

E  
446  
.K564  
1829a



*George Washington Flowers  
Memorial Collection*

DUKE UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

ESTABLISHED BY THE  
FAMILY OF  
COLONEL FLOWERS





**TREATISE**  
ON  
**THE PATRIARCHAL,**  
OR  
**CO-OPERATIVE SYSTEM OF SOCIETY**  
AS IT EXISTS IN SOME GOVERNMENTS,  
AND COLONIES IN AMERICA, AND IN THE UNITED STATES,  
UNDER  
THE NAME OF SLAVERY,  
WITH ITS NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGES.

---

BY AN INHABITANT OF FLORIDA.

3- Kingsley

SECOND EDITION.

.....  
. 1829.

326.7

K55-T

Flower lot:

/

~~121388~~

PREFACE.

---

It will be allowed by every one, that agriculture is the great foundation of the wealth and prosperity of our Southern States. This important science has already attracted some share of attention from men of the first talents, by whose improvements in cultivation several valuable productions promise, from their superiority, to maintain a preference in foreign markets ; and the recent introduction of new articles of tropical produce into the southern districts, where they bid fair to succeed, offers still greater incitements to agricultural enterprise, and opens a new and extensive range for future speculation.

While this great field of wealth and independence promises now to be well understood and duly appreciated, the primary cause and means by which alone it can be realized, has either escaped attention, or been designedly overlooked : I mean the perpetuation of that kind of labor which now produces it, and which seems best adapted, under all circumstances, to render it profitable to the Southern capitalist.

The idea of slavery, when associated with cruelty and injustice, is revolting to every philanthropic mind ; but when that idea is associated with justice, and benevolence, slavery, commonly so called, easily amalgamates with the ordinary conditions of life.

To counteract the existing prejudice against slavery, by making it evident that the condition of slaves may be equally happy and more independent of the ordinary evils of life, than that of the common class of whites denominated free—that they are now equally virtuous, moral and less corrupted than the ordinary class of laboring whites:—that their labor is far more productive—that they yield more support and benefit to the State ; which, under a well regulated system of management, is better fitted to endure a state of war than it would be with an

330.753





PREFACE.

equal number of free white people of ordinary means and condition; and, finally, that the slave or Patriarchal System of Society [so often commiserated as a subject of deep regret] which constitutes the bond of social compact of the Southern seaboard of the United States, is better adapted for strength, durability and independence, than any other state of society hitherto adopted. To endeavor to prove all this, and to destroy the prejudice existing against slavery, under the circumstances with which it is now associated in the South, is the object of the present essay; dedicated to the people of Florida, and to political economists throughout the Southern States, by a votary of rational policy, and


most respectfully

their humble servant,

Z. KINGSLEY.

••• See notes at the end.

330753



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2017 with funding from  
Duke University Libraries

A TREATISE  
ON  
**THE PATRIARCHAL SLAVE SYSTEM.**

---

That there is a large portion of territory in the Southern states unfavorable to the health and production of white people, is evident from the sickly appearance of nearly the whole seaboard laboring white population, extending from the Chesapeake Bay to the Mississippi. This sickly appearance is most observed among the lower orders, who are exposed to the weather; and it can only be accounted for by supposing that nature has not fitted a white complexion for hard work in the sun, as it is evident that the darkness of complexion here is a measure of capacity for endurance of labor, under that influence.

Many, from a superficial view of things, suppose that the aversion to labor observable in the South, among the working classes of whites, proceeds from natural indisposition. But a nearer view, and better acquaintance with facts will show, that the radical cause is the want of health, which produces an apathy or aversion to work and frequently a relaxation, or want of natural excitement in the powers of life, which seek artificial stimulants: as we see frequent instances of the strongest, soberest, and most industrious mechanics coming from the North, becoming, after a few years hard labor, weak and idle, and finally, falling a sacrifice to the abuse of ardent spirits. Some are of opinion, that the want of health in these classes, is owing to their being unaccustomed to a hot climate. But as many years have elapsed since the first white people settled among the Southern swamps, and their descendants have not improved either in looks or longevity, it becomes evident that people of white complexions are unfitted by nature for that situation.(2)

Some of our Northern neighbors, living in a state of health and affluence, and not being aware that this prosperous state, in many instances, proceeds indirectly from Southern slave labor, and without duly investigating, and comparing the hardships, and humiliation of the lower condition of their white population with the more comfortable state of the Southern negroes, have denounced the patriarchal state of subordination of the latter, called slavery, as the most abject and miserable of all possible grades of human existence. Now it appears to me, that no one state can be perfectly free from these evils; but that all must experience some modifications of dependence.(3) The negro under the management of a just, conscientious and humane master; (of which description it will certainly be allowed that there are some) who provides for the physical wants of his servants, his wife and children, in health, sickness and old age, for no other consideration than the equitable one of competent labor, when in health, will surely enjoy a happier and more enviable state of existence than the



poor white man, burdened with a family, who has to contend with cold and hunger, besides religious and moral tyranny.

