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confidence in the leader of a party or the head of a government, they are content to leave to the cooler reflection of those who watch the times, and have any thing to lose. The more limited object, at present in view, is to oppose the calm and reasonable grounds on which the former opinions of Mr. Brougham on the subject of Negro Slavery were founded, against the ravings which have marked his career as candidate for the representation of Yorkshire; and to put it to the wise and just, whether the reasons which Mr. Brougham has given for the change of his opinions, or the circumstances under which he has changed them, are such as to encourage confidence in his conduct or his integrity.

OPINIONS,

&c. &c.

OF THE PECULIARITIES OF THE WEST INDIAN POPULATION, AND THE DIFFICULTIES OF A TRANSITION FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM.

It may fairly be assumed, as a general principle, that a multitude collected at random from various savage nations, and habituated to no subordination but that of domestic slavery, are totally unfit for uniting in the regulations of regular government, or being suddenly moulded into one system of artificial society. In fact, the sudden formation of a political body has always been found the most arduous achievement in the art of governing.—*Colonial Policy*, vol. ii. pp. 146, 7.

Our Colonies are at present inhabited by a race of negro slaves; they are not possessed of men fit for the situation of subjects. They have as yet only the bodies of subjects; bodies animated by the minds of slaves in the rudest state of society; and no power under that

which called them into existence can *at once* transform them into men capable of supporting the relations required for the constitution of a free and civilized community. *They are utterly unfit for the relations of voluntary labourers in a regular and civilized state.*—*Col. Pol.* ii. 120, 1.

In fact, there is at least as wide a difference between the habits of a slave and those of a free subject, as between the nature of an African and that of a European. A slave has to learn the difficult lesson of industry ; as different from compulsory labour as it is from indolence and sloth. Hitherto he has only obeyed the impulse of another man's will ; he has been actuated by no motives but the fear of the lash. The gift of liberty brings with it the burthen of thinking and willing and planning ; the task of providing subsistence for himself and his family ; the obligation of performing all the social duties. The slave restored to liberty has only had experience of those parts of the functions of a citizen, which in themselves are so disagreeable to his nature, *that nothing but violence could have induced him to perform them.* It is hard to say from which of the two states, of slavery or rebellion, the transition to the rank of a free subject is the greatest and most difficult. But the negroes are not only in a state of slavery, they are in a low state of civilization. The industry of a savage, his habits of voluntary obedience, his capacity for enjoying civil and political rights, and in general his fitness for becoming the subject of a peaceable and regular community, is, if possible, more limited than that of a mere slave. He has all those habits of voluntary exertion to learn, which are wholly unknown to the members of barbarous tribes, and which form the bond of union among the inhabitants of civilized society. The

inhabitants of rude nations, indeed, know of no medium between the extremes of servility and despotic sway. They consist only of two classes of people—tyrants or masters, and slaves. Force is the only inducement to exertion, and indolence the chief reward of wealth or power.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 134.

OF THE FALLACY OF THE FREE NEGRO SYSTEM, AND THE
NECESSITY OF THE FEAR OF PUNISHMENT TO EXCITE
LABOUR.

The complicated iniquities and the manifold disadvantages of the slave system, have for several years called the attention of European statesmen to the correction of abuses so flagrant, and the remedy of evils so pregnant with danger. Various expedients have been proposed during the wide discussion which those momentous questions have excited. Some *zealots* have contended, with an *inexcusable thoughtlessness*, that the crimes of those whose avarice has transferred the population of Africa to the West Indies, can only be expiated by immediate emancipation of the slaves. The counsels of such *fanatics* have unhappily been adopted and carried into effect by one of the most enlightened nations in the world; *and we have seen the consequences of those insane measures.* Of the plans sketched out, the most important are those which recommend an amelioration in the condition of the negroes, and a gradual change in their hard lot. It has been suggested by many, that settlements not yet cultivated may be peopled by free negroes; and the most sanguine hopes have been entertained of the salutary consequences of such a scheme. Any plan which comprehends the idea of free negroes; or includes the word, is peculiarly

adapted to accord with the feelings of those worthy persons who are so keenly alive to the sufferings of the Africans in a state of bondage. It is natural, therefore, that the schemes to which I allude should be well received, and even eagerly embraced, before a sufficient interval is allowed for sober examination. *These projects are dangerous in the extreme.* I shall prove, from the most simple and obvious considerations, the inefficacy and impossibility of the plans proposed, and then that the dangers of the new order of things intended to be established by such schemes, would be so great as to render their utter impracticability a real blessing.

