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REMARKS
ON THE
SLAVERY AND SLAVE TRADE
OF
THE BRAZILS.

BY T. NELSON, R.N.

LATE SENIOR ASSISTANT SURGEON OF H. M. S. CRESCENT AT
RIO DE JANEIRO.

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REMARKS ON SLAVERY.

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burning sun.

MERCHANT OF VENICE.

THE undiminished interest which continues to be taken by the British public in matters relating to negro slavery and the slave-trade, and their anxiety to suppress radically throughout the world a system no less revolting to humanity, than at variance with the simplest dictates of divine and human justice, has induced the writer of the following remarks to think, that any information, however humble, which may either serve to confirm the opinions already entertained, or further the great and philanthropic end to which those opinions are struggling to attain, may not prove unacceptable, especially at a juncture, when doubts are beginning to be widely held of the total inefficacy of the measures which have been hitherto adopted to crush the traffic in negro slaves, and no little perplexity

is experienced in the selection of others more likely to prove successful. An experience gained in the course of a professional intercourse with liberated Africans, and during a lengthened residence in the Brazils, is the guarantee offered for the authenticity of what is about to follow, and as an excuse for this intrusion upon public notice.

Of all the countries wherein slavery exists, and by which the slave-trade continues to be prosecuted with untiring perseverance, the Brazils unquestionably ranks the first. Its immense extent of territory, reaching from the river Amazon to within a short distance of the river Plate, and stretching from the sea many hundreds of leagues into the interior, embraces every variety of climate, from the torrid to the temperate zone. The intertropical position of the greater portion of this territory, and its fertility in all that relates to intertropical produce—as cotton, coffee, sugar, and tobacco; the delightful salubrity of the district lying to the southward of the tropic of capricorn, and its admirable adaptation for pastoral purposes, the total absence of what deserves the name of epidemic disease throughout the empire—all hold out a tempting prospect to the agriculturist, and have been found to reward richly those who have chosen to take advantage of them.

The formidable obstacle which the hotness of the climate, at certain periods of the year, throws in the way of manual exertion, nature has in a great measure counteracted, by the promptitude with which she causes cultivation to flourish under the smallest amount of toil. The majority of those expensive and laborious undertakings, which the English agriculturist must perform to insure an adequate return, are

here neither adopted nor even known. The land having been cleared of its primary coat of wild vegetation, requires no other care than to be annually broken by the hoe, in order to yield, in many cases, a doubly repeated harvest in the course of the year.

Throughout the entire country, nature has been lavish of her choicest stores. Trees of almost every intertropical variety, many furnishing the costliest woods, others the most delicious kinds of fruit. Plants, some prized for their beauty, others esteemed for their medicinal virtues, spring up indigenously in the more genial districts, and, with the variety of their tints, clothe the hills, the valleys, and the margins of the rivers, in the most enchanting verdure. The leguminous and farinaceous productions of the vegetable world are nowhere more obedient to the call of the husbandman, or more prolific of their refreshing and nutritive principles. The mandioca and figon plants—answering to the corn and potato of Great Britain—are easily reared, and afford a wholesome and palatable food for the lower orders of the people. Rice and Indian corn add to the general abundance, and cheapen, while they increase, the variety of the necessities of life.

With a country so admirably adapted for agricultural purposes, it is not surprising that its possessors should confine themselves strictly within their limits, and content themselves with turning to account the advantages which flow from the climate and the soil. What seems more worthy of astonishment, is the circumstance, that so great a source of wealth should have been so long overlooked, and that even since its discovery, so little comparative advantage should have been taken of it.

But prompt as nature is in the Brazils to respond to the industry of the cultivator, it has been found from experience, that to one race of mankind alone, has she confined the capability of fulfilling, without detriment, that indispensable office.

It is in vain that the white man endeavours to overcome the obstacle arising from the scorching heat of a tropical sun. For a short time he may brave the fatigue, but in the end, and that before long, his constitution succumbs, and without even the intervention of any of those endemic and fatal fevers which check abruptly the European's career in less favoured tropical countries, he is compelled here through pure exhaustion, to desist.

To the negro alone, is reserved the power—hitherto a noxious one to him—of withstanding the intense solar heat, and of continuing to do so, while labouring in the fields, with so little injury, under proper and judicious care, as not to influence his constitution, or shorten perceptibly the natural term of his life.

Gifted with this peculiarity, but denied the advantage of using it in his own behalf, the negro from the first day the cultivation of intertropical regions by Europeans commenced, has been made the tool of their rapacity—the degraded instrument with which they have collected the riches of this great agricultural El Dorado.

While the precepts of Christianity were regarded rather as the subjects of speculation than the rules of life, and while it was not deemed inconsistent for men, flying for conscience sake from the arbitrary will of a despotic prince, and the overbearing dicta of a dominant hierarchy, to enslave unlimited numbers of their

kind, the injustice of slavery and the slave-trade was never dreamt of. The patriot who had abandoned his country, rather than submit to the infringement of its liberties, and the sectary who had retired to the desert, where no surplice might intervene between him and his communings with his God, alike beheld the great principles for which they had combated, and for which they had sacrificed so much, grossly violated in the person of the negro, without feeling the smallest compunction ; and even practised as laudable upon him, that which committed upon a being of a different complexion would have filled them with the liveliest remorse. But men spring not at once from the discovery of first principles to their ultimate results, and a time, it would seem, must elapse, before even a great moral truth can dispel the gloom of ignorance and prejudice, and shed its benign rays upon all. But when at length Providence saw fit to awaken men's consciences, and to remind them of the great fundamental christian precept, " Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," then arose a tenderness concerning the treatment of the negro, and certain qualms began to be felt, as to the justice of placing him so very low in the social scale of human beings. Late in the last century the horrors of the system were first traced by the philanthropic pen of Clarkson, and the great and good Wilberforce soon after lent all the aid of his eloquence and the best energies of his life, to unfold their lurid details. Round this small nucleus a strong and numerous party collected by degrees, which, struggling manfully with a host of prejudices and powerful interests, exasperated with the prospect of loss, and gathering

fresh strength from each succeeding defeat, ultimately became the voice of the nation. And the world at length beheld England, though the last in the iniquity, the first to be roused to a sense of its enormity, and endeavouring by every effort within her power to rectify her errors, and by the most ample atonement, to wash off the stain from her national history.

But while Great Britain has been thus laudably employed, and at an expense and temporary self-sacrifice which shows the sincerity of her repentance, other nations have been either sluggishly indifferent or obstinately purblind. For this, two reasons may be assigned; first, a laxness of morals and a consequent indifference to human suffering; and, secondly, a pertinacious adherence to wrong, because it cannot be rectified without some real or apparent self-sacrifice. The first, as it partakes more of a passive character, offers fewer obstacles in the way of its removal; but the second, resting upon a perverted and stubborn principle in human nature, presents a lowering and almost unassailable front to the appeals of humanity or the dictates of justice. Unfortunately, although the former may exist alone, nevertheless, where the latter condition prevails, it is never found wanting; and thus it happens, that in combating the worst of the two, we have to struggle with both. This peculiarity, is most strikingly applicable to the Brazils. Here the two react upon each other with the liveliest reciprocity, and without the slightest check. For it must be borne in mind, that the Brazils is in a position very different from what England was when she gained, as it were, over herself, the great moral victory. With the latter, the question was as to colo-

nies ; with the former, it regards the mother country. In the one was a vast body of disinterested citizens, who, unbiassed by personal motives, weighed the question in their minds dispassionately, and pronounced accordingly. In the other, scarcely an individual exists, who, either directly or indirectly, is not personally interested in the support of the slave system, and who would not look with the utmost distrust upon any change in it which may be proposed. The Brazilians, in short, are, what the British West India planters were ; wrapt up in the existing state of matters, and wedded to them with all the pertinacy which long habitude and self-interest can be supposed to create ; and as unlikely to introduce of their own accord any method of amelioration as ever were our own colonial countrymen.

The custom, coëval almost with their possession of the country, of being served by slaves, and the deeply-rooted prejudice, that the negro is unfitted to fill a higher place ; more than all, their inability to discern how he could possibly be useful to them in any other condition, confirm even the more liberal among them in their predilection for slavery, and incline them to regard any plan of abolition, however plausible, much in the light a scheme would be looked upon by Englishmen, which proposed to supersede their present constitution by one modelled on the principles of More's Utopia or Plato's Republic.

With such an extent of country, endowed with such powers of fertility, with no method but that of slavery for turning them to account, and deterred by no scruples from employing that method, the Brazilians continue to foster slavery and the slave-trade, not-

withstanding every remonstrance, and every treaty to the contrary.

Year after year passes by, and one series of efforts after another is made by Great Britain to mitigate slavery and suppress the slave-trade; yet she finds herself at this moment as far, if not farther, from the accomplishment of her wishes than ever. For it has been to no purpose, and this is said advisedly, that the philanthropy and the resources of England have been brought to bear upon the system. All, indeed, which the utmost foresight and the most stringent provisions have been able hitherto to effect, amount to no more than having sharpened the ingenuity of adventurers and enhanced their profits; increased materially the sufferings and the mortality of the Blacks, and displayed in broader colours the profligacy and insincerity of the Brazilian government.

It is truly a matter of deep annoyance to think that, from the first moment humanity raised her voice against the revolting traffic, it has continued steadily on the increase. While there was yet no advocate to plead the wrongs of the African, and while the trader in human flesh was protected by treaties, and permitted to pass on his infamous mission unmolested, the evils of the slave-trade were less in extent and misery than they are now. Macpherson, in his *History of Commerce*, states that in the year 1768 the entire number of negroes shipped by all nations was estimated at 97,000, of which only 1,700 belonged to Portugal. Nineteen years after, in 1787, Mr. Bandinell, quoting the report made to the privy council, mentions the annual exportation of negroes from the coast of Africa to have been 200,000, of whom Portugal shipped

25,000, chiefly for the use of the Brazils, then a dependency of her crown. And Buxton estimates the number of late years as still not less than 200,000, which, in all probability, is under the mark.

During the year 1838, according to official returns, the supposed number of negroes imported into the Brazils was fixed at 94,000, or only three thousand short of the total amount exported from Africa in 1768 by all the nations of Europe put together.

To account for so startling a fact, it may not be out of place to give here a glance at the history of the Brazils, from its first occupation by the Portuguese up to the present time.

In the year 1500, Cabral, the celebrated Portuguese navigator, while on his way to India, having been accidentally driven to the westward of his course, discovered the coast of Brazil, and took formal possession of it in the name of the King of Portugal.

For many years, however, the importance of the acquisition did not appear to be recognised sufficiently, and even for a long period, namely, during the misfortune which befel Portugal in the loss of her independence, it seems to have suffered a total neglect. Spain, by whom that independence had been destroyed, was already glutted with transatlantic possessions of more dazzling but far less intrinsic value, and remained satisfied with the annexation of the mother country to herself. In those times, colonies were only prized on account of the mineral treasures they possessed, and as the Brazils was not yet known to contain any, it failed to stimulate the cupidity of Spain.

When the revolution of 1640 restored the inde-

pendence of Portugal, and placed the house of Braganza upon the throne, the Brazils, freeing itself from the partial dominion which the Dutch had obtained over it during this disastrous interval, gladly returned to its allegiance to the mother country; by whom, however, it continued to be treated for long after, with mingled jealousy and neglect. Indeed, from this epoch until a comparatively recent period, the Brazils may be said to have lain dormant under the soporific legislation of Portuguese statesmen. Acting in the spirit of the narrow politics of their country and age, all intercourse between foreign countries and the Brazils was jealously prohibited by those unwise rulers, and almost every kind of vegetable produce, either neglected to be cultivated through indolence, or suppressed, if supposed to be detrimental to the interests of the parent state. The great mineral wealth of the country, which in the meanwhile had been accidentally brought to light, alone gave it any value in their eyes, and prompted them to hold over it a watch, if not so perfect, by no means inferior in jealousy to that of the dragons of old. With the example of Great Britain before them, eliciting to the utmost the vegetable resources of her West Indian possessions, and drawing from them a princely revenue, Portugal kept dosing over her peerless dependency, like an idiot over a gem chance has thrown in his way, and with the lustre of which he is pleased, although its value be to him unknown. Hence it happened that, saving the produce of its gold and diamond districts, Brazil was of no value to Portugal. Beyond the mere search for the precious minerals the latter never thought it worth her while to look, and nearly up to the moment

when the country was lost to her for ever, she remained ignorant of the alchemy which converts broad fields into so many perennial mines of gold.

At length came the French Revolution, and in its train those fierce struggles which shook the stoutest nations to their centre ; overturning many institutions only venerable from their antiquity, and recomposing others, with something of the wondrous powers of a kaleidoscope, in a new and better shape. Brazils, remote as it was from the scene of strife, " heard the insufferable noise," and felt the shock. Don John the Sixth, of Portugal, finding his ancient dominions no longer tenable, abandoned them in 1807, and sought a refuge in his transatlantic possessions. Thither he carried with him the unwieldy pageantry of a rapacious court, which in the sequel proved far more ornamental than profitable to the country of its adoption.