Moreover, the free white man, with the greatest economy and industry, usually consumes nearly the whole product of his labor; laying by but little, even under the most favorable circumstances, but with a smaller stock of prudence and exertion, which more commonly happens, he not only consumes all his earnings, but is compelled by cold, hunger, and want of employment or ill health, to apply to the public for charity. Whereas the negro by his labor, discreetly restrained under the co-operative, or Patriarchal system, not only furnishes clothing, implements of husbandry, and provision, but creates a large export surplus to meet contingencies; thus increasing the comfort and capital of the establishment, of which he considers himself an integral part.(4)

In short, the greatest value of agricultural product for export, and nearly all the springs of national and individual prosperity, flow from slave labor, as is fairly demonstrated by our annual account of exports. It could not reasonably be expected otherwise. The labor of the negro, under the wholesome restraint of an intelligent direction, is like a constant stream; that of the white man is economically measured out by his urgent necessities, or dissipated by his expences. Besides, climate enables the one to furnish articles of greater value; while the white man's labor is usually applied to raise cheap articles of food for the mere subsistence of himself and family.

Such is the comparative usefulness of these two classes of society in our present state of peace. But to render a slave holding country stronger and equally advantageous in a state of war, against which it ought always to be prepared; or, in other words to neutralize the spirit of disaffection which necessarily results from every unequal distribution of privileges; it will be requisite to alter a little our present policy.(5) Before, however, we begin, and by way of getting rid of some slight prejudices, it might be well to take a view of some other slave holding countries, which have already undergone the test of experiment, and successfully resisted all the disorganising temptations and insidious machinations of powerful, but, as yet, unsuccessful enemies;(6) and endeavor to obtain safe and conclusive evidence from established precedents exactly applicable to our circumstances.

First, I will take a view of Brazil,(7) which is by far the most powerful and extensive slave holding country in America, or in the world; its population consists of something less than one million of whites, something more than one million of free colored, and considerably over two millions of slaves. It passed through such a war of revolution as our own from the colonial state to that of an independent government, attended with all the violence of conflicting interest, opinions, and consequent hostility of royal and independent partizans, with their hostile armies. It now ranks, as Empire of Brazil, perhaps the most extensive government in the world, and is carrying on war with the free Republic of Buenos Ayres; with its white free colored population, it has fitted out, manned, and sent to sea nearly forty ships of war, and has raised or sent to the frontiers, nearly fifty thousand regular troops. It now affords the grand imposing spectacle of a slave holding government, whose population greatly preponderates in favor of color, at war with a free republic, which constitutionally disavows slavery, and which not only endeavors to subdue it by force of arms, but to subvert it by inflammatory proclamations: offering freedom





and protection to the slaves as their reward for revolt. But all these disorganizing temptations have heretofore failed; the slaves maintain their obligation, and do their work peaceably as usual; furnishing produce and means, not only to support the national credit, but to carry on the war, and repel the bearers of these insidious proclamations. This trait of virtue and fidelity in the Brazilian slaves, is to be attributed to humane and just treatment.

The door of liberty is open to every slave who can find the means of purchasing himself. It is true, few have the means, but hope creates a spirit of economy, industry and emulation to obtain merit by good behavior, which has a general and beneficial effect. Slaves are also allowed to hold some kind of property, under limitation—such as stock. But the grand chain of security by which the slaves are held in subordination, is the free people of color, whose persons, properties and rights are protected by law; which enables them to acquire and hold property in their own name, and allows the free children of quarteroons by a white man, to be white by law. By this link, they become identified with the whites on one side, and with the slaves by descent on the other; a connexion which perfectly cements the three casts of which the whole nation is composed; and each being perfectly contented with its permanent, lawful privileges, the jealousy, which might otherwise arise from cast or difference of complexion or condition, is totally extinguished, and no one feels an interest in disturbing that with which every one is satisfied.

The British colonial policy is fast verging to the same point. Its object is to improve the education and mental attainments of its free colored population, as well as to protect its slaves from unjust oppression.

The free colored people are thus gradually rendered fit to take place of the whites, whose lives have long been uselessly sacrificed to a hot climate, which does not, nor ever can agree with them. They have so far progressed, as to fill up a great deal of agricultural as well as mercantile room, and most of the militia troops with free colored people, who are good mechanics, well educated and of great respectability: so that a very considerable share of landed property has already passed into their hands. Their law also entitles the children of free quarteroons, to all white privileges, if the father is white. By this policy they unite the two casts, who become equally interested in maintaining good order and contentment among the slaves.

