and civilization, and the blessings of religion to all the tribes of Africa.

Having intimated some of the measures pursued by Great Britain and the European powers for the discontinuance of this unnatural commerce in the human species, I propose to

\* Note E.



make a few remarks upon what has been done in our own country.

You know that your people were brought for slaves to the southern parts of this country at the times of their early settlement; not first by the colonists themselves, but by merchants of the parent country for their use. As population increased, the demand for them became greater, and the traffic more considerable; so that, at the time of the American revolution, great numbers were held in ignominious bondage.

Notwithstanding the zeal of the colonies to assert their rights, and to resist what they called oppression; and their great explicitness in declaring that *all men are equal*, and that *liberty is the birth-right of all*, and *an inalienable property*; yet they could not at once give that freedom to others which they so resolutely claimed for themselves. The delegates, however, in the first Continental Congress, seemed to have felt the inconsistency of retaining one portion of the inhabitants in slavery, while they were asserting the rights and liberties of the whole; and accordingly passed and promulgated a resolution, on the 6th of April, 1776, that "no slaves should be imported into any part of the confederation:"\* thus determining to prevent the increase of an evil, the existence of which they could not but lament.

The vast territory north-west of the Alleghany mountains having been ceded to the United States, Congress, to make permanent regulations for it, passed an ordinance for its government, dated 13th of July, 1787; the sixth article of which enacts, that "there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." How this national statute was violated

\* See Journals of Congress for 1776.



when slavery was allowed to Missouri, on its admission into the Union, you have heard with astonishment.\*

When, to consolidate the union of the several states, and to perpetuate the blessings of liberty, the Federal Constitution was formed, a reference was had to this degraded part of the community; but though full powers were possessed for the entire and immediate suppression of the farther importation, yet by way of compromise with the slave-holding states, and in accommodation to their views and requisitions,† it was deemed expedient to postpone the suppression *for twenty years*. “It were doubtless to be wished, (says Mr. MADISON‡) that the power of prohibiting the importation of slaves had not been postponed until the year 1808, or rather that it had been suffered to have immediate operation. But it is not difficult to account either for this restriction on the general government, or for the manner in which the whole clause is expressed. It ought to be considered as a great point gained in favour of humanity, that a period of twenty years may terminate forever, within these states, a traffic which has so long and so loudly upbraided the barbarism of modern policy; that within that period it will receive a considerable discouragement from the Federal Government, and may be totally abolished, by a concurrence of the few states, which continue the unnatural traffic, in the prohibitory example which has been given by so great a majority of the Union.”

Though there was to be so long a suspension of the work of mercy, yet Congress repeatedly gave to the world pledges of their wish and of their determination wholly and forever to abolish a traffic which president MONROE, in his message of 1820, described as “disgraceful to the civilized world.” Laws have been multiplied for its restriction and prohibition;|| penalties increased in severity; as an ultimate expe-

\* Note F. † Note G. ‡ See a paper of his in “the Federalist.”

|| Note H.

dent for its termination, it has been branded with its appropriate name of "Piracy," and those who shall be found engaged in it are subjected to capital punishment; and, under the authority of these acts, and for more effectually enforcing the provisions of them, some of our armed ships have been employed on the coast of Africa.\*

The *importation* of slaves being prohibited, we look forward to the gradual *emancipation* of such as are yet held in bondage; and rejoice that the Colonization Society interests itself so zealously in behalf of such as obtain freedom.

It would be gratifying to learn, that the condition of those who are yet held in slavery was more comfortable, and that attention was paid to their improvement; but we have heard, with deep regret, the inhabitants of the southern states reproached with neglectful indifference towards this degraded and wretched portion of American population. Even a munificent donation, sent to relieve those who had suffered by a desolating fire, was rejected, because it was forwarded with a request that the people of colour should be partakers of the relief; and the liberal bequest of the venerable and philanthropic Kosciusco is impeded in its kind appropriation.† We are informed, too, that these hapless beings are not only subjected to the most laborious drudgery, "and their lives made bitter with hard bondage;" but that they are brought up in the most deplorable ignorance; are not instructed in the rudiments of religion; and are even denied the privilege of hearing preachers, who, from compassionate motives, have offered to make them acquainted with the duties and doctrines of Christianity.‡ Here, then, is a large

\* Note I.