When the king and government had sufficiently recovered from the confusion, not to mention alarm, of their precipitate migration, they added another instance to the many, of the truth of the proverb, that in the school of adversity wisdom is best taught. For, casting their old and deeply-rooted prejudices aside, and listening for the first time to the suggestions of a sound policy, they threw open, in the year 1814, the ports of the new empire to all friendly and neutral nations.

The moment this beneficial measure began to operate, the Brazils became, as it were, infused with fresh vigour and life. The incubus under which she had been so long groaning once removed, she sprang with rapidity into both commercial and political import-

ance. From resembling the chest of a miser, she became like the coffers of a bank, diffusing (instead of locking up as hitherto) her wealth and resources over the civilized world.

The elasticity with which the Brazils thus bounded from a state of torpidity and barrenness into activity and productive wealth, is worthy of notice, as offering a strong instance of the beneficial effects of free-trade. Here we behold a country, though rivalling in extent the greatest of existing empires, overflowing with the materials for an extensive commerce, and possessed of the noblest harbours in the world, finding it difficult, under a prohibitive system, to freight annually a few vessels with its produce; and again we see it, after a lapse of thirty years, and under more liberal auspices, supplying Europe with half, and North America with the greater portion of the coffee which they respectively consume, exporting considerable quantities of sugar, and second, only to the United States of North America and the island of Cuba, in the production of cotton and tobacco.

In consequence of the new policy, foreigners from every European country flocked to the Brazils; plantations were laid out, the peculiarities of inter-tropical cultivation more sedulously studied, and a career of internal prosperity begun, which all the extravagance of a venal court, and the fraudulent transactions of an unprincipled exchequer, have not been able to destroy. During the year 1800, the exportation of coffee from Rio was so insignificant as not to be noticed. Seventeen years later, and three after the prohibitive system was annulled, the coffee exported from the same harbour had swelled to the respectable amount of 80,000

bags. For the year 1827, the number of bags had increased to 350,000; ten years later still, from official returns, I find it stated at 666,496 bags; and last year (1844) the exportation had risen to the enormous number of 1,189,523 bags. The article coffee has been chosen because it is the principal staple of Rio; but it must not be supposed that the prosperity has been confined either to Rio or to the kind of produce under review. Bahia, Pernambuco, and Maranh, bear no remote resemblance in their commercial history to that of the capital of the empire. The cultivation of sugar, cotton, and tobacco, has progressed, if not with the same rapidity, still enough to show that it has shared in the vivifying impulse, and that the check to further progress rests not as formerly upon internal errors of legislation, but upon the restrictive duties which exterior and independent agents have seen proper to impose.

The foregoing cursory glance, while it proves the rapidity with which the Brazils has grown into commercial consideration, corroborates the melancholy fact with which I set out, namely, the palpable increase of slavery and the slave-trade. In consequence of the continually increasing demand for slave labour, occasioned by the extension of her trade, the Brazils has more than counterbalanced all that the exertions of humanity have gained in the successive renunciation of the slave traffic by the different governments of Europe and America.

When the question first began to be agitated by Clarkson and Wilberforce, the Brazils consumed but an insignificant portion of the unnatural commodity,

as in a preceding quotation has been already shown. Now, under different auspices, a number little short of what then was the entire demand is required for her individual supply. It is a fact sufficiently discouraging, that no sooner has the evil been crushed in one quarter than it springs up into new life and fresh vigour in another; and, like the redoubted monster of heathen mythology, appears to baffle every effort designed for its destruction.

During the year 1817, the number of negroes imported into the harbour of Rio de Janeiro amounted, according to Drs. Spix and Martius, to 2075; since then, the number has gone on increasing, and of late years it is computed, that the negroes landed in the immediate vicinity (for but comparatively few have the audacity to enter the port) are not less than 47,000. But how does this happen? some reader may ask, in whose mind a treaty solemnly ratified is synonymous with a sacred obligation; how is it that all this iniquity not only exists, but continues to prosper? Have not the Brazilian authorities denounced the traffic, and agreed by treaties with England to use every effort to suppress it? Are we to understand that the treaties in question are no better than so much rubbish, with which the Brazilian government amuses the philanthropists of Great Britain, and under the guise of which it assumes all the meretricious airs of a self-sanctified prude? Precisely so. For, notwithstanding that it has been stipulated by the government of Brazils, to exert every effort to crush the slave-trade, both by seizing itself, and rendering every facility to English cruisers to seize upon vessels either found conveying slaves, or suspected by

their fittings and arrangements to be destined for that purpose; yet a week scarcely passes, during which vessels answering to the latter description are not franked from their Custom-houses; and an influx of negroes is suffered to be poured into the country, and connived at with the most unblushing effrontery.

In excuse for the last-mentioned fact, it is urged that the limited resources of the government, and the extent of coast to be guarded, the clashing of private interests with public engagements, and the weakness of the executive at a distance from the capital, render this grievance unavoidable. And perhaps to a certain extent these may be allowed to weigh. But is the coast immediately outside of the harbour of Rio; nay, is the very harbour of Rio itself so far removed from the supreme executive, that cargoes may be landed either without or within the forts with impunity; and are the highways of the suburbs so much beyond the surveillance of the police, that troops of naked and wretched blacks, just landed, may be driven along them at night without attracting notice, or meeting the smallest check? Yet such facts are of monthly occurrence. I have known of cargoes landed under the guns of the forts which guard the entrance of the port, and of whole fazendas of recently imported blacks, existing in the neighbourhood of the city, which, by some strange overlook, the authorities never appeared to find out. It is not very long ago, since the small-pox was introduced by a cargo of recently landed negroes into a small village called Ponto Caju, situated in the north-west angle of the harbour of Rio, and about four miles from the town. To this identical village, it must be under-

stood, that not a bale of cotton goods can be surreptitiously conveyed without the imminent risk of its seizure; yet hundreds of these poor creatures could be conveyed thither with no more notice taken of them than if they had been wrapt in the cloud which once enveloped Æneas. Nor, in all human probability, would their existence there have ever been bruited abroad, but for the retributive scourge they brought among their avaricious and unprincipled oppressors.

But why have recourse to reports, however widely spread and well authenticated, when proofs of the shameless insincerity of the Brazilian government are as plentiful as need be, and as open as day? On one occasion, two years ago, H. M. B. Partridge, while cruising off Santos,* a town close upon the sea, and about a hundred miles to the southward of Rio, saw and gave chase to a vessel standing directly in for that spot. But before she could come within gunshot of the vessel, the crew had run her on shore, and landed a cargo of slaves. The whole transaction happened close to a Brazilian fort, the governor of which, far from seizing upon the proscribed cargo, offered no hindrance to its being landed; on the contrary, prevented the British commander from either securing the vessel or rescuing any part of the slaves, by enforcing that provision of the treaty which prohibits all foreign interference within the compass of Brazilian waters. On another and subsequent occasion, information having been obtained that a vessel was about to leave the harbour of Rio for the coast of

* A place notorious as a wholesale receptacle for slaves, and remarkable since the period in question for the murderous attack which was made there upon Captain Willis and Mr. May, of H. M. S. Frolic.

Africa, laden with illegal stores, and furnished with slave fittings, H. M. S. Curlew was ordered to unmoor and proceed in pursuit of her the instant she left the harbour. This was done, and before the suspected vessel had proceeded six miles outside the forts, she was overtaken and brought back. When the hatches were opened, and her hold was examined, the information was found to be substantially correct, farinha, water-butts, slave coppers, and fittings for a temporary slave-deck, were successively discovered, and as she hoisted Brazilian colours, she was submitted to the jurisdiction of the English and Brazilian mixed commission court. So glaring was the case, that none doubted but condemnation would be the result. Great then was the amazement of those who took an interest in the affair, when by a majority, in which the able and upright English commissioner was not to be found, the vessel was judged, in the first place, to have been detained while in the Brazilian waters, and therefore beyond the reach of British interference; and, in the second place, she was declared to be no prize at all, but a lawful trader, freighted with a legitimate cargo, and following a laudable end! It is but a few months ago, since the Brazilian government demanded from the American commodore a vessel under the colours of the United States, which the latter had seized upon in the harbour upon well-grounded information, amounting to proof, that she had been and still was engaged in the slave-trade. The vessel had just arrived from the coast of Africa, and the information had been given against her by three of her own crew, American subjects, in a letter

which one of them had contrived to drop into the boat which had been sent by the American commodore to make the customary inquiries. As the seizure infringed some point of international right, the vessel was delivered up to the jurisdiction of the Brazilian courts; but far from entering into any investigation, the government, the day after they took possession of her, gave her up to the owner or consignee, and left the master and the crew at perfect liberty.

Many more instances might be cited; but a sufficiency has been just told to show with what feeling the Brazilian authorities regard the slave-trade, and how little they are disposed to co-operate heartily in its suppression. All along they have endeavoured to throw every obstacle in the way of this great end, and have neither spared ingenuity nor respected honesty and fair dealing, so that they might elude their solemn obligations, and perpetuate their disgrace.

On glancing over my notes, I find an instance mentioned in which a capture of recently imported negroes was actually made by Brazilians, and as some may think I am severe, I will record it to show that, at all events, I am impartial. The circumstances occurred nearly three years ago, and the truth of it is unquestionable.

One dark night the city-guard, while patrolling the streets, accidentally stumbled upon a number of naked and wretched-looking Blacks. The poor creatures had evidently broken away from their drivers, and in the confusion of landing in the dark, had not been immediately missed. Attracted by the lights, they had wandered in the direction of the city, and when

detained by the patrol, not being able to give any account of themselves, they were conveyed to the guard-house, and secured there for the night.

On the following morning, at the usual hour, the sable peripatetics were brought before the judgment-seat. But who can paint the amazement of the officials at the singularity of the phenomenon which met their sight? Instead of the negroes who had been picked up the night before, lean and shrivelled from long suffering and starvation, and destitute of a rag, a throng of decently-clad, broad-shouldered, brawny varlets stood before them, displaying in their faces the different feelings which injured and indignant innocence is so apt to create. Seldom, indeed, in the history of the marvellous, had an instance occurred so striking. A few hours spent in a Brazilian prison had done more than could have been effected in a Brazilian palace after the lapse of many months. Compared with it, the cave of Trophonius was a mere juggle,—a trick of modern legerdemain placed in competition with a miracle by Dr. Faustus or the Wizard Scott. In a space of time so short, limbs had swollen from starveling leanness into comely proportions; faces furrowed with care and haggard from want had become smooth with satiety and grinning with content; nay, stranger than all, tongues which the night before gave utterance to nothing save unintelligible gibberish, were now fluent in Portuguese patois, and most explicit as to their owners and the streets wherein they lived. So complete a metamorphosis was too much for the wits of the worshipful Juiz do Paz. Muttering something relative to the darkness of the night, and the proneness of human nature to make

mistakes, this Brazilian Radamanthus shrugged his shoulders sceptically, pronounced emphatically the characteristic *O Diablo!* and following it up with the national and Job-like apothegm, "*Paciencia para forza,*" as he sunk back into his chair and congenial apathy, left the whole matter to be registered among the singular instances on record of ocular delusion—or successful deceit.*

By the more candid Brazilians it is confessed, that to abolish the slave traffic is what neither the people nor the government have the slightest wish to attempt. As to agreements by treaty to do so, is a matter of necessity, a species of deference shown to the spirit of the age, a diplomatic fiction, in short, to be rid of foreign importunity. Such an unblushing avowal of the "*fides punica,*" expressed in the words of a few, and in the conduct of all, ought to be kept continually in view, to warn against placing any confidence either in the expressions of sincerity on the part of the Brazilians, or in any exertions they may appear disposed to make in suppressing the evil. Their restiveness even under the treaties which at present exist, and their anxiety to be released from them, notwithstanding their pharisaical professions of sympathy with the feelings which influence civilized Europe on the subject of the slave-trade, broke beyond all prudential control in the month of March last, when an official intimation appeared in the

* A *bonâ fide* capture actually took place a short time before the writer left the harbour of Rio; but the circumstances attending it were such as plainly to show that the government was, in this case, much in the predicament of Molière's "*medecin malgré lui,*" compelled to be, what was furthest from its wishes, a suppressor of the slave-trade.

Journal do Commercio, signed by the minister of justice, to the effect that, on the 17th of that month, the slave treaties with Great Britain would expire, and that henceforth all persons and vessels detected in the illegal traffic of slaves would be tried before the ordinary law courts of the empire, until such time as a tribunal should be erected for their special consideration. I will not pretend to decide how much truth may be contained within the brief limits of this startling intimation, nor will I dwell upon the astonishment it created in the minds of those who were reposing in the security of a treaty they fondly imagined to be perpetual; but it can be easily pictured, if this reading should prove correct, the amount of vigilance the Brazilian authorities would display to guard their coast from the pollution of a slave cargo, and with what eagerness and severity they would prosecute and punish those who might be caught in the attempt.

“Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.”