The Spanish, French, and Dutch Colonies have all adopted the same policy.

The island of Saint Domingo is now independent under its aboriginal name Hayti. (8) Its colonial tranquility was first disturbed by national edicts, which the French people, while frantic with revolutionary zeal, madly promulgated in their colonies. This dangerous fanaticism soon spread itself among the slaves holders, who being divided into two great political factions, nearly equal in strength, armed their slaves to support their own political opinions. This, together with their pride in denying the participation of equality to the free colored people, caused the destruction of that flourishing and important colony. The fall, and final extinction of its colonial power, and its subsequent re-establishment under a free and independent government of negroes in our vicinity, furnishes in a variety of incidents which took place during its whole course, abundant examples of situation, occurrences, and facts, from which we may establish consequences that





would apply to almost every possible situation in which we could imagine slaves of a similar class to our own to be placed.

To infuse a general spirit of revolt among the numerous plantations of St. Domingo, appears to have been a matter which required both time and labor to accomplish; especially as some departments were more prudent than others, and tried to counteract it. Santhonax and Polvorel, the commissioners sent out from France to enforce the national decrees of liberty and equality, were the most active and successful propagators of liberty. But in many of the quarters, the slaves still continued to work, even without white overseers; and furnished large quantities of coffee for exportation during the whole government of Toussaint. And, what is still more remarkable, the rich and extensive department of Grande Anse continued to furnish nearly its usual quantity of produce, and remained quiet for several years after the commencement of the revolution, and until Jeremie was evacuated by the British, notwithstanding that this department was annually besieged by Generals Toussaint and Rigaud, commanding the armies of the South and of the West, accompanied by all their seditious proclamations. The slaves were armed by their masters, and protected themselves and families while they made abundant crops of coffee. In short, when we come to consider the massacres and bloodshed necessarily attending such a horrid revolution, where a vast number of slaves were forced into a state of licentious anarchy, and led on by partizans blinded by revolutionary fury, who gave no quarter on either side, it is astonishing that the slaves now liberated should have so soon returned to a peaceable and quiet state of domestic order, and again admitted whites to reside peaceably among them, and enjoy all the pre-eminence that condition could give.(9) But such was the fact; and considering that they were still acting on the defensive against the British, who, for many years after, and with all their disposable force, endeavored to subdue them, it is a matter of astonishment and wonder how so much produce was still made as was exported under the reign of Toussaint, and until the arrival of the grand French expedition under Rochambeau and Leclerc, in (1802—3) when the island was again thrown into anarchy, and would have been ultimately re-conquered but for the breaking out of the war afresh between France and Britain, which suspended the farther progress of the conquest, and finally confirmed its independence. Its government has now settled under the form of a military Republic; but the quantity of produce raised bears but little proportion to what it was under the Patriarchal restraint of its Colonial system of government, as the present state of individual emancipation implies less necessity for hard work, especially in a healthy, fertile, and mild climate such as Hayti, where few clothes are required, and bountiful nature produces spontaneously the necessaries of life.

From all these facts it follows, that, under a just and prudent system of management, negroes are safe, permanent, productive and growing property, and easily governed; that they are not naturally desirous of change but are sober, discreet, honest and obliging, are less troublesome, and possess a much better moral character than the ordinary class of corrupted whites of similar condition.(10)

Their strong attachment to their homes, to their wives and children, and to domestic life, are likewise great securities for their good behavior; which, with a fair and equitable allowance of clothes and provisions, kind treatment when sick, and fair words when well, will, in most cases, insure



good behavior, obedience and attachment. Under these circumstances they will, without grumbling, and with very little corporeal punishment, perform a great deal of valuable labor in a year, and with profit and satisfaction to the owner, who, if prudent, will soon find himself in easy circumstances, and feel happy in experiencing the attachment, confidence, and good will of a grateful and happy people.(11)

The policy generally pursued by our own slave holding state governments with regard to free colored people, and that pursued by foreign colonial and other slave holding governments, is directly opposite. In the latter, the free colored people have found it their interest universally and decidedly to place themselves in the scale of the whites, or in opposition to the slaves.(12) In the former, necessity, from the unfavorable construction of the laws, has compelled them universally to throw themselves into the scale of the slaves in opposition to the whites. This difference of policy adopted by these different governments, who have precisely the same views and interests to favor, and the same objects to guard against, is obviously owing to the difference of local circumstances, growing out of the different situations of the two countries with regard to population.