† Note J.

‡ Note K.

|| Our newspapers frequently state these things: it might seem invidious to quote the paragraphs. Something may be learnt from Dr. TORREY'S *Picture of Domestic Slavery*, and Dr. GRIFFIN'S *Plea for Africa*, p. 32—34.

number of our fellow beings, who live where the highest degree of CIVIL LIBERTY is professed, and yet remain *excluded from it*; and where that SPIRITUAL LIBERTY wherewith Christ has made us free is enjoyed, without sharing any of its advantages; and who are destitute of all the sources of consolation and enjoyment which belong to a human, moral, intellectual being! Alas! that the gloom of servitude is not brightened by some rays of mental and moral light, and is suffered to gather with its deepest shades over that grave, which is looked forward to with hope only because "there the wicked cease from troubling and there the weary will be at rest; the voice of the oppressor be no more heard, and the servant be free from his master."

There is something appalling in this reflection. It is a consideration of fearful import: for, when we think of the Supreme Being as the Judge and Vindicator of the oppressed, and the Avenger of their wrongs, we must look forward with apprehension to the day of righteous retribution.\* Well might Mr. JEFFERSON say, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that GOD is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events,—that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest."†

But I turn from these fearful forebodings, to make some remarks upon the former and present condition of people of colour in the state of Massachusetts.

Although in early times in this state there were Africans in several families who were purchased as slaves, yet they were always treated humanely; were well fed and clothed; were instructed by their masters and mistresses, particular-

\* Note L.

† *Notes on Virginia*, p. 173. Philadelphia edition, 1788.



ly on the Lord's day; and were required to be present morning and evening, when the family were called together to hear the Bible read and to unite in prayers; their children were baptized, and, when old enough, were sent to school; and, in short, their condition was merely that of *servants*, not of slaves. Indeed, the practice itself of domestic slavery is altogether repugnant to the institutions and feelings of the people of New England, and to that remarkable spirit of wholesome and rational liberty by which this Commonwealth, in particular, has been greatly distinguished from the earliest period.

In the year 1641, it was ordained that "none shall be held in bond slavery, villinage, or captivity, unless it be lawful captives taken in just wars, such as willingly sell themselves and are sold to us;—and such shall have the liberty and Christian usage, which the law of God established in Israel concerning such persons doth morally require."

A most honourable and humane resolve was passed in the General Court in the year 1646, against "the heinous and crying sin of man-stealing" on the coast of Guinea, in order to obtain persons to carry into captivity.\*

In the early part of the XVIIIth century, the venerable Judge SEWALL interested himself warmly in behalf of the Africans who were subjected to bondage.†

In 1767 a bill was brought into the General Court against "the unwarrantable and unnatural system of enslaving mankind, and to prevent the importation of slaves into the province."

At the time of the revolution it became customary for masters to give liberty to their servants, and those who did

\* The resolve, and the case on which it is founded, are recited in the Report of a Committee of the General Court of Massachusetts, 16th January, 1822, respecting free negroes and mulattoes.—That Report contains, also, a most interesting history of the acts and regulations of the Court respecting slaves.

† Note M.

not do it voluntarily, were sued by the negroes for their freedom.

The abolition of slavery in Massachusetts was *virtually* effected by the Constitution established in the year 1780;\* though the law by which it was *completely* effected was not passed till the 26th of March, 1788;—"seventeen years before the abolition in Denmark, the earliest European abolition." This law received the signature of JOHN HANCOCK, Esq. then governor of this Commonwealth. That eminent patriot was a warm friend to the liberties of the Africans in our country; he is remembered, by some whom I now address, with high sentiments of veneration and gratitude; and his name is inscribed on the triumphant banner borne in your procession this day.

It has been remarked that, "in the first census of the inhabitants of the United States, in the year 1790, *no other than free persons* were returned from Massachusetts, the only state in the Union which at that time did not contain slaves, and the only state represented in the first Congress held at New York in 1789, which had formally abolished slavery."