To such an extent does slavery exist in the Brazils, that it has been introduced into every department wherein manual labour or ingenuity is required. Not satisfied with employing slave labour in the discharge of those offices which the heat of the climate renders it impossible for the white man to perform, it is called upon to meet all the wants proper to domestic and metropolitan life. The negro is not only the field labourer, but also the mechanic; not only hews the wood and draws the water, but by the skill of his hands contributes to fashion the luxuries of civilised life. The Brazilian employs him on all occasions, and in every

possible way ;—from fulfilling the offices of valet and cook, to serving the purposes of the horse ; from forming the gaudy trinkets, and shaping the costume which is to clothe and decorate his person, to discharging the vilest of servile duties. A contempt for everything implying manual labour and skill has consequently sprung up in the Brazilian breast, and with that contempt an aversion to any kind of calling which bears not upon its front the stamp of gentility. Accordingly, to Frenchmen is resigned the mystery of the scissors and needle ; to Portuguese adventurers the ignoble duty of retail shop-keeping ; and to the English, Germans, and Americans, the care of supplying the country with foreign necessities and luxuries. The only reservations for themselves, are the senate, the learned professions, the army, and the civil list ; which, comparatively roomy as they are, can accommodate but a moiety of the candidates for admission into them. Nothing can be conceived, socially speaking, more helpless than the Brazilian *per se*. At home, he is at the mercy of his slave for all his domestic comforts ; abroad his entire trust, whether for amusement or business—for necessities or superfluities, depends upon the foreigner. Slavery seems to have sapped his self-dependence, emasculated his energies, and thrown him a helpless creature upon the offices of others.

One of the first things which arrests the attention of a stranger, while passing along the streets of Rio, is the vast number of slaves employed in carrying burthens too and fro. Frequently as many as thirty may be seen together hurrying along ; each with a bag of coffee on his head, his body, the upper part of which is seldom covered, glistening, if the day be warm, like a

surface of well-oiled ebony. All the while a few wild notes are chaunted by the sable group, to cheer each other on, and ease the labouring respiration. Should the goods be too bulky, or not suited for this kind of carriage, they are placed in a sort of cart, and dragged or pushed along by as many negroes as may be required.

In Bahia, however, not even this last contrivance is adopted. There, when anything very unwieldy, as a case of sugar, or a pipe of rum, requires to be conveyed from one place to another, it is slung to a pole, and with often as many as a dozen negro slaves at either end, carried along, with a shouting and noise compared with which, the cries of Billingsgate are the music of the spheres. I mention this to show the excess to which the system is carried—the universality of slave labour in being made to perform everything, down even to what in other countries, would be required only of the horse. But the truth is, that here the slave is less expensive in his keep, and more generally available, than his quadruped rival, and accordingly is made to supply his place.

In addition to all these demands upon the labour of the slave, there is another occasioned by the mines. The reader is no doubt aware that the fertility of the surface of this country is in a measure rivalled by the mineral riches which its bowels contain. The “*Auri sacra fames*,” which in times past allured adventurers to the country, still exerts its influence over the present generation; and although the harvest, literally speaking golden, be not so great now as at an earlier period, it is still sufficiently abundant to stimulate the speculator, and consequently to require the labour of great num-

bers of slaves. In 1808 the slave population of the Minas Garaes, as this district is called, was, according to Von Eschwege, 148,778; which number had increased at the visit of Doctors Spix and Martius in 1820 to 165,210.

To supply the demands for slave labour arising from so many and such diversified sources, formed, until the treaty with Great Britain was concluded, one of the most important importations into the Brazils. And though in law this trade is supposed to exist no longer, it remains in reality the same; or, if any change has taken place in it, it is, as will be subsequently shown, in the greater barbarity with which that trade is now conducted.

When England effected the treaty with Brazil for the abolition of the slave traffic, she flattered herself, that not only had a great and perennial source of human suffering been dried up, but a guarantee indirectly obtained for the better treatment of those who already were in slavery. Inasmuch as the slave proprietor having no other resource left but internal reproduction, would necessarily be led to cherish more carefully the trunk from whence the only supply was henceforth to be obtained. And so, in all probability, would it have happened, had the spirit of the treaty been properly carried out. But as it has not been so, the minor with the prime evil still continues, and all, save the mockery of a name, remains the same.

Having cursorily indicated whence arises the demand for slaves, the next topics which naturally suggest themselves, are the number of slaves actually employed; how that number is supplied, and what the facilities are for doing so. And for this purpose it will be necessary

to premise that the empire of Brazil is said to contain from five to six millions of inhabitants (for the looseness of statistical returns forces us upon approximations.) Malte Brun estimates the population at 5,725,502; Mr. Sturge at 5,000,000; and Balbi at 5,300,000, divided as follows—

Portuguese	-	-	-	-	900,000
Mestizoes (Free)	-	-	-	-	600,000
———— (Slaves)	-	-	-	-	250,000
Negroes (Free)	-	-	-	-	180,000
Converted Indians	-	-	-	-	300,000
Independent Indians, Europeans, &c.					150,000
Negro Slaves	-	-	-	-	2,926,500

By this table it would appear that in the Brazils upwards of three millions of human creatures are condemned to slavery. Upon their labour rests the superstructure of the wealth of the empire; they constitute its productive power—for of the remainder of the inhabitants it may be said, excepting the slothful and wandering hordes of Indians, that they are “*Nati consumere fruges*”—in other words, born to batten upon the toil of the ill-starred blacks.

To keep up this amount of slave labour is a matter of vital importance—one upon which the very existence of the empire as an agricultural and commercial nation depends. But the method which is adopted is no less flagitious than opposed to every dictate of sound and safe policy. For nothing can be more short-sighted than to depend for the perpetuation of such a class of inhabitants, upon an extraneous supply. Ignominious under any circumstances, it is often precarious, and

never satisfactory. The first care of a government ought to be, in the opinion of the wisest, to render the country whose destinies it directs as independent as possible of others, in that, in which its existence is involved—to enable it to complete within itself the circle, as it were, of its most pressing necessities. What opinion, then, must we form of a government which looks abroad for the very sinews of industry; which in fact, either covertly encourages or supinely permits the nascent energies, the indigenous shoots to be overwhelmed by a stream of slave immigrants; who, when death brings their bitter days of bondage to a close, leave nought behind them, save the necessity of perpetuating a system of revolting cruelty and injustice in order to supply their place.

It has long been remarked in young countries, where an unlimited field is offered for agricultural enterprise, and an outlet afforded to superfluous produce, that the inhabitants multiply in a ratio far exceeding the proportion occasioned by immigration; and that after a certain interval, countries so circumstanced become capable, independently of all foreign aid, not only to sustain the number of their inhabitants, but to go on increasing it so long as their prosperity lasts. Far from regarding every birth as a burthen, they hail it as an addition to their productive power, and wisely cherish, by every suitable measure, whatever is best fitted to further so important an end. Brazil answers to these conditions. It is a country whose resources are inexhaustible, and for whose produce, as I have elsewhere shown, there exists a steady and an increasing demand. Do we find accordingly, internal propagation to keep pace with commercial prosperity, and to promise

ere long the total abandonment of the baracoon system with its attendant horrors? Facts compel us in answer to declare, we do not. So far from the slave population being multiplied by its own innate powers of reproduction, it cannot even remain stationary; but is found to dwindle away, and would soon shrink into insignificance, except for the shoals of doomed Africans which are annually drawn from the opposite coast to supply the defects. But why is it so? Are not Negroes as capable of propagation in the Brazils as in their native land? There, none can doubt their powers of reproduction, who considers for a moment, that, notwithstanding the frightful drain occasioned by the slave trade, the race still continues, and without any very sensible diminution, to exist. In answer, there are two reasons to be given. The one is, that slavery overwrought, carries within itself the principle of an insidious but rapid decay—the other is, the reckless and shameful encouragement given to this tendency by the Brazilians themselves.

That the first reason is founded in truth few will be inclined to deny, who are at all acquainted with the history of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Caribbean islands, and of the adjacent continent of America north and south, wherever European influence has penetrated. The very circumstance of the Negro race holding their present degraded position is a practical illustration of this very fact. For it was not until the first and aboriginal stock of predial slaves had become spent on the American continent and adjacent isles, that the second and more inexhaustible, came into vogue. Millions of human beings were immolated before an African was touched; whole races of men were wiped from off the

face of the earth, and the only records left of them, those which tell the lurid tale of their total extinction, before the African variety attracted the bloodshot eye of European taskmasters.

Here, one cannot help pausing to reflect how little this great continent has had to boast of from its intercourse, with what is chosen to be styled, civilised Europe. From the first day the history of the connection commences, up to the present moment, it has been one vast theatre of tyranny and injustice on the one side, and of suffering and slavery on the other; wherein not only the aborigines of the soil have been forced to play their wretched and degraded part, but wherein the children of another continent have been compelled to share. Commercial enthusiasts may dwell rapturously over the impulse given to European enterprise and industry by the discovery of such an extensive territory as South America; but the philanthropist will hesitate to respond, when he comes to consider that the uniform result has been to destroy rather than to reclaim. That the advantages have been hitherto not only all on the one side, but secured and still perpetuated, by the sacrifice of thousands upon thousands of human creatures. Few prevailing opinions are more deserving of being classed among popular fallacies, than the one which identifies the progress of civilization with either the cultivation of land, or the manufacture of cotton; regardless of the measures taken to accomplish those ends. The enclosure of thousands of acres, and the productions of numberless bales of calico, will not influence the march of intellect one iota. On the contrary, they will materially retard it, while the sacrifice of personal liberty is implicated in the one, and the

corruption of morals is involved in the other. The systems which are built upon them may seem fair to the sight; but like painted sepulchres, they will be found, when examined, full of loathsome rottenness within.

The future inquirer into the advancement of real civilisation in Europe, will find it difficult to parallel the atrocities committed by its inhabitants during the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, in support of their colonial system, with anything which has transpired of an earlier date; and will be not a little puzzled to reconcile the self-complacent notions of these generations with the history of their deeds. The unsparing cruelty of the Albigensian crusade in the Gothic ages; the bloody bigotry which hatched the eve of St. Bartholomew; the long catalogue of the dark deeds of the Duke of Alva,—shrink, “shorn of their beams,” before the baleful glare of modern negro slavery. A mistaken but disinterested zeal, and a perverted but stern sense of duty, engendered the first into an ephemeral life. The lust of lucre, and an intense selfishness released from the restraints of all principle, begot the second into perennial existence.

With regard to the second reason, the matter stands thus. From an early date, the price of a negro slave has been, comparatively speaking, so little, and the means of replacing him so easy and so much at hand, that to countenance or encourage his increase in the Brazils by propagation, was, and is, universally regarded as expensive and absurd.

So long as droves of Africans of every available age

are brought into the slave market, and sold at a cheap rate, it is not in the nature of a people so indolent and short-sighted as the Brazilians are, to be troubled to wait the tedious process of nature, and submit to all the expense and risk attendant upon infancy and childhood, when by a slight exertion of volition, and the outlay of a moderate sum, they can step into the neighbouring street, and there provide themselves with whatever age or sex they require.

The necessary consequence of such an accommodating system it requires no great penetration to foretell. That sex, as a matter of course, is selected which nature has adapted to endure the heaviest hardships, and undergo the greatest amount of fatigue. Out-door and mechanical occupations, the peculiar department of masculine labour, far outweighs the demand occasioned by domestic wants, for which the female is better fitted, and a loss of the balance of sexes is the inevitable result. That this is no idle speculation, unsupported by proofs, the following table of the population of the Capitania of St. Paulo, one of the fairest and most flourishing districts in the Brazils, taken in 1815, will abundantly show.

WHITES.		BLACKS.				MULATTOES.			
Males.	Females	Free.		Slaves.		Free.		Slaves.	
		Males.	Females	Males.	Females	Males.	Females	Males.	Females
54,993	60,110	2,210	2,656	22,917	16,808	20,480	23,805	5,296	5,746

By casting the eye along the figures above, the inequality between the number of the respective sexes

under the head blacks will at once be seen :—a disproportion, too, which is peculiar to that division, all the others showing a marked preponderance of the females over the males.

But great as this disparity is, it falls short of that which existed in the Minas Geraes, and in the island of St. Catherine's as quoted by Spix and Martius, from whose work the preceding as well as the following tables are taken.

POPULATION OF MINAS GERAES, 1808.

COLOURS.	FREE PEOPLE.			SLAVES.		
	Male	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
Whites - - -	54,157	52,527	106,684			
Mulattoes - -	64,466	65,250	129,656	7,557	7,880	15,737
Blacks . . .	23,256	24,651	47,957	86,849	46,186	133,035
	141,879	142,428	284,277	94,706	54,066	148,722

POPULATION OF ST. CATHERINES, 1815.

MALES.			Females.		
Free.		Slaves.	Free.		Slaves.
Whites.	Negroes and Mulattoes.	4,905	Whites.	Negroes and Mulattoes.	2,573
11,495	312		13,311	353	

In this last table the proportion of male to female Negro slaves stands nearly as two to one.

Such was the existing state of matters thirty years ago. That it has not since undergone any change

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admits of easy demonstration, even in the absence of such tables as the foregoing, which now-a-days are either not compiled, or kept, if they are, most sedulously from the public eye. Let us first of all examine the interior arrangements of a slaver. In all of them the male and female negroes occupy separate parts of the vessel, and I have never yet visited one in which the space occupied by the males was not at least three times greater in extent than that occupied by the females. In those vessels the females are most frequently confined to that part which corresponds with the cabin and state-rooms of a regular trader. While the entire hold of the vessel, and frequently what is termed the fore-peak, is set aside exclusively for the males.