In our greatest slave holding states which take the lead, the great majority of the inhabitants is white, who boast of enjoying every privilege of free men, but possessing a strong feeling of prejudice against every other shade of color, and inhabiting a high, healthy country, suitable to the labor of white people, to whom colored labor is not absolutely necessary. This majority has the right of forming laws to govern the minority, or slave holding part of these states, lying nearest the sea, to whom a colored population is absolutely necessary, and with the safety and good government of which a smaller degree of prejudice against color would better comport. But as the great quantity of whites in the up country is at all times ready to put down or exterminate all the colored people in case of insurrection, fear and force in governing these people are safely substituted for wisdom and policy.(14)

The operation of physical causes has induced the foreign slave holding colonies and governments to adopt a policy diametrically opposite. Their climates being unfavorable to the increase of the whites, has thrown a great majority into the scale of the free colored people, many of whom, being rich and liberally educated, enjoy great respectability, and having the same interest with the whites, and great influence with the slaves, form a barrier to insurrection; which not only makes life and property safe in time of peace, but renders the whole physical strength of the country completely disposable in time of war.

North Carolina, by the liberal provisions of her constitution and enlightened policy to her free colored people, stands firmer with regard to slave property than any state to the south, not even excepting Louisiana. A general line of limitation might be drawn between white and colored, such as exists in the British West India colonies. Taxes in all cases should be equal; and the law both criminal and civil should be as impartial as the sun. If it is otherwise, what kind of protection can be given either to person or property; and what must be the final result where neither is given?

I believe no disadvantage has ever been perceived in North Carolina from its free citizens of color being allowed to vote.

It appears from the above statement, that to raise the value of southern plantation property to its just scale of purchase value, according to the rat



of interest yielded by its neat average return of crops, to bear an equal proportion with the value and returns of real property in the north, which is the principal object of this treatise, it may be considered necessary—

1st. To put all fear of danger, either to person or property, from insurrection of the slaves, at rest.

2d. To destroy all doubt of the permanent durability of such property in case of war or invasion.

3d. To extinguish that general foreign or northern prejudice against holding slave property, which commonly arises from their mistaken view of our policy and laws to regulate slaves and free colored people.

To accomplish these objects will require a considerable sacrifice of local prejudice to the shrine of self interest, with some small mixture of discretion which I flatter myself the present enlightened state of society, improved by its advancement in the science of political economy, will, in consideration of the proposed advantages, liberally bestow. Health and bodily perfection, are certainly before all other objects the most important; and to attain these, no sacrifice of any kind should be considered as too great. Improving the breed of domestic animals, has occupied the attention of some of the most eminent and useful men in our country. How much more meritorious and laudable would that philanthropist be to whose energy and moral courage mankind were indebted for exposing and removing a prejudice that not only continues to entail ill health and degeneracy on the people, but completely neutralises the physical strength of the country, by placing one portion of the inhabitants in hostile array against the other.

The red aborigines were in this low country a healthy people. The negroes are not only a healthy people, but robust and durable even in the swamps.

The intermediate grades of color are not only healthy, but when condition is favorable, they are improved in shape, strength and beauty, and susceptible of every amelioration. Daily experience shows that there is no natural antipathy between the casts on account of color; and it only requires to repeal laws as impolitic as they are unjust and unnatural; which confound beauty, merit and condition in one state of infamy and degradation on account of complexion, and to leave nature to find out a safe and wholesome remedy for evils which, of all others, are now the most deplorable, because they are morally irreconcilable to the fundamental principles of happiness, and self preservation.





## NOTES.

---

[1] It will reasonably be inquired, who is the writer? and how presumes he to advise in contradiction to common practice and the received opinion of nineteen-tenths of all the slave owners of the United States? He answers that he is a slave owner, and has a right to express his opinion, having lived by planting in Florida for the last twenty-five years. He disavows all other motives but that of increasing the value of his property; moreover, he thinks that truth will support his arguments as to a subject with which he has had great opportunities of becoming well acquainted, having lived long in different slave holding countries.

[2] This observation will apply to many of our farmers whose youth, strength and ambition seem for several years to set the climate at defiance, but they are finally overcome by sickness, which brings on debility and premature old age.

[3] Northern migration to the south for the purpose of gain in winter, and southern migration to the north, to spend money in the summer, finally concentrate in the north the whole product of southern slave labor.

Slavery is a necessary state of control from which no condition of society can be perfectly free. The term is applicable to, and fits all grades and conditions in almost every point of view, whether moral, physical or political.

