

lost, if justice be rendered to you. In this assertion we have found nothing but falsehood: we please ourselves in the belief, that our decree will draw the bands still closer which unite you to the mother country. Your patriotism, your interest, and your affections, will concur in inducing you to confine your commercial connections to France only; and the reciprocal tributes of industry will establish between her and her colonies a constant interchange of riches and good offices. If you act unfaithfully towards France, you will be the basest and most abandoned of the human race. But no! generous citizens, you will not become traitors to your country: you shudder at the idea. Rallied, with all other good Frenchmen, around the standard of liberty, you will defend our glorious constitution. The day shall arrive, when the representatives of the people of colour will cross the ocean to take their seats with us, and swear to live and die under our laws. The day shall arrive among you when the sun will shine on none but freemen; when the rays of light shall no longer fall on the fetters of slavery. It is true, the national assembly has not yet raised the condition of the enslaved negroes to a level with your situation; because suddenly granting the rights to those who are ignorant of the duties of citizens, might perhaps have been a fatal present to them: but forget not, that they, like yourselves, are born to freedom and perfect equality. It is in the irresistible course of things that all nations, whose liberty has been invaded, shall recover that precious portion of their indefeasible inheritance!

You are accused of treating your slaves much worse than the whites: but, alas! so various have been the detractions with which you have been aspersed, that it would be weakness in us to credit the charge. If, however, there be any foundation for what has been advanced on this head, so conduct yourselves in future as to prove it will be a shameful calumny hereafter.

Your oppressors have heretofore endeavoured to hide from their slaves the lights of christianity, because the religion of mildness, equality,