The desires and wants of man in a rude state are few, and easily gratified. The chief exertion to which necessity impels him, is the procuring of food, and his hunger is no sooner satisfied than he sinks into the luxury of repose. When the natural fertility of the soil affords him spontaneously, a regular, though simple perhaps, and scanty supply, the powers of his mind become languid and feeble, his corporeal strength decays, and he regards as the greatest of all evils, any occupation that calls for mental exertion, or is attended with bodily fatigue. The negroes, though in a less degree, are nearly in the same circumstances with the American Indians, to whose bondage and toils they have been doomed to succeed. Born in a less genial climate, and compelled to procure their sustenance by somewhat greater exertions, they are not content with so small a portion of food, and view with less horror the labour of providing it. But beyond this their industry does not extend: like all savages, they are excited to exertion only by immediate necessity. If you talk to them of conveniences and comforts, and the delights of acti-

vity, you speak a language which they have not yet learned to comprehend ; and the idea of a pleasure which must be purchased with a toil, presents to their minds a contradiction in terms. Were they, indeed, allowed to remain in their own country, the influence of those desires which spring from local attachment, the ties of kindred, and the intercourse of more civilized men, *might by slow degrees* awaken those appetites, and excite those *artificial wants, which alone can excite regular and effective industry.* But if suddenly removed to a milder climate, and a more plentiful soil, with their original repugnance to exert more labour than necessity prescribes, *it cannot be imagined that any thing except the power of a master can prevent them from sinking into a state of listless inactivity.* Accordingly the negroes who have been transported to America are uniformly found to be totally deficient in active industry. That those who continue in a state of slavery should exhibit the appearance of an indolence, which nothing but the immediate terror of the lash can overcome, is perhaps more the consequence of their degraded condition, than of their uncivilized state. *But the want of activity is not confined to the slaves ;* the free negroes are, with very few exceptions, equally averse to all sorts of labour which do not contribute to the supply of their immediate and most urgent wants. Improvident and careless of the future, they are not actuated by that principle which inclines more civilized men to equalize their exertions at all times, and to work after the necessaries of the day have been procured, in order to make up the possible deficiencies of to-morrow ; nor has their intercourse with the whites taught them to consider any gratification as worth obtaining, which cannot be obtained by a slight exertion of a desul-

tory and capricious industry. The slaves, indeed, who are forced to labour during the whole week for their masters, shew some symptoms of application in cultivating their own provision-grounds on the holidays allowed them: but the most indolent of men, if pushed into activity for the advantage of others, will naturally continue their exertions, at least for a short time, when they are themselves to reap the fruits of the additional toil; and the voluntary labour for their own profit, during the little interval of liberty, may become tolerable, by forming a contrast to the unrepaid and compulsory fatigues in which by far the greater part of their days are spent. In fact, even under these favourable circumstances, the slaves in our West Indian Islands allot but a very small portion of their free time to the work for which they are with certainty to be recompensed, by *gains that no master ever interferes with*. Out of the six days per month, besides accidental holidays which are allowed them in Jamaica for the cultivation of their grounds, the more industrious do not allow above sixteen hours to this employment. *As to the free negroes, it appears that their industry is still more sparing*: of their invincible repugnance to all sorts of labour, the most ample evidence is produced in the Report of the Committee of Privy Council, in 1788; and the accounts which foreigners have given of the same class of men, in almost all the other Colonies, agree most accurately with the statements collected by the Committee of Privy Council. The Abbé Raynal himself, with all his ridiculous fondness for savages, cannot in the present instance so far twist the facts according to his fancies and feelings, as to give a favourable portrait of this degraded race. Nor does it seem to be of much consequence, in this view of the