It certainly is a mistaken notion that the progress of labor, guided by the accidental impulse of single individuals, is greater than that of systematic co-operation, directed and controlled by a skilful mechanic and economist, under the patriarchal government; for it is evident that slaves taught early, could produce any kind of manufactured goods one-third cheaper than free people; the co-operative system of labor being better calculated either to increase the quantity or to attain perfection in the manufacture; and whenever labor, expended in manufacturing cotton into cloth, yields more than it does when employed in raising the raw material, slaves will become manufacturers.

[4] As white people are only wanted to act as overseers, or to fill vacancies in conformity to law, their number must always be limited to these wants and easy situations. But the number of colored people must eventually be bounded by the quantity, and quality of soil from which they derive subsistence by manual labor.

[5] Pride and prejudice, our present stumbling blocks in the management of our negroes, should give way to policy and the necessity of self preservation, and induce us to remove as far as possible whatever are the obvious causes of this dangerous spirit of revolt.

Power may for a while triumph over weakness and misfortune. But as all nature (from the eternal principle of self) takes part with weakness against power, the re-action finally must be terrible and overwhelming.

[6] Whoever was so unlucky as to see, on Cumberland Island, last war, the magical transformation of his own negroes, whom he left in the field but a few hours before, into regular soldiers, of good discipline and appearance, and with what despatch and celerity the recruiting service went on under the protection of a few hundred marines, notwithstanding all the care and vigilance that was used to prevent desertion, could not help figuring to himself the consequences had there been a larger force, able to maintain a position on the main, with any ulterior object of conquest in view and possessing the means of equipment. Where would they have stopped, or what could have stopped them?

[7] The empire of Brazil embraces, from north to south, about one thousand leagues of sea coast, and as many from east to west. The whole of this immense territory, in a wholesome, temperate and warm climate, is watered by the largest and most extensive rivers in the world, and possesses abundance of capacious and deep harbors for shipping, with inexhaustible quantities of incorruptible timber, of which it has already built some of the finest first-rate ships of war and

10



merchantmen that any country can boast of. Its export agricultural produce is fast approaching in value to that of the United States, and it is incontestably the most extensive, valuable, rich, healthy and best situated body of land under any one government in America; and bids fair, from its policy and form of government, which is a limited monarchy, to be one of the most durable. Its present population, being more than three-fourths colored, will rapidly predominate on that side, on account of its convenient situation to Africa, its immense annual importation of slaves, its rich soil, its temperate and healthy climate, and more especially from its great distance, and the expense of passages from Europe. With Chinese economy it may, at some period not very remote, compete in population with that most ancient Empire, which it greatly exceeds in extent. Of all other countries, in fact, it most resembles China in its climate, fertility of soil and complexion of inhabitants.

[8] I heard of no instance of abuse or treachery on the part of the negroes of Grand Anse, during my residence in Jeremie, while it was held by the British; nor did I experience either insult or interruption in the south or west of St. Domingo, under the government of Touissant, or Rigaud. I resided there nearly a year, at one period, besides making frequent voyages, during which I often travelled alone, and on horseback, from L'ogane to the Cayes, and from Petit-Goave to Jacmel, through woods and over mountains, with my saddle bags loaded with specie to buy coffee; and though I frequently met large groups of armed negroes in the woods, I neither received insult or hinderance, but was always treated with kindness and civility. Many Americans, (I may say hundreds) at that time on the Island, can testify to the same treatment and circumstances.

[9] This observation applies only to neutral nations. The French, who were at war and enemies, were several times not only plundered but killed within the government of Rigaud; but under Touissant, I knew of no instance of treachery, and all nations, classes and conditions were equally protected.

[10] For the truth of this observation, I appeal to every slave holder in the south, who has had an opportunity of witnessing the conduct of white laborers who come annually to seek work from the north; whether the common plantation negroes do not conduct themselves much better and are of a more respectable moral character.

[11] Our laws to regulate slaves are entirely founded on terror. It would be worth while to try the experiment of a small mixture of reward with the punishment—such as allowing them the free use of Sunday as a market day and jubilee, which I have observed had a good effect in all foreign countries, also in Louisiana. The laws of the southern states are exclusively constructed for the protection of whites, and vexatious tyranny over the persons and properties of every colored person, whose oath can in no case be admitted as evidence against a white person. Policy and self-preservation require, to render the co-operative system beneficial, that slaves must be kept under wholesome and just restraint, which must always create some degree of resistance more or less to Patriarchal authority; to counterbalance which the interest and co-operation of the free colored people is absolutely necessary when the white population is scanty.