From these statements it must be apparent to you, my friends, that the lines have fallen to you in pleasant places, and that you have a goodly heritage. Yours are the privileges of liberty, secured by the immunities of that free constitution of government under which you live, improved by the advantages of knowledge, and sanctified by the influence of religion. You live among those who acknowledge and respect your rights and franchise, who are disposed to treat you with kindness, and from whom you are daily receiving tokens of civility and favour. You live among those who take a kind interest in your improvement, and have assisted you in the erection of this commodious house for

\* Note N.

public worship; and the very street in which it is erected bears the name of one who was an able vindicator of your cause.\* There was raised up for you a liberal benefactor in the late ABIEL SMITH, Esq. who left you a legacy to support a school for the education of your children:† and it is gratifying to know that the institution is in a flourishing state; that a private school, under the care of the wife of your worthy and pious pastor, has obtained kind patronage; and that the Sunday School is well attended. I most sincerely commend you for your correct and decorous deportment, for the disposition which you show to be known and regarded as good and useful members of society, for your ambition to have your children well instructed and brought up in good moral principles and habits, and for your own respect for religion, and regular attendance upon public worship. I sincerely congratulate you upon all the advantages with which you are favoured, and hope that you will continue to make a good use of them, and that they will be increased and perpetuated. I rejoice with you in the gladness of this day; and trust that by your decorum and temperance, you will gain approbation in the view of the community, do honour to yourselves, and have a fund of pleasant reflections to enrich the joys of to-morrow, and to enliven all your future anticipations.

Accept my cordial wishes for your welfare, temporal and spiritual. Though you are as strangers in a foreign land, yet, through the blessed gospel, and the privileges offered you in CHRIST JESUS, you may become fellow citizens with the saints, and share the glorious liberty of the sons of God.

With all the cheering emotions which this occasion inspires, let us mingle those of fervent piety. *Let us pray for oppressed Africa*, the land of your fathers. God grant that it may be protected from the spoiler, and that its inhabitants

\* Note O.

† Note P.



may not only remain unmolested, but may become civilized, and receive the knowledge and the advantages of the Christian religion!—*Let us pray for those who are returning to those shores to form a new colony.* May they be preserved in health, and be greatly prospered!—*Let us pray for your devoted kindred in captivity.* May their hardships be alleviated, and the wrongs which they suffer be redressed!—*Let us pray for those who interest themselves in behalf of the oppressed Africans.* May their exertions be crowned with the most hopeful success, and rewarded into their own bosoms with the best of divine blessings!—*Let us, also, pray for those who shall add their bounty to the contribution which is now solicited.* May they have a recompense in the life which now is, and a more abundant reward in the life and world to come.

Finally. Let us all look forward to another world, where undisturbed freedom and everlasting happiness are to be enjoyed. There may we all meet, and be accepted by the mercy of God, the common parent of us all, through JESUS CHRIST our Saviour!

AMEN.

## NOTES.

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### NOTE A.

THIS disgraceful commerce is said to have begun in the year 1508, when the first importation of negro slaves was made into Hispaniola from the Portuguese settlements on the western coasts of Africa.

[See ANDERSON'S *History of Commerce*, VI. 336.]

"The shores of Hispaniola were the first American soil polluted by the footsteps of an African slave, and they were the first to witness his emancipation; the land which first drank his tears, was the first drenched in the blood of his oppressors; and the mountains which first re-echoed the sound of the lacerating scourge, were the first which reverberated the signal of his triumph. He is now the lord of the soil he ignobly tilled for others, and waves the banner of freedom over the scenes of his former ignominy and suffering. The voice of GOD speaks loudly in this event,—let the nations look to it." [CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE, for *January and February*, 1822. p. 39. The whole article deserves careful perusal.]

