

Outalissi;

A TALE OF DUTCH GUIANA

[Christopher Edward Lefroy]

“Metanoecite” !!!

Ioannes ho Baptistes

LONDON: J. HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILY. 1826.

Advertisement by the Editor. COURTEOUS reader! a few years ago I had the honour, with three more, of leading the forlorn hope in an enterprise of almost desperate philanthropy in Dutch Guiana. My three companions successively fell victims to the pestilential climate; I only have survived the deadly service. Amongst the papers which fell into my hands upon the death of one of my companions was the manuscript from which the following pages are printed. On my first inspection I thought it was something of a private journal of what had happened to himself, but cannot, upon the most careful inquiry, find a single name of any person at Surinam corresponding with those mentioned in the narrative, and there is no such plantation as Anne's Grove in the colony. The rest of the locale seems to agree with the reality; but whether any thing of allegorical illustration was intended by the compilation, or whether it is altogether a fiction of my friend's imagination, or whether (to use a favourite metaphor of the late Lord Ellenborough in libellifying publications) it consists of only a peg or two of truth whereon to suspend a profuse drapery of fiction, or a peg or two of fiction whereon to suspend a respectable drapery of truth, you are just as good a judge as I am. In either case, whether pure fiction, or only a sort of melo-fictitious reality, it seemed to me to have sufficient interest to justify me in offering it to your candid perusal.

For myself, I disclaim all intention of personal offence or reflection in this publication; my object is merely to expose some of those features in the unreformed system of West Indian slavery, which I am quite sure every honest man in Guiana, Dutch or English, infidel or believer, will agree with me, are at irreconcilable variance with CHRISTIANITY. Of the origin of that system every living being is absolutely guiltless, and many of them of all blame in the origin of their connexion with it.

I have the honour to subscribe myself,
Courteous Reader,
Your most obedient humble servant,

THE EDITOR.

Outalissi.

Chapter I. Route for South America.

- Nunc vino pellite curas; Cras ingens iterabimus æquor. Hor.

EDWARD BENTINCK, a young officer in the Dutch service, was stationed in the year 1820 with a detachment of his regiment at an outpost on the eastern extremity of the colony of Surinam, near the mouth of Marawina river. His father, a Dutch nobleman, who had emigrated from Holland on the expulsion of the Stadtholder, had obtained from the late Duke of Portland, of whom he was a distant relation, when that nobleman was at the head of the British Cabinet, the government of the neighbouring colony of Berbice, which he held for several years during the time that Dutch Guiana was in the occupation of the British. When he entered upon his appointment, he had left Edward at Eton with a view to his future service in the British army; but on the restoration of the Orange family, after the peace of 1814, he naturally preferred that of his native sovereign, from whom therefore he without difficulty procured a commission for his son. Edward, after having had the honour of being present at the battle of Waterloo, and personally sharing in the gallant rescue of his own prince, (who, as it is well known, having been severely wounded on that glorious occasion, was on the very point of being surrounded and taken prisoner,) was content for some time with the enjoyment of his well-earned laurels, and the society of his friends. Having however embraced the army as his profession, he was anxious to see some variety of service, and there being no immediate prospect of his active employment in Europe, he solicited and obtained leave to exchange into a regiment then stationed in South America, which he joined accordingly in the summer of the year 1820, and was very shortly after his arrival detached to the outpost already mentioned, being then in the twenty-fourth year of his age.

No young man ever entered life under stronger or more cheerful, grateful, and affectionate impressions of the truth and value of Christianity than Edward Bentinck. His mother, although a member of the Dutch church, and familiar with the Calvinistic view of revelation which characterizes that establishment, was a woman of such superior understanding and fervent charity, that she never could assent to all the repulsive peculiarities in the opinions of its great founder, which either acquired grace, consistency, and attraction from her mode of explaining them, or she confessed at once were beyond her comprehension. Whenever she was pressed with any inferences that seemed to bear hard upon the impartiality of the Christian dispensation, she used to say, the impartiality is as complete as is compatible with the free agency of the intelligent natures to which it is addressed; every one is as free to accept the restorative provision as he would have been to stand or fall had he been born in paradise, and had the nature of the disobedience of our first parents been such as to admit of its punishment being individual and not collective; if the effects should be partial, it will be simply because men are free agents, and will not always follow the light when they see it and know it, but continue in darkness because their deeds are evil. Every man's own bosom tells him that his moral character with his maker must depend upon the inobliquity and disinterestedness of his efforts to obey the will of God, as far as that will has been revealed to, or can be discovered by him. Mercy, by the Christian system, is infinite to failing efforts, where the combat has been manfully embraced; or even to repentant and redeeming efforts after long neglect, where the efforts are sincere. To deny a free agent the reward of victory where all combat is persistingly declined, is surely neither inconsistent with justice or mercy. My only anxious wish, Edward, she used to say, is to see you a good Christian; I have no other: 'all else beneath the sun God knoweth if best bestowed or not, and let His will be done.' Thus indelibly impressed on the core of his young heart, mingled with the remembrance of a vigilance for his happiness that never slept, a patience with his faults that never tired, an affection that not only forgave, but wept and prayed, and would have welcomed any death for him - like a name engraved on a young tree

deepening with its age and expanding with its growth, and, what ever storms assailed it, if for a moment partially obscured, never, whilst life itself remained, to be erased or obliterated - so deep and dear were the impressions of Christianity engraved by maternal affection upon the heart of Edward Bentinck.

Chapter II. Plantation.

'And yet, loved England! when thy name I trace In many a pilgrim's tale, and poet's song, How can I choose but wish for one embrace Of them the dear unknown, to whom belong My mother's looks-perhaps her likeness strong. Yet deem not Gertrude sigh'd for foreign joy: To sooth a father's couch her only care, And keep his sacred head from all annoy.' CAMPBELL.

THE only resident planter near Edward's outpost was an Englishman of the name of Cotton, a man of unbounded wealth and almost equally unbounded profligacy. He was a widower of eight and forty, with only two surviving legitimate children, Matilda the eldest a girl of about seventeen, and Charles a child of about six. His wife, a lady of great natural abilities and the best English education, had died two years before of a broken heart, owing to her husband's unbridled and irreclaimable indulgence of his passions, and the total consequent neglect, more than any express ill treatment into which she had ultimately fallen, but not before she had completely imparted to her daughter, all her own accomplishments, especially those of drawing, music, and the Italian and French tongues, as the old school books used to call them, and besides making her a very considerable proficient in botany, had pursued with her a course of varied and extensive reading uninterrupted by many of those tiresome etiquettes, the attention to which is indispensable, but which are often a great tax in more crowded societies. So that in point of general information she would have had nothing to fear from a comparison of her daughter with the daughter of any English nobleman of the same age. The person of Matilda, which was at least five feet eight inches, would have been too tall if the height had not been entirely carried off to the eye by the most perfect symmetry of form, and a corresponding ease and grace and dignity of every motion; indeed it was scarcely possible for the eye, as she approached or receded from it, to analyse the figure as it does when every limb seems to obey a separate act of volition, and to be caught up in succession like those of an automaton by a separate set of wheels.

But whatever Matilda did, wherever she bent her steps, grace seemed by stealth to follow and furtively compose her, so that such was the unity of her progress whenever she moved, that it seemed rather a change of attitude than a movement of limbs. Matilda's features were perhaps more open to criticism than her person; her nose was not exactly what a sculptor would select as a study, but was in perfect unison with the beautiful contour of her head, and between sweet lips and good teeth, and eye-lashes that, like the rich foliage that fringes the edge of her own native and magnificent rivers, (for Matilda was a Creole,) were designed to give shade and reserve to a full supply of light and intelligence, which whenever she thoughtfully raised them, her eyes seemed to flash upon all subjects, was never critically examined. Her hair was lightbrown, arranged always in the simplest taste, and with scarcely any other art than that of the most exquisite cleanliness. Her complexion, like that of most other tropical ladies, was pallid and soft, almost without colour, but not in the least sickly; her dress exactly like that of a lady of her own rank* and age in Europe, always in the best taste and almost always without any other ornament than perhaps a rose in the bosom, or a sprig of orange or some other simple wild flower, playfully intermixed with the hair. Some of my readers, perhaps, from the foregoing description of Matilda Cotton, will think that she did not require the prospect of one hundred thousand pounds fortune to make her sufficiently attractive, but as such a combination of interesting circumstances although rare will sometimes take place, and I cannot accommodate the facts of my story to the reader's ideas of probability, I am obliged to declare, that so it was. Not that this prospect ever formed an item in the ingredients of her self-estimation; utterly secluded from all society that could exemplify, like the *beau mondes* and *haut tons* of London and Paris, the voracious demand for money of rivalships in ostentation and display, she scarcely knew either the value or extent of her father's riches; the supplies of an elegant

* 'Illam, quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia flectit, Componit furtim, subsequiturque decor.' TIBULLUS OF SULPICIA, IV, ii. 7. *Note by the Author.*

retirement, and of the pursuits and studies of a rational and cultivated mind, having never failed her, she had never been very inquisitive into the nature or extent of their source, or induced to examine its stability. From what she heard others say sometimes, she had some indefinite notions of her father's wealth, but the effect of it which she had observed upon his own happiness, and those whose happiness ought to have been as dear to him as his own, disposed her rather to a superstitious fear of it. Matilda too was a sincere and earnest Christian; she had seen her mother, to whom she owed every thing, pine herself to death from the neglect of her husband, and the total alienation of his affections, from which the influence upon him of a sincere belief in Christianity, however occasionally overborne, would have saved her; and she ascribed, to the facilities of self-indulgence which his affluence had afforded him, his abjuration (for she knew that he made no scruple in general of avowing his infidelity in revelation, although he had never shocked her by such a confession) from a faith which could allow him no peace of conscience, whilst his daily practice was in total variance from both the letter and spirit of its directions, and gladly would she have relinquished all her interest in his wealth, for an alteration in her father's principles and practice. Not that Mr. Cotton's character, although far gone indeed from consistent morality, or even consistent humanity, was entirely monstrous and without any touch of natural affection and generosity; on the contrary, he doated on his daughter, and possibly from some remorse of conscience for his conduct towards her mother, and partly to atone for it, he was to her all kindness and delicacy; and with a jealousy of libertinism, which superficial observation perhaps might call inconsistent, but which in fact is by no means uncommon in such a character, he would scarcely allow an equivocal observation to pass unreprieved in her company, or an eye 'relaxed to love' to profane her presence.

Chapter III. Self-Inspection.

'Who hath not paused when beauty's pensive eye
Ask'd from his heart the homage of a sigh?' CAMPBELL.

THE hospitality of countries is generally proportioned to the scantiness of demands upon it; in British West Indians it has always been conspicuous, and as few men are without some good quality, or the semblance of some to conceit themselves upon, and this is a sort of splendid virtue least incongruous with a sensual life, no man had made it more his study, or knew better how to practise it, and that gracefully, than Mr. Cotton. Nor indeed had he been less disposed to it, was it likely, whilst living at a distance of one hundred and fifty miles from the port and capital of the colony, and whilst his only white neighbours were the directors (a class of men for the most part of the lowest and coarsest description) of the adjacent plantations, that a young man like Edward Bentinck, of superior education and perfectly gentlemanly manners, with intelligent, prepossessing features, and a good figure of five foot ten inches, set off by a military carriage, and that air of self-possession which the abrupt and sudden shifts of demand upon all a man's faculties, as well of body as of mind, comprised in a life of adventure and danger, can only give, should not be a welcome accession to his table, to which he was often accordingly invited; and having no companion at his own solitary meal in his barracks, the rules of the service requiring only the presence of a single officer with so small a detachment of men, he became, after a few weeks, not only a regular guest at Mr. Cotton's table, but almost an inmate in his family, and his mornings as well as evenings were often spent there.

The reader has perhaps already anticipated an attachment between Edward and Matilda; but whatever the reader may suppose, it was a long time before Edward himself could come to any such conclusion. On his first assumption of his military profession, he had with great innocence, prudence, and decision, solemnly abjured the worship of the little blind boy, as utterly incompatible with the frequent hardships, exiles, and dangers by which alone the honours of such a profession could be won. Besides, he had seen a good deal of London society, and been admitted from the rank of his father, Count Bentinck, into that of the court circle at Brussels and the Hague, and he had triumphantly withstood the ordeal of masquerades, operas, routs, waltzes, conversaciones, and all other modern fashionable modes of promoting the influence of the social powers. He had often seen at these parties objects that could not but excite his admiration - girls of surpassing beauty adorned with all that art and study could contrive to increase its captivation - radiant figures like the Dauphiness of Versailles, as described by Burke when he saw her (as he says) 'just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in - glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendour, and joy.' But he had always brought his heart away unwounded, and, as he would fain have persuaded himself, invulnerable; what therefore (thought he) can I have to apprehend from the dusky belles of the equator, or if a solitary English rose should chance to grow in such a wilderness, what little chance is there that I should ever come across it, or if I should, I can admire it and pass on as I have done many a score times in England itself, where the rose and the lily unite their matchless empire of female beauty! So much for the self-knowledge and resolution upon that subject of four and twenty! The fact was, he had never withstood any ordeal at all. Nothing can be more unpropitious to any sentimental influence than the noise, heat, collision, constraint, embarrassment, and often ill-dissembled mutual antipathies, jealousies, envies, and rivalships of a fashionable London or Brussels party. The flowers that he had seen by their number and variety had distracted his interest, and very much disenchanting each other. No single isolated rose had ever before for so long a time together engaged his undivided attention. For a little while after his arrival the novelty of the natural as well as moral scenery by which he was surrounded entirely absorbed all his reflections: the enormous scale of the landscape, the interminable sweep of massy wood, the size of some of the trees, the breadth and beauty of the rivers clothed with wood down to the water's edge - except where in intervals of cultivation the

bright and vivid green of a large plantation of canes finely contrasted with the dark foliage of the surrounding forest – the luxuriant growth of the canes themselves shooting up perhaps a dozen feet above his head, which made him feel always in walking through them like Gulliver in the Brobdignagian corn fields – the singular appearance, to an eye accustomed to the European clothing, of a negro and almost naked slave population, occasionally intermixed with a tribe or family of the free and aboriginal Indians, very much of the colour of new mahogany, with their light fantastic coronals of the beautiful feathers of the red and blue macaws, and their salempores or long pieces of dark blue calico thrown gracefully over one shoulder, and across the body like a Roman toga – every thing for a little while was so strange to him, and so unlike any thing he had seen before, as to render him quite insensible to his danger from an object of much greater and more important attraction of a European character, till one day when some slight indisposition had prevented Matilda from occupying her usual place at dinner, and in the evening accompanying his flute (which he played very agreeably, because with truth and judgment, and without any affectation) with her harp or piano, a suspicion from the pain he felt that he was not quite in marching order at a moment's notice came across him, and as he sauntered home by the light of a full moon, he began to challenge himself a little. Is it not very strange (said he to himself) that whenever that girl is absent when I had expected the pleasure of her company my heart sinks, and I feel as if my visit had been exclusively to her; and if I do not look like a fool, I always feel as if I must do so, I cannot enter with any animation into the subject of conversation – my mind seems withdrawn by some powerful spell from every thing before me, yet what can I be to Miss Cotton? Or what (fetching a deep sigh) ought she to be to me? Surely I am not such a fool as to be in love! however cavendo tutus! I'll not go to-morrow, I'm resolved, or the next day either, unless I feel myself quite stout again.

Accordingly the next morning he awoke with all his heroism in full force, resolved to absent himself from the source of danger, but yet (said he) her father said she had a headache, it would be brutal after so much hospitality not to ask how she is to-day; I may as well walk towards Anne's Grove (the name of Mr. Cotton's plantation) as any where else, and I dare say I shall meet some of the servants, or perhaps her father himself, of whom I can inquire; besides I wish to take the exact measure of that silk cotton tree near the house, which would cover the front of half a dozen of the first rate London houses, and make the largest British oak look really diminutive by the side of it. Having executed this prudent intention without any interruption, and put down the dimensions in his pocket book, (*viz.*) height, one hundred and twenty-five feet; extreme projection of the branches each way, between seventy and eighty feet; diameter of head (say) one hundred and fifty feet; girth above the buttresses fifteen feet;* Edward was just proceeding towards the house in perfect satisfaction with himself, unconsciously repeating with great emphasis from Sir Walter Scott's beautiful poem of Rokeby –

‘The myrtle bids the lover live,
But that Matilda will not give;’

when the voice of a young lady, who had approached very near to one side of the tree whilst he was busy taking the girth of the other, startled him with ‘Good morning, Mr. Bentinck! is my father with you? I thought I heard my name pronounced by some one?’

‘Ye–s, I believe – that is – no! I have not seen him,’ replied Edward, colouring up to his ears, ‘I was also looking for him to inquire after the health of Miss Cotton, whom he mentioned yesterday as being slightly indisposed; but I am better pleased in having this ocular proof of her amendment.’

‘O,’ said Matilda, whilst a slight tinge of carnation suffused her marble brow, and improved her soft complexion, ‘twas merely a slight headache, but my father insisted on my keeping myself

* This is an actual measurement, the girth appears small in proportion, but the branches spring from a low part of the stem, which is supported by enormous buttresses exactly like those of a Gothic cathedral, sometimes nearly twenty feet high. *Note by the Author.*

quiet; he is over anxious about me, indeed, since the death of my mother, (the tears starting into her eyes, and her voice becoming rather tremulous from an apparent effort to controul some strong emotion,) although nothing can repair her loss to me, my father has been too good to me, and is scarcely satisfied, unless I solicit his indulgence of some new whim or other at least once or twice a month. You'll dine with us to-day, Mr. Bentinck, it will really be a charity to my father, who is not fond of soliloquy, and there are not many subjects of interest with him that I can enter into?'

'I am afraid,' said Edward, 'it will not be in my power to wait upon Mr. Cotton to-day; I am already a good deal in arrear with my regimental returns from the enjoyment of his obliging hospitalities, and I must return to-day to arrange them.'

'Well then,' said Matilda, 'you must breakfast and spend the day with us to-morrow; regimental returns have rather a serious sound, but, to say the truth, I want the help of your taste and pencil a little in the construction of an alcove which I have obtained my father's permission to erect upon the sea-shore, it is not above a quarter of a mile from the house, and we are so protected from the sun by the impenetrable foliage over our heads, in the walk I have had cut to it through the wood, that it is cooler than the house even in the middle of the day. I shall beg the favour of your attending me there to-morrow.'

'That,' said Edward, 'is a challenge that it would be difficult for any one to refuse; my taste and pencil are already much indebted to the encouragement of Miss Cotton, and cannot be better employed than in her service. I shall do myself the honour of presenting myself at Anne's Grove tomorrow, at the time you appoint, to receive my further orders;' and having conducted his companion to the door of her house, and made his bow with rather a constrained air of formality, he returned to his post.