matter, whether the new stock of negroes is imported at once from Africa, or purchased in a state of slavery from the old settlements. Those who have been slaves, either in European plantations or the kingdoms of Africa, especially the former, will, from habit, be more prepared for labour, and more skilful in performing work, than free men in a rude state, who have never experienced the hardships of fatigue. The Mydah negroes, in their own country, are, for the most part, in a state of bondage; and their lands are in much better cultivation than those of the other tribes. Accordingly, in the West Indies they are uniformly preferred to all others for docility, quietness, and submission to the master. The Koromantees unite to greater strength a more fierce and untameable disposition; but such of them as have been slaves in Africa are observed to apply with greater alacrity and effect to field-labour. *These habits of industry, however, have been formed by the constant dread of punishment: no principle less powerful can maintain them; and they must cease with the master's authority, to which they owed their existence.—Col. Pol. ii. 404, et seq.*

The partial and nominal subjection of the negroes, or their submission, as subjects, to the authority of those men whom they formerly obeyed as slaves, will be merely an intermediate and temporary result of the colonial crisis, and cannot be expected long to exist. Various circumstances, both in the situation of the negroes themselves, and in that of the Europeans, concur to render such an arrangement only temporary, and to prevent it from being any thing more than an intermediate state, preparatory to a further and more permanent change. It must be remembered that the peculiar situation of the negroes will have very little

tendency to promote their contentment and peaceable demeanour. They will form the oppressed and labouring part of the community, destitute of property, deprived of the most essential privileges; toiling for a mere subsistence, whilst others are enjoying the fruits of their exertions. The class thus oppressed, too, will be united by common origin, habits, and complexion; indelibly distinguished from the superior order by the same circumstances; united to the rest of the community by no common principles or interest, and held in subjection, though not in slavery, by a handful of strangers. It is easy to see that so unnatural a state of things cannot have a long duration; that a body formed of such jarring principles must contain within itself the seeds of speedy dissolution. A race of men such as the Africans can only be kept in subjection by the whites so long as they are in chains: "the day that makes a man a slave," says Homer, "destroys half his worth; the day that breaks his fetters destroys the whole authority and security of his master." Whilst the slave system exists, the division of the negroes, the watchful eye of the overseer, the constant fear of the driver's lash, may prevent the multitude from uniting and overpowering the least numerous class of the community. The masters, though few in numbers, are civilized, and united. Each proprietor of slaves has one constant and simple end in view—the preserving of subordination and the furtherance of work. The slaves are powerful indeed in numbers, but incapable of acting with premeditation or skill, and are prevented from combining, not only by the perpetual attention of the master, but by various circumstances in their own character and habits. *If, however, for the close inspection, the interested care, and the absolute authority of the master, there is sub-*

stituted the general superintendance, the limited power, and the unconcerned exertions of the government, checked by the acknowledged rights of the negro subjects, it is easy to see how rapidly a still further change will be accomplished, how short will be the duration of European property and power. The circumstances of the negroes, and their relative situation to the whites, will be constantly tending to consummate the colonial revolution, by establishing the complete independence, or, which is the same thing, the supremacy of the most powerful class, and effecting the total extirpation of their former masters.—Col. Pol. ii. 133, et seq.

OF THE NECESSITY OF ABSOLUTE POWER AND OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Nothing but the subdivision of the negroes, and their subjection to the power of masters armed with absolute authority, can prevent them from acquiring that ascendancy to which decided superiority in numbers and strength naturally and invariably leads.—Col. Pol. ii. 310.

It requires very little argument to prove that the quantity of work which may be obtained from a labourer or drudge is liable to be affected as much by the injurious treatment that he receives, as by the idleness in which he may be permitted to indulge. Where this drudge is a slave, no motive but fear can operate upon his diligence and attention. A constant inspection, is therefore absolutely necessary; *and a perpetual terror of the lash is the only preventive of indolence.—Ibid. ii. 451.*

OF ADMITTING NEGRO EVIDENCE.

The mere circumstance of slavery is not the only reason for rejecting the testimony of the blacks against the Europeans in the American Colonies. The distinction of race; the radical difference of manners and character; the perpetual opposition of interests as well as prejudices; the inefficacy of oaths in the mind tempted by passion, uninfluenced by religious impression, and a stranger to the dictates of honour; *these are the circumstances which render a negro's testimony utterly inadmissible against a white man;* and they will mark the situation of the vassal as decisively as they now do that of the slave.—*Col. Pol. ii. 432.*

OF THE TIME REQUIRED TO ALTER THE HABITS OF THE NEGRO.