The *Abbe* RAYNAL, in his *History of the West Indies*, Vol. IV. p. 148, Book XI. has an address to the inhabitants of Hispaniola, (more usually called St. Domingo,) written several years before the revolution there, which seems prophetic of that event:

"If interest alone can have influence over you, listen to me once more. Your slaves stand in no need either of your generosity or your counsels, in order to break the sacrilegious yoke of their oppression. Nature speaks a more powerful language than philosophy or interest. Already have two colonies of fugitive negroes been established, to whom treaties and power have given a perfect security from your attempts. These are so many indications of the impending storm, and the negroes only want a chief sufficiently courageous to lead them to vengeance and slaughter.

"Where is this great man whom nature owes to her afflicted, oppressed, and tormented children? Where is he? He will undoubtedly appear. He will shew himself. He will lift up the sacred standard of liberty. This

venerable signal will collect around him the companions of his misfortunes. They will rush on with more impetuosity than torrents. They will leave behind them in all parts indelible traces of their just resentment. Spaniards, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, all their tyrants, will become the victims of fire and sword. The plains of America will suck up with transport the blood which they have so long expected, and the bones of so many wretches heaped upon one another during the course of so many centuries will leap for joy.—Then will the *Black Code* be no more; and the *White Code* will be a dreadful one, if the conqueror only regards the right of reprisals.”

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NOTE B.

“In a few years the number exported varied from *fifty to an hundred thousand*. In 1791 the British importations alone amounted to *seventy-four thousand*.”

“It is calculated that Africa has been drained of no less than *one hundred and fifty thousand* of its inhabitants annually; and that, in the year 1817, *two hundred and forty thousand* slaves were exported from the coast of Africa.”

“The extension of the trade for the last 25 or 30 years must, in a degree, be conjectural; but the best information that can be obtained on the subject furnishes good foundation to believe, that during that period, the number of slaves withdrawn from Western Africa amounts to upwards of *a million and a half*; the annual average would be a mean somewhere between fifty and eighty thousand. [*Report of Committee to Congress, February 9, 1821.*]

“In the last twelve months [1820] not less than *sixty thousand* Africans have been forced from their country, principally under the colours of France.” [*Sir GEORGE COLLIER'S Report.*]

The importation into South Carolina in the year 1783 was as follows :

From Africa and the West Indies . . . . .	1003
From St. Augustine, &c. . . . .	167

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1170

The next year (1784) were imported from Africa	} 4020
and the West Indies . . . . .	

From St. Augustine . . . . .	1372
	<hr/> 5392

Negroes imported into South Carolina in 1783 & 1784 . . . .	6562
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[See HOLMES'S *Annals*, Vol. II. p. 468.]



## NOTE C.

TREATY between his Britanic majesty and his most faithful majesty, signed at London, 28th July, 1817—and his Catholic majesty at Madrid, 23d September, 1817—and the king of the Netherlands, at the Hague, 4th May, 1818.

## NOTE D.

THE plenipotentiaries of the powers composing the Congress at Vienna declare—"that they could not better honour their mission, fulfil their duty, and manifest the principles which guided their august sovereigns, than by labouring to realize their engagement to effect the universal abolition of the slave trade, and by proclaiming in the name of the sovereigns their desire to put an end to a scourge, which has so long desolated Africa, degraded Europe, and afflicted humanity: and in making this declaration known to Europe and to all the civilized nations of the earth, the said plenipotentiaries flatter themselves they sha<sup>ll</sup> engage all other governments, and particularly those who, in abolishing the traffic in slaves, have already manifested the same sentiments, to support them with their suffrages in a cause, of which the final triumph will be one of the greatest monuments of the age which undertook it, and which shall have gloriously carried it into effect."

In transcribing this most noble declaration, I am reminded of a remark of the celebrated M. NECKER. In his work of the French finances, published in 1784, referring to the slaves in the colonies, he expresses a strong disapprobation of the execrable trade, and throws out the idea of a *general compact*, by which all the European nations should agree to abolish it; and he indulged the pleasing hope that it might take place even in the present generation.