Chapter IV. Morning Adventure.

'For ever fallen! no son of nature now, With freedom charter'd on his manly brow; Faint, bleeding, bound, he weeps the night away, And when the sea wind wafts the dewless day, Starts with a bursting heart for evermore To curse the sun that lights their guilty shore.' CAMPBELL.

THE symptoms of Edward's complaint were now too unequivocal to allow him to mistake them, and he returned from his morning excursion under much greater depression of spirits and derangement of his self-complacency than he had sallied forth; so that, on disencumbering himself of his heavy European regimentals, which are rather adapted to the frigid than the torrid zone, he threw himself listlessly across two or three chairs in a state very little qualified to attend to regimental returns, when Serjeant Vanderdonder appeared with a bundle of papers for his examination and signature, and the short salute of, 'the returns, your honour!'

'O! curse the returns,' said Edward, 'what have I to do with regimental returns? 'Othello's occupation's gone!'

'Your honour bid me bring them to you, when you came back from your walk,' said the serjeant. 'But the heat's enough to kill the devil,' observed Edward; 'who can trouble himself about returns with the thermometer at 95? Leave them, however, I'll look at them this evening. "Othello's occupation's gone!"' sighed Edward again, as soon as the serjeant had withdrawn. 'Is marriage then the only cure for love?' and a thought of great unworthiness crossed him for a single moment; but to do him justice, scarcely for a moment. 'No!' said he, 'bubble as it is, in some respects, there is glory in the reputation wrested from the cannon's mouth, the pride, pomp, and circumstance of war — the consentaneous estimation of personal courage by all mankind — the conscious superiority to the basest of all passions, personal fear — the heart and eye that fail not in the worst extremity, and only to be acquired by constant exposure to danger, are worth something; but, if such reputation is only to be won by the sacrifice of private principle and private honour, my ambition is at an end. Whatever be the bias of my heart at this moment, it is so free from every taint of impurity, that if it is not my duty to pursue it, at least, I am sure that I may safely leave the issue of it to that particular Providence to reverse which I have always been carefully instructed, and, indeed, my own reason persuades me to confide; for without this supporting doctrine of a particular Providence, not only the Christian religion must be a fable, but no other religion can be true. There can be no moral relationship between man and his Maker, at least no individual moral responsibility, if individual men are not objects of His attention and care.'

Having thus, very much to his own satisfaction, settled his accounts with his own heart, he called in the serjeant to proceed with those of his regiment, to which, with my reader's permission, I must leave him for a few hours, whilst we return to his neighbours at Anne's Grove.

No girl could be less forward to think herself an object of particular interest with any one than Matilda Cotton, for from the absence of all opportunity of self-comparison, she was totally insensible to the superiority of her own endowments, mental or personal; but it was not probable that a companion like Edward Bentinck, the only one that was qualified since her mother's death to enter into either her amusements or studies, should have an attraction for her; and her father, a man of observation and great natural acuteness, although not of much reading perhaps, began to suspect such a possibility.

'You seem heated, my dear Matilda, why will you walk so fast?' said he, as she entered the breakfast-room.

'I was afraid you would be waiting, papa; I have been chatting with Mr. Bentinck, and engaged him to spend the day with us to-morrow,' replied Matilda, 'I know I am but a wretched companion for you, and it is my duty, when I can, to provide you others.'

'You have hitherto been always dutiful, my dear,' said Mr. Cotton, laying considerable stress upon the last word, 'and as long as you continue so, your happiness will be the dearest study of my heart, but do not call yourself a wretched companion for me, or you will make me suspect I

am an insufficient one for you; your society is the most delightful that remains to me!' he continued with a half suppressed sigh. 'However, I shall be glad to see Mr. Bentinck to dinner; but all the morning I am likely to be particularly engaged.'

'I can find him plenty of employment, papa,' said Matilda, 'in correcting my designs for the alcove, or supplying me with better, as I may never again have the advantage of such assistance.'

'So you have been killing two birds I see with one stone,' said her father; 'but' (observing a slight blush on his daughter's cheeks) 'as you please, my love! You know I trust you perfectly.'

'My dear papa,' said Matilda, after her father had left the room, 'can any faults of yours affect your claims upon my affection and gratitude? You are too good to me.' The next morning when breakfast was over, he apologised to Edward for committing him for a few hours to the charge of his daughter, 'who,' said he playfully, 'is always plundering me upon some pretence or other, and has expressed her intention of engaging you this morning in one of her schemes, so I am afraid I shall come badly off between you. See what it is, Mr. Bentinck, to have a fanciful daughter! Well, I suppose I must bear it with the best grace I can, but, Matilda, my dear, be moderate in the expense of your alcove, as West Indian banks, in the present day, are not quite as inexhaustible as they were fifty years ago, although yours, thank God, has hitherto been one of the best.'

'O yes! I dare say,' replied Matilda, 'and when it is finished, if the critical eye of a certain gentleman discover any defect, and I allege in my defence that I was afraid of the expense, I shall get a good scolding for my self-denial.'

'Why, that has happened sometimes, perhaps, I must confess,' said Mr. Cotton, 'so I believe, as usual, you must have it all your own way, for I see I shall save nothing by interfering. *'

'Mr. Bentinck, au bon revoir; I shall, perhaps, be able to pick up an acquaintance or two to meet you at dinner.'

'I shall always be happy to be introduced to any of your friends, sir,' said Edward. As soon as Mr. Cotton was gone, and Edward and Matilda had spent some time in sketching, altering, comparing, and selecting from a variety of designs for alcoves, and grottoes, and summer-houses in one of the portfolios of the latter, and she had summoned two of her little female negro pages (of which she had always half a dozen at least of the handsomest upon the plantation, more especially attached to her own person) to follow then, she called upon her companion to attend her to the sea-shore to give her his opinion of the site where she proposed to erect the alcove.

'You are attached to this spot, Miss Cotton,' observed Edward, as they entered upon their beautiful sylvan walk, completely over-canopied by an intertexture of foliage, impervious even to the rays of the meridan sun, but kept perfectly dry and healthy by the constant draught through it from the sea (to which it formed a vista), of a fresh and scarcely ever failing breeze, loading itself with, and diffusing over the house as it approached it, the rich perfume of the orange, the jessamine, and the tube-rose, profusely intermixed with the cinnamon and other native aromatic plants on each side and through the whole length of the avenue, 'as the embellishments by which your house is surrounded, almost all of which own the fair hand of their author, sufficiently manifest?'

'It is my birth-place,' replied Matilda, 'and I have never found it unhealthy, like most other parts of Guiana, and from the prevalence of the sea-breeze the heat is much less oppressive on the coast than it is in the interior. The luxuriance of vegetation here and the inexhaustible field of botanical research and amusement have great charms for me; there is only one spot in the world for which I would exchange it.'

'May I ask where that spot is?' said Edward.

'O, England! England!' exclaimed Matilda, 'whose glorious history is ever to my imagination the first and brightest chapter in that of the world, whose sons are ever prompt to show their manly bosoms to the fiercest foe, and her illustrious Senate - the home of liberty, the light of

*'Bold is the man, how great so'er his skill, Who dares to combat with a woman's will; For if she will, she will, you may depend on't, And if she won't, she won't, and there's an end on't.'

truth, the lofty guardian of all the highest hopes and interests of the human species, the only impregnable asylum of persecuted justice, where, as at the bar of God, I had almost said, kings and subjects, masters and servants, planters and slaves must take their trial; but it is not her pre-eminence in arts and arms, in freedom and enterprise, that excite my admiration so much as the Christian morality and generosity of her national character; where is the field of general philanthropy which her courage is not the first to undertake, and her constancy the last to abandon? But I beg your pardon, Mr. Bentinck, you speak our language so exactly like a native, that I always forget you are not an Englishman. You must excuse me; I have acquired a habit of being, perhaps, too warm in defence of England, from the pain I am here frequently exposed to of hearing it decried; for your countrymen, I am afraid are not very fond of it, and my father is quite a Citizen of the World, but the name of England uttered with the deepest affection, was mingled with my last blessing from my mother's lips.'

'I assure you, Miss Cotton,' said Edward, (unconsciously returning a deep sigh to that with which Matilda had concluded her panegyric,) 'your animation in defence of England requires no apology to me, although a foreigner. Any country whose institutions are such as to occasion an attachment like yours to predominate in the breasts of her children must be ever great and glorious; besides, I am not at all insensible to the advantages of your institutions, and consequently of the English character in many points, over those of other countries. Indeed I have often wished myself an Englishman, and never more so (continued Edward, looking earnestly at Matilda,) than since my introduction to the family at Anne's Grove.'

'O,' said Matilda, with a slight blush, 'I did not mean to tax your politeness so far as that, Mr. Bentinck; your own country is entitled to your preference.'

'My own country is not what I have understood it was,' said Edward; 'it has never recovered the leaven of atheistical principles which it received when it was overrun and so long occupied by the patricidal armies of the French revolution. Away from home, the character of my countrymen has always been rather ferocious, mercenary, and cruel, as the history of Brazil and the Molucca islands illustrate; but formerly, after their glorious emancipation from the yoke of Spain, they had at home some great redeeming qualities, indefatigable industry, a determined spirit of independence, and a stern simplicity of character. This resulted in part from the gloom of Calvinistic impressions of Christianity, but which conduced upon the whole to their maintaining the dignity of their Christian calling, by a strict and exemplary adherence to, and discharge of, their moral and domestic duties and affections; but now those that retain any faith in revelation at all, are for the most part philosophical Socinians, and the mass of the people seem to me decidedly materialists; which makes their industry sordid, their courage stubbornness, and their simplicity coarseness.'

'I cannot say that your picture of the modern Dutch is very captivating,' said Matilda; 'but if materialism is one of their national features, it will account for any degeneracy - a process of such unlimited degradation of the human character, that a people must already be degraded to employ it, as if instead of refining ore into pure gold they should take pleasure in reconfusing the precious metal into ore. From what I see of your countrymen settled here, I confess to you fairly I should not call your picture much overcoloured; but I do not allow myself to think that people of the miscellaneous character and often desperate fortunes of colonial settlers, are a fair specimen of the society of the mother country.' At the end of the walk next the sea, where Edward and Matilda soon arrived, was a little circular artificial mound or platform, with almond trees all round the edge, the stems of which were quite clear, like so many columns, and their intervals open, but the heads were trained to grow at right angles with the stems, and so interspliced and drawn together as to form a screen from the sun exactly like the sounding-board of a pulpit -- a termination to the avenue rather curious and formal than beautiful, which suggested to Matilda the substitution of an alcove. Mr. Bentinck's task was to assist her in contriving one that should form in itself an interesting object of repose to the eye in looking down the vista from the house, without intercepting the view of the sea. They had been sitting for some time upon the benches under the

almond trees in close consultation upon this perplexity, when before they had satisfactorily overcome it, their attention was diverted to a galloway looking vessel as the sailors call it, (that is, a vessel made for evading pursuit, as if she were designed for some illegal employment, with low flat sides, strait gunwale, and masts sloping very much back), and which by standing off and on the coast, making and answering signals, seemed to be in communication with some one from the shore.

‘That vessel is after no good I am afraid,’ said Edward, ‘her appearance and conduct look very suspicious.’

‘O,’ said Matilda, after looking at her attentively for a few seconds, ‘you will be too familiar with vessels of that description if you are quartered much longer in this neighbourhood; it’s a slave ship, I cannot bear the sight myself, but if you will just walk round that point of land a hundred yards lower down, you will see that they’ll run in presently to the mouth of the creek, and discharge their miserable cargo, where I dare say there are boats ready to receive them.’

‘I was in hopes that this scandal of the Christian world had been almost extinguished,’ said Edward, ‘is not the importation of Africans illegal by your laws, and is there not a court here under an express treaty composed of British and Dutch commissioners for its repression?’

‘The commissioners I am informed,’ said Matilda, ‘have only authority to interfere with vessels that are caught in the trade under British or Dutch colours, by a Dutch or British ship of war, and therefore the British or Dutch colours are of course never or scarcely ever used in such a business, that vessel you see is under French colours, which are not subject to visitation by the British cruisers, and the persons here who ought to enforce the laws of your country for the abolition of the trade, are almost all of them directly or indirectly concerned in its encouragement.’ ‘But is not your father,’ said Edward, ‘as a British subject exposed to the penalties of the British abolition laws, which are very severe, and extend I believe even to death?’

‘Not here,’ said Matilda ‘and if the British commissioners should report him to their government, it would be difficult in England to collect the evidence against him; indeed the authorities here would not give up a British subject to the vengeance of his own country, unless he were actually engaged and found on board a slave ship, brought by a British or Dutch cruiser before the mixed Court, which in that case I understand has authority to send him home for trial, but not otherwise. I do not know that my father is concerned at all in the present vessel, but if he is, it is probably only in common with his neighbours, and there is no one but the captain of the slave ship himself that could prove which was the original importer; in a few hours these slaves will be divided perhaps between a dozen plantations.’

‘Might not the government seize them,’ said Edward, before their dispersion, and punish the owner of the plantations where they were found?’

‘Their intelligence in Paramaribo, one hundred and fifty miles off,’ said Matilda, ‘could not be quick enough, and if it was, the seizure of the slaves would not necessarily implicate the planter, as they might be landed without his knowledge; they might, to be sure, order you or whoever was the officer stationed at your outpost to interrupt such proceedings, but we know that they would rather forbid you. In short, they connive at it as much as possible, they will never act upon information if they receive any, unless they are goaded and urged to it by the British commissioners, much less lay themselves out for it; and if they should be forced to prosecute any one under your abolition laws, exculpation is easy where there is great reluctance to condemn, and what between the intimidation of witnesses, the simulation of ships’ papers, and the conscious infringement of the laws by the judges themselves, the worst consequence probably would be a short confinement. I am therefore under little apprehension of personal danger to my father: but the enormous guilt and all-crime-comprising character of the trade is the great drawback on my happiness. I have no doubt that a third of the original number of that cargo of despair have died on the passage from Africa, and at least another third of those that remain will not survive their voyage a twelvemonth. It is, as you may suppose, a forbidden subject between my father and me, but there is a sort of implied compact between us, that he is not to interfere with my management of his

slaves, if I do not inquire much into his, and I cannot better employ his indulgence than by endeavouring to alleviate their sufferings, and make them if possible some reparation for the wrongs, to the infliction of which he is a party. At my earnest entreaty he has lately allowed me a Moravian missionary to instruct them on the Sundays, in the apostolical simplicity of whose character and prudence, and inofficiousness of whose conduct, my father (to do him justice) always expresses the utmost confidence.'

'With such an advocate and benefactress,' said Edward, 'upon every plantation, the slaves might find some freeman who would not be unwilling to change places with them, the transition from the hold of a slave ship to the ministration of angels, must be like a translation to heaven.'

'I am afraid you think me fishing for compliments,' said Matilda, 'by your readiness to bestow them; but go,' said she, and bring me word when they have landed their miserable captives, that's a spectacle that will soon sober your fancy, as in case any of them should be taken to Anne's Grove, I must hasten home to make some addition to my father's provision for them, but I will wait your return.'

I need not remind such of my readers as are familiar with the models of ancient sculpture, that the expression of figure is often quite as definite as that of feature. Constraint, freedom, authority, subjection, boldness, fear, strength, weakness, exertion, repose, hilarity, dejection, attention, listlessness, and many other moods of mind, may be conveyed distinctly to the imagination by attitude and position of muscle alone. When Edward had run round the point of land before mentioned, he saw some sailors assembling on the beach, a little farther down between two or three hundred slaves, some of whom were in pretty good flesh, others nearly skeletons, but one figure, different from the others, arrested his particular attention, he did not obey the sailors who were marshalling them as quickly as the rest, he did not move either lamely or alertly like the others, but deliberately and firmly although with evident reluctance; when he came in contact with the others, he started out of it again as if he declined their fellowship, his chest was alternately compressed and dilated, and almost convulsed from indignation or some strong emotion. There was no stoop in his shoulders, his stature was perfectly erect, his knees and ancles and all his limbs were beautifully clean and elastic, his muscles had evidently none of them been unequally strained, his whole appearance, in short, denoted a man who had never had any other master than his own will; his wrists were bound together by a strong hand-cuff, with an iron bar of nearly a foot in length and an inch in diameter between the loops. When the rest of the party were arranged, one of the sailors, a very strong robust fellow, seemed to order him to move, and on his expressing or betraying some hesitation, had the temerity to strike him with great violence, as he stood fronting him, close under his face, in a single instant the captive raised his hands, and bringing down the iron bar with the force of both his arms upon the sailor's head, who dropt instantly as if he had been shot, by one brave bound of nearly twenty feet, he sprang into the wood, followed however as instantly by half a dozen sailors with cutlasses and pistols.

When Edward Bentinck returned to Miss Cotton, a little sobered in his view of the angelic nature of slavery under any circumstances, and told her what he had seen, 'God speed him!' said Matilda, 'but he has no chance, their cutlasses will cut down the underwood which will effectually impede him, especially as he is manacled; but we shall perhaps hear the result of his attempt to escape, this evening, as I think it very likely you will meet the captain of the vessel at dinner, at any rate we must defer our deliberations on the alcove to a better opportunity, as I wish to get home in case any of his poor fellow victims should have occasion for my services.'

'Are labouring hands then so scarce here,' said Edward, 'that men of established wealth and information like your father, will risk their character, as well as personal peace and security, by so disreputable a practice?'

'O no!' said Matilda, 'there are more slaves in the colony, I am sorry to say, than many of their owners can afford properly to clothe and feed; with regard to my father, I believe it is more out of resentment to the interference of the British government than any thing else, that he

continues it; but he is like other planters, too much accustomed to the almost absolute disposal of the lives of his dependents, and they will never any of them forgive the invasion of their despotism.'

Conversing in this way, they had not got above half the length of the avenue on their return to the house, when they were startled by a hoarse voice of some one concealed by the bushes on one side of them, but very near, exclaiming 'D--n you, shoot him!' when three or four bullets whistled by them, and in the same instant the noble savage darted into the avenue, and threw himself covered with blood at their feet, crying, 'Save me, massa! save me from those devils! me be your slave, massa! me give my life for you.' Matilda fainted, and sunk in the arms of her companion, her little pages, to whom she was more than a mother, cried and sobbed, and wrung their hands, saying, 'Missy gone dead, Missy gone dead!' 'To the house for a couple of men and a hammock,' said Edward to one of the little girls, 'quick Lucy!' and in the meantime kneeling on one knee, and supporting Matilda on the other, and taking off her bonnet and using it as a fan, he soon removed the syncope, but it was not possible for him to give any effectual assistance to his sable supplicant, against half a dozen men of his own strength, although the imploring gestures and tone of voice of the unhappy victim were as pathetic to him, as they were proud, scornful, and indignant to his pursuers, all he could do as they bound and dragged him off was, to say, 'remember that you have been seen, and if you use him illegally it is at your peril.' 'Ay! ay!' said one of the scoundrels, whose name he afterwards found to be William Askens.