I must be allowed to suspect that before we people the unsettled colonies with negroes who will work for hire, we must discover a new race of Africans, industrious in their own country, or invent some method of operating instantaneously upon the tribes already known an enlargement of desires and a change of habits, *which, in the natural progress of human society, is the slow produce of many succeeding ages.*—*Ibid. ii. 419.*

OF THE INEFFICACY OF LAWS TO MODIFY THE CONDITIONS OF MEN IN THE WEST INDIES.

It is evident that two orders of men must be formed in the West Indies: the whites, possessed of all the

land, entrusted with the whole civil power, clothed with domestic authority ; and the blacks, whose lives are spent in poverty and subjection, toiling for masters whom they consider as a different race of beings, and in whom they recognize the enemies that tore them from their country. Between these two orders there can exist no bond of union but that of force : they are the oppressors and the oppressed. Similarity of complexion and situation will constantly excite the one against the other, and *there will be no intermediate class, at least for a series of years, to soften the transition, to hold the balance, or to connect the two classes together.* The white will always view the black as a being of an inferior order, bought with his money, depending on him for support, and born for his use. Nay, should we succeed in finding or creating a new generation of white proprietors, half the work would still remain. The Africans, too, must undergo a radical change ; they must be enlightened with the ideas of abstract philanthropy, and inspired with the sense of general expediency and love of order. In such circumstances, it is idle to talk of laws and regulations. Men must be first found ready to obey and to conform ; manners and circumstances are independent of any institutions, however positive. It is vain to think of securing the privileges of the negro vassal, so long as the hand of Nature has distinguished him from his lord, and the circumstances of his situation have given him the superiority in numbers as well as strength. The modifications of slavery, established by law in favour of the negroes, will, without rendering their situation much more tolerable, give them far greater opportunities to disturb the peace of the colony. It is easy, then, to see the result of all this. The planters, knowing that

by law their vassals have certain rights, will use their power over them with far less moderation than if they lay wholly at their mercy. The negroes, on their part, finding how nugatory their constitutional privileges become in the particulars most essential to their happiness, and united by every tie which can induce men to make common cause, will avail themselves of the few advantages of which their superiors cannot deprive them, *and will at once revenge the injuries of their race.*—*Col. Pol. ii. 430, et seq.*

OF THE IMPOLICY OF ANY INTERFERENCE BY PARLIAMENT
IN THE SLAVE CODES OF THE COLONIES.

The details of the slave laws require minute and accurate acquaintance with an infinite variety of particulars which can only be known to those who reside on the spot. To revise the domestic codes of the colonies would be a task which no European government could undertake, for want of information and for want of time. Any parliament, council, or senate, which should begin such a work, would find it necessary to give up legislating for the mother country, in order partly to mar and partly to neglect the legislation of the colonies. Let this branch of the imperial administration, then, be left to the care of those *who are themselves the most immediately interested in the good order and government of those distant provinces, and whose knowledge of local circumstances (of those things which cannot be written down in reports, nor told by witnesses) is more full and practical.* The questions of regulation are many and complex; they are stated by a *quomodo*; they lead to the discovery of means, and the comparison of measures proposed. Without pretending to dispute the supre-

macy of the mother country, we may be allowed to doubt her omniscience; *and the colonial history of modern Europe may well change our doubts into disbelief.* Without standing up for the privileges of the colonies, we may suggest their more intimate acquaintance with the details of the question, and maintain that the interest both of the mother country and the colonies requires a subdivision of the labour of legislation—a delegation of certain duties and inquiries to those who are most nearly connected with the results, and situated within the reach of the materials.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 504.

OF THE DANGER ARISING TO THE WEST INDIA COLONIES
FROM THE EXAMPLE OF, AND COMMUNICATION WITH,
ST. DOMINGO.

The permanent superiority of the Africans in St. Domingo is an event which is on the eve of being accomplished. It is an event which at all times may be expected, and is, in fact, the natural consequence of that policy, equally incautious and inhuman, by which the Antilles have been peopled by African slaves.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 142.