## NOTE E.

"It appears that the number of ships carrying French colours has multiplied to an extent altogether incredible on any other supposition, than that adventurers of all other nations, and particularly of this country, have assumed a French disguise. It has been officially stated to our government, upon the most respectable authority, that *two hundred thousand slaves* have been carried off from the coast of Africa, by vessels under the French flag, in the course of the last year." [See *Memorial of the American Colonization Society, presented to Congress 6th of February, 1822.*

## NOTE F.

WHEN an application was made by the Missouri Territory to be admitted as one of the United States, and *with the permission to hold slaves*, it was generally believed that Congress could not grant such an indulgence; that it would be a violation of the Bill of Rights, on which our Constitution was founded, as well as of the principles of justice and humanity, and repugnant to the very spirit of liberty, which is the pride and boast of a professed NATION OF FREEMEN. Both in the Senate and Congress the question whether Missouri should be admitted with or without the restriction was agitated in warm debate, and in some most impressive speeches. All that learning, humanity, a regard to sound policy, and a respect to the principles of our free and republican forms of government could adduce, exhibited with the most powerful and persuasive eloquence, failed of effecting their benevolent purpose! Their pleadings fell upon deafened ears, and moved not hearts indurated by selfishness. The Bill for the admission of Missouri into the Union, *without* the restrictive clause prohibiting slavery, passed the House of Representatives, though only by a lean majority of *four* votes:—against the restriction, 90—for the restriction, 86. So that Missouri is permitted to become a *slave-holding state*.

It is impossible to describe the feelings of surprise and regret which this decision has occasioned in the New England States. The friends of humanity and freedom are palsied at the shock. Not only will this be the means of continuing and extending the most disgraceful practice of keeping slaves, but of opening a new market for the sale; and thus furnish slave traders and kidnappers with inducements to procure, *per fas aut nefas*, new supplies by importation. We are thus reminded of a fine apostrophe by Dr. BEATTIE:

“Let it not any longer be said that slavery is countenanced by the bravest and most generous people on earth; by a people who are animated with that heroic passion, the love of liberty, beyond all other nations, ancient or modern, and the fame of whose toilsome but unwearied perseverance in vindicating at the expense of life and fortune the sacred rights of mankind, will strike terror into the hearts of sycophants and tyrants, and excite the admiration and gratitude of all good men to the latest posterity!” [*Essay on Truth*, Part III. Ch. 2.]

## NOTE G.

IN the Convention most of the states were anxious to insert a provision authorizing the immediate total abolition of the slave trade. This was resisted peremptorily by Georgia and South Carolina, and the compromise

was at length effected which is found in the ninth section of the first article of the Constitution. The earnestness of those two states was further shown by their insisting on the security in the fifth article against any amendment to the Constitution affecting the faculty reserved to them of continuing to prosecute the trade for twenty years.

In the debates of the Virginia Convention respecting the Federal Constitution, Mr. MADISON declared—"The southern states would not have entered into the Union of America without the temporary permission of the slave trade. And if they were excluded from the Union, the consequence might be dreadful to them and to us."—"If South Carolina and Georgia should disunite from the other states for not indulging them in the temporary continuance of this traffic, they might solicit and obtain aid from foreign powers." [p. 322.

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#### NOTE II.

"THE act of Congress of the 22d of March, 1794, contains provisions that no citizen or citizens of the United States, or foreigner, or any other person coming into, or residing within the same, shall, for himself or any other person whatsoever, either as master, factor, or owner, build, fit, equip, load, or otherwise prepare, any ship or vessel, within any port or place of the United States, nor shall cause any ship or vessel to sail from any port or place within the same, for the purpose of carrying on any trade or traffic in slaves to any foreign country; or for the purpose of procuring from any foreign kingdom, place, or country, the inhabitants of such kingdom, place or country, to be transported to any foreign country, port, or place, whatever, to be sold or disposed of as slaves, under the penalty of the forfeiture of any such vessel, and of the payment of large sums of money by the persons offending against the directions of the act.

"By an act of the 3d of April, 1793, in relation to the Mississippi Territory, to which the constitutional provision did not extend, the introduction of slaves, under severe penalties, was forbidden, and every slave imported contrary to the act, was to be entitled to freedom.