'We don't want none of your instructions, we know'se what's legal as well as you and what is not, and if we did not we shouldn't come to you to inquire.'

'Very well!' said Edward, 'but depend upon it I shall make some inquiries about you.'

Whether any of the men knew Miss Cotton, or suspected from some parts of Edward's dress and military figure, although out of uniform, that he was the officer commanding the detachment on that station, they seemed to abate something of their violence with their prisoner, and he thought he heard one of them say to Askens, 'hush Bill, the least said the soonest mended, you're always so d--d ready with your tongue, that ere gentleman has got the guard down here, its my opinion, and you know'se very well that this here trade as they call's it is out of all law and gospel too, and if I don't wash my hands of all consarn in it afore long my name's not Bob Jackson.'

The arrival of the hammock prevented Edward's distinguishing any more of their dialogue, and having carefully conveyed his fair patient to her house, he repaired to his barracks to shift his clothes and collect himself a little before dinner.

Chapter V. The Slave Captain.

'Man's inhumanity to man, Makes countless thousands mourn.' BURNS.

BESIDES Mr. Cotton and one of his blank officers (as they are called) or directors of the name of Hogshead (a dreadful looking mixture of gluttony, remorseless cruelty and craft) and Mr. Bentinck, the dinner-party at Anne's Grove consisted only of two others, one of them was a man about forty, of light figure and complexion, soft eyes, expressive rather of good nature, and a vive-la-bagatelle disposition, with a little something perhaps of treachery and sudden fire, and some irony in the lines about the mouth, but no expression of deliberate cruelty or indeed of any prevailing direction of sentiment; there was nothing particularly coarse even about his hands, which were not quite like those of a dandy, neither were they like those of a clown, but like those of a merchant, or man of business, or any other plain man. The expression of the other's countenance was one of fixed and irreversible solemnity and circumspection, it was lighted sometimes by a smile of great benevolence, but there seemed to be an incapacity to laugh, not an abstraction from external or near objects, but a concurrent and paramount attention to some introspective or distant ones; like that of a general whose commanding elevation enables him to see the movements of approaching or cooperating forces, that are quite invisible or indistinct to others, an intimate and sleepless apprehension of surrounding danger, with an expression of resolved and calm self-devotion to the service in which he was engaged, a complete supercession of passion, pride and egotism by the overbearing importance of some more comprehensive interests, and the severe responsibility of their defence. His eye was one of steady fire without the blaze, 'There was no worldly feeling in his eye, The world to him was as a thing gone by -' gone by, that is, not as a field of duty but a source of reward; - in the world but not of it, like Moses on Mount Nebo, he seemed distressed for want of adequate power to communicate to all his species his own glorious view, and their danger if they delayed to follow him, of being rapidly overtaken by some intervening enemy, that would cut them off from it for ever.

'I suppose,' thought Edward Bentinck, as he prepared to return to Anne's Grove, 'I need not be very particular in my dress to-day; Miss Cotton, I am afraid, will not have recovered her fright, and if she has, her father will scarcely allow her to be present with this slave captain whom she hinted I should meet, some farouche looking ruffian, who doesn't waste much time upon his toilette I'll be bound.' When therefore on his joining the party Mr. Cotton introduced him to his two visitors; 'Mr. Bentinck! Mr. Schwartz! Captain Légere!' he was a little surprised to see in the former an almost saintly benevolence of countenance, and the dress and appearance of a Moravian missionary, and in the latter nothing more than an ordinary Frenchman. Still there was so much singularity and novelty to him in the incongruity of characters assembled, that he could not help feeling considerable curiosity to see how they would amalgamate in conversation. The first subject naturally was the occurrence of the morning, 'I hope, sir,' said Edward Bentinck addressing himself to Mr. Cotton, 'that Miss Cotton will not suffer materially from her fright this morning, with which doubtless she has acquainted you?'

'No,' said her father, 'she is now tolerably composed again, and will perhaps make her appearance with the coffee, especially as my friend Mr. Schwartz here is I know one of her particular beaux; but it was a most outrageous conduct on the part of the seamen, I have requested Captain Légere to rebuke them severely, and if he gives them a round dozen it will be scarcely more than they deserve.'

'Surely,' said Edward, 'if the unhappy man dies they'll be guilty of murder, will they not?'

'By all the laws of Christendom,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'O! you mistake me,' said Mr. Cotton, 'what I complain of, is their shooting at random in that way through a thin screen of foliage into an open walk close to a dwelling house; as for the man, if he would not stop when they desired him, and they could not otherwise overtake him, I don't see what else they could do very well.'

‘He could hardly expect,’ said Mr. Légere with a sardonic grin, ‘after taking the trouble of bringing him across the Atlantic Ocean into the rational and civilized world here, that he was to give us the slip in that way, before he had paid us for his passage; but,’ added he, ‘I will take care to rate them soundly for their want of caution. *Sacre! ils ne peuvent jamais discriminer*- they’re so accustomed in Africa to use their fuzils, as they would in a German shooting match, that they keep me in constant hot water whenever they are on shore any where else.’

‘You give one an encouraging idea of your employment, Mr. Légere,’ said Edward.

‘*Il faut que tout le monde vive,*’ said Légere, shrugging his shoulders.

‘There are different modes of conducting all employments,’ said Mr. Cotton, ‘Captain Légere, for example, never stows above three mules* to a ton, or loses more than a third of his cargo on the voyage, and his decks are as clean nearly as those of a man of war. I will not however deny, that it would be desirable to avoid even such a waste of valuable life and muscle as that, but the risk and penalties are now so heavy as to compel the traders, like smugglers, to make the profits of one successful voyage cover the loss and expences of three, and if that precious little humbug, Mr. Wilberforce, had been content to regulate instead of abolishing the trade, there might have been something to be said for him.’

‘But,’ said Edward, ‘don’t you see that it would have been impossible by any regulations to bring such a trade within the pale of humanity, because any restrictions that at all proportioned the numbers to the tonnage of the vessels employed, would have so enhanced the price of legally imported slaves, as to make the profits upon smuggling a sufficient temptation to practise it with at least as much, if not more, disregard to waste of life than prevails at present?’

‘I can’t see,’ said Mr. Hogshead, ‘what right Mr. Wilberforce had to trouble his head about the matter for my part, with Ireland and the press gang under his nose.’

‘It’s rather hard upon Mr. Wilberforce too,’ said Edward, ‘or indeed any man, to condemn him for doing any thing because he could not do every thing. What he has achieved has cost him the labour of his whole life; and looked at seriously, and in all its remote and probable consequences, a most glorious achievement it is; he has rescued the profession of Christianity from its foulest blot, and by his single moral pertinacity, with the divine authority of revelation in his support, he has done more towards the recognition of the rational rights of man than the whole infidel sect of the Illuminati, and all the physical force employed in the French revolution to boot.’

‘I confess,’ said Mr. Cotton, ‘if you appeal to Christianity, the West Indian case has not a leg to stand upon, if Mr. Schwartz therefore will not allow me to dispute the truth of that, I throw up my brief.’

‘And if I thought,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘that Christianity was not true, I confess candidly I should be disposed to throw up mine; my charge against the system of slavery, as it has hitherto prevailed in the West Indies, is that it is incompatible with the inculcation of the doctrines and duties of Christianity upon eight hundred thousand or a million souls, if those doctrines and duties are of fabulous origin, of course my charge drops to the ground; otherwise, for instance, how painful, and in general I’m sorry to say, how vain is it for me to call upon the slaves to abstain from promiscuous intercourse upon pain of incurring the heavy displeasure of their Maker, whilst not only is no facility given, but every possible obstacle opposed to their contraction of marriage, the great hinge upon which all the charities of life, and consequently all advances in civilization and moral refinement depend; and the most frightful example is set them by the whites of contempt for that institution; and if I do succeed in impressing the minds of the slaves with a sense of the truth and obligations of Christianity, how can I do so without proportionally lessening their respect for their masters, who live in open derision and defiance of all its restraints, and the spirit as well as letter of its directions?’

* The slang term for slaves. *Note by the Author.*

‘To be sure you can’t,’ said Mr. Cotton, ‘therefore I say an acquaintance with Christianity cannot be extensively introduced amongst the slaves without the greatest danger. I have given way to my daughter’s importunity upon the subject, but depend upon it without a reform of the whole social system (as it exists in this colony at least) upon Christian principles, to expect you to teach Christianity without impairing our security, is to expect you to light a candle in a magazine of powder or gas without danger of explosion.’

‘It is difficult,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘to deny that there is danger, but the danger, remember, does not result from the nature of the light, but of the element into which it is introduced, and if there were any assimilated principles or institutions in general observance amongst the planters to act like a safety lamp in a mine and prevent the directness of the contact, the danger would be little or none. Nor is it from Christianity (which expressly forbids all violence) that any danger can fairly be said to result after all, that is, no danger can ever attend the diffusion of Christianity that is not common to the diffusion of general information and intelligence; or rather, I should say, whatever is peculiarly Christian in the light circulated, has nothing in it but humility, temperance, industry, docility, gentleness, peace, charity, self-sacrifice, and social love; but the same light by which I inculcate these duties, must also convey a variety of other truths, philosophical as well as moral, and who can say that impetuous spirits will not sometimes act upon the light and reject the discipline?’

‘That Christianity has a levelling tendency in one sense,’ said Edward, ‘I should think it would be impossible to deny; but its great value is, that whatever alteration in the condition of the world it is designed ultimately to accomplish, it is emphatically a religion of tendencies, while it instructs its disciples to wash each other’s feet, to disclaim all titles of inflation or inequality, and shows that no condescension which they can practise towards each other can approach the example of their benignant and divine Master himself in His mystical incarnation and atonement; it strictly forbids the violent employment of the physical force of a little finger in advancement even of its own designs; so that it seems to comprise the only means that were ever offered of effecting what has been considered as a desideratum by the best and wisest of all ages, (viz. a reduction of the great inequalities in the conditions of men,) without the confusion, and anarchy, and bloodshed that have always attended and defeated the employment of all others.’

The reader who has never lived within six degrees of the equator, might perhaps wish that I should give him some description of an equatorial dinner, as well as the general conversation that prevailed there, but the truth is, that except perhaps in rather a greater profusion, although a general inferiority of materials, there is so little difference either in the composition or serving up of the dinner* of a Surinam planter, or the costume of the company, from the dinner of any opulent man in Europe, that if it were not for the heat of the atmosphere, any one might suppose himself dining with a London family who kept half a dozen black servants. The only peculiarity in a house where there are ladies is the naked feet,* which is a little repulsive at first, but after a few weeks residence, no one would either observe it, or feel the least inconvenience from it. Upon the plantations sometimes, indeed, and even in Paramaribo, in the houses of the Jews and low Dutch, the nudity is not confined to the feet, but you are waited upon by boys and girls of eight and ten years old as naked as they were born; but my reader need not be informed that in any family presided over by a lady in the European sense of that term, (although I am sorry to say that ladies of that description in Dutch Guiana are not very numerous; one great source of social evil in the West Indies, as in Ireland, being absenteeism,) this is not and cannot be the case.

Adjoining the room at Anne’s Grove, where Mr. Cotton had ordered tea and coffee to be prepared, was a long gallery or balcony into which it opened, this latter again terminating in a door of painted and plate glass, which opened into two long parallel walks formed by three unusually fine

* The flesh, fish, and fowl of Surinam are all inferior to those of London, and what will surprise the reader still more, the fruit exceedingly so, both in flavour and variety. *Note by the Author.*

* By a colonial regulation at Surinam, the slaves are prohibited from wearing shoes. *Note by the Author.*

and lofty rows of the elegant leafed tamarind trees, and resembling with great accuracy the double aisle of a Gothic cathedral. Having thrown her bonnet loosely over her head to be ready for the wing on the least alarm of foot-steps, and that volume which every heart of human mould endears, into her lap, Matilda Cotton had been sitting here sometime waiting for a message from her father to make tea; but the moment she heard the approach of one of the party from the dining-room, off she was like a shot. Unfortunately Mr. Bentinck, who was first in the procession from the dinner table, saw her before she left her chair, and her father just caught a glimpse of her fine form as she sprang into the tamarind walk from the balcony. 'Matilda, my dear Matilda!' said her father, following her, 'give us some tea!'

'Pray excuse me to-night, papa!' said Matilda, as she came running gently back to him when she heard his voice, 'after what happened this morning I cannot bear the sight of that odious Frenchman.'

'My dear Matilda,' said Mr. Cotton, 'if by word or look that odious Frenchman, as you call him, ever insults you, no consequences of his resentment to myself should save him from my horsewhip; but you know that as I am completely in his power, it's as well not to offend him.'

'But if I go back, papa! I shall very likely say something that will -'

'No! no! my love,' said Mr. Cotton, 'he knows your opinions very well, and will not be near so likely to take offence at any thing you say as at your absence - besides, there's your friend Mr. Schwartz there, and it's hard if we can't keep this Frenchman in order between us; he is, like many others of his countrymen, half monkey, half tiger, but he will certainly never display either of these qualities offensively in my presence to you, and it cannot contaminate you to sit in the same room with him for half an hour.'

'Well, papa, I will go to the devil with you, you know,' said Matilda playfully.

'No! my darling girl, you shall not go to the devil with me,' replied her father with emotion; 'you have already one parent in a better place, and you shall meet her again.'

'O! papa, we!' said Matilda, as they returned to the drawing-room.

'So, sir,' said Mr. Légere, as Mr. Cotton re-entered the room with his daughter, 'you've recovered the fair fugitive! in my country, mademoiselle! we soon stop the flight of young ladies that make too free a use of their wings!'

'You shoot them, I suppose, sir?'

'No; we've cages called convents,' said Mr. Légere.

'And iron rings, bolts, leg locks, and handcuffs, to confine them to the bars, I suppose, sir?'

said Matilda.

'O,' said Mr. Légere, 'I see where I am now. I am exceedingly sorry, Miss Cotton, for the fright you received this morning, but I promise you I'll read all my fellows such a lecture when I go on board, as shall prevent the recurrence of such an accident. As for the man that was wounded, whose name is Outalissi, although the wound is merely a graze across the ribs, it would have served him right if the bullet had scuttled his knob; he has given me more trouble since his embarkation, than almost any man I ever took on board: twice he jumped overboard, once he attempted to scuttle the ship, and latterly he refused all sustenance, and would have died if we had not had an unusually short passage; and yet he has nothing to regret in Africa, for, by the account of Askens, one of my men, who undertook to guide the surprise party to his village, of which he seemed to be the head, they did not leave a hearth to shelter, or a dog to live in it to miss him, and he's quite a young man, not older than Mynheer Bentinck, so that he may do just as well here, if he would but think so.' Matilda changed countenance, and giving a look to Edward Bentinck, that seemed to say, 'You are a man, rebuke him,' left the room.

'Morbleu!' said Mr. Légere. 'Do the Surinam ladies think it's possible to carry on a slave trade with rose water?'

'I am not,' said Edward Bentinck, 'a Surinam lady, or quite a stranger to military carnage, and am not startled by the sight of honest blood; but your business seems to begin, proceed, and

end in wholesale treachery, cruelty, and murder, robbery, and crime of every sort;* and, if I were governor of this colony, I would take good care, Mr. Légere, that this should be your last visit.'

'Ah, ah!' said Légere, 'then you would not be long governor, for the planters would tell some lie against you or another, and get you recalled, or make the colony too hot to hold you. The members of the court of policy, as they call it here, (which is the court of criminal justice,) are all planters; and even if the governor was to prosecute, they would never condemn, because they know they are all obnoxious to the same charge; and as for religion, pity, compassion, philanthropy, and all that humbug, who ever heard or met with a Dutchman out of Vaderland who would sacrifice a stiver to any one of them?'

'Frenchmen, I suppose,' said Edward, looking sternly at Mr. Légere; for he did not think it worth while to take up more seriously the championship of his country with the captain of a slave ship. 'Messieurs de la grande nation, of that description of character, are never to be met with out of La belle France.'

'Ah, monsieur!' said Mr. Légere, with a grimace of momentary pensiveness; and either only hearing the last words of the observation addressed to him, or in his intense national and personal conceit overlooking its irony, 'Je sais bien qu'il n'y a qu'une France!'

'But, Mr. Légere,' continued Edward, 'after having done every thing to exasperate your unhappy victims, do you never try to soothe their feelings when you get them on board?'

'O yes, every thing,' said he. 'We physic, flog, and iron them; and sometimes, if there is much smother, we throw a dozen or two overboard to make room for the rest to breathe.'

'Every thing but mercy, humanity, and kindness,' said Edward; 'and that last act which you mentioned must often be one of the greatest of them. May I ask if it is alive or dead that you throw them overboard when you are too crowded?'

'Ah, c'est égal,' said Mr. Légere, 'qu'importe cela? But,' said he, suspecting that Edward was laughing at him, '*Outalissi*, who now belongs to Mr. Cotton, speaks very good English; he was accustomed, I believe, to attend when he was a boy, and latterly to conduct, on his own account, a little sort of commercial caravansera from the interior to Sierra Leone, and he will tell you more about it. He's a fine subject, Mr. Schwartz, for you to try your hand upon, and I have brought some blue parrots for mademoiselle, that I believe I must first place under your care, to break them of the bad language they have learned on board the Harpy.'

Mr. Schwartz made no reply to this stroke of raillery, but being engaged to sleep at a plantation within a hundred yards of the military post, challenged Edward to accompany him home; and their host, who seemed absorbed in his own reflections since his return into the room with Matilda, merely wished them a good night, and they departed.

*See Note A.

Chapter VI. The Missionary.

'His warfare is within; there, unfatigued,
His fervent spirit labours, there he fights,
And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself;
And never-with'ring wreaths, compared with which
The laurels that a Caesar reaps are weeds.'

COWPER.

'YOU are a married man I presume, Mr. Schwartz, and have been a missionary here for several years?' said Edward interrogatively, as they walked slowly over the sandy shore that lay between Mr. Cotton's and the military post; whilst the peace-dispensing and solemnizing beams of a nearly full moon seemed to darken the thick foliage which absorbed them on one side of their path, and lighten the glistening water which reflected them on the other.

'Yes,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'I have a wife and children at Paramaribo, without whose support I must often have sunk under the weight of all the anxious responsibilities and difficulties that attach to the situation of a missionary in this colony, where I have endeavoured to support that character now for nearly twenty years.'

'Are there not,' said Edward Bentinck, 'besides the original Indians, two considerable settlements of free and self-emancipated negroes, with whom, of course, you have occasional intercourse; have you succeeded at all in your missionary exertions with them?'