The following is a list taken from the books of H. M. R. Ship *Crescent*, stationed in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro for the reception of the negroes who are captured from the slavers by the British cruisers along the coast, and shows the numbers respectively of the males and females found in eight full vessels which were taken between the years 1840 and 1844 inclusive.

					Males.		Females.
Paquete da Benguela	-	-	-	-	167	-	113
Aceiceira	-	-	-	-	253	-	78
Dois de Favereiro	-	-	-	-	227	-	135
Anna	-	-	-	-	287	-	193
Nove Irmaos	-	-	-	-	144	-	130
Name unknown	-	-	-	-	187	-	159
Vencedora	-	-	-	-	178	-	160
Anna	-	-	-	-	48	-	139
Total	-	-	-	-	1861		1107

The reason that in two or three the numbers approximate more nearly, than in the others, is not owing so much to the original assortment of the sexes on the eve of starting from the coast of Africa, as to the mortality which occurs during the middle passage, and which always proves more destructive to the males than to the females, in consequence of the greater constraint and confinement to which the former are subjected compared with the latter. The reader, from these data, will not be taken by surprise when told that on most estates the disproportion of female to male slaves is very great, and that on not a few in the interior of the country, where numerous hands are employed, the number of females are regulated by the mere domestic wants of the establishment; nay, I have been told that on some there is not a female to be found. Such is the aversion of the proprietors of the soil to be encumbered with any hands which cannot perform the highest amount of labour, and which are not always of avail. Even in the city, the poor forlorn female negro, unlike the Spartan matrons of old, suffers a depreciation in value the moment she becomes a mother; and often, it is painful for the sake of our common humanity to record it, is punished for the last and least exalted social intercourse her degraded position still places within her reach.

It not unfrequently happens that the slave owner grudges his poor victim the necessary leisure to nurture her child, but waits impatiently the consummation of nature, when, by an amiable exertion of his absolute authority, he drags the ill-starred infant from the asylum of the maternal bosom, to find a sub-

titute in a sort of foundling hospital, where even if it is not nipped in the bud, which is most frequently the case, it never sees or is seen by the parent again.

With the preceding facts before us, namely, the deeply-rooted predilection on the part of the Brazilians for slave labour, their universal employment of it in all the menial, mechanical, and laborious departments of life, and their reckless neglect of those measures which would secure an internal self-supply, we are prepared to understand why so much transmarine traffic in human creatures still continues to exist.

The number of slaves imported annually into the Brazils has been variously computed; nor is it possible, from the secret manner in which they are introduced, to conjecture what the exact number may be. If, however, we consider the amount of labour to be kept up, and the waste of life which the system adopted occasions; if we add to this the known excess of deaths over births, and the few of the latter which ever arrive at maturity, and again reflect that the great and steady annual increase of produce elsewhere shown, argues a proportional increase of labour or of labourers, notwithstanding the pernicious influences opposed to their natural development; we cannot help concluding that the drafts drawn from Africa must be very great. Buxton, in his work, estimates the number at 78,000 annually, Bandinell at 94,000 in 1838, and the probability is that the latter estimate is nearer the truth, and even short of it. And the reasons why I am disposed to think so are these: A person who invests his capital in any industrious pursuit is naturally led, if not before, very soon

after, to calculate the detriment sustained by that capital in the original purchase, and subsequent waste of materials employed in following it up. And his determination to adhere to or abandon it, is altogether influenced by the ability of the returns to cover the necessary expenses, and allow something over besides, proportioned to the amount originally laid out. Now the Brazilian agriculturist is no less alive to this most necessary process, than the British manufacturer, inasmuch as it has been thrust upon him, more especially of late, by the powerful incitement of foreign competition. With him, the purchase of the soil, owing to its cheapness, is but a secondary matter ; the purchase, and maintenance of the means to cultivate it, constitutes the grand consideration, and to this accordingly his inquiries are turned. From what I can learn, the result of these have been to show, that the average waste of the principal material—slave life, (the nature of the subject forces upon me the use sometimes of incongruous expressions)—is somewhere about ten per cent. per annum. And upon this basis, the Brazilian agriculturist proceeds to raise the superstructure of his economical calculations. Elsewhere it has been stated that the slave population of the Brazils amounted to 3,000,000, which, at this rate, would give a mortality of 300,000 annually. But we will take for granted that commercial precaution has carried this estimate to the highest extreme, and that it is also drawn from a class which is most exposed to the causes of mortality. We will even admit, that domestic slaves enjoy on an average a longer term of life, and with a liberality, which the startling lowness of the estimate abundantly permits of, allow the average mortality of the whole

to be seven and one half, instead of ten per cent. per annum. Even then the number of deaths among the negro slaves in the Brazils will stand at 225,000 a year.

To replenish such a drain, the reproductive power of the slave population, under the peculiar circumstances which have been already pointed out, is utterly inadequate; how much more so must it be, to add to the integrant number! Does not the reader think that if 125,000 spring from this source, it will be quite as much as it can be supposed to yield? Whence, then, is derived the remainder? And in answer, the mind turns instinctively to the baracoons of Africa.

But satisfactory though this may appear, I will not leave it to stand alone. Collateral proofs are neither wanting nor difficult of attainment to support it. In a former quotation, the number of negroes imported into Rio during the year 1820—when the traffic was legal, and when there could be no object in concealing or misrepresenting it—was 20,075. The amount of coffee exported from the same harbour for that year, was 80,000 bags. In 1844, the slave-trade being no longer lawful, the number of negroes surreptitiously introduced, of course, appears not, but the returns for the year, state the export of coffee to have been 1,189,523 bags. The connexion which necessarily exists between produce and labour, will enable the reader to draw his own conclusions with regard to the increase of slave traffic which has taken place during the interval. Another proof may be drawn from the number of vessels, and the amount of capital employed in the trade between Rio and the coast of Africa. During the year 1843, forty vessels were cleared from the Custom

House of Rio, for the different Portuguese settlements on the coast. They were freighted with the following items of native produce.

Coffee.	Sugar Cases.	Half-tanned Hides.	Rice.	Tobacco.	Rum.
95 bags	86	106	1,129 bags	1,474 rolls	2,483 pipes

And besides, from information I can rely on, with fifty thousand pounds worth of English manufactured goods. The reader will remark the discrepancy between the comparatively great number of vessels, and the quantity of goods conveyed; he may also notice the apparent inadequacy of the latter for the purchase of so many negroes as I have elsewhere specified. But it must not be overlooked, that money in specie, to a considerable amount, is also employed, as is proved by the fact of large sums being frequently found in the slavers which are captured; and it must, more than all, be borne in mind, that owing to the great risks to which the traffic is subjected by the vigilance of British cruizers, a considerable depreciation has taken place in the value of human bone and muscle in the great marts on the coast of Africa, whither they are brought to be sold.

The slave adventurer, finding in the prosecution of his revolting traffic, the risk to be much greater now than formerly, while, at the same time, the supply at the source continues to be as abundant as ever, takes advantage of the circumstance to cheapen the commodity, and even not unfrequently has the price at his own making. For the merchandize (the reader will pardon the strangeness in consideration of the fitness of the expression) being acquired at no greater

outlay than the exertion of physical force, and the sacrifice of every feeling of humanity, and becoming expensive only when it requires to be kept, is generally disposed of at whatever price it will bring. Accordingly, the amount of goods bartered in exchange for a negro, I have been credibly informed, seldom rises in value, on an average, above six dollars. Truly the sum is very small, and may startle the reader, but I can assure him, I have known a female negro, grown to womanhood, purchased in exchange for a few bandana handkerchiefs! Nay, it frequently happens, in consequence of the vigilance of the English cruisers off a noted baracoon, or market for the sale of black humanity, that the export of the miserable subjects of the traffic suffers a temporary suspension. When this occurs, the slave vessels lie rotting in the rivers, and the negro's value undergoes a still greater depreciation. Meanwhile, as the stream of fresh victims keeps pouring in from the interior, the glut becomes so great, that the wretched sufferers are, at length, not considered even worth their scanty fare, and are accordingly, either summarily despatched by the monsters who have gathered them together in these animated charnel-houses, or left to the more lingering horrors of starvation, and of disease in its most tormenting and loathsome forms.

These facts will sufficiently reconcile the apparent inadequacy of the means with the magnitude of the effects; they will also serve to show the frightful degradation to which, in those countries, the human species is reduced.

But it must not be supposed that Rio is the only harbour whence slavers are dispatched, or that the

forty vessels mentioned are all that are sent from it, and the surrounding neighbourhood. Bahia, Pernambuco, Maranhão, and Pará, the four most important mercantile cities of the empire, and which form individually the centres of extensive sugar, tobacco, and cotton cultivating provinces, send out their respective speculations, and require supplies proportioned to the amount of produce which they export. With regard to Bahia, there are good reasons for supposing, that the traffic in slaves is carried on in it to a greater extent even than in the capital of the empire itself. Besides these, there are many small places along the coast, especially in the neighbourhood of Rio, such as Santos, Campos, and Macahe, which, from their position upon the coast, are well adapted to start an adventure quietly, or run a slave cargo, and which accordingly, are actively engaged in the traffic, and in a proportion almost inversely to their remoteness from observation.

It will be thus seen, that in fixing the number of slaves landed on the coast of Brazil at 100,000, I have by no means overshot the mark; nay, the constructive evidence, drawn from the different data, would lead me to believe that I have fallen, perhaps even now, short of the truth.

It must be distinctly understood, that this estimate has merely to do with the number actually landed, and is perfectly independent either of what is embarked, or brought to the baracoons for embarkation. This last belongs to a section of the system; no less shocking to the dullest sense of humanity to contemplate, than baffling to the ingenuity to compute. Of the horrors of the middle passage we are enabled to form an idea

from having witnessed its effects, but regarding the precursory scenes, I fear they can borrow no exaggeration even from the obscurity that envelops them. It is much to be questioned, whether the middle passage constitutes the darkest episode in the fearful drama. I have been told by eye-witnesses, who could have no object in deceiving me, that at times, the small-pox and dysentery, break out, and rage with pestilential fury among the blacks, confined in the baracoons, and waiting the appearance of a purchaser, and anticipate to crowds of them, the future sufferings of the passage, and a career of hopeless servitude, by a speedy and not unwelcome death.

As I have now touched upon this part of the subject, unquestionably the most hideous and revolting of all, the reader may not be indifferent to entering into a more lengthened detail of it. This is the more necessary, as, from experience, I know that no phase of system appears to be so easily overlooked or so readily forgotten, by the apologists for slavery.

It has been already said, that nothing certain is known of the sufferings of the negroes previous to embarkation ; it is not so, however, with what ensues immediately after. The measures which have been adopted to annihilate the traffic, if they have not accomplished their chief end, they have at all events enabled us to examine some of its worst features in a clear and decisive way. The reader, perhaps, may require to be told, that besides the squadrons employed on the eastern and western coasts of Africa, for the suppression of the slave trade, there is also another kept for the same end on the coast of Brazil. Attached to the last mentioned, is the "Crescent," one of Her

Majesty's frigates, which is dismantled, and permanently moored in the harbour of Rio de Janeiro, for the reception, medical treatment, and accommodation of the negroes captured from the slavers along the coast, until such time as their healths are sufficiently re-established, to permit them to be otherwise disposed of. This vessel has been thus employed since April 1840; and from that period, to the time I now write, has received on board the cargoes of eight full slavers, amounting in all, to about 3,000 negroes.

To enter into the history of each of the vessels captured would be equally tedious and unnecessary; I will, therefore, merely select and describe the appearance and subsequent history of two or three of them, which will abundantly illustrate the whole system; and in doing this, I cannot do better than quote verbatim from the notes which were taken at the moment the transactions described were enacting, and while the feelings dictated what the pen wrote.

The first is the *Dois de Favereiro*, concerning which, the notes run thus.

"On the 22nd of the current month, (February 1841,) H. M. B. *Fawn*, brought into harbour a full slaver she had captured a few days before while cruising off Campos. Long before the prize came to anchor, the news had spread through the squadron, and reaching the shore, had produced a considerable degree of excitement as well there as afloat.

"A few minutes after the vessel dropped her anchor, I went on board of her, and although somewhat prepared by the previous inspection of two full slavers to encounter a scene of disease and wretchedness, still my experience, aided by my imagination, fell short of

the loathsome spectacle which met my eyes on stepping over the side. Huddled closely together on deck, and blocking up the gangways on either side, cowered, or rather squatted, three hundred and sixty-two negroes, with disease, want, and misery stamped upon them with such painful intensity as utterly beggars all powers of description. In one corner, apart from the rest, a group of wretched beings lay stretched, many in the last stage of exhaustion, and all covered with the pustules of small-pox. Several of these I noticed had crawled to the spot where the water had been served out, in the hope of procuring a mouthful more of the precious liquid; but unable to return to their proper places, lay prostrate around the empty tub. Here and there, amid the throng, were isolated cases of the same loathsome disease in its confluent or worst form, and cases of extreme emaciation and exhaustion, some in a state of perfect stupor, others looking piteously around, and pointing with their fingers to their parched mouths whenever they caught an eye whom they thought would relieve them. On every side, squalid and sunken visages were rendered still more hideous by the swollen eyelids and the puriform discharge of a virulent ophthalmia, with which the majority appeared to be afflicted; added to this were figures shrivelled to absolute skin and bone, and doubled up in a posture which originally want of space had compelled them to adopt, and which debility and stiffness of the joints compelled them to retain.