The neighbourhood of a negro state will prepare our slaves for ideas of independence; and the first incursions of the enemy must be the signal for revolt.—*Ibid.* ii. 155.

There is, indeed, no direct communication between the people of St. Domingo and the great body of field-negroes in the opposite islands; but these have various opportunities of obtaining information from their brethren who are employed as house-servants, and who thus learn the state of affairs in a quarter that must

occupy the conversation of their masters ; from the artificers in the towns, whose intercourse with Europeans is more extensive, and who are always better informed ; from the free blacks, who, as a body, indeed cannot disturb the peace of our colonies, but who rank among their numbers many idle and dissolute persons, ready to instruct the slaves in what is going on ; and, last of all, from the negro servants who return to the West Indies, after having acquired, by their residence in Europe as free men, a large portion of information, and imbibed many of the opinions universally prevalent upon the subject of negro slavery. Without supposing, then, that the African inhabitants of St. Domingo have become infected with that rage of proselytizing which distinguishes their former masters, or that any measures have been pursued in the other islands for enlightening and exciting the negroes, it is manifest, from the constitution of the communities of which they form a part, that they will have ample opportunities for information ; and, upon such topics, it is the same act to inform and to interest men placed in their situation. Indeed, when we consider how much of the subordination of the negroes is derived from the habitual conviction of the decided superiority of white men, and their constitutional terror of opposing them, surely nothing can operate more immediately the destruction of those feelings, and of all the force which the negro chains derive from them, than the spectacle constantly presented to their eyes, plain and intelligible even to Africans—of their countrymen in the neighbouring island possessing the territory in full sovereignty, clothed with the spoils and covered with the blood of Europeans.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 154.

The negroes, then, are the enemies most to be dreaded

in America by all Europeans ; they are the natural foes of white men, who are distinguished from them by indelible marks in body, *and by marks almost indelible in mind*. The hostility has originated in every species of cruelty and oppression on the part of the most civilized but least numerous class ; it has been cemented by length and variety of injuries ; it has been occasionally inflamed by reciprocal ferocity and barbarous revenge on the part of the savages ; it is rendered perpetual by all those events and habits of animosity, and by those essential marks of natural distinction.

With such a power as the new black republic no European colony can form a league against any other European colony, or any other negro state. The negroes are alike hostile to all who have been masters of Africans, to all who are civilized and white. If any power deserves the name of a natural enemy, it is the negro commonwealth ; a state with which no other power can live in amity or form an alliance : a state equally hostile, and radically hostile, to all its neighbours. If any crisis can call for vigorous measures of prevention, it is that which may terminate in the establishment of such a power ; a power which, if once suffered to breathe alone and independent, must overwhelm every thing within its grasp. If the European powers value their colonial possessions, it becomes them to unite against this tremendous enemy ; to forget all rivalry, and to join in opposing the progress of this inevitable calamity ; to interfere, at all events, and abate this unexampled nuisance.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 301.

OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF NEGRO REVOLT TO THE
COLONIES.

It is, indeed, no common fate to which the European settlements in the Charibean Sea will be left. Hordes of blood-thirsty savages, intimately acquainted with every corner of the planter's house, every retreat into which his family may be driven, every crevice in the whole country, mad with unnatural rage against all that deviates from the sable hue of their own ferocious brethren ; pouring over every spot where European life exists ; scattering on all sides, not destruction, for that would be mildness, but every exquisite form of ingenious torment, only stopping in moments of satiety to lay aside the sword for the torch, and in the intervals of mercy alone exchanging torture for murder : marching against the parent with the transfixed body of his butchered infant as a standard ; sacrificing the weaker sex to their brutal lusts, amidst the expiring bodies of husbands and kinsmen ; and enacting other deeds of such complicated horror, that it is not permitted to the pen of a European to describe or to name them. These are a few features of the picture which wretched eye-witnesses have given us of negro warfare.—*Col. Pol.* ii. 308.

OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF REVOLT TO GREAT BRITAIN.

It is manifest that all commerce with those rich and fertile settlements will now be at an end. All the capital vested in the West India trade will be instantly thrown out of employment ; and that in colonial property will of course be buried for ever. All the cash