'Here and there one,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'appears to have imbibed some faint notions of the doctrines of Christianity, generally however certainly not; but then our means have been of the feeblest and most inadequate kind; and ask yourself what right we could have to expect from a people who had never, literally never, received any thing but misery, circumvention, and ill usage from the whites; an act which implies the greatest of all confidence, viz. the receiving their religion from them?'

'Why, not much, to be sure,' said Edward Bentinck; 'but tell me, honestly, Mr. Schwartz, your opinion on another question: When I left England, there was rather a fashionable school of infidelity, which ascribed most, if not all the miseries of life, to the refinements of civilization. From your opportunities of comparative observation here, (and they must have been abundant,) do you really think there is any ground for this opinion?'

'So far from it,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'there is not a single misery incident to civilized life to which they are not subject, with scarcely any of our alleviations or compensations; their bones are equally fragile, their flesh and blood equally susceptible of distemper, pain, and death, and they have no surgeon, chemist, or physician. There is not a moral trespass that they don't practise against each other, and there is no law for them in this life but that of the strongest, who monopolize the women and plunder the weak; - and no supporting knowledge of retribution beyond the grave, not to mention the unspeakable amount of positive happiness and enjoyment that arises to a cultivated mind from the mere act of exercising the mental faculties and reflection upon a boundless variety of subjects, physical and metaphysical, from which the savage is entirely cut off. And so far from their bodily strength and power of enduring fatigue being greater than those of the natives of civilized countries, it is quite the reverse. But the most decisive confutation of that theory is this fact, that in savage life (the only portion of it at least with which I am acquainted, viz. that of the Indians and Bush Negroes of this colony,) their numbers rapidly diminish, whilst in the civilized world population as rapidly increases. The increase of population has been always found co-progressive with the increase of happiness; and, in my humble opinion, the happiness of all communities must depend upon the commensurate diffusion of intelligence and self-discipline.'*

* See Note B.

‘Do you,’ said Edward, ‘believe there is any essential inferiority in the Africans that incapacitates them from ever attaining the same state of civilization as the Europeans?’

‘No one, certainly,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘has a right to say so, until the same moral apparatus of instruction has been applied to their education, which has never yet been done. I should feel, perhaps, more difficulty in disputing the existence of some actual difference in the comparative force of their mental faculties in relation to each other, or at least the mode of exercising them, their memory sometimes seems much stronger than that of Europeans, as well of intellectual impressions as sensible objects; but their imagination is more sensual, and therefore less subservient to the elevation of their understanding and their acquisition of science; they are, in fact, (and, in truth, I doubt whether it is not the only difference,) rather more directly under the government of their senses than Europeans, and therefore less capable of abstract reasoning or comprehending abstract principles; but whether all or any, or how much of this difference is circumstantial and accidental, or essential and proper, cannot be absolutely determined till their circumstantial degradation is removed. It is clear, however, that man’s rational nature can only rise and expand as his animal one sinks and is contracted, and therefore a single degree of elevation or depression in one or the other may make the difference between a civilized and a barbarous people.’

‘I confess,’ said Edward Bentinck, ‘my doubt of their equal capacity arises from the fact of their making no advance towards actual equality with their oppressors. That they should suffer such miscreants as yonder Frenchman to pillage, slaughter, and enslave them, adlibitum, for centuries, seems to me a marvellous thing, if their utmost capacities did not under-reach his; they have the same provocation to exert them that the Britons and Gauls received from the Romans.’

‘The Romans civilized,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘partly by extermination and partly by intermixture. There is no reason to think that the original Gauls or Britons would have ever emerged from barbarism by their powers of self-elevation any more than the poor Africans. If large modern European armies were to overrun and occupy the continent of Africa, no doubt the process of civilization would soon be commenced there; the only other means are those which England is now so earnestly and disinterestedly trying, viz. those of invitation to commercial intercourse and instruction.’

‘Your undertaking, Mr. Schwartz,’ observed Edward, ‘is a very noble one, but its prosecution in such a place as this must often, I should think, be extremely disagreeable.’

‘If in this life only we had hope,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘we should indeed be of all men the most miserable to the world’s eye; and, indeed, actually as far as the sacrifice of worldly enjoyment goes, a missionary’s life is or ought to be one of great privation and suffering; but we have a recompense of accumulating value and support as we approach its realization in the promises of our Master.’

‘To be sure,’ said Edward, ‘one of the best philosophical receipts for, and definitions of, happiness, is the selection of some noble object of pursuit with the consciousness of progress towards it, your object is noble, but where is your progress?’

‘The want of general progress,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘if now and then a case of incontestable reformation confirms our confidence in the saving power of Christianity individually, does us no harm; on the contrary, it only throws us more upon our internal resources, and leads us again and again to authenticate our commission by comparing its external signatures with the genuine moral inscriptions written by the finger of God in our own bosoms and consciences; and so long as our faith remains unshaken, so long as our confidence in Him, in whom we have believed, becomes more and more confirmed upon every examination, (which it will do if all is sound within,) the life even of a poor Moravian missionary, however ill appreciated and overlooked by the world, is not without great peace and joy, and aspirations at least of such sublimity

‘As give assurance of their own success,
And which infused from heaven must thither tend.’

If our visible progress was very rapid and decisive, the applause and acclamation of the world would suspend our introspection, and out of constant requisition our spiritual armoury might rust; - like the staff of a dismantled regiment, we must keep our post with fidelity and fortitude, recommending our Master's service to the utmost of our power, both by argument and a carriage of cheerful confidence and satisfaction in it ourselves, till he is pleased to fill our ranks, and in the mean time to remember, as the English general Wolfe used to say, that the great business of a soldier is to die; not that the surface of society is really any criterion of the progress of Christianity, - like leaven in meal, it is doing its silent subsurficial work on multitudes of spirits that are perhaps hourly passing to their reward without discernibly altering the external appearance of the mass.'

'But,' said Edward, 'whilst your visible success remains so very limited, the suspicion and jealousy, if not personal violence, to which you must be subject in a place like this, must be very trying: and the taunts and sneers, and blasphemies and revilings against your faith, and some of its undeniable and inexplicable mysteries, such, for instance, as the reconciliation of the existence of any evil with infinite and Almighty benevolence, if it does not shake your allegiance to it, must proportionally shock it; to hear constantly impugned either the justice or mercy of Him you love so well, and of whose essential goodness you have such intimate conviction, although you know not always how to vindicate it, must be very distressing if it does not gradually impair your affection.'

'Our affection is uphold, perhaps, by an unseen hand,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'but an object once dearly beloved is not often displaced from the affection by abuse; the pain it gives, indeed, is excessive, but this will be more than requited when He, whom we have presumed to love, in the confidence of his goodness that no impeachment of it by others has materially weakened, no adversity or sufferings of our own extinguished or reduced, shall vindicate his own ways to the moral apprehensions of an assembled world. How often in a human court of justice have I seen the friend, or child, or brother of the person arraigned, who have been writhing with agony whilst the counsel for the prosecution were inveighing against the latter, when an advocate in his defence repelled every slander, and sent him with unsullied honour out of court, burst into tears of joy and gratitude from the triumph of his unshaken affection, and the sudden relief of his own honest sympathy. Think, then, with what exultation and rapture the meanest of God's faithful and affectionate servants (not to say children) who through every shape of trial have retained their allegiance unto death, will join the final anthem of triumphant adoration, 'Holy! holy! holy! Lord God of Sabaoth, just and true are thy ways, O King of Saints!' But I am tiresome, Mr. Bentinck,' said he, as Edward seemed to be abstractedly playing with and rubbing the lapel of his coat.

'No,' said Edward, 'I listen to you with great pleasure; but I was thinking you made this Waterloo medal of mine look rather dull.'

'The most painful incident to our duty here,' continued Mr. Schwartz, 'is, that in exact proportion to the earnestness of the interest in Christianity which we excite in the unhappy slaves is the severity, I had almost said cruelty, of the struggle we impose upon them; besides the perpetual taunts and spite with which their fellow-slaves are often encouraged, by the directors, in galling them. Not only are no facilities afforded, but every possible obstruction is generally interposed to their compliance with the ordinance of marriage; and some masters positively forbid their slaves being baptized. Even of the doctrine of equality with their masters in the next world, so prominent on every page of the Gospel, and indeed so obvious a feature of its very essence (although one should think it a doctrine rather likely to allay their impatience of their inequality in this) I have heard the greatest jealousy expressed by one of the first official men in the colony. In such a state of things, therefore, where the whole social edifice is not only not Christian, but violently anti-Christian from turret to foundation-stone, I often feel, that to call for Christian duties from the poor inmates in the double fetters of heathen ignorance and atheistical or infidel owners, is to call upon them for a task surpassing human strength, and all ordinary and unpresumptuous expectation of divine aid. I am not contending that the status or condition of slavery in the abstract is incompatible with Christianity, because Christianity does not interfere with the external relations of society, so long as they do not actually obstruct its work, which is not with the body, but the soul; but I'm afraid

that Dutch slavery is incompatible, because it does so, which often involves us here in the most painful embarrassments. But I will illustrate this by a most distressing catastrophe, which occurred here not very long ago, when a fine young man of about thirty, who had been nearly ten years a member of our society, cut his throat; his Christian names were John Christian February, but before he was christened his master used to call him Quashee Sambo, and Quashee Sambo therefore every body else continued to call him to the day of his death. Quashee, at the time he was christened, lived with a negress about his own age, whom we made him put away, till they could both obtain their freedom, without which the obstacles to domiciliation, and therefore to all the moral duties of marriage in Surinam (my present observations are confined to this colony) are insurmountable, and that then we should gladly and lawfully re-unite them. Quashee said, he was afraid he could not bear it; and we thought ourselves authorised, perhaps injudiciously, to tell him that we trusted God would support him, and that he had promised compensation even in this world for all such sacrifices. His master also, a man of great benevolence, and of whom Quashee was a particular favourite, for he was a steady, faithful, docile, good lad, encouraged him by promising his freedom at his death at the latest, if he behaved well. Strange as it may seem, under these encouragements, Quashee regularly attended our communion, and persisted in a state of honest celibacy, as far as any thing is known to the contrary, for ten years, during which time he had saved money enough to purchase the freedom of his sweetheart, who was equally faithful to him, and he meant upon his master's removal to heaven, as he said, for he was much attached to him, to go back to Africa, and try to find his father and mother, from whom he had been torn when quite a child, and make Christians of them and his brothers and sisters, if he had any, or some of his countrymen at all events, if he could not discover his relations; and he was looking to the full reward of his constancy when his master was killed by a fall from his horse, before he had time to make his will, and his affairs were found so insolvent, that the administrators were compelled to order Quashee to be sold by auction, which had no sooner been done, to a man of notorious hostility to every shape and form of religion, but especially disdainful and derisive of any that imposed the slightest restraint upon sexual intercourse, than our poor hapless convert, for I will still call him so, went home to his negro-house and cut his throat. We had taught him to read and write a little, and in the fly-leaf of his Testament was found a note, addressed to one of my brother missionaries, stating in effect that he had hitherto supported the restraints of Christianity from the hopes which his master's sudden death had indefinitely postponed and disappointed; but as his fear of God's anger would now make it impossible for him ever to enjoy the unconsecrated renewal of his intercourse with Africana, and all hopes were gone of any other, he felt that life was no longer supportable, and that although suicide might perhaps be wrong, yet as he did not see it so expressly forbidden in God's book, as unmarried intercourse with the other sex, he hoped the former was at all events the least offence of the two, and that the Christian's God would fulfil to him in the next world the promises upon which he had too much depended in this; that he had endeavoured since his baptism to act up to the Christian direction of doing to others as he would be done by, and was not conscious of any obliquity in the general sincerity and earnestness of his intentions and efforts to act right and discharge his duty both to God and man, although he might not always have succeeded; that as he was sure his Christian father had meant kindly by him, he wished him every good and sincerely thanked him for the pains he had taken with him, and prayed that he might never know the agony which his heart was then sustaining; but before he made any more proselytes, hoped that he would consider well if he was not himself deceived; that, finally, he begged us all to forgive him, and not to be sorry for him (as he was afraid we should), as since his separation from Africana, he had never in fact had an hour's happiness in this world, and now between Christianity and slavery he felt that he never could.'

'But,' said Edward, 'where marriage is rendered actually impossible (as it appears to me generally in this colony) by the irreligion, tyranny, and forcible prevention of others, over whom the parties wishing to marry have no controul; do you insist upon the ceremony as a *sine qua non* of conjugation?'

‘Since the occurrence I have mentioned,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘we have not always done so, but as much as we can, we make such parties consider themselves as man and wife; but you see all the misrepresentation to which we expose ourselves by this, and the mischief to which such a relaxation of religious discipline is open from the liability of the parties (where there is no legal sanction of their union) to separation. How can Christianity ever be grafted upon such a system as this?’

‘Curse the system!’ said Edward. ‘I beg your pardon, Mr. Schwartz; but I almost wish you had not told me so much about it. I shall be thinking of poor Quashee Sambo all night.’

By this time the two spiritual and temporal soldiers having arrived at the barracks of the latter, the former, having no time to accept his companion’s invitation to supper, pursued his way to the adjacent plantation, and left Edward reflecting so deeply upon what he had heard, that he did not go to bed before he had turned poor Quashee Sambo’s testamentary epistle into the following verses: -

Quashee’s lament.

In vain I backward search life’s stream,
On memory’s page imprinted,
To find with mercy’s golden beam
One single hour that’s tinted.
O Christian, wherefore, in this sea
Of struggle overbearing,
Hast plung’d my soul, that but for thee,
Life’s joys might still be sharing.
Your promis’d heaven still mocks my reach,
And slavery’s here my lot;
Within me now’s the hell you teach
In thousand worms that die not.
You’ve wronged me, Christian, well you know,
That nature’s joys you’ve banished,
And all your promises in woe,
And doubt, and death have vanish’d.
Where is the hundred fold reward,
The spirit which you told me,
my efforts from defeat would guard
And in your faith uphold me?
Since I embrac’d it - life has pass’d
In struggle and privation,
And still in homeless exile cast
Denies me compensation.
O father, like a juggling seer,
In double sense you’ve palter’d,
Who keeps the promise to the ear
Which to the hope is alter’d.
But weep’st thou at the soul’s dread waste
To which thou see’st me driven,
Of every human hope out-cast
And still repell’d from heaven?
Then if (yourself deceived) sincere,
The pains by which you won me,
Good e’en to thee, tho’ bleeding here,
Your kindness has undone me.
Yet, yet, in breaking the sweet spell
Untutor’d Indians sleep in,
Pause, lest again my bosom’s hell
Another breast you steep in.

Chapter VII. The Deposition.

Throned in the vaulted heart, his dread resort,
Inexorable Conscience holds his court:
Wrapp'd in dark night, with terrors all his own,
He speaks in thunder when the deed is done.
Hear him, ye senates, hear this truth sublime,
He who allows oppression shares the crime.

EDWARD BENTINCK had just finished his breakfast the next morning, and was sinking into a profound reverie on the conversation and events of the preceding day, debating with himself how far it was his duty to report to his superiors what he had seen, first communicating fairly to Mr. Cotton the obligation he found himself under of so doing, when Serjeant Vanderdonder informed him that an English sailor was waiting to speak to him. An English sailor, said Edward - what can an English sailor possibly want with me? however, hand him in, serjeant; and accordingly with a short scrape of the foot, nod of the head, and hitch of the trowsers, but with a sort of curtailed and begrudged obsequiousness that seemed to express a full consciousness that it was but a swab of a Dutchman that he was addressing after all, Jack was introduced to the presence. 'Your name and business with me my lad?' said Edward.

'My name's Bob Jackson, your honour; and my business is to swear.'

'That's a business, Bob, of which I am afraid you are but too capable yourself, without my assistance,' said Edward.

'Why as to the matter of that,' said Bob, 'I can't say but our lingo is not always quite as much like a parson's blessing as it shou'd be, but what I means at present is to swear against that d-d French lubber Captain Ledger, as they calls him.'

'Well, what have you to say against him, Bob?' said Edward. 'Did I not see you amongst the men that shot that poor negro in Mr. Cotton's walk yesterday morning? are you not therefore one of his crew?'

'No, thank God!' said Bob, 'not now. I was only engaged for the voyage, and as soon as he come on board last night, and gave us a good rating of his d--d aggravating French jabber for being so handy with our fire-arms in this here civilized country, as he called it, I told him a bit of my mind, that his trade was nothing better than piracy and murder, that I 'd seen quite enough of it, and therefore if 'twas all the same to him, should be glad if he'd pay me my wages and put me ashore, which he was glad to do the first thing this morning, lest, as he said, cursing me for an English hypocrite, 'I should infect the rest of his crew with my dislike to the service. 'So I thought I'd come to your honour, and see if I couldn't lighten my conscience a little, by taking my davy of what I'd see'd since I went a board that hell boat!'

'But,' said Edward, 'does not the captain, when he engages you, exact a promise from you not to disclose what you see?'

'No,' said Bob, colouring, 'a promise is a promise, although made to the devil himself; and although we British sailors are queer fellows sometimes, I must confess, there are not many of us that would break our *sea word*,* but if he was to ax for any promise of that sort before he engaged us, he'd be shewing his colours too soon, before he knowd whether 'twas friend or foe that he was speaking to, and may be he'd never get his complement at all, for its too bloody a business for any but such as are next kin to the devil to engage in knowingly; they trusts to this, that, if they puts themselves in our power we puts ourselves in theirs; but, if I was to be hang'd to morrow, I could not rest till I had giv'd information of all I knowd. I hope your honour will not say as 'twas I as told

* Engagements contracted under the pledge of their professional honour, I suppose Jack meant. *Note by the Author.*

you, at least for the next two months. You're welcome to make what other use of the information you please, and I'm ready to swear to it; but these slave traders are spiteful fiends, as your honour may suppose, and if they was to know as 'twas I as started the law upon them, till I am fairly out of their reach, 'twould be as much as my life's worth to open my lips about the business.'

'Well, well,' said Edward, 'I'll not betray you into any danger, I promise you, therefore fire away my lad, only dont be too prosy. I've rather a curiosity to hear your story, but I have no authority to take your oath.'