“On looking more leisurely around, after the first paroxysm of horror and disgust had subsided, I remarked on the poop another wretched group, com-

posed entirely of females. Some were mothers with infants who were vainly endeavouring to suck a few drops of moisture from the lank, withered, and skinny breasts of their wretched mothers ; others were of every intermediate age. The most of them destitute even of the decency of a rag, and all presenting as woeful a spectacle of misery as it is possible to conceive.

Under the poop several of the passengers, or to be more explicit, owners or super cargoes, were stretched on pallets, haggard-looking, and suffering from the fever of the coast they had returned from oppressing. One especially struck me from the apparent hopelessness of his case. He was lying on one of the lockers, unconscious of what was going on around him ; his lips bloodless, and his countenance wasted and ghastly pale, presented in the last particular a striking contrast to the dingy squalor of the wretched negroes around him. For them I confess my sympathy was not of the liveliest description ; nay, a feeling of the justness of the retribution might for a moment have got the better of me, as I looked around and beheld the frightful amount of suffering and death they had been the voluntary agents in producing. Should any of them die, I could not help thinking how unfitted they must be to look Him in the face who had told us “ to love our neighbours as ourselves.” What a load of iniquity to be tottering with on the brink of eternity !

“ While employed in examining the negroes individually, and separating and classifying the sick, who constituted by far the majority, I obtained a closer insight into their actual condition. Many I found afflicted with confluent small-pox, still more with

purulent ophthalmia, and the majority of what remained, with dysentery, ulcers, emaciation, and exhaustion. In several, two or three of these were met. Not the least distressing sight on that pest-laden deck was the negroes whom the ophthalmia had struck blind, and who cowered in seeming apathy to all that was going on around. This was indeed the ultimatum of wretchedness, the last drops in the cup of bitterness. Deprived of liberty, and torn from their native country, there was nothing more left of human misery but to make them the victims of a physical darkness as deep as they had already been made of a moral one.

“The stench on board was nearly overwhelming. The odour of the negroes themselves, rendered still stronger by their filthy and crowded condition, the sickening smell of the suppurative stage of small-pox, and the far more disgusting effluvium of dysenteric discharge, combined with the bilge water, putrid jerked beef, and numerous other matters to form a stench, it required no little exertion of fortitude to withstand. To all this, hunger and thirst lent their aid to finish the scene; and so poignant were they, that the struggles to obtain the means of satisfying them were occasionally so great as to require the interference of the prize crew. The moment it could be done, water in abundance and a meal was provided them; and none but an eye-witness could form an idea of the eagerness with which the former luxury was coveted and enjoyed. For many days, it seems, the water had not only been reduced in quantity, but so filled with impurities, and so putrid, that nothing but the most stringent necessity could have induced the use of it.

"So painful and revolting was every object that met my sight, so much beyond the average amount of human suffering, the mass of loathsome misery and disease which surrounded me, destitute of a single trait upon which the mind could rest for a moment's relief, that now, after the lapse of a few days, and when leisure for writing is allowed me, the whole scene floats in my mind more like the phantoms of a frightful but impressive dream than the sober event of every day reality.

26th February.—"The details which a few days have enabled me to collect are entirely in keeping with the preceding description. The vessel's name is the *Dois de Favereiro*; she is about 300 tons burthen, and left Benguela, a Portuguese settlement on the coast of Africa, in January last. She had been only twenty-nine days out when captured by H. M. B. *Fawn*, a little to the southward of this port. During the interval between her capture and arrival, five days, twelve negroes had expired, and two more died immediately after her coming to anchor. The dreadful condition in which the negroes were found, and the mortality amongst them after their capture, argued no favourable tale of what had occurred during the preceding period of the voyage. As it happened, this point was not left to mere conjecture; for one of the slaver's crew, a negro slave who spoke Portuguese, told my friend Mr. Johnstone, the officer in charge of the prize, and myself, that when the vessel left Benguela, she had five hundred and ten negroes on board. When their number was taken the evening of the day they arrived, it amounted to exactly three hundred and sixty-two; thus showing a deficit from the

original number of one hundred and forty-eight human beings occurring during the short interval of thirty-four days."

So run the notes taken at the time ; and it could be wished that here closed the dark record of this fated vessel. But, alas ! it was not so. For weeks after the removal of the Africans on board H. M. S. Crescent, and notwithstanding everything that was there adopted to stay the progress of disease, it kept smouldering amongst their constitutions, shattered and utterly broken down by the previous excessive hardships they had endured, and exacted an additional amount of mortality, which will be at once seen by the following extract from the ship's books.

Died of the negroes belonging to the Dois de Favereiro :

Men	.	.	.	.	24
Women	.	.	.	.	12
Boys	.	.	.	.	20
Girls	.	.	.	.	6
					—
Total	.	.	.	.	62

Of another, called the " Vencedora," the following are the notes which were taken.

" Early yesterday morning (11th of September, 1843) the decks of the Crescent were again thronged by a miserable crowd of liberated Africans. The vessel in which they had been conveyed from the " coast " was captured a few days ago by one of the boats belonging to H. M. S. Frolic, a little to the northward of Rio.

" Previously to the removal of the negroes, Dr. Gunn,

(the surgeon of the Crescent) and myself went on board the slaver, and on stepping over the side, were astonished at the smallness of the vessel, and the number of wretched negroes who had been thrust on board of her. Below, the hold was crowded to excess; and above, the deck was so closely packed with the poor creatures, that we had to walk along the top of the low bulwarks in order to get aft. Of the appearance of the negroes, no pen can give an adequate idea. In numbers, the different protuberances and anatomical peculiarities of the bones can be distinctly traced by the eye, and appear, on every motion, ready to start through the skin, which is, in fact, all that covers them. Nor has this been confined to appearance; in many, at the bend of the elbows and knee-joints, over the hip-joints and lower part of the spine, the integuments have given way, and caused the most distressing and ill-conditioned sores. A great number of the Africans, especially the younger, cannot stand upright even when assisted, and the moment they are left to themselves, they double up their knees under their chins, and draw their legs so closely to their bodies, that they scarcely retain the form of humanity. So weak and so cramped are the most of them, that they had to be carried in the arms of the seamen, one by one, up the Crescent's ladder. All those not affected with contagious diseases are now on board the Crescent, and the most of them look like animated skeletons. From one of the Portuguese crew, who is at present under treatment for small-pox, I learn that the name of the vessel is the Vencedora, and that she left Benguela on the coast of Africa with four hundred and sixty slaves on board. But of this number only three

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hundred and thirty-eight have been counted over the side, a circumstance which will appear the less surprising when the space in which they were stowed comes to be considered. That nothing should be left to conjecture on this head, I have procured from my friend Mr. Noddall, the master of the senior officers' ship, the dimensions by measurement of this floating Pandora box, which are as follows :—

	Feet.	Inches.
Length of keel for tonnage	51	6
— over all	64	2
Extreme beam	21	4
Depth of hold	6	0

Dimensions of after-cabin, which is fitted with lockers all round, and contained, when captured, sixty-three slaves.

	Feet.	Inches.
Length from bulk-head to bulk-head	10	0
Breadth in foremost part	11	3
Breadth in after part	5	0
Lockers' width	2	6
Lockers' height	1	1
Extreme height from floor to deck .	3	5

“The vessel in all measures about seventy tons. She has no slave-deck, properly so called, for the leaguers in the hold are quite exposed, and have evidently formed the only floor which the negroes had to lie upon. Of course, not even the ingenuity of slave-traders could have stowed away two-thirds of the cargo in this awfully confined space, which, in

height from leaguers to deck, is under three feet. The remainder must have been kept on deck during the entire passage. There is every reason to suppose that many must have died from suffocation; but all things considered, that so many have survived the protracted horrors of such a position,—for the voyage has spread over thirty-two days,—is no less wonderful than that miscreants should exist, who felt no compunction in subjecting them to the shocking experiment.

“As might be expected, disease and mortality are rife among the miserable victims. All yesterday and to-day we have been selecting those who will require active medical treatment, and at this moment the number amounts to ninety-eight. Five have already escaped from all further suffering, and to all appearance, the mortality will be yet extensive. It is perfectly heart-rending to witness the number of skinny, tottering shadows who crowd the sick-bay; their features shrunk, their large eyes appearing as if they would momentarily start from their sockets, and, worst of all, their bellies puckered up, forming a perfect hollow, and looking as if they had grown to their back bones. Of such, dire experience has taught us to entertain but feeble hopes.

“12 Sept. To-day is a repetition of the events of yesterday; before the morning visit was over, five negroes had closed their mortal career, and one more was added this afternoon to the mournful list. It was really painful to behold the stern-sheets of the jolly-boat filled with the corpses of the negroes being conveyed on shore for burial. I had a conversation this evening with the Portuguese who is ill of small-

pox, and learned from him that, in addition to the number of negroes, there were besides thirty passengers and crew on board. Could the vessel be shown in England, as having conveyed from the coast of Africa four hundred and ninety human beings, not one in twenty would be inclined to give any credit to the fact.

“16th. This day we closed our first weekly sick return since the present cargo came on board, and truly the amount of suffering and mortality which it portrays is dreadful. Ninety-eight were placed on the sick list on the 11th instant, and twenty-one deaths have occurred during the interval. Meanwhile fresh cases keep pouring in, and Heaven only knows when they will stop. The following is a copy of the return in question.

Dysentery.	Pectoral affections.	Exhaustion.	Ulcers.	Small-pox.
38	15	10	5	8= 76

“Of these, many must prove fatal: so exhausted and prostrate are their powers of life from long-continued and poignant suffering. By the way, I have just been made acquainted with the fact, that during the latter portion of the voyage the water, as might have been anticipated, ran short, and the crew of the vessel were in the habit of mixing it with sea-water to make it go further with the Africans.”

The mournful presentiment expressed in the preceding note came in the sequel to be fully verified. For nearly a month after the seeds of disease, which had been plentifully sown during the middle passage, developed themselves with baleful rapidity, and with the most fatal results. During that short period,

nearly the whole of the cargo came successively under medical treatment; nor was health restored to the mass until seventy-six had closed their career in death.

Just as the negroes who remained of the *Vencedora* had entirely recovered their wonted health and vigour, and were fit to be sent to one of our colonies, *H. M. S. Dolphin*, on the 15th of November, 1843, brought into harbour a full slaver, which she had captured a day or two before, a little to the northward of Rio. The crew of the slaver had actually run her ashore, and had begun to throw the negroes overboard into the sea, in order that they might be induced to swim for the land, when the boats of the *Dolphin* came up and obliged them to stop and effect their own escape.

This vessel is the largest I have yet seen employed in this traffic, and is better fitted and found than the common run of slavers; she is American built, and several of her fittings bear the name of American tradesmen. But, as usual, the Africans benefit nothing from the greater size of the vessel. The additional room has not been devoted to give increased accommodation, but to carry a greater number from the coast. The hold, instead of being fitted with one slave-deck, has two; so that, in fact, the negroes have been as badly off, if not worse, than they would have been in a smaller vessel.

On attempting to go down into the hold, and satisfy myself with an examination before the Africans were removed, I was forced, after one or two unsuccessful attempts, to give it up;—the effluvium was perfectly overwhelming, and the heat so great, that the moment I left the square of the hatchway, the sensation ap-

proached suffocation. Anxious to ascertain the height of the thermometer, one of the free blacks belonging to the Crescent was sent down after, but he was as much incommoded by the heat and stench as myself, and returned, after an unsuccessful attempt to reach the remoter part of the hold, with the thermometer standing at 94° Fahrenheit. The decks furnish a melancholy spectacle of disease and wretchedness; but the most prominent and widely-spread scourge is purulent ophthalmia. Numbers of poor creatures are squatting down in corners or groping about the deck, deprived of all sight. Their immensely swollen eyelids, contrasting with their haggard and wasted features, and the discharge which keeps constantly trickling down their cheeks, and which they have not even a rag to wipe away, gives them an appearance of ghastly murky misery which it is impossible for me to describe.

Many eyes, I am afraid, are irretrievably lost, and several poor wretches must remain for ever totally blind. Dysentery, too, that fellest of all diseases in the negro race, is at work amongst them, and will doubtless commit fearful ravages. Five hundred and seventy-two Africans were found on board. What the number was at starting there is no means of ascertaining. One of the crew, a slave, who acted on board in the capacity of a cook, and who preferred being captured by Englishmen to escaping with his master, told me that many had died and were thrown overboard during the passage. The exact number taken on board, however, he could not tell. In all probability, it was not under seven hundred; but of course this is only mere conjecture. The cargo,

he told me, was shipped at Angola, and is composed of five distinct tribes, who converse in dialects differing entirely from each other.