"By an act of the 10th of May, 1800, the citizens or residents of this country were prohibited from holding any right or property in vessels employed in transporting slaves from one foreign country to another, on pain of forfeiting their right of property, and also double the value of that right in money, and double the value of their interest in the slaves; nor were they allowed to serve on board of vessels of the United States employed in the transportation of slaves from one country to another, under the punishment of fines and imprisonment, nor were they permitted to serve on board of foreign ships employed in the slave trade. By this act, also, the commis-



sioned vessels of the United States were authorized to seize vessels and crews employed contrary to the act.

“By an act of the 28th of February, 1803, masters of vessels were not allowed to bring into any port (where the laws of the state prohibited the importation) any negro, mulatto, or other person of colour, not being a native, a citizen, or registered seaman, of the United States, under the pain of penalties; and no vessel, having on board persons of the above description, was to be admitted to an entry; and if any such person should be landed from on board of any vessel, the same was to be forfeited.

“By an act of the 2d of March, 1807, the importation of slaves into any port of the United States was to be prohibited after the 1st of January, 1808, the time prescribed by the constitutional provision. This act contains many severe provisions against any interference or participation in the slave trade, such as heavy fines, long imprisonments, and the forfeitures of vessels; the President was also authorized to employ armed vessels to cruise on any part of the coast where he might judge attempts would be made to violate the act, and to instruct the commanders of armed vessels to seize, and bring in, vessels found on the high seas contravening the provisions of the law.

“By an act of the 20th of April, 1818, the laws, in prohibition of the slave trade, were further improved. This act is characterized with a peculiarity of legislative precaution, especially in the eighth section, which throws the labour of proof upon the defendant, that the coloured persons brought into the United States by him, had not been brought in contrary to the laws.

“By an act of the 3d of March, 1819, the power is continued in the President to employ the armed ships of the United States, to seize, and bring into port, any vessel engaged in the slave trade by citizens or residents of the United States; and such vessels, together with the goods and effects on board, are to be forfeited and sold, and the proceeds to be distributed, in like manner, as is provided by law for the distribution of prizes taken from an enemy; and the officers and crew are to undergo the punishments inflicted by previous acts. The President, by this act, is authorized to make such regulations and arrangements as he may deem expedient, for the safe keeping, support, and removal beyond the limits of the United States, of all such negroes, mulattoes, or persons of colour, as may have been brought within its jurisdiction, and to appoint a proper person or persons residing on the coast of Africa, as agent or agents for receiving the negroes, mulattoes, or persons of colour, delivered from on board of vessels seized in the prosecution of the slave trade.

“And in addition to all the aforesaid laws, the present Congress, on the 15th of May, 1820, believing that the then existing provisions would not be sufficiently available, enacted, that if any citizen of the United States, being



of the crew or ship's company of any foreign ship or vessel, engaged in the slave trade, or any person whatever, being of the crew or ship's company of any ship or vessel, owned in the whole, or in part, or navigated for, or in behalf of, any citizen or citizens of the United States, shall land from any such ship or vessel, and on foreign shore seize any negro or mulatto, not held to service or labour, by the laws of either of the states or territories of the United States, with intent to make such negro or mulatto a slave, or shall decoy or forcibly bring, or carry, or shall receive such negro or mulatto, on board any such ship or vessel, with intent as aforesaid, such citizen or person shall be adjudged a pirate, and on conviction *shall suffer death.*"

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NOTE I.

I BEG leave to refer to the "Report of the case of the *Jeune Eugenie*, determined in the Circuit Court of the United States for the first circuit at Boston, December, 1821, with an Appendix, by W. P. MASON, Reporter, Boston, 1822"—and to the *Review* of this Report, in the *CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE* for January and February, 1822.

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NOTE J.

THE distressing fire in Savannah, the capital of Georgia, called out very liberal contributions for the relief of the sufferers, particularly in the middle and northern states. In the city of New York the sum of *twelve thousand dollars* was promptly subscribed, and forwarded with a request that such *people of colour* as were sufferers might share in the distribution. This gave umbrage to the City Council, who sent back to the Donation Committee of New York the sum subscribed, because encumbered with such a condition!

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NOTE K.