'Well, your Honour, this is my story. I come out to the West Indies a few months ago on board His Majesty's sloop of war, the Saucy Anne, as brisk and fine a boat as ever swam, your honour, and when we come off Martinique, for some words which I had with the boatswain, the captain, he's not a bad man neither, said as hands were plenty now, he'd give me my choice of a good buffing, or a run amongst the Frenchmen without my wages, so, — that buffing's no joke, your honour! — as I thought I should soon get on board an English ship again by some wind or other, I chose the latter, and had not been long cruising about St. Pierre's, before this Captain Ledger, as they calls him, seeing me unemployed, said I was a good likely sea looking lad, and asked if I had a mind to take a run with him to Africa for a cargo of *mules*, as he should sail next day, and was rather short of hands? Being quite out of prog, your honour, and rather sulky at the moment, I said I didn't care, and he took me a board with him immediately. When we came into the Bight of Benin, I soon found what a cargo of mules meant, and one of the men, an Englishman like myself, of the name of Bill Askens — (there are black sheep in all professions your honour!) — said he knowd of a king as liv'd somewhere in those parts, about twenty miles up the country, that had taken him home and cured him of a fever once when he was wrecked upon that coast, and that if the captain would send a dozen hands with him, and give a trifle head money, he'd bring away the whole village, king and all. Accordingly I was ordered of the party, and exactly at midnight — (for Bill knowd the way very well) — we arrived at a long straggling street of rush cabins, which was — (I think Bill called it) — the metropolis of King Outalissi. This village was surrounded by a sort of wattle fence too high to be overlooked, and too stiff to be easily pushed through, but with only one entrance, giving the poor inhabitants the idea of security, but in fact, proving their destruction. Across this entrance Bill ordered us to dig and cover such a trench as it was impossible they could pass without falling into or over it, and to remain there whilst he went and set fire to the opposite end of the village, which happened also to be the windward end, and which, as soon as he had done, 'Now then,' said he, 'take it easy, boys! take it easy, boys! You'll see what bolting there'll be by and by!' Accordingly, as soon as the poor unsuspecting savages heard their hovels crackling over their heads, and saw the blaze by which they were surrounded, they all rushed out helter skelter in the greatest confusion, overthrowing each other into the trench; and by binding them as fast as they fell with the cordage and crippling irons with which we were provided, we soon had all the natives in our possession, but one who was too strong and active for us, and escaped into the woods, and now,' said Bob, biting his lips and looking inward, 'began, what upon my soul I'm ashamed to tell your honour the rights of, although I'm not *partikler* bashful neither, but I will only say, that after the most violent and brutal indulgence of our men with the women and womenchildren, and the slaughter of all as persisted in their resistance, we found ourselves the next morning, (besides the infants as we was obliged to leave to perish at the breasts of their dead mothers, and several whose broken limbs or excessive sickness from their fright and ill usage made it impossible as we could move,) in the possession of nearly a hundred slaves of all sorts, men, women, and children. Early in the morning, just as we were about to march off with our prize, the person who had escaped come stealing out of the woods to *reach an oyster*,* I thinks 'twas as Bill said, or some such lubberly lingo, as he larned when he was a soldier, for this Bill isn't above a half-bred sort of a land swab of a sailor after all, your honour, or he'd never be so bloody, cruel, and such an ungrateful villain as he is.

* Reconnoitre I suppose. *Note by the Author.*

Howsumdever the poor man came out of the wood to see how the wind sit, as I should say, and Bill said that this was the King Outalissi, for he knowd him very well, by reason of having lived several weeks with him and his father, who was since dead, when they took Bill home with 'em to nurse him and cure him of his fever after his shipwreck. When our people heard he was King Outalissi, most of 'em was for scuttling his knob, as they said, for fear of his bringing down a rescue upon us, for as for catching him, as well attempt to catch His Majesty's sloop of war the Saucy Anne, under top, top-gallant royals, sky-scrappers, and moon-rakers, when she tears through it like a rocket your honour; but Bill said, 'No! no! put up your levellers and bilboas lads; we must take him alive, or we shall lose the very pride of the haul, when they've had him digging out their d--d Dutch coffee dams.' Just so, your honour; for Bill was always very ready with his tongue, although I told him that I didn't see why Dutch coffee dams should be more d--d than any other, your honour.'

'Well, go on,' said Edward.

'When they've had him' (continued his informant) 'digging out their d--d Dutch coffee dams in Surinam for a twelvemonth over his -- * in mud, exposed all day as naked as he was born, to sun, wind, and rain, without either shade or shelter; they'll have taken some of the royal shine out of his Majesty's breeches,' said Bill, just so, with a sneer, your honour; as I told him, royalty was royalty, breeches or no breeches, your honour. And with that Bill brought forward an old woman, that he said was King Outalissi's mother, for we could not find that he had wife or children, in order that the king might see that we had his mother a prisoner. As soon as the king distinguished his mother, your honour; he jumped, and tore, and struck his breast, and threw himself upon his knees, and beat his head against the earth, and clenched his hands, and seemed to me like a ship in her last throes before she founders, your honour; but Bill said, 'let him flounder about a bit; let him flounder about a bit; I knows the sprat to catch a gudgeon! I've got him fast enough I see,' and with that, your honour, Bill went up to King Outalissi, and palavered with him a little, and at last, he told him, 'that if his majesty would surrender him self up, and come with the rest of his subjects to Surinam, where they'd make a gentleman of him, (which is a much greater thing than a king, said Bill, and he'd be much better off than he was in his own country,) he'd let his mother go free,' to which King Outalissi seemed very agreeable, and it quite seemed to compose him, your honour; but Bill knowd if he let his mother go before he got the king in the grimpets, he'd have knocked her brains out with his tomahawk may be, and been out of sight himself sooner than a shot could follow him, or perhaps have caught up the old woman, and been too quick for Bill even with his mother in his arms, and the king know'd as Bill was not to be trusted if he giv'd himself up before his mother was free, so 'twas agreed that, after binding one of the king's hands, his mother was to be unbound altogether, which was accordingly done, and the old woman might have got a pretty good start into the wood by the time the king's binding was finished, for she wasn't so old but that she could have run, although Bill would have caught her again I've no doubt, your honour, if 'twas only to aggravate the king, (tried to do it indeed, I know he would, as he'd ordered some of the youngest to be ready to start after her again as soon as he gave the signal,) but she positively refused to leave her son, when Bill said jeeringly, your honour, 'that since she was so pressing, and his majesty had agreed to make his voyage with him, he'd give his mother her passage for nothing,' but she died, your honour, about three days after we got on board again, with between thirty and forty more men, women, and children, some of whom at least died, and some they were obliged to throw overboard to make room for the rest, or they would have all died of suffocation and dissentery, your honour; as they was all laid in the hold one a top of 'tother all night like so many sacks, and only brought upon deck by a dozen at a time for half an hour twice a day, which made me tell the captain last night that he was Jonas enough to sink the bravest fleet that ever left a British port, if the Bible was true, and what is said about heaven and hell wasn't all a flam, your honour. There are such places as heaven and hell, your honour,' said Bob doubtingly.

* An hiatus in my copy of this deposition makes it impossible to supply this word. I suppose Bill meant up to his waist. *Note by the Author.*

‘You have given an experimental description of one,’ said Edward, ‘and its inhabitants, and the best proof of the existence of the other somewhere, is the contest of the two principles of good and evil in every man’s own heart, and which made you so sensible of the difference as to take the honourable resolution you did of invoking, at any risk to yourself, the vengeance of even human justice upon those who have become little better than pure incarnate demons, by exclusively practising the latter; but finish your story.’

‘That’s my story, your honour; I’ve nothing further to add; but that when we arrived off the Marawina, we were ordered to land what survived of the slaves, and take ’em down the creek to Mr. Cotton’s the planter at Anne’s Grove, who would give us a receipt for ’em, which we did after recovering King Outalissi, who broke away from us after landing, in yonder walk of Mr. Cotton’s, as your honour knows. Now if your honour will just lend me a Bible for a minute, as I may put my oath to it, my heart will feel as light as a bird again.’

‘There is a Bible,’ said Edward, after taking down the purport of Bob’s story, and making him subscribe it; ‘but I have no authority to take oaths.’

‘God has authority,’ said Bob Jackson, ‘its only afore your honour that I takes my oath to God,’ then kissing the Bible, ‘I swear as all I says is true, so help me God!’ said Bob.

‘And now I’ve heard your story,’ said Edward Bentinck, ‘what would you have me do with it?’

‘Just what your honour pleases, if you will only give me time to get on board my old ship the Saucy Anne again. She’s still out here, I understand, somewhere, and I dare say the captain would forgive me by this time; they don’t use us over well always in the king’s service, to be sure, although his majesty himself, they say, has a fine sailor’s heart in him, God bless him! But he never knows the rights of half that’s done in his name, worse luck, or he’d soon put an end to it; for when we’re on shore, sometimes they hunts us about like wild cats.’

‘And when we’re at sea, the cats hunt you, I suppose,’ said Edward.

‘And when we’re at sea, as your Honour observes, the cats hunts us. But I’d sooner be tied up to the grating for a round five dozen, your honour, under Captain Switchem of the Tottunofog, and he’s one of the readiest men with the cat as ever I heard of, than be consarned again in such a bloody sarvice as this here slave trading, your honour.’

‘But why don’t you take your information to the British commissioners at Paramaribo?’ said Edward.

‘Why, maybe, your honour, they would’nt believe what I says, that I did’nt know what mules were when this here Frenchman engaged me, your honour, and might get me pen’d up for six months in their putrid black hole there at Fort Zelandia, till they could send me home to be hang’d or transported as a felon; for slave trading by the British laws is felony, and liable to death without benefit of clargy, your honour. And besides, your honour, if I’d been seen going into the British commissioners in my sea gear, I should have been in more danger from the vengeance of these here traders, your honour; some of whose spies might watch me, or hear of me from the sarvants. Now, if your honour will send a copy of my davy to the British commissioners, or put the governor up to what I’ve told you, he’ll have nothing to do but to send down the Comet, or any other small war craft that happens to be in the harbour, and whip up this here Frenchman just as if he fell in with her quite unsuspecting-like, your honour, without any one’s being a bit the wiser how he got his information.’

‘Well, my lad, I’ll consider of it,’ said Edward. So, with the same nod, hitch, and scrape, as he entered, exit Bob, leaving Edward Bentinck in a dilemma of no very enviable kind; for he did not know the British commissioners, and revolted as he was by the outrageous guilt of the slave trade which had just been laid open to him, he, of course, saw that he could not report his information to the governor without danger of being looked upon as a busy intermeddling fool, for

* Piracy now, thank God. - EDIT.

troubling himself with what did not concern him, and making them open their eyes where they wanted to shut them; and the danger which Edward no longer affected to disguise from himself, and which was a great deal more embarrassing, viz. that of interrupting his intercourse with the Cottons, who, if any inconvenience should result to them, would suspect him perhaps of being the author of intelligence to government from the personal observation, for the opportunity of which he was indebted to their hospitalities - a suspicion from which his informant's injunction of secrecy for two months would, for so long at least, make it impossible he could vindicate himself, and to communicate only a portion of the information he had received, and keep back the name of perhaps the most guilty party, namely, the planter to whom the slaves were consigned, would, besides the inefficiency of it if government pursued any enquiry into the business as they ought to do, be sacrificing public duty to private feeling.

For a long time Edward inclined to put the deposition quietly in his own writing-desk, and say nothing about it.

'What have I to do with the slave trade,' said he to himself, 'horrible as it is? Why should I turn Don Quixote, and stir up a hornet's nest about me of all the planters here, besides incurring the secret ill will of all the official authorities, and probably even of that of my own commanding officer, and hazard besides that hope which,' said he, smiling, at the alteration in his own feelings, 'I would not exchange for the occupation of any Othello that ever lived, or all the fame and glory of the world;' and he spent a great part of the morning endeavouring to satisfy himself of the honour of keeping his own counsel, and leaving the slave trade to those whose especial duty it was to attend to it.

'Are there not fanatics enough in the world,' continued he in soliloquy, 'to run a muck, and tilt at all these things, as Pope says, without me?' But it would not do; it was impossible that any zeal in the suppression of such monstrous ultra-heathen enormities could be fairly obnoxious to the charge of fanaticism. He then tried another position. 'Did not our Saviour himself,' said he, 'enjoin the wisdom of the serpent: and St. Paul declare that all things were not expedient?' But his honesty was too stubborn for him still. 'Base subterfuge!' he exclaimed, 'Who does not see that the expediency there recommended, both by Christ and his illustrious servant, is an expediency upon general principles and for the general good, and not an expediency to be determined by the petty and often unwarrantable wishes of individual egotism. - Here's this excellent man Mr. Schwartz, with a wife and children, whom such a man *must* love with ten times the intenseness of a man of worldly dissipation, even if not absolutely untrue to his nuptial engagements, yet he cheerfully foregoes that greatest of all luxuries to a benevolent heart, the pursuit of the means of indulging those we love, confines them as well as himself to the utmost simplicity of shelter, food, and raiment; and after these are procured, devotes every spare hour and every spare shilling to the prosecution of Christianity, asking for no return in this world, but always carrying a serene and satisfied, although a decisively serious aspect, regardless of any personal dangers although extending to his life, and cheerfully committing his family to the protection of that parental Providence of whom his utmost ambition is to be found a faithful servant at his death, still counting his utmost services as nothing compared with the value of his Master's favour and goodness in the pardon of his faults; here also is even my honest friend, who has brought this dilemma upon me, and who, if something in his breast had not taught him to disdain the principles of selfish expediency, would never have incurred the danger of making a disclosure - For shame, Edward Bentinck, to suffer a British seaman to outdo you in Christian principle and disinterested generosity. - No, Matilda! I will not sacrifice the singleness of Christian truth and honour even for you;' and he immediately took his pen and wrote a full account of what he had learned, (reserving only the name of his informant,) and addressed it to Colonel Vansomner, his commanding officer at Paramaribo; concluding his note by saying, that his informant was an Englishman, and had requested him to send a copy of his deposition to the British commissioners, which he therefore did by the same opportunity, but without any accompanying remark whatever of his own either confirmatory or explanatory; in the mean time, lest the vessel should escape, he thought it right to send a soldier immediately to head

quarters to acquaint the colonel with the practices which had been disclosed to him, and which he feared were but of too frequent occurrence, of course leaving it to him (the colonel) to take whatever further steps in the business he thought proper; and having ordered a soldier to proceed immediately with his letter, Edward Bentinck, although very far from cheerful, felt quite satisfied that he had done the thing which was right.

Of the divine passion of love, in its finest influences, a libertine is no longer susceptible; but from libertinism Edward's principles had hitherto saved him, and Edward was in love. Those who have never been so, will either laugh at his scruples of acting upon the convenient doctrine of selfish expediency, or condemn his hesitation from such a motive, in obeying the stern dictates of duty. Those who have been in love will not deny him the credit he deserves on this occasion for his anti-selfish decision.

Chapter VIII. The Distressing Inquiry.

- 'O! fatal, fatal day!
When led by false humanity astray,
To save these Christians I became their prey.'

OLD PLAY.

TO an ingenuous mind the pains of dissimulation is always proportioned to the claims, which we think those upon whom we practice it, have upon our affection, gratitude, or candour. Edward Bentinck had great misgivings, not of conscience, (for he could not but be satisfied that he had acted right), but of the consequences of the step which he had taken, to those with whose fate and welfare he scarcely dared acknowledge to himself the depth and nervousness of his sympathy. But what was to be done? He could not disclose to his neighbours at Anne's Grove, the information of which he had been the medium of communication to the colonial government, without not only defeating the very object of that communication by promoting the escape of the persons implicated, but gratuitously compromising the safety of his informant, which he had promised not to do. For some days, therefore, he discontinued his customary daily visits; it was not possible, however, in common courtesy, to avoid occasionally calling.

Upon one of these occasions, about a fortnight after his despatch to Colonel Vansommer, (to which he had hitherto received no reply), as he approached the house, he saw in the coffee grounds, a figure, (which might have been a study for the Royal Academy,) of some one apparently observing him with very earnest scrutiny, and who, when he came close to him, made him a very dignified salam.

'Have you ever seen me before, my friend?' said Edward Bentinck; for, seeing him upon an English plantation, he concluded that he spoke English.

'Yes, Massa,' said Outalissi; for my readers will have recognized the royal savage; 'I saw you with the lady of this house on the morning of my being landed from those floating shambles when I attempted to escape into the wood, and you spoke angrily, Massa, to the blood-hounds that were baying me. I saw, from the fright the lady was in, that you could not help me more effectually.'

'I am glad to find,' said Edward, 'that the wound you received was so trifling as to admit of your working in the field so soon.'

'Oh,' said Outalissi, 'the wound was just what they intended it should be, full of cruelty and short of mercy. I expected they would pursue me when I plunged into returning to the land of my fathers by the way of a bullet through my head.'

'But have you no such thing as slavery in your own country?' said Edward.

'O yes,' said Outalissi, 'plenty of slavery there too; but that is principally from defeat in war, Massa, and a thousand contingencies may restore us to liberty. Besides, from contemplating its possibility from our childhood, our fortitude, when such a misfortune does befall us, is less taken by surprise, and being intimately familiar with all the directions of its pressure upon our bodies as well as minds, we know much better how to humour and adapt ourselves to our condition.'

'In Africa,' continued Outalissi, 'there is often scarcely any difference between the master and the slave: they eat, drink, hunt, and work together, and the slave becomes sometimes the son or brother of his master by marrying his daughter or sister; but here the master's a tyrant and the slave a dog, without any community of hopes, fears, thoughts, wishes, constitution, or even colour between them, and the only hope that remains to us is that of death;* but before that comes to me, oh, for one short grapple upon equal ground, and secure from interruption, with that

* I have taken the liberty sometimes of improving Outalissi's language a little, (although he spoke very tolerable English,) in order to convey what appears to me the force of his impressions with more clearness. -
Note by the Author.

Christian traitor, that ungrateful monster, that bloody tiger, that sea-kite in yonder ship, that at one fell swoop, by coward stealth and treachery, consigned me and all my tribe to this hideous and interminable slavery and exile. Savages, they call us; but you shall hear, Massa.

‘I found him dying on the shore, and I made two of my people bring him in a hammock a long day’s journey to our village. Our virgins fed him with their kindly bowls of fever balm and sweet saganate; and when they had restored him to health and strength, supplied him with such articles of cloathing as our simple habits give us any skill in making, begged him to think kindly of us, and to return our humble services to the first poor African whom he met with in similar distress; it is not many moons, since he had left us.’

Oualissi then went on to relate pretty nearly the same story as that which Edward had before learned from Robert Jackson.

‘I trust,’ said Edward, ‘you will find your situation here more supportable than you expect, Oualissi. I think I can answer at least for one member of the family doing all she can to make it so.’

‘True, massa,’ said Oualissi, ‘if the lady of the house were not a Christian, I should think her an angel, and with the other slaves should almost worship her; but we are brought up in Africa with the same horror and loathing of a Christian or white man as we are of serpents and scorpions; with us the name of Christian implies all that’s cruel, treacherous, venomous, and deadly, massa! and it’s difficult not to shrink from it, even when it appears under a form so passing fair and lovely as yon white angel’s. But, O massa, here are other forms approaching, which cannot betray, for they cannot deceive me.’