[12] A slave who saves my life by rescuing it from assassins at the risk of his own; or who saves the lives and properties of a whole community by informing against conspirators, must still remain a slave! and what a dreadful feeling of general resentment must originate from such a source of injustice! No wonder (with such laws) at the universal antipathy and detestation against slavery, thus identified with tyranny and the most oppressive cruelty.

[13] What greater insult can be offered to common sense, than to arrogate the condition of freedom to ourselves, who have not the power, under any circumstances, of disposing of our property in the way we please. Is there any thing worthy of acceptance that can be offered to a slave but freedom? And that we have not within our gift in many of our States.

If our low country is destroyed, and I lose my life and property by an insurrection, what satisfaction is it to me to know that our back country militia will



promptly and bravely revenge my death; and destroy my negroes? A state of war might soon produce such an event.

A very common argument against free colored people's testimony being admitted as evidence in all cases is, that their moral character is not generally so respectable. The force of all testimony must be measured by its respectability; therefore of unequal value. But that the moral character of free colored people generally, is inferior to that of the same condition of whites, I think cannot be proved. On the contrary, all unprejudiced people who have had an opportunity of knowing, and have paid attention to the subject, will say that the very opposite is the case. Even if it were not so, what a reflection on our policy and justice, to outlaw them for complexion, which they cannot help, and deprive them of the means of acquiring moral improvement, by driving them to seek shelter among the slaves! Few, I think will deny that color and condition, if properly considered, are two very separate qualities. But the fact is, that in almost every instance, our legislators, for want of due consideration, have mistaken the shadow for the substance, and confounded together two very different things; thereby substantiating by law a dangerous and inconvenient antipathy, which can have no better foundation than prejudice. It is much to be regretted that those who enact laws to regulate slaves, and free people of color, are often obliged to consult popularity rather than policy and their own good sense. If such alterations were practicable as would render slave property safe, without adopting the present system of terror, all such laws as tended to regulate plantation management, and interfere with the province of individual owners, could be repealed, property would increase in value; and the owner, no longer a kind of state prisoner, hovering over the movements of his negroes and overseers, could liberalise and improve his mind by travelling, and satisfy his thirst for knowledge wherever the advance of science offered the greatest field for its acquirement.

The patrol laws are demoralising to the whites who compose the patrol; tyrannical and unjust to the negroes; and unnecessarily superceded, in most cases, the owners prerogative and rights over his property.

Some of our state laws, in defiance of our national treaties, condemn to indiscriminate imprisonment in the common jail, every class of free colored persons, who may arrive within their limits, without reference to sex, cause or condition; and to be sold as slaves where they have not the means of paying the penalties annexed to the crime of arriving within the jurisdiction of the law. What must be the final consequence of such infatuation! an insatiation arraying itself in open and avowed hostility against twelve millions of people, now composing the colored population of this quarter of the world. Hayti, alone, in the full career of wealth, freedom and juvenile independence, with equal, if not superior, advantages of climate, soil and situation, to any equal portion of territory in the world, and evidently destined by nature, at no very distant period, if not to command, at least to share the commerce of the surrounding ocean; and, without being overpopled, comfortably to accommodate twelve millions of inhabitants.

A war of color would, in our situation, of all wars be the most dangerous; therefore the least advisable, because we naturally and unavoidable (under our present policy) contain within us the materials of our own dissolution; and nine-tenths of all our present white friends would at least laugh at our absurd indiscretion.

All the late insurrections of slaves are to be traced to influential preachers of the gospel, (as, for instance, at Barbadoes and Demarara,) to white preachers, (missionaries) from England. Vesey, who instigated the Charleston plot, was an exhorting brother. Gualla Jack or Jack the Conjurer was a priest in his own country, M'Choolay Moreema, where a dialect of the Angola tongue is spoken clear across Africa from sea to sea, a distance perhaps of three thousand miles; I purchased him a prisoner of war at Zinguebar. He had this conjuring implement with him in a bag which he brought on board the ship and always retained them. I know two instances, to the southward, where gangs of negroes were prevented from deserting to the enemy by drivers, or influential negroes, whose integrity to their



masters, and influence over the slaves prevented it; and what is still more remarkable, in both instances the influential negroes were Africans, and professors of the Mahomedan religion.

A favorite maxim with some of our old southern politicians to increase the security of slave property has been to prohibit the increase of free people, or, by some means or other not yet divulged, to get rid of the evil altogether. If this could be done without making the remedy worse than the disease, it would be worth while to try it; but as the iniquity has its origin in a great inherent, universal and immutable law of nature, legislation, by the aged, against such an alleged crime as propagation in youth, would be hopeless and like the story of the King of Arabia, who, after destroying his appetite by excess and gluttony, made a law forbidding, under a severe penalty, that any of his subjects should be hungry.