THE patriotic General Kosciusco bequeathed a fund exceeding *twenty thousand dollars*, in the hands of President JEFFERSON, to be laid out in the purchase of young female slaves, who are to be educated and emancipated. General COOKE, of Virginia, has, at the request of Mr. JEFFERSON, undertaken the administration of this trust, in the hope that the difficulties opposed to the wishes of the testator, under the existing laws of Virginia, may be obviated, in accordance with the terms of his will, by incorporating the bequest with the funds of the American Society for

colonizing free people of colour, under the sanction and controul of a Court of Equity.

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NOTE L.

IN the Federalist, Mr. MADISON writes thus—"May it not happen, in fine, that the minority of *citizens* may become a majority of *persons*, by the accession of alien residents, of a casual concourse of adventurers, or of those whom the constitution of the state has not admitted to the rights of suffrage? I take no notice of an unhappy species of population abounding in some of the states, who, during the calm of regular government, are *sunk below the level of men*, but who, in the tempestuous scenes of civil violence, may emerge into the human character and give a superiority of strength to any party with which they may associate themselves."

I make an extract from a pamphlet entitled "Free remarks on the spirit of the Federal Constitution, the practice of the Federal Government, and the obligations of the Union respecting the exclusion of slavery from the territories and new states." Philadelphia, 1819.

—"It will be finally encumbered by the slave population.

"The last of these consequences is especially appalling, when we consider that no country in which personal slavery has prevailed to any considerable extent has escaped servile wars; and that the fruits of a century of civilized industry, the proudest monuments of the most refined art, and the most admirable creations of state wisdom, may be laid waste in the struggles, and forever lost in the triumph of the desperate multitude, whom a jealous policy had debarred from knowing their value, and a cruel yoke prepared for every excess of havoc. History, both ancient and modern, is full of examples of furious and destructive revolt."

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NOTE M.

HON. SAMUEL SEWALL, afterwards Chief Justice of the Superior Court, in 1700, addressed a Memorial to the Legislature of Massachusetts, which was afterwards printed in a pamphlet, and bore the title of "the selling of Joseph," and in which he pleaded the cause of the oppressed Africans, both as a lawyer and as a Christian.

Being desirous of seeing this Memorial, I applied to Rev. SAMUEL SEWALL of Burlington, a descendant of the Judge, who, though not possessed of the tract, obligingly communicated to me the following extract from his ancestor's manuscript Journal, referring to it.

"1700. Fourth day, June 19.....Having been long and much dissatisfied with the trade of fetching negroes from Guinea, I had a strong

inclination to write something about it, but it wore off. At last, reading BAYNE, Ephes.\* about servants, who mentions Blackamoors, I began to be uneasy that I had so long neglected doing any thing. When I was thus thinking, in came brother BELKNAP to show me a petition he intended to present to the General Court for the freeing a negro and his wife, who were unjustly held in bondage. And there is a motion by a Boston Committee to get a law that all importers of negroes shall pay 40*s.* per head, to discourage the bringing of them: and Mr. C. MATHER resolves to publish a sheet to exhort masters to labour their conversion: which makes me hope that I was called of God to write this apology for them. Let his blessing accompany the same!"

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NOTE N.

THE first article of the Declaration of Rights asserts, "All men are born free and equal;" which was inserted with a particular view to the liberation of the negroes on a general principle. Some persons, however, doubted the extent of this principle until the trial of a case at the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts in 1783, the decision of which was in favour of a negro, on the ground of the above article in the Constitution.

[See Coll. Hist. Soc. IV. 206.

On the origin and progress of attempts for the abolition of slavery in Pennsylvania, see *Historical Collections*, N. S. Vol. VIII. p. 183.

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NOTE O.

THE African Meeting House is in Belknap street.—In Dr. ELIOT'S biographical notice of Rev. JEREMY BELKNAP, D. D. is the following account:

"An ingenious young man in this town, [Boston,] at the desire of a West India merchant, had written in favour of the African trade, using all the arguments which can be gathered for the lawfulness of slavery from the scriptures and the practice of nations. He took the signature of *John Marsham*; and seemed to court the controversy, as one able to maintain his ground and confute his opponents. These essays being published in

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\* The work referred to is BAYNE'S Commentary on the Ephesians, London, 1658, fol. and the particular passage was the VIth chapter, 5th verse.

the newspapers were answered through the same channel by several able and ingenious hands. Among the best pieces were those which proceeded from the pen of Dr. BELKNAP."