At this moment Mr. Cotton appeared with his director, Mr. Hogshead; Oualissi did not utter another word, but by his change of eye, a slight quiver in his upper lip, and the tumultuous movement of his chest as he resumed his labour, he spoke more eloquently to Edward Bentinck than if he had drawn the contrast between Matilda and her father and his prime minister in the strongest language.

After exchanging the usual salutations with Edward Bentinck, Mr. Cotton immediately proceeded with him to the house, leaving his director to superintend the cultivation of his coffee till his return.

Matilda had been copying, from an engraving of a celebrated picture in the collection of the late Duke of Orleans, the figure of an Egyptian Sorceress with her familiar spirit on her finger, and mechanically imitating the wild drapery of the figure before her, she had thrown her shawl lightly over her head like a hood, from beneath which the curls of her beautiful hair hung rather loosely over her temples as she bent forward to her drawing; her eyes appeared animated with the same pensive archness, and her sweet lips to be unconsciously reflecting the same half unmasked smile as those in the gipsy portrait. On this she was engaged so intently that she did not for a minute perceive the entrance of her father and his companion, the latter of whom was so completely spell-bound, that he involuntarily put his hand on Mr. Cotton’s arm to prolong the indulgence of his admiration. But Mr. Cotton, who could not be insensible of his daughter’s personal attractions, was, perhaps, only induced, by such an intimation that he was by no means singular in his perception of them, the more hastily to interrupt his companion’s contemplation of them by announcing rather loudly, ‘Mr. Bentinck, my love!’

‘Pon my word, papa,’ said Matilda, starting and snatching her mantle from her head, ‘Mr. Bentinck has been such a stranger for some days that I think it requires some apology in you to introduce him so abruptly.’

‘It’s too late to make a stranger of Mr. Bentinck now,’ said Mr. Cotton, significantly; ‘but come, put away your rattletaps, whilst they bring us some refreshment, as I cannot stay loitering here long with so many new hands to look after, and your friend, Mr. Schwartz, coming here every day to teach them that they are as good as their master.’

‘Now, papa,’ said Matilda, ‘you have begun, you know, and I declare I will defend Mr. Schwartz; - if he teaches the negroes that they may be equal in the next world; he teaches them also that their only claim to be so, will depend upon their good conduct and honest endeavours to act

right in this, in whatever state of life it may have pleased Providence to place them, with which it is not the design of Christianity to interfere, so long as that state admits of their full and free observance of the worship and duties of Christianity.'

'He teaches them a doctrine,' said Mr. Cotton, 'upon the truth of which depends their master's condemnation; can they be taught that God's estimation of character depends upon a conformity to restraints and principles, of which they see all their masters live in open derision and defiance, without losing all respect for their masters?'

'Must their masters always live so?' said Matilda.

'Well, my dear, a bargain is a bargain,' said Mr. Cotton, 'I promised that I would not interfere with you, and I will not. The Christianity you put into them, I must flog out of them, that's all, or I perceive we shall all get our throats cut together.'

'O papa, that's cruel,' said Matilda, 'and makes me cruel, I cannot continue to instruct them upon such terms,' and she left the room, but returned in five minutes, having apparently been shedding tears.

'My dear Matilda,' said her father, embracing her as he met her, having risen to return to his grounds, 'I am sorry that I spoke so harshly; I will not break my word with you or suffer the religion of the negroes to influence my conduct towards them one way or the other; perhaps one day something may yet be conceded to the character of your unworthy father, for his affection to you and his protection of your goodness. We will never renew this controversy, but you know what has occurred to discompose me a little at present. Mr. Bentinck, I will not drag you out again in the sun, but I hope I shall find you on my return, and that you will stay and dine with us.'

'If you had not called this morning, Mr. Bentinck,' said Matilda, as soon as her father had left the room, 'I believe I should have sent to request you to walk over. The Dutch frigate that lays in the harbour has been down here, and carried Captain Légere and his vessel the Harpy to Paramaribo, and my father is in daily expectation of being apprehended as a party concerned in the cargo (which is notoriously illegal) and confined in the close miserable dungeon of a criminal gaol in the fort there. Now, we know that the Dutch authorities here would have taken no notice of any information if they had received it, of their own accord, nor indeed could they, without the greatest injustice, as when they overlook nine importations, if they punish for the tenth, the parties prosecuted become victims of oppression, because of partiality, instead of being examples of justice. We are afraid, therefore, that some one has conveyed information to the British commissioners, and in this case, if the evidence is conclusive, we have no hope of escaping, as the authorities would be exposed, through the report of the commissioners to the British government, to the censure of their own; and this French Captain Légere has often declared that if they inflicted the penalties of the abolition laws upon him, that he would not suffer alone, but that all who had made a cat's-paw of him should suffer with him. I endeavour, in my father's presence, to controul my uneasiness and pursue my usual occupations, as I believe he is more anxious on my account than his own; but that naturally only increases my agitation, and indeed I am very unhappy, for if my father's punishment should not extend to his expulsion from the colony, it probably will to his long temporary removal from hence, where of course I cannot stay without him. It must be a sapless heart that takes no root in a domicile of even a few years, and this has been mine all my life. My father,' continued Matilda, her voice almost faltering, and with look of some reproach at Edward Bentinck, 'thought that the commissioners' intelligence must have been derived from you, as you were present when the unhappy Africans were put on shore; but I had too good an opinion of Mr. Bentinck to think it possible, that without at least some intimation of what he might think his duty, he would compromise the safety of a family, of which he has now for several weeks been almost an inmate; but, perhaps, he has received some directions from his superiors, which it was the object of his call this morning to communicate or execute.'

'There is nothing in life,' replied Edward, 'that I would not sooner forfeit than the good opinion of Miss Cotton, because I know her good opinion could only be permanently won by my never suffering any selfish wishes or feelings to make me swerve from the honest and disinterested

convictions of my own conscience. There are cases in which the discernment of duty is so difficult, and the arguments for and against any particular line of conduct so nearly equipoised, that the only safe and honourable decision for a Christian is to turn the scale against himself, and let his own inclinations kick the beam. But I assure you, Miss Cotton, that I have received no directions or communication whatever from my superiors upon the subject, nor have I any object whatever in my visit here this morning, but to inquire after your health, and enjoy the pleasure of your society.'

'Then,' said Matilda, overlooking the equivocal character of the whole answer, in the decisive, although limited negative of the latter part of it, and betraying quite undesignedly, that the implication of Mr. Bentinck's character was by no means an inconsiderable ingredient in her distress, 'half my anxiety is at an end. I was sure you were incapable of such duplicity. But good gracious, Mr. Bentinck, you have been devouring one of my gloves; I must beg you to restore it to me, although you have almost destroyed it. I assure you, you will find one of the biscuits on the table a much better thing.'

'This is better than either,' said Edward, seizing (with both his own) the hand extended by Matilda for the glove, which he had nearly twisted and bit to pieces in his embarrassment under his examination, and touching it with his lips.

'No, Mr. Bentinck!' said Matilda, withdrawing her hand firmly, but not resentfully, from his grasp, 'I must not permit this misunderstanding for a single moment; I will not deny the esteem I entertain for you, lest I should be guilty of the very duplicity from which I have this moment but too unreservedly, perhaps, expressed my joy in your exculpation; but I entreat you for your own sake, not to think of any thing further, it is impossible.'

'The esteem of Miss Cotton,' said Edward, 'is much too great a treasure to allow me to run the slightest risk of losing it by any encroachment on her generosity; but our thoughts will not always be restrained, even by the consciousness of their presumption.'

'I must correct you again,' said Matilda, 'presumption is a word inapplicable to the real and sober nature of the case, there would be no presumption, Mr. Bentinck, in your entertaining such thoughts; but the irremovable distance of our situation and circumstances makes them absolute insanity in either of us.'

'We are both young,' said Edward, 'can that distance never be diminished?'

'Never!' said Matilda. 'You belong to a profession which deprives you of all controul over your own movements and actions; you have no security even of remaining in the colony for a single day, and during the life of my father, every tie off affection and duty bind me here.'

Edward only replied by a deep sigh.

'You are too honourable, I know,' said Matilda, 'to deceive me, and I perceive that you cannot deceive yourself; let this, therefore, be the last time you compel me to renew the subject. I am not old, but you are, perhaps, still younger as a man, than I am as a woman. You have a profession, which has already conferred on you such distinction and honour as many a lion-heart has wooed all his life through unnoticed dangers, hardships, and sufferings, without obtaining, and you have powerful friends at home to find you opportunities of winning the fullest plume of glory; go, therefore, where glory waits you, and some twenty years hence, when your name, like that of Nelson or Wellington, is alike conspicuous in the East, the West, the North, and the South, and blazes with unrivalled lustre round the world, if Surinam and your humble acquaintance there, should ever recur to your recollection, remember, that amongst them there was one who had the courage to declare to you, that she could only value the glory, even of a Nelson or Wellington, in exact proportion to the amount of self-subduction, generosity, and forbearance that had been practised in the progress of its acquisition.'

'Let me,' said Edward, 'keep this memorial of so noble an injunction,' drawing at the same time a little Indian plait of grass from Matilda's work box and tying it round his neck, 'I will not exchange it for the riband of the Garter; - if I cannot wear then both, and the principles which I shall ever associate with this are incompatible with the attainment of the other.'

‘I cannot forbid such a request as that,’ said Matilda, ‘but do not misconstrue my acquiescence’ -

‘A soldier to Mr. Bentinck!’ said a servant entering at this moment -

‘I will come out to him immediately,’ said Edward.

Matilda changed colour, thinking it might be an order for her father’s apprehension; ‘Pray return, Mr. Bentinck,’ said she, ‘I am alarmed now at the sight of every stranger.’

In a few minutes, after conversing with the messenger, Edward returned into the room with an air of great vexation, to say that he had not brought a word of intelligence concerning Captain Légere or her father; but that a fresh detachment had come down to relieve him at the outpost, and he was ordered to return with his men immediately to Paramaribo, in the same boats that had brought down the relief-guard, for which the tide would not allow him above an hour or two before he embarked; that he must, therefore, abruptly take his leave, and beg her to make his excuses to Mr. Cotton; ‘and as this may possibly be the last interview (and is at all events the last for an indefinite time) which the restless life I have embraced will allow me to hope for; O pardon,’ said Edward, again raising her hand to his lips, ‘my thus once more expressing the great value I shall ever attach to the friendship of Miss Cotton.’

Matilda did not think it necessary to rebuke him again at that moment, and the agitation she betrayed, although relieved from all immediate apprehensions for her father, was not perhaps to Edward the least agreeable reply that she could make him. She merely said, however, a little tremulously, ‘Good bye, Mr. Bentinck, I sincerely wish you well!’

Chapter IX. A Narrow Escape.

'With caution taste the sweet Circean cup,
He that sips often, at last drinks it up.
Habits are soon assumed; but when we strive
To strip them off, 'tis being flayed alive.
Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
He that abstains, and he alone does right.'

PROGRESS OF ERROR.

WHEN Edward reached his barracks he expressed his surprise at the abruptness of his recall, to the officer superseding him, and asked if any reason had been assigned for so much anticipating the usual period of his relief?

'None, whatever to me,' said the officer, 'I received my directions from Colonel Vansomner, and he, I believe, his from the Governor; but I know nothing whatever of the reason; there has been some noise about a slave ship, that the *Kemphaan* frigate has brought up to town; but I did not of course suppose you would be indiscreet enough to defeat the connivance of that trade by the authorities here, by volunteering any interference with it, or that my directions to relieve you at this outpost could be in consequence; but if you mean to obey the order of returning with your men in the boats that brought us down here, you have not a moment to spare in collecting your things, for it has been flood-water this half hour, and Sergeant Vanderdonder is, I believe, only waiting your order to embark the men, as I told him to get them ready. You must sleep for a night at a plantation about half way, called *Bachelor's Adventure*, which you will not reach much before midnight, and the next tide, to-morrow morning, at six o'clock, will carry you easily to *Paramaribo* by noon, when you will of course present yourself to the Colonel.'

In less than half an hour Edward was on his way to the colonial capital. Whether he should consider his recall as a reproof from his superiors for his officiousness? What would be the consequences to Mr. Cotton of the information he had been the medium of transmitting to them? In what light the share he would be discovered to have had in exposing him to them, would appear to his daughter, whom the more he saw the more he admired, and the more undeniably he felt that she had an unrivalled precedence and interest, never to be supplanted in his heart? Whether she would ever allow him an opportunity of vindication; or on the contrary, whether it were not almost certain that her father, at least, if not herself, would interdict for ever all further intercourse between them? These were no very cheerful subjects of reflection for him during his long row, and under the depression of which the consciousness of right intention was hardly able to support him. Will nothing but selfish expediency ever prosper, thought he in this cursed world? If I had not been a Christian or could but have got over the uncompromising singleness of motive that Christianity requires of its professors, and its deep disdain of every shade of hypocrisy and selfish subterfuge, I might have still been living within the delicious influence of the presence and society and even acknowledged friendship of that sweet girl, the opportunity of more successfully cultivating which I have now resigned to another. But the example and conversation of Mr. Schwartz occurred to him, and he could not help saying to himself how vulgar is the courage which enables me or any man to risk his life in energetic exertion, compared to that stayed confidence in God and the sufficient and abundant reward of his approbation, which enables a man to endure a long, course of privation and passive suffering with unrepining composure and even graceful dignity. I know my mother too would think that I had done right, and tell me that a Christian without sufficient confidence in the parental providence of God to sacrifice his private wishes when they seemed to interfere with his duty, did not really deserve the name.

A little incident that occurred at this moment in the boat came seasonably in aid of Edward's Christian philosophy to divert his melancholy. Serjeant Vanderdonder said, that since he got into the boat he missed a parcel of tea and sugar which he had put in before him, and he was sure one of the negroes with whom he left it must have taken it out before they left the station,

or hid it somewhere in the boat; Edward, who recollected the account given by Stedman* of the superstition of the negroes, determined to employ the same stratagem as that to which he had recourse on a similar occasion. The boats here are all built with a sort of quarter-deck cabin, in the stern of which the folding-doors, which open towards the stern of the boat when they are shut, appear completely to enclose those within the cabin from the view of the rowers. Accordingly, Edward told the negroes, six in number, that a parrot's feather was to grow within six minutes upon the tip of the nose of him who was guilty, at the same time pronouncing a few incoherent words, and making two or three circles with his sabre, he shut himself up within the cabin; here peeping through the key-hole, and observing the rowers with great attention without their perceiving him, he soon saw one of them, at every stroke of the oar, put up his hand and feel the tip of his nose; upon which he instantly ran up to him, and cried, 'I see the parrot's feather; thou art the thief, thou rascal.' To which the poor superstitious fellow instantly answered, 'Yes, me, Massa!' then kneeling to the sorcerer, as he thought him, for mercy, the serjeant goodnaturedly said, that in return for his confession he would forgive him.

'What an evidence is such superstition,' thought Edward, 'impressed upon the wildest and most untutored of the human species, of the universality of the belief in the invisible world, and the irresistible power and authority of its agents.' His abstract reflections and soliloquies, however, were interrupted for a short time by his approaching the plantation, where he was directed to remain for the night, and where he arrived with his party between eleven and twelve o'clock. The owner of the plantation was not at home, but the officer that had taken Edward's station at the outpost had prepared the servants to expect the return party, who occasioned therefore very little derangement. The men were accommodated in the coffee lodges, and Edward found a good supper prepared for him in the dwelling house, and a hammock in a room adjoining.

The day had not been one of much bodily exertion, but the pressure upon his heart and spirits, and the anxiety of mind that the occurrences of it had occasioned to him, had made it a fatiguing one, he therefore soon dispatched his supper, and having disencumbered himself of his suffocating woollen uniform,* loosely enveloped himself in a light linen roquelaure, and threw himself into his hammock. He however had not been there many minutes, when (before he was overtaken by sleep) a naked bust of great symmetry and beauty* of a very young negress, (who, from the legal prohibition in Surinam of slaves wearing shoes, had entered the room without his perceiving it,) appeared close to his pillow and within the embrace of his arm. 'I come to tell massa good night,' said she. After examining for a few seconds the object from whence proceeded this address, his hand in moving, some how or another caught in the beautifully plaited chain of grass which he had purloined from Matilda, and which still remained upon his neck, and he said firmly, 'Good night to you, go!' and the vision disappeared. How often in the course of his equatorial campaign this little talisman acted with equally saving potency, the notes from which this little narrative is collected do not say. Certain it is that surrounded, as he was, by every temptation as well as facility of indulgence, nothing but such a spell upon his heart, or religious impressions of more than human strength could have preserved him in that point of conduct, from irretrievable moral ruin.

The next morning Edward proceeded with the tide according to his directions to headquarters at Paramaribo, which he reached about noon, nothing particular having occurred in his progress, and on his arrival in obedience to his orders, he waited immediately on Colonel Vansomner his commanding officer.

* See Stedman's Surinam, vol. ii.

* See note C.

* Whoever supposes a sable Venus to be without attraction supposes so from having never had an opportunity of experiencing it. They have often not only the grace of the most perfect symmetry, but the most acute vivacity and intelligence, as well as benevolence of feature. - *Note by the Author.*

‘Well, sir!’ said Colonel Vansomner, ‘you’ve given us a great deal of trouble here, and got me goose beside from the governor for sending such a colonial novice to that station, but I did not like to banish another to that torrid Siberia, as we call it here, out of his routine; how could you be so foolish as to trouble yourself about the slave trade, Mr. Bentinck? Of course you know it could only be continued here by the connivance of the authorities, and no man likes to have his eyes opened against his will; and by informing the British commissioners too, you compel the colonial government to inconvenience the parties accused, by going through the forms of prosecution, although the court of policy, whose members are all planters or administrators of plantations, will no doubt somehow or another shuffle them out of the scrape, after saving appearances by letting them lie in prison a few months, till the first bruit of the business is blown over a little: but this gives a great deal of trouble, and exposes the colony besides to the complaint of the British government.’

‘I really thought,’ said Edward, ‘that it was the sincere wish of his Netherland majesty to suppress this frightful traffic, from the laws that he has passed for that apparent purpose, and the public expression of his ministers.’

‘Pshaw!’ said Colonel Vansomner, ‘all that, you know, is merely to humbug the British government; his Netherland majesty’s ministers are obliged ostensibly to comply with whatever directions my Lord Londonderry pleases to send them, but we know better here than to suppose it can ever really be the wish of the Dutch government to ruin their own colonies.’

‘I do not believe,’ said Edward, ‘that the solid prosperity of any community can ever be consulted by the tolerance of such an all crime-comprising practice; but surely if the West Indian interests are in the state of depression which is contended, the rigid prevention of fresh supplies of labourers is the only chance that remains of their salvation, the best way of helping any declining market is to shut out all further competition, and the best way of helping the existing West Indian proprietors, I should think, would be rather to contract the field of West Indian cultivation, than invite fresh speculators to employ new capital in its extension, by continuing the facilities of obtaining fresh supplies of African muscle.’