“ 17th Nov. Yesterday, in consequence of the confusion inseparable from a fresh arrival of liberated Africans, the exact number of cases of disease could not be got at. To-day, after much exertion and fatigue, for the weather is very hot, the cases of ophthalmia have been selected and set aside, and amount in all to two hundred and eighteen. Twenty-two cases, of dysentery have been selected from amongst the negroes sent on board the Crescent, and the number is likely to increase.

“ 21st Nov. The eyes of the negroes afflicted with the ophthalmia are beginning to take on a more favourable aspect generally. We have been highly delighted with the magical effects of the nitrate of silver in these cases. Under its influence, the profuse discharge is rapidly disappearing, and the numerous ulcers on the cornea assuming a healthier and healing appearance. Our hopes are considerable, that we shall not have many totally blind after all. Several eyes are irretrievably lost; but, thanks be to Heaven, this disaster has seldom visited both eyes in the same person.

“ It is astonishing to witness the sagacity, if I may so call it, and fortitude with which the poor creatures submit, nay, press to be treated with the different remedies. Not only do they appear perfectly aware that their interest is consulted, and give no trouble, but exhort each other to stand firm while the necessary painful operations of scarifying and of touching the inflamed and ulcerated parts are performed. I

could not help being struck, on more than one occasion, while a dingy group of some hundred and more surrounded me on the lower deck of the hulk, which had been hired for their accommodation, all waiting eagerly yet patiently to have their eyes attended to. Children not more than five or six years old will go down on their knees, and opening their swollen eyelids with their own fingers, will remain firm and unflinching whilst the pungent remedies are applied to their eyes."

But while the local affection was thus yielding to the remedies employed, dysentery, in spite of every effort and every precaution, continued to spread. Unlike the acute complaint in the white man, in the negro its approach is insidious, and attended with so little pain, that its poor victims, ignorant of its nature, often do not complain until the most fatal lesions have taken place. Day after day fresh cases would present themselves, or be selected where the disease was suspected to exist; but it mattered comparatively little whether they were got early or late: the disease once established clung to the wasted bodies of the wretched sufferers. Apathetic, from exhaustion, to acute suffering, and with scarce any rallying powers of constitution left—and seldom indeed did it quit its hold until death closed the scene.

I will not harass the general reader with the medical details which characterise this part of the subject, and which, in the majority of cases, form but the melancholy prelude to the most disastrous results—but hasten to draw the harrowing and loathsome description to a close, upon which, not without reluctance, I have felt it my duty to dwell, by simply stating that

after weeks of dreadful suffering and misery to the Africans, during which but few escaped from an attack of disease, eight of them were rendered irrecoverably blind, and the following list swept into eternity.

Men	48
Women	3
Boys	72
Girls	10
<hr/>	
Total	133

“ Animus meminisse horret.”

The contemplation of this part of the subject throws into bold relief, the singular perversity of the apologists for slavery; who, by a strange ellipsis in their train of reasoning, invariably leave out this particular stage. In the conversations which the writer has had with slave-owners, and those covertly connected with the slave-trade, their favourite topics were the great benefit conferred upon the negro by removing him from his barbarous country, and converting him into a Brazilian slave; and his superior condition as such to the labourer of Great Britain. The English patrons of this delectable and flattering comparison, which, however, I am afraid the most abject of their countrymen would spurn at and resent, I have repeatedly heard to ask, “ When do you ever hear of a slave in the Brazils dying of starvation?” and had they chosen, with quite as much propriety they might have added—or perishing from cold; for in the Brazils, owing to the beneficence of nature—certainly not to the liberality of man—the one is fully as likely a contingency as the other. With shallow artifice, they enlarge

upon the destitution of the lower order of their countrymen at home, and dwell with peculiar emphasis upon their scanty fare. From newspaper reports they cull the choicest pieces of individual misery, and borrowing from them a mock commiseration, tell the slave-trade abolitionist to look to, and remedy the wretchedness at home, before Quixotically seeking for what exists abroad. Their especial care is, that the selection of cases for contrast shall be from the opposite extremes; reserving of course the favourable one for themselves. The one picture is overcast with clouds, and shrouded in gloom—the other is lit up with sunshine, and what no light can embellish is prudently left out. They never balance the isolated instances of misfortune inevitable in great communities—the deaths in ditches from starvation which interest them so much, with the thousand upon thousands who are annually made to perish in the baracoon or noisome hold, in order that the slave system may be properly carried out. They especially eschew all consideration of the fact that the British labourer does not belong to a caste “born to no inheritance but slavery,” but constitutes one of a great social pyramid; at the base of it, it is true, but deterred by no paralyzing influence from taking, by his industry and intelligence, any intermediate position between that and its highest pinnacle. Above all, they perversely forget, that for one negro to be admitted into the enviable condition of a Brazilian slave, the price exacted is too much. The sacrifice of four lives in order that one may live to enjoy all the social and eminently humanizing benefits which Brazil has to bestow, is more than even the most lukewarm humanity, unbiassed by interest, would consent to allow. The commission

of evil is a suspicious channel, under any circumstances, through which to obtain any good, but when that evil swells into such monstrous disproportion with the supposed good effected—when, like a plague spot, it spreads over a vast section of the human race, causing incalculable misery to many, and most doubtful benefit to a few (slavery in Brazils being the benefit inferred)—when contact with it confounds youthful and ingenuous impressions, corrupts the heart, and enlists in its defence minds which owe whatever intelligence they may possess to their having had the good fortune to be reared under its antagonist principle, even supposing its benefits far less equivocal than they are, still it would deserve to be held in universal execration, and its aiders and abettors branded with perpetual infamy.

The insult offered to the labourer of Great Britain by the invidious comparison of his condition with that of the Brazilian or any other slave, can only serve to illustrate to what absurdities men will be driven, when goaded by the suggestions of a self-interest which is involved in a system raised upon the ruins of morality and common sense. Sorry indeed would be the condition of an English peasant, if a handful of farinha and a morsel of carne secca (salt junk) once or twice a day, could confer a social position superior to, and happier than, his own. Yet such is deemed by the people I allude to, an equivalent, at the least, for liberty, for immunity from the lash and the caprice of a hard task-master, for the solace of domestic life, and more than all, for that hope of bettering one's condition which never leaves a free man's bosom but with his life. Themselves struggling with an eagerness not always delicately alive to the appeals of conscience,

to raise their position still higher in the social scale, deny to the negro the same privilege—a privilege inestimable, since it forms the main-spring of civilized society. And yet they loudly assert his condition a happy one, and suited to his peculiar nature; because, say they, he is not capable of making use of higher privileges were they granted him. According to such reasoners, the common desires, whose only limit we are led to believe is the whole human race, owing to an unaccountable diversion by nature of the stream of her gifts, has been turned aside from the African, and left him incapable of improvement, destitute of ambition, and callous to all the feelings engendered by social intercourse. But it is necessary for such men to choose between two alternatives—either to embrace a palpable absurdity, or to admit the commission of gross injustice and inhumanity. As might be supposed, they have adopted the first, influenced by that inclination characteristic of the majority of mankind, rather to be thought mistaken in their understanding than depraved in their hearts.

In a former part of this paper, I had occasion to mention casually the price of a slave in his own country. I will now resume this topic, and endeavour to explain how much he costs before he can be fairly introduced into the Brazils for sale. It was then stated that the average price given for a slave on the coast of Africa was from five to six dollars value in goods. But this is neither the only nor even the principal expense incurred. The vessel which is to convey the slaves, its outfit, and the reward to the captain and the crew, in the event of a successful run, constitute the principal items in the slave speculator's balance bill. When these

are fulfilled, and the mortality, together with every other ordinary contingency allowed for, a cargo of negroes can be brought into the market of Brazil for sale, at the moderate outlay of twenty-five dollars a head. The smallness of this sum may well surprise the reader, nor will his astonishment in all likelihood be less, when told that between the purchase of a slave on the coast of Africa, and his sale in Brazils, a great disparity exists. In the former it varies from five to six dollars ; in the latter from two hundred and fifty to three hundred ; or in sterling money from fifty to sixty pounds ! Here a fact obtrudes itself which I am unwilling to pass over in silence, and it is—the greater value of a newly-imported slave to one who has been in the country for some time. Of course this does not include those who have acquired dexterity in some mechanical employment, or who have gained a character for sobriety and good conduct. The reason assigned for this is confessed to be the prevalence of drunkenness among the negroes long resident in the Brazils, and the great difficulty of keeping this vice within moderate bounds. Than this a more conclusive proof could scarcely be required to show how little the negro relishes his bondage. A race who felt especially favoured in being made Brazilian bondsmen—who hugged the chains of slavery as the cherished links which connected them with civilisation, would not be so prone to indulge in the hollow, unsubstantial refuge of the wretched and oppressed. They would not brave the frowns and bear the stripes of their benefactors, if they found not in the delirious dreams, or blank prostration of drunkenness, a solace superior to their hours of sobriety. It is believed that this vice, when it pre-

vails amongst a whole race, is peculiarly presumptive of their physical wretchedness, and moral degradation; and it will require stronger arguments than have yet been heard from the apologists for slavery to convince us that in this, as in any other peculiarity of human nature, the negro forms an exception.

Unfortunately the fact is but too apparent, that the vice of drunkenness prevails to a very great extent amongst the slave population of Brazils. In every street, and along the roads, at short intervals, the "Venda," or shop for the retail of spirits, greets both the stranger's eye and nose, as he passes along. Of an evening, swarms of negroes may be seen congregated in these dens or around their doorways, vociferating and jabbering with all the characteristic loquacity of their race; all the while they are tipping their modicum of cuscach, (new rum,) and, if their means will permit of it, treating themselves, in addition, to a mess of small fish fried in hog's lard, the savour of which of a sultry summer's evening is far more pungent than grateful to the noses of the uninitiated. Whatever sums the coffee-carriers and other out-door slaves may have gained, over and above what they are obliged at the close of each day to return to their owners, is spent at the venda. Thither also the domestic slaves bring the trifling sums of money they contrive, by some unknown means, to scrape together, and in the excitement it procures for them, forget for a while their masters and their miseries. So strong is this inclination in the slaves, that I have been repeatedly requested by their owners not to give them money, as it only afforded them the means of getting tipsy, and thereby incurring a severe chastisement. Indeed, this is perhaps the principal source

of discord between the slave and his owner, and more prolific of punishment to the former than any other of his failings. For this he is flogged and imprisoned; for this his neck is encircled with an heavy iron circlet; and for this his head is enclosed in a tin vizor shaped like the snout of a pig, and pierced with small holes sufficient to permit of respiration and vision, but effectual against the introduction of anything solid or fluid into his mouth. This propensity of the negro slave for stimulants is eagerly seized upon and urged against him by those little favourable to his welfare, and, coloured with whatever exaggeration prejudice can supply, is made, together with his asserted aversion to labour, an argument for his detention in slavery. How ridiculous, they say, to dress the negro's mind in the sensitive feelings of a European freeman; to attribute to him sentiments which he never felt, and cannot even comprehend! Is it upon such as that, they remark with a sneer, pointing the while to the poor degraded negro, the good people of England waste so much of their maudlin sympathy? Can they find no better subject upon which to bestow their squeamish philanthropy than a set of sordid savages whose relaxation is apathetic sloth, and whose chief pleasure is gross intemperance! In answer, if answer were deigned to be given to such atrocious assertions, they might be told, that when Satan met the hideous offspring of his own wickedness at the portals of hell, he knew it not, his haughty, though fallen nature was loath to recognise, in the monstrous object before him, the fruit of his own sin!

But to resume the subject. It will be readily seen, by glancing at the vast discrepancy between the price paid in the baracoon, and the sum received in the

Brazilian market for a negro slave, what an irresistible temptation is held out to the cupidity of lawless and unprincipled men; and it will not require much acuteness to foresee what dangers will be braved and what ingenuity will be exerted to grasp so glittering a prize. An additional inducement, were any more required to engage ruffians in a speculation of this description, is furnished by the insignificance of the sum required to fit it out. Scarcely a needy Portuguese adventurer from the old country, but holds out to his dazzled imagination the hope, that in time the land of his adoption will supply him with the means to try his fortune in the great Brazilian lottery of slave-trading; in which the prizes are in such goodly proportion to the blanks, that it is more the dread of not being able to purchase a ticket, than any misgiving about its probable success, which awakens his anxiety. From the roadside "venda," or in English vernacular, hedge alehouse, whither the recent Portuguese immigrant is glad to betake himself to obtain the means of bare subsistence, he looks with a half confident eye to the gaudy chacaras or villas of his hoary precursors, and promises himself, with far more likelihood of success than the sanguine Alnaschar of the Arabian Nights could lay claim to, to raise from anticipated slave profits such a one, some day or other, for himself. The slave-dealers are the nabobs of the Brazils—they form the dazzling class of the parvenus millionnaires. Do you see that nondescript building with its stuccoed front and green painted balconies; surmounted by vases and plaster images from the heathen mythology, and surrounded by a garden in which elaborate fountains, stucco figures, and brick and mortar

borders to the walks and flower-plots, leave scarcely any room for the flowers themselves. *That* is the chacara, or country residence, of a slave-dealer—a man who, twenty years ago, landed in the Brazils with scarcely a testoon in his pocket ; who commenced his career by keeping a venda, but closed that to open a retail warehouse, which the ferret eye of British competition no sooner beheld, than it fostered into noxious *respectability*, by the obliging accommodation of unlimited credit. The man was shrewd—he beheld his store filled with goods which did not belong to him, and being of a speculative turn, he ventured a part of them in the slave trade. But fortune, less indulgent than the British creditor, frowned on his first effort. The vessel in which he had embarked his goods, or the slaves obtained in exchange for them, was captured on the coast by a British cruizer, and his dreams for the present of a rapid fortune, ended, as dreams usually do, in nothing. Meanwhile the bills drawn at no early date, became due, or, to be more correct, his debtor account to the English dealer began to wax old, and payment was gently urged by the creditor. The ready shrug of the shoulders, and the characteristic *paciencia, meu senhor*, were all he had at his disposal, or at least what he intended to give. And here the uninitiated might conclude the matter was at an end, that—

“ When the brains were out the man would die.”