In the IVth volume of the publications of the Historical Society of Massachusetts, are the answers of Dr. BELKNAP to queries respecting the slavery of Africans, which contain several very interesting particulars.

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NOTE P.

ABIEL SMITH, Esq. of Boston, left by will, for the support of a school for African children, \$4,000 of 3 per cent. stock ; 30 shares in Newburyport Turnpike ; 20 shares in Second New Hampshire Turnpike ; 17 shares in the Kennebeck Bridge ; 5 shares in the bridge at Tiverton, R. I. and 5 in the Bathing House.



*NUMBER of Slaves in the United States according to the Census taken in Virtue of the Act of Congress of the 14th of March, 1820, and the Act of the 3d of March, 1821.*

STATES AND TERRITORIES.	MALES.				FEMALES.			
	Males under fourteen years.	Males of fourteen and under twenty-six.	Males of twenty-six and under forty-five.	Males of forty-five and upwards.	Females under fourteen.	Females of fourteen and under twenty-six.	Females of twenty-six and under forty-five.	Females of forty-five and upwards.
	to 14	to 26	to 45	45 &c.	to 14	to 26	to 45	45 &c.
Maine . . . . .								
New Hampshire . . . . .								
Massachusetts . . . . .								
Rhode Island . . . . .	2	1	1	14	2	3	3	22
Connecticut . . . . .			13	24			13	47
Vermont . . . . .								
New York . . . . .	1,861	1,624	932	671	1,544	1,579	1,065	812
New Jersey . . . . .	860	1,583	917	623	592	1,285	1,036	656
Pennsylvania . . . . .	1	1	18	65	3	2	36	85
Delaware . . . . .	1,244	839	337	135	979	611	233	131
Maryland . . . . .	24,736	14,846	10,718	6,073	22,740	13,403	9,362	5,520
Virginia . . . . .	96,831	52,791	45,438	23,164	92,468	51,972	40,691	21,748
North Carolina . . . . .	48,914	27,511	19,395	10,731	45,055	25,663	13,326	9,422
South Carolina (ex- cept Kershaw) . . . . .	50,346	31,484	30,868	14,417	48,364	33,064	29,690	13,550
Georgia . . . . .	33,204	19,541	16,249	6,922	32,141	19,379	15,631	6,089
Alabama . . . . .	9,665	6,563	4,200	1,352	9,140	6,141	3,779	1,039
Mississippi . . . . .	7,016	4,600	4,061	1,173	6,677	4,807	3,506	974
Louisiana . . . . .	11,675	10,876	10,520	3,495	10,763	11,672	7,758	2,305
Tennessee . . . . .	20,314	10,078	6,529	2,826	19,251	11,153	7,192	2,764
Kentucky . . . . .	31,469	17,132	10,944	4,369	29,231	17,407	11,801	4,379
Ohio . . . . .								
Indiana . . . . .	43	37	11	7	40	21	21	10
Illinois . . . . .	170	179	133	66	139	128	71	31
Missouri . . . . .	2,491	1,511	852	487	2,281	1,461	855	284
Territory of Michigan . . . . .								
Territory of Arkansas . . . . .	323	276	143	78	293	268	157	79
District of Columbia . . . . .	1,245	775	671	316	1,311	990	696	373
Grand Total . . . . .	342,460	202,248	162,950	77,013	323,014	201,509	151,922	70,320

N. B. THE opinion of General WASHINGTON, first president of the United States, on the subject of slavery, may be learned from passages in his will respecting the emancipation of those he held. The opinion of President JEFFERSON is quoted in page 12 of the preceding discourse; of President MADISON in pages 10, 21 & 24; and of President MONROE in page 10.

Males 784671  
 Females 746765  
 Total 1,531,436