About twenty-five years ago, I settled a plantation on St. Johns river, in Florida, with about fifty new African negroes, many of whom I brought from the coast myself. They were mostly fine young men and women, and nearly in equal numbers. I never interfered with their connubial concerns, nor domestic affairs, but let them regulate these after their own manner. I taught them nothing but what was useful, and what I thought would add to their physical and moral happiness. I encouraged as much as possible dancing, merriment and dress, for which Saturday afternoon and night, and Sunday morning were dedicated; and, after allowance, their time was usually employed in hoeing their corn, and getting a supply of fish for the week. Both men and women were very industrious. Many of them made twenty bushels of corn to sell, and they vied with each other in dress and dancing, and as to whose woman was the finest and prettiest. They were perfectly honest and obedient, and appeared quite happy, having no fear but that of offending me; and I hardly ever had occasion to apply other correction than shaming them. If I exceeded this, the punishment was quite light, for they hardly ever failed in doing their work well. My object was to excite their ambition and attachment by kindness; not to depress their spirits by fear and punishment. I never allowed them to visit, for fear of bad example, but encouraged the decent neighboring people to participate in their weekly festivity, for which they always provided an ample entertainment themselves, as they had an abundance of hogs, fowls, corn and all kinds of vegetables and fruit. They had nothing to conceal from me, and I had no suspicion of any crime in them to guard against. Perfect confidence, friendship, and good understanding reigned between us; they increased rapidly. After a few years, this pleasant and profitable state of harmony was interrupted by the revolution of 1812. A war party of Seminole Indians attacked the plantation in my absence; caught, bound and carried off, or killed forty of them, whose reluctance in going with the invaders may be imagined from the following circumstance. The wife of a young man they had tied and were driving off, that her husband, who was too strong to be handled, and who had his young child in his arms, might follow; but this he absolutely refused, handing over the child to his wife, and saying that she knew best how to take care of it, but that his master should never say that he was a runaway negro; upon which the Indian shot him, and he died next day.

But my object in this long digression is to show the danger and hurtful tendency of superstition (by some called religion) among negroes, whose ignorance and want of rationality render them fit subjects to work upon. I afterwards purchased more new negroes. A man, calling himself a minister, got among them. It was now sinful to dance, work their corn or catch fish, on a Sunday; or to eat cat fish, because they had no scales; and if they did, they were to go to a place where they would be tormented with fire and brimstone to all eternity! They became poor, ragged, hungry and disconsolate: to steal from me was only to do justice—to take what belonged to them because I kept them in unjust bondage; that all pastime or pleasure in this iniquitous world was sinful; that this was only a place of sorrow and repentance, and the sooner they were out of





~~121388~~

it the better; that they would then go to a good country, where they would experience no want of any thing, and have no work nor cruel taskmaster, for that God was merciful, and would pardon any sin they committed; only it was necessary to pray and ask forgiveness, and have prayer meetings, and contribute what they could to the church, &c.

They accordingly formed private societies under church regulations, where all were brothers and sisters, and, under an oath of the most horrid penalty, never to tell or divulge any crime that would bring any brother or sister into trouble, but to lay all the blame on those who had not united with them, and who, of necessity, were obliged to join the fraternity, as soon as possible, in their own defence. They had private nightly meetings, once or twice a week, with abundance of preaching and praying, (for they all exhorted, men as well as women) with an ample entertainment from my hogs, as it was no sin to steal for the church, the elders of which held it right to break open my corn house and provide amply for the meeting; so that, finally, myself and the overseer became completely divested of all authority over the negroes. The latter even went so far as to consult the head men of the church whether or not, according to religion, my orders ought to be obeyed! Severity had no effect; it only made it worse; and I really believe that, in several instances, sick children were allowed to die, because the parents thought conscientiously that it was meritorious to transfer their offspring from a miserable and wicked world to a happy country, where they were in hopes of soon joining them!

I relate the above circumstance not from any disrespect or prejudice against any particular religious profession; but when it renders men unhappy and discontented with their condition in life, by destroying local attachment and love of country, it certainly should be rationally opposed: and I cannot help regretting that honest well meaning men, with so much ability to do good, and render mankind, especially the lower orders, happy and contented, should so misapply their talents as to subvert all natural and rational happiness, and endeavor to render our species miserable.