‘Well!’ said Colonel Vansomner, ‘I can’t enter into that; you may now, sir, go and hear what Monsieur Derague the governor has to say to you upon the subject, as he desired that I would send you to him.’

‘So, Mr. Bentinck,’ said the governor,* on Edward’s presenting himself, ‘you are in correspondence with the British commissioners here I find, to help us in the discharge of our duty.’

‘I could not be aware,’ said Edward, ‘that my furnishing those gentlemen with information of a case, which I understood it to be their especial duty to attend to, would be disagreeable to your excellency.’

‘Their duty,’ said his excellency, ‘only extends to the adjudication in conjunction with his Netherland majesty’s commissioners, of slave vessels found trading under Dutch or British colours, and brought before them by a Dutch or British cruiser, but like other gentlemen, it is not very easy always to confine them to their duty; I do not however blame them so much, their business is of course to affect a confidence in the earnestness of the wishes of our government to extinguish this traffic, corresponding with that of their own, or rather of the English fanatics whom that popular government is reluctantly compelled to humour, and upon this pretence they are unceasingly tormenting me with complaints of the continuance of slave importations, on which occasions my only refuge is to reply, ‘procure me conclusive evidence, gentlemen, and I will take care to punish the offenders you complain of,’ which I know without the kind assistance of such volunteer philanthropists as Mr. Bentinck, it is scarcely possible they should obtain. One of them the other day wished to advertise a reward for information, but I told him that did not belong to his functions, and refused him permission to do so; he then wished me to advertise one myself, as the governors of the English colonies are in the habit of doing, which also I assured him our Dutch

* See note D.

laws would not allow. I did not anticipate that the Dutch army would have so soon supplied them with what the Dutch laws denied.'

'I am sorry that I have incurred your excellency's displeasure by the step I have taken,' said Edward, 'but I did not conceive that my duties either as a man, a christian, or an officer of his Netherland majesty, could be at variance with those of gentlemen appointed with his majesty's concurrence, to put down a practice of which every state in christendom has expressed its abhorrence and reprobation.'

'Their duties don't agree with our interests, Mr. Bentinck!' said the governor, 'and as for Christendom, the admission there of these poor Africans is really only a work of christian humanity, for they would all be butchered by their own chiefs if they could no longer sell them.'

'The first reflux of prisoners,' said Edward, 'with which the slave dealers are now supplied, upon the hands of their masters might, I'm afraid, be exposed to destruction; but I humbly submit, but I humbly submit, if by the introduction of a commercial intercourse their masters found the labour of their prisoners subserve the same purpose as the sale of their persons, viz. that of procuring them European articles by legitimate commerce, they would be too valuable to be in danger of being wantonly slaughtered.'

'Well!' said the governor, 'by the time you have been here as long as I have, you will see this subject in a different light, in the mean time, whilst you remain one of my subjects, I have only to request that you will confine your philanthropy to the duties of your own service, and not interfere with mine.'

Without replying to the last observation of his excellency's, Edward only made his bow and retired, but the worst of this day's gauntlet he had to run yet, in encountering the sarcasms and derisions of his mess.

'You got goose from the governor this morning, Bentinck, I suppose?' said Colonel Vansomner as soon as they were set down to dinner.

'Something like it indeed, Colonel,' said Edward.

'It was my fault too I confess,' added the Colonel, 'in some measure, for not giving you a hint not to see any slave vessels.'

'How could you be so indiscreet, Mr. Bentinck,' said Captain Gencherit, 'as to stir up a hornet's nest about your ears, by meddling with the slave trade in such a place as this? as a good Dutchman and friend to the colony, you should rather help the inhabitants to save appearances to the British government (which is all the ministers at home care about) than betray them to it.'

'I don't know about a good Dutchman,' said Edward, 'but as a good christian, I know I would not by any species of negative connivance, make myself a party in the unutterable guilt of such a commerce for the value of my commission.'

'Christianity!' exclaimed Lieutenant Van Whistletop, 'that's all d--d Humbug and doctrine of ninety-five, nobody here believes in Christianity, my dear fellow!'

'For that very reason,' said Edward, 'this is the last place where a man of honour would confess any doubts even if he had any. Mankind have agreed to look upon even religious conversion, the substitution, I mean, of one view of christianity for another with great jealousy, because almost all religious questions, from their very nature, are insusceptible of demonstrative proof, and the motive therefore is always suspicious, unless an obvious sacrifice of self-interest accompanies the change; but apostacy has ever been regarded with unqualified abhorrence, because the difficulties of honest *dis*-conviction are at least equal to those of honest conviction, and if in the absence of certainty a man abjure the faith of his education, he does it at the desperate risk of committing treason to his maker, his country, and his own soul, a risk surely which no one in his senses would run except for the purpose of excusing a vicious life, or advancing some temporal purposes, and every man's own breast tells him, that the deliberate abjuration of his religious principles from either of these motives, justly deserves the infamy which mankind have uniformly agreed to attach to it.'

'G--d d--e, Bentinck!' said the Lieutenant, 'why 'twould take me a month at least to understand all that theology, you must have been brought up for an English bishop to be sure! where the devil did you learn it all? at Eton, or amongst those d--d English methodists, that are always preaching liberty and practising *la loi du plus fort*, taking from us the best half of Guiana, and stuffing their abolition of the slave trade down our throats, so as to destroy the value of the remainder?'

'Without the English,' said Edward, 'I don't see very well how we should have had either ships, colonies, or commerce; beside I've always understood an ample equivalent was given for Demarara and Berbice, in the contribution of England towards the expense of fortifying the frontiers of the Netherlands, and as to the abolition of the slave trade, the only fault that I have to find with them on that head, is that they did not go far enough, they thought that the atheistical principles of the French revolution, with which every country in Europe except their own had been so long over-run, had left us more right feeling than they have; they should have made the strict bona fide relinquishment of that inhuman horrid commerce, the sine qua non of restoring to us any colonies at all.'

'Well d--n politics and religion too,' said Ensign Essuan, who presided by rotation at the bottom of the table, 'I hate them both, give us a toast, Bentinck.'

'I give you,' said Edward, 'Admiral Van Capellan, and his gallant companions in the attack of Algiers, or if you like it better in fewer words, the progress of rational liberty.'

'I don't care a tinker's curse for either one or the other,' said the Ensign, 'if you had given us the Progress of Pleasure now, I'd have drank it in as many bumpers as you please; but come, tell us something of your life out there in torrid Siberia. I understand there's a devilish pretty girl, the daughter of a Mr. Cotton a planter out there?'

'I know no lady of that name, exactly corresponding with such a description,' said Edward.

'Well! exactly!' replied the Ensign, 'never mind exactly, but you know a Mr. Cotton a planter and his daughter Matilda, who live there, they tell me the latter is quite a nonpareil of beauty and accomplishments, a perfect model of elegance in her manners, of decisive christian principles, and what is of much more importance, one hundred thousand pounds fortune in expectancy besides, in short, a regular, virtuous, dignified, well bred European lady of the first attractions.'

Poor Bentinck upon this sally looked a little (as they say) as if he could not help himself.

'Oh! Oh!' continued the merciless Ensign, 'look at him Colonel! egad! you must have led a fine mahometan life out there, with Miss Cotton to go and talk humbug and sentiment to of a morning, and a fine seraglio of sable houris, I'll answer for it, at your quarters there of an evening, for the more substantial indulgence of the divine passion; I for my part like the black houris the best of the two.'

The very association of so gross an idea with an idol that his heart had enshrined in the purest and chastest radiance of truth, constancy, and honour, shocked Edward in the same sort of way as sacrilege and profanation, or some monstrous and impious blasphemy would have done, and gave him such excessive pain that he half filled a tumbler with water, to dash into Mr. Essuan's face; but he had been brought up under strong impressions of the antichristian nature of private duelling, and its total discrepancy with national war, (the former proceeding generally from motives of personal resentment, and involving all the feelings of which Christianity expressly enjoins the subduction, the latter none,) and he resolved that, at least after he had once had an opportunity of proving that his courage was quite equal to the public duties of his profession, he would never fight a duel, he therefore by an effort of self-command drank off the water that was intended for his gay colloquator, and merely said quietly, 'Sir, any man who is capable of the one indulgence, would be unworthy of the other.'

'Why you don't mean to say,' observed the Ensign, 'that there's any harm in such indulgence?'

‘I do mean to say,’ said Edward, ‘that there is very great harm in every practice which desecrates the divine passion of love, upon the sanctimonies of which depend all the benignant charities of life. The religious sanction of that passion in fact by the institution of marriage, is the great hinge upon which the moral refinement of all communities must turn, and in proportion to its observance or neglect, all nations must either advance in civilization or retrograde towards barbarism; what says Dr. Esquirol on the effect of the banishment of religious influence in France?’*

‘Marry or be d–d then seems your maxim,’ said the Ensign.

‘Marry, or abstain, is the direction of religion,’ said Edward.

‘To marry and be ruined is the practice of a fool,’ said the Ensign.

‘To marry and renounce the vanities of ostentation and display is the practice of a wise man,’ said Edward. ‘If you are not a man of fortune, you must choose between the enjoyment of domestic happiness, ‘that only bliss of paradise which has survived the fall,’ and the indulgence of the pride of aristocratic station.’

‘D–n pride,’ said the Ensign, ‘indulgence of pleasure, married or unmarried, is all I contend for; and if you or any other man says there’s any harm in that, or pretend in that respect to more purity than your neighbours, by G–d, I say, you’re a d–d hypocrite.’

‘Don’t bluster, Essuan,’ said Colonel Vansomner, ‘or you’ll get the worst of it, I see.’

‘I make no pretensions,’ replied Edward, ‘and measure out no man’s guilt, which is perhaps only a question of degree and circumstance between any of us. I may not be pure, but that will not deter me from insisting upon its being the duty of us all to make the best fight we can against impurity; but, gentlemen,’ continued he, rising, and with great firmness, ‘in reference to Mr. Essuan’s application to me of so revolting a term as hypocrisy, I shall perhaps still more surprise him, by declaring it to be against my conscience to fight a duel. After this, no man of real courage will insult me, I am sure; should any other, I can only say,

“The man that will traduce because he can
with safety to himself is not a man.”“

This answer, delivered with the most composed determination, effectually puzzled the Ensign, and put an end to the discussion, and the conversation took another channel till the officers dispersed.

I trust upon the whole the reader will think my white hero acquitted himself well here. Such trials may appear trifling in parallel pages with those of Fox’s Book of Martyrs, but they are by no means so in reality to the modern disciple who values, as he ought to do, his Christian consistency.*

* See note E.

* Ensign Essuan was horsewhipped a few days afterwards by one of the Governor’s sons for taking the lead of him and his partner in going down a dance. Young Mr. Derague offered him satisfaction, but he said it was contrary to his principles as a christian to fight a duel. –
Note by the Author.

Chapter X. The Hospital.

'Ye who the killing agony have proved,
To see the friend whom from a child you loved,
With falt'ring lips call blessings on your head,
And wring your hand, and sink among the dead,
'Tis yours the hypocrite's pretence to scan,
Who, heaven denying, boasts him friend to man.'

EDWARD BENTINCK was not kept above two or three days in suspense as to the effect of the information which he had communicated to the colonial government upon his late neighbour, although they were two or three days of the greatest anxiety and uneasiness he had ever experienced in his life; nor was the state of his mind much improved when he heard that Mr. Cotton had been apprehended and brought to town as the consignee of the cargo of Africans brought to him by Monsieur Légere, and lodged in the criminal gaol, which was situated within the garrison, and in fact formed a part of the fortress which defended the town of Paramaribo.

Mr. Cotton, as was customary with opulent planters, in addition to his plantation house, had also an establishment at Paramaribo, where he sometimes resided for several months of the calender winter. In this house his daughter, who, upon her father's apprehension, had attended him to town for the sake of being near him and paying him daily visits, was now residing; and the very next morning after Edward heard of her arrival he called at the house, and (his heart almost audibly out-knocking his hand) inquired if she was at home?

'Yes, sir, she's at home,' said one of her little black pages; 'but'— with a look of reproach that said more emphatically than any words could have done— 'you are the last person that can ever again be welcome here.'

'Is she ill then?' said Edward.

'No, massa, not ill, but sick in heart a little,' replied Lucy.

'Take her this card will you, Lucy,' said Edward, 'and say that the gentleman whose name is upon it, requests the honour of an interview.'

'Missy says that you must excuse her,' said the messenger returning in a few minutes, 'she cannot see you, sir.'

Edward Bentinck now perceived as he walked ponderingly home, that he was considered as the original and sole instigator of the arrest of the slave captain and his accessories, and when he recollected how many probable enemies the opinions and principles which he had avowed and maintained had already occasioned him, who would be but too happy to turpify the character of the step he had taken, by the use of every epithet and expression which conveyed a shade of moral insinuation - such English unpatriotic opinions! such fanatical hypocrisy! such gratuitous officiousness! such ungrateful duplicity! they would exclaim - he could not but feel that his conscientious obedience to the duties of humanity, had exposed to irretrievable ruin the fondest wishes of his heart, and all those distant imaginary, yet dear deluding structures of hope, which an uncorrupted heart of twenty-five *will* build of paradisiacal materials, came tumbling about his ears. In this situation he resolved however, to persist in seeking some opportunity of pleading his case before Matilda, by disclosing as much of the real fact as he could without endangering his informant, and the course of reflection and conscientious feeling of paramount duty which led him to become the medium of such informant's communication to the colonial government, as he thought himself sure, that if she would but allow him to explain his motives in many of which he knew she would concur, they must at least extenuate his conduct in her opinion. Accordingly, in the course of a few days, he learned the hour in which it was customary for Matilda to visit her father in the prison within the fort; and upon one of these occasions on her leaving the prison, he presented himself to her and respectfully requested the honour of attending her home.

‘This is persecution, sir!’ said Matilda, ‘do not avail yourself of my father’s present melancholy situation, occasioned as we are informed by yourself, to interrupt me in the discharge of my daily duties and affection towards him.’

‘If I were not certain,’ said Edward, ‘that Miss Cotton was under a misapprehension, I would not have exposed myself to so severe a charge from her, I only entreat permission to explain some of the appearances against me.’

‘I cannot hear you sir,’ said Matilda, ‘I cannot with propriety hear a vindication of his conduct from any gentleman, who is in no way accountable to me for it.’

‘But is it consistent with Christian justice even, much less Christian charity,’ said Edward, ‘to condemn any one unheard? and must I innocently lose a good opinion I so much value without an opportunity being afforded me of exculpation?’

‘I entreat you to leave me, sir,’ said Matilda, ‘I dare not continue the conversation, I have promised my father I would not permit you to renew your visits without his consent, and it would be inhuman at present even to mention to him a subject of so much irritation.’

‘Only then,’ said Edward, ‘let me implore Miss Cotton to suspend her own judgment for the present, and I will forbear to solicit the indulgence of exchanging another word with her.’

‘My judgment,’ said Matilda, rather softened, would rejoice to acquit any one of whom I had ever thought so well as I confess I have done of Mr. Bentinck, I could almost have pledged my own faith for the sincerity and security of his, but do not mistake me, sir, or overrate the value of my judgment, it can *never* be of any consequence to you, I must again beg you to leave me, Mr. Bentinck! I cannot ask you in.’

‘After knowing your promise to Mr. Cotton,’ said Edward, ‘I would not, without your permission, put my foot over the threshold to save my life, I will not even ask you any more to acquit me, but do not repel my dependance on your charity, for a few weeks at least not to condemn -.’

‘Good morning to you, sir,’ said Matilda, as she entered her house, ‘I would not have my father know that I have allowed myself even the conversation which has just passed with you.’

Upon the whole Edward was not greatly relieved by this conversation from his depression, for although where any real wish exists in the breast of the judge for the innocence of the accused, exculpation is comparatively easy, yet this could be the case with only one of his judges, and supposing he could ever succeed in convincing Miss Cotton of the propriety of his conduct, or at least of the honesty of his motives, what chance had he of overcoming the resentment of her father, who was undeniably the sufferer from it? He did not return home therefore after leaving Miss Cotton, but continued in a state of rather melancholy abstraction, to wander about the savannahs adjoining the town, and from thence strayed almost unconsciously through an umbrageous single path for four or five miles into the bush or wood, till he came to a small cleared area of cultivation, belonging to an old Indian known by the name of Pannana, who lived there with his wife and family in a little thatched cabin of his own construction, under the shade of his own plantains, interspersed with small fields of rice of his own cultivation, and without the circle of his little farm, peninsulated from the rest of the world by interminable and impervious forests. The deep seclusion and seeming repose of the spot as Edward approached it affected him, and he could not help ejaculating, ‘O God! for such an impenetrable home, with an adapted constitution, and one adored and devoted companion, looking with me through the moral vista of revelation, (or even the hopes of natural religion undisturbed by any option of light or consequent misgiving for having rejected it,) to the renovation and perfection of our being, and the eternal production of all the delightful sanctimonies of our earthly connexion in a still better world! would not every advantage past, present, and prospective, which I derive from what is called civilization and European refinement, be well exchanged?’

The old man was sitting under the colonnade, which is always formed in the Indian and negro cabins by the projection of the thatch, with a little granddaughter of three or four years old upon his knee. ‘Are you a Christian, my friend?’ said Edward.

‘No! massa! me no Christian,’ replied Pannana.

‘But why, living so near Paramaribo, do you not send your children to school there, to learn Christianity and general knowledge out of the white man’s book?’

‘Christianity is no good, massa,’ said Pannana, ‘Christianity make them good for nothing. Christians have all our faults, massa, and many modes and practices of theft, falsehood, treachery, and cruelty, which we disdain.’

‘But,’ said Edward, ‘you must see that the Christians have so much more knowledge than you have, which contributes to the enjoyment of life, I wonder you do not think it worth while to take some pains to acquire it?’

‘True, massa,’ said Pannana; ‘but knowledge, a tree which bears two fruits, the one a slow and deadly poison, but delicious, and the other good for dressy (curing) the heart, but bad for taste, massa. Which you think children eat most of, if you send them to the tree?’

‘But God Almighty,’ said Edward, ‘many hundred years ago sent his own Son into the world to instruct all men, white, black, and red, in their duty, and commanded us all to attend to his instructions, on pain of his eternal displeasure.’