But no : neither the creditor nor the debtor were to be so baffled. The homely adage, “ In for a penny in for a pound,” influenced the former, while the hope of retrieving his loss spurred on the latter to a second venture. And so it was arranged. More goods were

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furnished—another speculation was entered upon, which in the sequel proved successful. The previous disappointment was now amply made up by the present profits; confidence was restored; avarice received a fresh impulse; the speculation was repeated again and again, the final result of which has been to supply the means to perpetrate that absurdity in stone and mortar, and to enable its owner to live in it in a style of vulgar profusion.

Such is an episode from a roadside conversation one may hear any day from an old resident in the Brazils, and such the prospect which stimulates the ambitious and unprincipled adventurer in that country to engage in a speculation, one successful hit in which is equivalent to a fortune.

The risk of capture by British cruisers which the slave-dealer has to run in prosecuting his infamous trade, has operated in two ways in suggesting precautionary measures. By one he is prompted to equip vessels well found, and in which stowage is sacrificed to speed. By the other, (which is the more favoured by the Brazilians,) he is induced to purchase any old and nearly worn-out craft which he can come by, and to provide her as cheaply as possible with the necessary stores. Having done so, he sends her on a venture to the coast to take her chance of escape, by eluding entirely the vigilance of the British cruisers.

The first method possesses the advantage not enjoyed by the second, viz. the desirable one of speed, should a cruiser heave in sight; but the second is infinitely less expensive, and even when unsuccessful, scarcely cripples the resources of the speculator. By adopting it, a greater number of vessels can be dispatched with

the same outlay of capital, and the chances of escape proportionally increased ; and so great are the profits, that should but one out of five make a successful run, the surplus left, after all losses are deducted, is nevertheless very considerable.

It is almost incredible, the smallness and worthlessness of the vessels employed of the latter description, to convey hundreds of human creatures across the Atlantic. Mention has been already made of one which measured but seventy tons, and it remains to be said of her, that she was found upon survey so rotten, that she was condemned as not sea-worthy, and broken up in Rio harbour.

Twelve contos of reis, equivalent at the present rate of exchange to about twelve hundred pounds sterling, is the average cost incurred in the purchase and outfit of a vessel of this sort ; so that, if to this be added the sum paid for the negroes on the coast, the cheapness with which they can be introduced into the Brazils, may at once be comprehended.

That no chance of escape may be lost, the slave-trader studies the treaties contracted by Great Britain with the various civilized and demi-civilized powers of the world for the suppression of the traffic, and dexterously avails himself of whatever scapehole the hollowness or morbid sensitiveness of the high contracting agents afford him. For awhile the golden flag of Spain sanctioned the scenes which were enacting on the slave-deck below. Portugal next lent her colours to protect the infamous traffic ; but of late, more stringent provisions having shaken the security formerly borrowed from them, the preference is now given to the United States' flag ; and the civilised world is accord-

ingly edified with the anomalous sight of the emblem of the rights of man and social equality floating over the hatchways which conceal the sinews of slavery. To be better understood by some readers, it may be necessary to explain that, in consequence of the more recent clauses introduced into the slave treaties which Great Britain has formed with the different nations, the nature of the cargo, and the fittings of a slaver may now be brought into any of the slave commission courts as evidence; and, provided they be conclusive enough to prove intention of the crime, of themselves they are sufficient to warrant her condemnation. But this can only be carried out where a right of visit is enjoyed; and as all, with the exception of the government of the United States, have acceded to this arrangement, which, be it understood, is mutual, to that government alone of all the civilized powers in the world, now belongs the unenviable distinction of lending a cloak for a time to the schemes of the slave dealer.* Protected by the flag of the North American Union, a vessel may sail from any port in the Brazils furnished with slave fittings, and freighted with faranha, junk beef, &c., and proceed to any given rendezvous on the coast of Africa, fearless of molestation. It is doubtless a pointed display of independence for the government of the United States to stand forth the uncompromising champions of international punctilio, and refuse, in the face of the world, to accede to an arrangement, to which the rest of what is worthy in the world, have given their consent. But it could be wished that the occasion had been better chosen, so as not to have brought national vanity into

* Since this was written, France, by the recent treaty, has withdrawn her consent to the right of visit.

such unamiable and invidious contraposition with universal philanthropy.

The usual method adopted to obtain the protection of the flag is this. A Brazilian speculator buys an American vessel, and makes it one of the provisions in the bargain that the transfer of the purchase shall not take place until she has reached some specified place on the coast of Africa. By this arrangement the American flag is secured to protect from search, whatever illegal stores and fittings she may be freighted with, and the venture by this means is so far helped to a successful issue. Not long ago an affair transpired in Rio which placed this fact in a clear light. Three seamen belonging to an American vessel which had arrived a few days before from the coast of Africa, declared to the American authorities that they had formed part of the crew of a vessel which had been sold by the captain under the stipulations just mentioned, and who, along with them, had just returned from fulfilling them. They further stated that the captain, on his appointed rendezvous on the African coast, not contented with delivering over the vessel to those who were waiting to receive her, went a step further, doubtless from pure good-nature, and actually allowed the negroes to be shipped, before he hauled down his flag to make room for another better suited to wave over such an unhallowed cargo.

Of course the foregoing is but one of the several ways in which enterprises of this description are conducted. Often, vessels are freighted with all the semblance of fair trading—the nature of the cargo being made a screen for the presence on board of illegal articles. Thus I have known horses to have been entered as part freight, to account for the unusual num-

ber of water leaguers, and for the quantity of farinha, deal boards, &c., requisite in a slaver. The coast of Brazil once cleared, the throats of the horses are cut—their carcasses thrown overboard—and the water, &c., reserved for more valuable consumers. I recollect an anecdote told of a Brazilian skipper illustrative of the ingenuity with which excuses are fabricated. His vessel had been overhauled by one of our cruisers just outside the harbour, and several things having been discovered of a suspicious character, he was made, sorely against his will, to put his helm up, and return into port. Aware that among other prescribed articles he had on board a quantity of bricks and mortar—items strongly presumptive of sinister intentions, he was anxious to dispose of them, so as to weaken their evidence against him in the commission court. To throw them overboard he could not, owing to the closeness with which his motions were watched, and to conceal them was out of the question. At length a lucky idea gleamed through the cloud of his perplexity. Next morning at daylight the Brazilian crew were observed to come upon deck, each furnished with a brickbat and a quantity of mortar. Curiosity was immediately aroused, which, however, was soon succeeded by astonishment when they proceeded to holystone the deck! The ruse was ingenious, but a little too refined. The captors only laughed at the subterfuge, and condoled with the wily skipper, that the well-known habits of his countrymen should have so entirely divested it of a shadow of probability.

I have elsewhere adverted to the enormous profits of the slave-trade; it may not be trespassing too much to indulge, upon this head, in a little further detail. For the sake of illustration we will suppose that, out of

five vessels despatched to the coast of Africa for slaves, one only makes a successful run. She has started, we will say, with six hundred slaves, but one hundred and fifty have died on the passage, and fifty more after landing, from the sufferings endured, and the diseases contracted during that trying period; so that but four hundred remain in marketable condition. Well, into the market they are carried, and on the lowest average they will fetch four hundred milreis, or in sterling money about forty pounds ahead.

Four hundred multiplied by forty, gives sixteen thousand pounds as the net proceeds of the cargo. But from this former losses have to be deducted—namely, the four vessels captured, the expense of whose purchase and outfit, taken singly, is twelve hundred pounds, and the cost of the negroes (for we will adopt the most unfavourable case, and suppose them to have been all full) seven hundred pounds more. This will make a sum in all of seven thousand six hundred, to which having added nineteen hundred more, as the expenses of the successful vessel; the entire outlay will thus amount to nine thousand five hundred, which, after being deducted from the gross sum received for the slaves, will leave a surplus of six thousand five hundred pounds sterling; in spite of a calculation, let it be distinctly remembered, far more unfavourable to the slave-dealer than in reality takes place.

Having thus unveiled some of the facts connected with the slave-trade in the Brazils, the next subject which suggests itself for consideration, is the efficacy of the measures at present employed for its suppression.

In entering upon this topic, to which, tritely enough, the term remedy has been applied, I cannot

but feel the most unaffected diffidence. A retrospect of the zeal which has been displayed, and the labour gone through in projecting plans and concluding treaties; and a knowledge of the men who have successively borne their share in this generous work, make me cross the threshold with becoming reverence. But it is a reverence which I confess to be far less inspired by the measures than by the men. The splendour of great and good names cannot blind us to the results of experience—that grand touchstone of all social projects, and the leveller which enables the ordinary mind of to-day to pass judgment upon the designs of the greatest intellects of the past generation. We cannot conceal from ourselves the facts which the preceding pages disclose, and knowing them, we cannot be supposed capable of sanctioning the measures whose only legitimate praise must be earned by their utter extinction.

Influenced by the noblest and most generous motives, the philanthropists of England, headed by many of her greatest statesmen, have adopted several plans as a remedy for this great social evil. But their treatment, with all due deference to them, has been in a great measure empirical. They have been applying their remedies rather to the ultimate effect than to the proximate cause; they have been treating the ulcer without paying due attention to the constitution, and ought not to be astonished if it continues as hideous and unsightly as ever.

Under an exaggerated impression of what our navy can do, they have long depended with fond partiality upon it for the extinction of the slave-trade. They have lined the coast of Africa with sailing vessels, and at this moment are blockading the estuaries of its

principal rivers with steamers. But far from ruining the slave-trader, they are if anything, doing him a service. For they are only rendering the goods in which he traffics sufficiently precarious to ensure for them a high market and a ready sale. No doubt the prize-list displays to advantage the zeal and perseverance of our naval force, and, to the superficial observer, may convey the idea of heavy loss sustained on the part of the illicit trader. But it is so only in appearance. Unlike more praiseworthy and delicate branches of commerce, the slave-trade stands in need of no bounty; firm as evil in human nature itself, it thrives in company with it. Far from languishing under the effects of restraint, it gathers from it additional strength.

*E come palma suol, cui pondo aggreva,
Suo valor combattuto ha maggior forza,
E nella oppression piu si solleva.*

For thirty years past we have been employing cruizers, and since 1838, every obstacle which existed previously, and which fettered their perfect efficiency, has been removed. The equator, north and south, is now alike submitted to their control, and no parallels of latitude limit their sphere of action. Long coveted and favourite islands have been occupied so as to afford a convenient rendezvous, and to enable them to command the great thoroughfares of these seas; and that nothing might be left undone, the co-operation of the naval force of other countries has been sought for and obtained. And what are the great practical results? Is the trade destroyed? Are the slave-traders ruined? Have the baracoons been closed? Has the price of slaves become so enhanced in the Brazils as to force

on the Brazilians the necessity of internal reproduction ? No : not even the least of these has been achieved. New baracoons were opened as fast as Captain Denman destroyed the old ones ; the trade continues unabated ; men grow rich on it in the Brazils ; and so little has the price of slaves become increased, that after the lapse of nearly thirty years, their intrinsic value has not been raised, individually, twelve pounds.

Few will be inclined to deny that the plan of annihilating the slave-trade by employing men of war to capture the vessels engaged in it, appears at first sight extremely feasible ; and he would be both silly and presumptuous who would attempt to censure those by whom it was originally projected. The feats which our navy had already done, in the way of sweeping the seas, and in blockading particular lines of coast in the teeth of powerful and skilful antagonists, were sufficient to encourage even the least sanguine to expect from its employment in this case, the speedy suppression of an infamous traffic carried on by a band of ruffian adventurers. To have prognosticated then, that after the lapse of thirty years, our cruizers should have cruized in vain ; that, in spite of the general sense of the civilized world, the great opprobrium of civilization should continue to exist, and not only exist, but advancing in deformity should take unto itself " seven devils worse than before," would have been to incur the obloquy of being a lying prophet—to share, and with more show of desert, the fate of the unhappy Cassandra of old. But that which would have been regarded as insanity to predict, is now the simple truth to record. The experiment, promising as it appeared, has failed, and has forced upon the friends of our common humanity the necessity of

looking about for fresh plans. Amongst these the favourite is to civilize Africa! To spread among the dusky denizens of the great Lybian wastes, the children of the Gambia, the Niger, and the Nile, the lights of Christianity. To teach them the arts of industry, more especially to direct their energies to the cultivation of their soil, and by showing how much more profitable and agreeable that is to making war upon and selling each other into captivity—to wean them from their barbarous and destructive habits, and close their ears for ever to the instigations of selfish and unprincipled men. A gigantic project truly, but one which, I fear, and in sorrow confess it, not more gigantic than impracticable. To grapple this subject in all its breadth, we must clear our minds of the fumes of enthusiasm, and be prepared to measure with a dispassionate understanding and a correct eye, the obstacles, physical and moral, which stand in the way. In the first place, we have a continent as the proposed field which constitutes one of the grand divisions of the globe; and of them all the least endowed by nature with those physical advantages which facilitate the intercourse between man and man. The rivers which flow through it, though large, are few; their mouths broken up by deltas, or rendered unnavigable by bars. The general face of the country is flat, covered with impenetrable forests, which are relieved only by deserts of sand. The inhabitants are numbered by millions, and so divided by tribes, that their dialects change with almost every geometrical degree; their manners are synonymous with barbarity, and their minds are darkened by the ignorance of many centuries.