I was informed by a gentleman who lived near the Fishdam ford, on Broad River, South Carolina, that his employer had made an experiment on the management of negroes, of whom he was overseer, which answered extremely well, and offers to us a strong case in favor of exciting ambition by cultivating utility, local attachment and moral improvement, among slaves. He established four or five plantations, not far apart, and stocked each of them with a suitable proportion of hogs, and work cattle, under a driver, who had the entire management of every thing under his (the overseer's) control. The overseer's duty merely extended to direct the driver on what land he was to raise provisions, and where cotton was to be planted; with this understanding, that all the cotton raised, after it was cleaned and packed, belong to the owner, and that all the hogs, corn and provisions left after supplying the plantation, belonged to the negroes, who might do with it as they pleased.

The consequence of this arrangement was, that these plantations, regulated as before stated, turned out better crops than any other plantations of equal force in that neighborhood, and the owner had no further trouble nor expence than furnishing the ordinary clothing and paying the overseer's wages, so that he could fairly be called free, seeing that he could realise his annual income wherever he chose to reside, without paying the customary homage to servitude of personal attendance on the operations of his slaves.

Good policy requires that all laws tending to demoralise the people by holding out a premium for perjury, should be abolished. Motives of policy, self-preservation or justice, on which laws should be founded, form little or no part in such laws, as far as regards the free colored people of the South, (with some exceptions, such as North Carolina and Louisiana,) which are dictated in a spirit of intolerant prejudice and irresponsible antocracy, holding out to people they nickname free, no positive reward or premium whatever for being virtuous; nothing to stimulate to industry or the acquisition of a good name, learning or refine-





ment; no kind of protection either for person or property; their destiny is already fixed by a mark of nature which has doomed to irrevocable disgrace its degraded bearer, who is singled out as a victim for cruelty, avarice and revenge; whose punishment must be corporal, not even excepting the most delicate female, whom industry and virtue alone would place at the head of society in any other country. The fruits of their industry must be offered up as a temptation to the avarice of some nobler color, which alone is privileged to hold and protect it. In short, liberty is merely nominal, without any constitutional protection. They may be sold for debt to pay partial, exorbitant and tyrannical taxes or fines, all which are unconstitutional. Oppression is carried to its greatest extreme when a mother of the most unexceptionable moral character, leaving her family on account of ill health, and going out of her native state, is inexorably punished by perpetual banishment from her husband, children, friends, country and all that is dear to her.

Since these severe enactments against color, several of the most respectable and enterprising young men have withdrawn from their native country and entered into the Haytian navy, and more will undoubtedly follow. I should think it were better to induce such to remain at home as friends, than oblige them to pass the Rubicon as enemies.

It has been a favorite project of some of our least mathematical economists, to transport all the colored people of the U. States to Africa, without considering that the cost of the annual increase alone, if purchased, when added to the lowest possible freight, would exceed the annual revenue of the U. States. Besides, the difficulty and stern opposition that would encounter a prostration of all rights of property and liberty of person, they would have to put on board in irons, under a strong guard, and be conveyed and landed in the same military formality, to oppose the resentment of the natives whom they must displace, as well as the vengeance of the convicts themselves, both of whose lives must be sacrificed to famine or resentment at the despotic nod of cruelty and superstition.

A great opportunity was lost of colonising more rationally at the late evacuation of the Spanish part of Saint Domingo, where there would have been ample room for all the colored people of the U. States, within five days sail of Charleston.

A patriarchal feeling of affection is due to every slave from his owner, who should consider the slave as a member of his family, whose happiness and protection is identified with that of his own family, of which his slave constitutes a part, according to his scale of condition. This affection creates confidence which becomes reciprocal, and is attended with the most beneficial consequences to both. It certainly is humiliating to a proud master to reflect, that he depends on his slave even for bread to eat. But such is the fact.

In most foreign colonies where spring is perpetual, Saturday is allowed the slaves as a compensation for their furnishing their own provision, which chiefly consists of yams and plantains, produced almost spontaneously, or with little labor, and abundance of sweet, nutritious, and farinacious fruits of exquisite flavor, growing wild on the trees all the year round. This not only supplies them with delicious and wholesome food, but furnishes the means of traffic in the towns at night, or to carry to market on Sundays which is every where celebrated as a day of freedom and rejoicing, similar to the practice at New-Orleans.

Let any slave owner reflect and say, how much advantage the country would derive from preaching up industry, economy and a local attachment to the slaves; and, by pointing out to them the happy coincidence and wise and beneficent dispensation of so much good which every where surrounds them, how much he would be deserving of universal respect and gratitude; instead of preaching up terror and dismay, misery and discontent, as dispensations of the supreme Author of all good. All local attachment and love of virtue must be chilled or annihilated by such intemperate abuse of supreme wisdom. Any extreme is said naturally to produce its opposite.—Will an excess of error ever produce truth?





## Date Due

[illegible]

Duke University Libraries



D00456311K

326.7 K55T

330753