But formidable as all these appear to be, they are neither,

singly nor collectively, such as to intimidate a determined mind, far less fill it with despair. The history of our race proves that difficulties no less apparently insurmountable have been triumphantly overcome; and were there nothing besides these to contend with, few doubts could be reasonably entertained of a successful result. But there is another—one which, Gorgon like, paralyses every energy, and lays the most stubborn courage and perseverance prostrate in the dust; opposed to which, the devotion of enthusiasm and the coolness of prudence alike contend in vain; no less subtle than deadly, it eludes the nicest researches of science, and defies its power. Far more formidable than walls of adamant, it encircles the greater portion of this devoted continent, and with a destructive fury which ages of experience bear sad witness to, repels every attempt which has been made to set it at nought. Need it be said that the climate of Africa is alluded to? This it is which must render, as it has hitherto rendered, every effort which the Europeans choose to make, abortive.

To instruct a savage people, we must mingle with them; and that, not in the ridiculously minute proportion which at present holds in Africa, but largely, as the Asiatics with Greece, the Grecians with Italy, and the Romans with central Europe and their ultima Thulé—these islands. No homœopathic remedy will avail here. The days when individual exertion could effect miracles are gone by; we must not look in these times, among the officials employed in Africa, for a Confucius or a Cadmus; nor among the missionaries for a Manco Capac. If we wish to appear respectable even in failure, we must limit our plans to the mea-

sure of human efforts, and not be so unreasonable as to expect to accomplish a miracle in morals, when baffled by the agency of a physical cause. And that we have been baffled is abundantly shown by the history of the colony of Sierra Leone—of the establishment of Fernando Po—of the numerous missions which have been sent out from England, but which never returned, or if they did, a melancholy wreck; and if anything could be wanting to clench conviction, by the disastrous result of the recent unhappy and ill-devised expedition up the Niger. To struggle manfully with difficulties, to persevere in efforts once begun, is no doubt deserving of praise, and greatly so when in the prosecution of a great and good cause. Even when success is denied in the latter case, the reflection is still at hand to console us—that, at all events, we have done our duty. But it must not be forgotten that while there is a duty which urges us on, there is another which, at a certain point, bids us to desist. It is here that firmness degenerates into obstinacy, and perseverance is no longer a virtue but a vice.

Religious zeal, experience has shown us, can be carried to bloodthirsty fanaticism, and the most philanthropic enthusiasm, has been before now betrayed into actions far distant from humane. The quick sensibility of Las Casas, stung by the sight of so much human suffering, suggested as its remedy the very evil to which our attention is now turned; he proposed, in order to save the Indian, that the African slave should be used instead. Let us beware, lest in our anxiety we fall into a like error, and in attempting to alleviate the condition of the African, forget what

is due to a distinguished service and to gallant men. For the long series of years, during which the experiment of suppressing the slave-trade by means of cruisers has been tried, our naval officers and seamen have stood the brunt. With characteristic alacrity they have submitted to a cheerless exile on an inhospitable coast, and with intrepid fortitude they have braved the deadly perils of a pestilential climate. Thousands upon thousands of them have fallen victims. Again and again has the British pendant fluttered over silent and deserted decks. At many a spot along those low and sullen shores, the oaken tablet marks where whole ships' companies lie—the propitiatory offerings for the success of this philanthropic plan,—a plan which, had it been followed by success, would have soothed our regret for their untimely fate, by yielding us the reflection that they had not died in vain. In them we would have beheld the Roman sentiment, “*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*,” expanded to the dignity of universal benevolence, and death encountered successfully in the cause of mankind. But what embitters the cup, is the thought that they have suffered to no purpose; and what exasperates the feelings is the fact that the destructive routine is still perseveringly kept up.

Surely it cannot be sufficiently known in England that the fluent harangues, uttered in all the fervour of an indiscriminating and easy zeal to admiring and sympathising assemblies, often find an echo in the death groans of those who have to carry their senseless projects into effect. Surely it cannot be suspected by the fairer portions of those assemblies that the waving of their perfumed handkerchiefs, the warmth

of their applause, are frequently but the signals for the flow of the bereaved mothers' and the widows' tears. It requires no need of rhetoric to enlist the feelings in this view of the subject.

The late disastrous occurrences on board H. M. S. Eclair, in consequence of which the writer, in common with many others, has to deplore the untimely fate of an esteemed friend, speak volumes.

A letter is now before me received not long ago from a friend employed on the coast of Africa. Its contents principally consist in the description of a malignant fever which had broken out on board some of our vessels; and in the melancholy detail of the mortality it had already caused among the officers and crews. It also states that the cruising was vigilant, persevering, and successful.

A short time before leaving South America, and about the same period the letter in question was written, I was told, while conversing with several old residents in the Brazils, of the landing of several cargoes in the neighbourhood of Rio. One gentleman, who had but recently arrived from Macahee, a small town close to Rio, mentioned eight slavers to have landed there to his knowledge within the two months preceding his departure. It was remarked by another of the party, and agreed to by all, that for the two previous months, namely, April and May, (1845,) more slaves had been landed than during any other two months for many preceding years; and in proof, it was declared, that the price of a slave was one hundred and fifty milreis cheaper (£15) at that moment than it had been in November last. From these facts I leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Nor is the useless sacrifice of our sailors the only

objection to be urged against' this plan. There is another, and which may prove of more weight to those who are little inclined to be influenced by this; and it is, in the fact, that the plan in question is not more destructive to those charged with enforcing it, than baneful to those for whose benefit it has been embraced. There can be no doubt, that since it has been adopted, the sufferings and the mortality of the negroes have become materially increased. In his well-grounded anxiety to elude the vigilance of British cruisers, the slave-trader has resorted to every scheme which his ingenuity could suggest. And in each of them the slender advantages which the negroes formerly possessed have been entirely done away. To ensure speed, they are now crammed into a space while living which would no more than hold them when dead; and to avoid heavy loss, in the event of capture, they are embarked on board vessels nearly worthless from age, size, and rottenness; and which, could the secrets of the deep be disclosed, would be found not unfrequently to have foundered at sea. All arrangements as to space and ventilation are now abandoned, even that last semblance of a provident humanity, the slave doctor, is discarded, and the poor wretches are left to take their chance of life or death, as their constitutional powers of endurance may decide. This fact is so well known, and has been already so ably and energetically exposed, that it is unnecessary here to do more than allude to it.

Convinced of the futility of these projects, we are now approaching the point where the question suggests itself—Has nothing absolutely been done to put a check to this enormous evil? Among the many barriers

erected, has none had the effect of at least crippling its progress? Of all the weapons employed against it, has none pierced the quick? has each in succession proved nothing better than a "*telum imbellis sine ictu*?"

In reply, I am inclined to say no; and that one measure has been adopted, which, if it has not succeeded in repressing, has, at all events, served as a check to the spread of slavery in the Brazils. And it is the simple and obvious one of discouraging the consumption of the produce of slave labour. To say that this has done as much as all the other measures put together would be indeed saying but little; but to say that it has in a degree answered the end required of it, there is no unbiassed mind which knows anything of the Brazils will presume to deny. There is an irresistible power in the force of what political economists style an effectual demand, and so long as the means of making such a demand is placed in the hands of Brazilians, there will be no want of vigour in the slave-trade. It has been in consequence of the market, yearly increasing, which they enjoy for their coffee, which has enabled them to turn into derision the efforts of cruising, civilizing, &c., which Great Britain has put forth to suppress the slave traffic. If the people of England think that one acre less of Brazilian soil has been cultivated, in consequence of their naval interference, they are mistaken. Were all the present hindrances removed, and slaves allowed to be imported without molestation, I question much whether the slightest perceptible impulse would be given to Brazilian agriculture. The present actual

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amount of produce is not regulated by the labour, but by the demand which exists for it.

It is not the preventive efforts of our men-of-war which gives much serious uneasiness to the more shrewd of the Brazilians. It is the circumstance of not finding a sufficient market for their produce which fills them with alarm. The inquisitiveness of our cruizers serves no better purpose than to sharpen their ingenuity, and irritate their national vanity. But the exclusion of their produce from our markets, cripples their progress as an agricultural country, and affects their purse. This it is, in reality, which they find the most intolerable and exasperating of all the nuisances which the slave-trade has subjected them to; and to be relieved from which, they might well consent to almost any amount of restrictive surveillance Great Britain may choose to impose, conscious that in having gained this advantage, they had secured a power which would render the other abortive. The resources of the Brazils are inexhaustible, its power to supply unlimited; all that it wants is, the opportunity of showing both. Give but the order, and leave the care of fulfilling it to us, is not more true of the enterprise of the Manchester manufacturer than of the Brazilian agriculturist.

At this moment coffee is not cultivated more in the Brazils because sugar is cultivated less. Were every facility or encouragement for the growth of the latter granted to-morrow, the quantity of the former would not be reduced one bag. No labour would be diverted from cultivating the one to the other; but more labour would be undoubtedly employed, and the cases

of sugar would only be proportionately increased. To sum up in a few words,—Cruizing for slavers has never prevented the Brazilian agriculturist from meeting the demand for his coffee; nor would it any demand which might be created for his sugar. But restrictive duties have caused his growth of sugar to languish, though it could not that of his coffee, because of the existence of more indulgent and efficient markets elsewhere. That this is not a merely speculative opinion the following table will serve to show.

COFFEE AND SUGAR EXPORTED FROM RIO.		
Years.	Bags of Coffee.	Cases of Sugar.
1835	538,694	19,277
1836	704,245	17,889
1837	666,496	
1838		
1839	871,785	17,627
1840	1,063,801	13,499
1841	1,013,915	10,465
1842	1,179,731	15,460
1843	1,189,523	9,433

Much has been said of the absurd inconsistency of this legislative measure, as it now stands, by those who are anxious for its removal. Why, they ask, if it be good as a general principle, not apply it to the produce of the United States, as well as to that of Cuba, and the Brazils? If the sugar and coffee of the one are offensive, because of the mode of their cultivation, why not the cotton and tobacco of the other, which is grown in the same way? You admit the slave-grown produce of the one, which of course does away with the morale of the measure, and what public objection can be made to extend the same indulgence to the

other? None, certainly; were there no other difference between the two than meets the eye in this plausible proposition. Generically they are the same; both are the result of the labour of slavery; but specifically they are widely dissimilar; inasmuch as the slavery which is employed in producing the one is a slavery maintained by internal reproduction; whereas the slavery which grows the other is replenished from without, and requires for its existence the perpetuation of the slave-trade. And what the difference is between these two, may be gathered from what has gone before. I am no advocate for slave-labour in any shape, and would hail the time when its abolition throughout the world was declared, as the most important step in the history of modern civilization. But I see no reason because that result cannot for the present be obtained, why we should abandon any scheme which might lead to the softening of its more revolting features—why we should not discountenance those who, in the face of humanity and common sense, persist with dogged obstinacy in supporting a system which aggravates the social malady, and inflicts incalculable additional misery upon those who are exposed to it. Such, however, as this restrictive enactment is, it must be admitted to exert but a limited influence at best. It may, and no doubt does, throw an obstacle in the way, but it is an obstacle to the slave-trade, such as the tub is to the whale; or, to estimate it perhaps a little more justly, as a drag is to a coach-wheel, a contrivance which partially retards but does not stop the vehicle's progressive career. Then is there no hope of cure left? Is this lazar sore to be allowed to wrangle and fester in

the very midst of the bloom of enlightened institutions and of generous sentiments—a stain and a reproach to them? After long years of unrequited toil—after many and great sacrifice in blood and treasure lavished in vain, are we to retire from the contest baffled and defeated? (for to go on as we are now doing, is to struggle against a Titan with a sword of lath.) Shall it be recorded that Great Britain, backed by the intelligence of the civilized world, retired from a struggle in which justice and humanity were the stakes; and before a people who would have furnished the only decent pretext for such a step, had they, and they only been the objects of it? This I leave to far abler intellects and more enlightened and practical men to decide; and content myself with the task which I have now performed, namely, the exposition of the slave-trade as it now exists in the Brazils, and the futility of the measures which have been as yet adopted to suppress it.

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**DERBY & SONS
NOTTINGHAM 1997**