‘And do you really believe,’ said the Indian, ‘that we and our forefathers are all, as you would teach us, condemned to suffer eternal torments in another world, because we have not been taught your mysterious novelties? Are we not the work of God? And can the Almighty not manifest his will without the help of a book? If this is true, and God is just, then how is it consistent with his justice to force life upon us without our consent, and then to condemn us to eternal damnation, because we did not meet with you? No, massa, we are convinced that the Christians are more depraved in morals than we Indians, if we may judge of their doctrines by the general badness of their lives.’*

‘God condemns only for the rejection of light,’ said Edward, ‘he will not punish you for not meeting with Christians; but, having met with them, for neglecting to avail yourselves of the opportunity of learning his will through them; as you know very well that what the Christians tell you of loving and fearing God, and doing as he bids you, because you love and fear him, and obeying his next and second great commandment, to love your neighbour as yourself, and do to others as you would have others do to you, is all true, because God assures you that it is so by his own direct palaver with your own heart.’

‘Massa,’ said Pannana, ‘what Christians say, very true and good; what Christians do, very false and bad; which we believe, massa? our fathers always talkee Christians were devils, massa! Christians hunt ’em – Christians shoot ’em – Christians make slave of ’em;’ then stamping with his foot, with great indignation, ‘this,’ said he, ‘not your country, massa? – this my country? – this my father’s country, till Christians come and rob us of all, massa?’

‘I did not mean to offend you,’ said Edward, ‘I thought, as you live so near the Christians, you might probably be upon better terms with them.’

‘No, massa, you no offend me,’ said Pannana, ‘you seem good massa, and talk kindly to poor Indian, and me no talk of Christians that live now, massa; some of whom are come more bettra, massa, since they knew us, and we not all good neither, massa; there are bad Indians, as well as good Christians. But you know what they now call Oroococoo Snake,* massa! O, ougree, massa! If you touch him, he kill you; our fathers used to call him *Christian*, massa!’

Edward feeling that proselytism to any extent against such strong traditional prepossessions, strengthened by the vicious habits and example of almost every nominal Christian resident in the colony, excepting the missionaries, must be either a work of miracle or preceded by the reformation of the Christians themselves, thought it in vain to pursue the conversation; and, therefore, after tasting some of Pannana’s palm wine,* which was very delicious, and telling him

* Stedman, vol. i. chap. xv. p. 382.

* The most deadly reptile in creation perhaps.

* This wine is obtained from a particular species of the palm-tree, by merely boring a hole in

that he might, perhaps, repeat his visit, which the old man said he should consider as a promise, he took his leave.

But between the propagation of Christianity, the difficulties of maintaining his own Christian consistency, the obstacles to the prosecution of the wishes nearest his heart, and which, although a few months ago, he thought himself quite proof against, were now daily acquiring a more uncontrollable ascendancy; the hot-water in which he had involved himself with the governor, and the collision of almost all his opinions with those of his military companions, so completely absorbed his attention, that he somehow or another took a wrong turn, which only led him more deeply into the wood, from which, when it became quite dark, he found it impossible to extricate himself till the next morning.

The day had fortunately been a dry one, and from a gun-flint and a knife, which he happened to carry about him, having made a blazing fire, he passed the night better than he expected; but the next morning, on his arrival at the garrison, from anxiety of mind and the extreme noxiousness in such a latitude of the heavy dews and vapours, and occasional rains to which he had been exposed without shelter all the night, he was soon seized with the symptoms of violent fever and ague, and conveyed immediately to the officers' ward in the hospital.

For eight or ten days his fever increased rapidly, till it reached its climax, producing considerable inflammation of the brain; but yet, except in intervals of actual delirium, from the agony it occasioned him, Edward Bentinck did not lose his self-possession; but, after the fever was abated, so rapid had been the complete prostration of his strength, and such was the extreme state of his exhaustion, that he could not stand a minute upon his feet without fainting, and he lay for many nights apprehensive of removal before morning to the other world from cramp or spasms in the stomach; during this time the great question of the truth or falsehood of the religious impressions in which he had been educated could not but press anxiously upon his mind, he reviewed all the evidences that he could think of, both for and against their divine origin, and the former seemed to gain both light and weight as his approach towards death and disengagement from external objects threw the latter more and more into the distance, and as the influence of his senses subsided, the unselfish benignity of the spirit of Christianity and the beauty of its spotless holiness carried stronger and stronger conviction to his unsophisticated heart, that such a religion could not be of earth, or as every thing must partake of the spirit and nature of its origin, it must have been more earthly. The composure arising from such an anchor of his soul in its utmost emergency and the increasing confidence in its sufficiency, which he derived from every examination, contributed materially to prevent a fatal issue to his fever; but it was many days before he could leave his bed or walk across the room, and weeks before he began to recruit his strength sufficiently to think of resuming his military duties, and would have been much longer, but for a little incident, of the effect of which the medicines and diet got all the credit, but which, in fact, was of more service than both together.

Edward happened one day, at the commencement of his convalescence, to be standing near the door of the ward, which was a little ajar, when he thought he heard a voice he was acquainted with, saying to the nurse, as she approached the ward -

'Missy bid me *tell* you,' (Negro idiom) 'how is Mr. Bentinck?'

'Who is your mistress?' said the nurse, 'I never answer inquiries unless I know from whom they come.'

'Missy no let me say datty,' replied the messenger.

'Well then, you may go back to your mistress, and tell her what I say.'

Which the messenger accordingly did.

the trunk at the proper season, and making a fire round it, to exhale the juice, (some vessel being placed to receive it,) which is put by for a few hours till fermentation commences, in which state it is drunk. The tree, I believe, generally dies after it is once tapped. - *Editor*.

'Was any one inquiring after me, nurse?' said Edward, when she entered the room.

'A little girl, sir; but as she would not tell me who sent her, I sent her away; but she will be here again presently, I have no doubt, as she seemed very reluctant to go back without an answer. Would you like to see her, sir, when she returns?'

'No, on no account,' said Edward, 'as her mistress does not wish that I should know her, and if I should have seen the messenger before, the former would, perhaps, learn that she was discovered; but, if she calls again, I wish you would speak to her just outside the door, and leave it a little open, that I may try and distinguish the voice.' In a few minutes a tap at the door summoned the nurse out of the room, who beckoned to Edward to follow her to the door, where he soon heard the same voice say,

'Missy say she cannot tell you her name; but she bid me give you this,' offering the nurse some money, 'and beg you to send her an answer to her inquiry?'

'Mr. Bentinck,' said the nurse, taking the douceur, 'is rather better, but it is tedious slow work, in this climate, recovering from such an attack as his; if there had not been some strong secret hope in his heart of something for him to live for, he must have sunk under such a fever, like the poor gentlemen on the beds on each side of him, and they have not either of them many days to live, I am sure.'

'Thank ye,' said Lucy, whose voice Edward now distinctly recognised, and off she flew with her message.

From that moment the convalescence of the patient, who was the object of such an interest, became decisive, whilst the declension of strength of his two companions, to whom the nurse alluded, and of whom I will now give some account, was daily more obvious.

I will just observe first, however, that the issue of fevers in the West Indies depends almost entirely upon the state of the mind, and I cannot see why, from this and many other notorious instances of mental influence on material complaints, one might not as well contend for the non-existence of matter, as to adopt the reasoning of Mr. Lawrence and other sceptical anatomists, and contend, from the occasional influence of matter over mind, for the non-existence of the latter.

One of Edward's next neighbours, in the ward, was a young Hanoverian, who had been a Lieutenant in the German Legion, in the British service; but being reduced at the peace, had entered the service of Bolivar, where, besides his rations, he got literally nothing but hard blows and broken promises - never a stiver of pay - and his lodgings and clothing were always of the worst, and most scanty description; he soon, therefore, quitted that service in disgust, and from his acquaintance with an Hanoverian officer of rank in the Netherlands army, then commanding the troops in Surinam, he came there upon the medical staff, for which he had been originally educated; but dissatisfaction with his present circumstances and slow prospect of promotion, although quite a young man, concurred with the malaria of the climate to reduce him to his present condition. He was a determined materialist; he professed, indeed, a sort of belief in a God, but derided the doctrine of a particular Providence, and laughed at the idea of his being accessible to prayer, or suspending for a moment the operation of those laws of matter to which he had, somehow or other, irrevocably committed the world: in fact, for any purpose of consolation to himself or value to human society, he might just as well have been an absolute Atheist.

'Oh, sir, I am a miserable man,' said he one day to Edward, 'I want to write a letter, and I have not strength.'

'Be composed,' said Edward, 'and to-morrow, perhaps, you will be able.'

'To-morrow, sir!' cried he with vehemence; 'You do not know what you are talking about. The doctor told me to-day - yes, he did, that I should not live till to-morrow. May God Almighty prove him a liar! Why did he not tell me the real state of my case sooner? Well, when I am dead, I hope my corpse will bring a plague upon the house, and infect every one that comes near it. May every Dutchman and Spaniard that meets my burial in the street drop down dead, and be eternally damned! I have served them both, and do not know which are the greatest rascals! I was at Schimmelpinck's funeral the other day - the coffin was hardly big enough to hold him, and what

a burying-place! The coffins are all piled one above another, and their corners stick through the ground - the carrion vultures flew about as if they were glad to see us in our black clothes. I'll be laid there by and by - Lord help me! But I must write that letter!

'You cannot write in your present state of agitation,' said Edward, 'would it not compose you to read a chapter in the Bible, or let me read one to you?'

'That's all d-d humbug sir; all imposture and jugglery, you may depend upon it. Not that I ever examined the subject quite as much as I ought; but it is too late, now this accursed fever has moored me fast, and death will soon explain to me the grand secret, without the trouble of my examining the question at all. But I must write that letter! I have something on my mind which I would not disclose; but I had rather the whole world should know it, than that I should die, and when that's off my mind, it may perhaps relieve me. Is there no help? Is there no power in physic? Oh, it would be nothing to be shot in battle! - nothing to founder at sea! - nothing compared with dying in this gloomy deliberate way. Oh, this accursed climate; and yet it is so natural for a man to love his country, that I should not be surprised to hear one of these amphibious frogs of Dutchmen say, that this infernal steam-kettle of an atmosphere, was the finest climate in the world.'*

In this way he continued cursing the hour of his birth, and every object and thing that surrounded him, till after a considerable intermission of his execrations, Edward found, on addressing him, that he was dead.

Edward Bentinck's sick neighbour, on the other side of his bed, was a young Englishman, of the name of Shelford, who had come out with him from Europe, to look after a considerable property, which had devolved on him by the death of a planter, nearly belated, in hopes of returning in a few years with sufficient fortune to pursue an attachment, which he had formed before he left England, to a girl of great beauty, as far as could be judged from the miniature found upon his heart; but which, alas! 'a wealthless lot,' had compelled him for a time to forego. He had been moved into the military hospital on his seizure, in preference to continuing in his own house, for the benefit of the advice and attentions of the military medical staff, who were considered the most skilful febricians in the colony. He was a delightful fellow, with a heart responsive to every emotion of generosity - a perfect gentleman in short, and incapable of being a blackguard. If the reader asks what is a gentleman - and what is a blackguard? the definition, perhaps, will be rather difficult, from the infinite number of shades of each of those characters, which sometimes seem to approach almost to an identity; but every one knows there is, in fact, as much difference between a gentleman and a blackguard, as there is (if the reader will pardon for once the use of an expressive vulgar proverb) 'between a silk purse and a sow's ear,' and that you can never make one of the other. A gentleman, amongst other characteristics, is, especially a man of good faith, a man who sweareth to his neighbour and disappointeth him not, although it were to his own hindrance, the very antipodes of the personification of the spirit of law, a man who always binds himself by the *spirit* and never shelters himself from its demands under the *letter* of his engagements, a man who would lose all his self-respect if he ever had recourse, from mercenary or interested motives, to falsehood, subterfuge, equivocation, or deceit, a man of perfect self-command and modest undogmatical manners, a man of urbanity, benevolence, and equable courtesy to all, a man of obvious pride, but proud only of his superiority to meanness, ever ready to make allowance for the failings of others, but never of his own: the word Christian is the nearest to a synonyme for gentleman; but Christian and gentleman are not convertible terms, because there are many duties that belong to the consistency of each character, which are not reciprocal. Christianity is in some of its aspects a dispensation of such sublime and lofty mercy, that it seems beneath the infinitude of its importance to dole out its bounties with rigid precision of correspondence to the degrees of variance in the temporal character of its disciples; it is not, therefore, for any human judgment to

* See Adventure at the Havanna, published in Blackwood. - *Note by the Author.*

pronounce with what inequality of progress and imperfection of consistency the sincere desire and endeavour of conformity to its spirit may entitle any one to the glorious name, and still more glorious death-conquering privileges of a Christian; there is about a gentleman too a feeling of aristocracy of difficult reconciliation with the repulse of all egotistical pretension and the uniform inculcation of self-abasement, which pervade the doctrines of the cross, but where these two characters of gentleman and Christian meet, or rather when the latter is engrafted on the former, they constitute together the model of social excellence, the utmost perfection of humanity; such was poor Shelford. He had since his arrival in Surinam been misled occasionally into some of those irregularities which young unmarried men for the most part, I am afraid, consider as quite venial, and practice without scruple; but he had great misgivings about them, for his heart and principles were as sound as a rock.

The morning after the death of the young German, he called Edward close to his bed-side; 'Bentinck!' said he, 'I have been in this hospital once before, but I have never been quite so ill as I am now, and the desperate departure of our poor companion, reminds me that I have no time to lose in throwing myself upon the support of the religious principles in which I have been most carefully and affectionately brought up, for such is the agony I suffer, that it is impossible I can live many days unless it abates. My mother has been long dead, but an excellent aunt supplied her place in confirming upon my heart the strong religious impressions that are interwoven there with the remembrance of my dear mother's affection. We have, I believe, both of us been educated in the same faith, for I have often heard you express your confidence in the truth of Christianity, will you allow me to go over with you some points of its evidences?' Upon Edward's assenting and drawing a chair close to his head, 'look,' said he putting out his furred and swollen tongue to shew the fury of the raging fever that was consuming him, and pressing Edward's hand on his burning forehead, 'I feel as if my brain was burning to a cinder between two fires, I therefore want no argument to convince me of the existence of evil, and moral evil must have preceded physical, now to suppose that a being who had not strength to retain the upright moral posture of his creation, should be able to recover and maintain it after being crippled by a fall, without some such preternatural interposition of his maker as that which Christianity explains to us, seems to me an absolute absurdity, do you think so Bentinck?'

'Indeed I do,' said Edward; 'I have no other hope for myself but in the great atonement of the death of Christ, and the silent and generally gradual but not the less preternatural influence of purchased for them by that atonement.'

'Well then,' said Shelford, 'the only other question is the mode of availing ourselves of it. I see clearly,' said he, 'that I have contracted some wrong habits, which nothing but such a sickness as this would have given me resolution to break off, but which now if it should please God to restore me, I am determined to overcome; therefore, whether the issue of this sickness be life or death, I feel satisfied that it has been sent to me in mercy, at the same time my life has not been without trials and prevailing efforts to act right, but I endeavour as much as I can to look out of myself altogether, and confide exclusively in the mercy more adequately purchased by Christ's blood, not' said he emphatically, 'that I am an Antinomian and think human efforts of no consequence, far from it! but our best motives are so mixed, that I feel now that I dare not trust to them; I feel no resentments, but forgive from the bottom of my heart any who have injured me, and am I trust in perfect charity with all men. I cannot say that I have no wish to live, at my age the summer of life is all before me, and I have brothers and sisters and many friends in England, besides my father whose partiality and constant kindness the thought of enjoying again in this world is very delightful to me, and death in itself is an awful change to any man of reflection, but I think I have courage to meet it, if it should so please God, do you think I am in a proper state of mind to do so?'

'You really make me envy you,' said Edward, 'your views of your present situation altogether, and your belief in the truth and value of Christianity seem so rational and manly.'

‘O! there I’m fixed,’ said he, with great energy, ‘I never doubted! You know not how thankful I am now to my father and friends for their discouragement in me of some opinions that seemed favourable to infidelity.’

‘Shall I read to you,’ said Edward, ‘from the Bible, or any of the prayers from the service of the church of England?’

‘I have them all by heart!’ said Shelford, ‘I have them all by heart! No! leave me for the present, now as I am a little exhausted.’

After this Shelford said little till near midnight, when, having declined any more medicine, and feeling his end approaching, he called Edward and pressing his hand said, ‘Bentinck! you know my friends, its God’s will that I should die in exile, but I thank him that it is not without a witness to acquaint them that although my life has not been faultless, my death did not disgrace their Christian goodness and example. God bless you!’

These were his last words, and after a few convulsive respirations in less than ten minutes he had entirely ceased to breathe. ‘Curse it! I can’t help it,’ said Edward as he turned from the bedside sobbing like an infant, ‘Christianity then does not always fail men at the hour of death!!!’

I don’t know what made Edward Bentinck swear unless it was at his own sensibility, but as a mere narrator I am bound to tell the truth, he did so; he had scarcely heard from Shelford a single expression of impatience during his whole sickness, and nothing could exceed the manly composure and calm fortitude with which he met his death: the contrast between him and the young German naturally drew forth the last part of the foregoing exclamation of Edward, and could not but make on him the deepest and most salutary impression.

The following lines were found in Shelford’s pocket book, they are not perhaps his own, or if they are, they were not intended probably to express his own feelings and circumstances, but were written from a partial sympathy with those of some unhappy inmate of the same sick ward, with which he became acquainted on some former occasion.

THE DYING EXILE.

I should like to have died in my birth-place,
In spite of my errors, perhaps, then
The affection of those who once lov’d me
Might have pitied and sooth’d me again.
But here all is dark and appalling,
If a prayer to my Saviour I sigh,
My spirit from pardon recalling,
‘O! that’s all d--d humbug,’ they cry.
O! could I but describe my emotion,
When open before me one day,
My name in a book of devotion,
Inscribed by my mother, there lay.
The word seem’d to startle my ear;
Did I ever a mother embrace?
No! my heart said, else how came I here,
So contrasted the thought and the place.
On the wall had I seen here another
Hand writing of God, as of yore,
Than a name of such mercy as mother,
It could scarcely have startled me more.
But thank God in the grave she’s reposing,
The trials, with life only closing,
Which she’d borne a son to go through.
Yet there is a relation diviner,
Half repairing the moral of time,

Which has charities closer and finer,
And sanctities still more sublime.
To this I've too fondly aspired,
For this I've all dangers defied,
This the only reward I've desired,
And this gain'd, I could calmly have died.
With this hope from frenzy to shield me,
Through all climes of the world could I roam,
Content, if at last it would yield me
The bliss of a personal home.
But my gourd, like the prophet's, is wasted,
And to God's ways I cannot say well!
Life's sole chaste cup of pleasure untasted,
Hell!
But whence comes, from above or below,
The fine form which my sight stands before,
It's of beauty angelic! but so
Is one which on earth I adore.
It is one from the land of my birth,
Life's last anguish to sooth, nor in vain,
For a hope's stealing o'er me, when vanish'd this earth,
We shall meet in some union, unsullied by pain,
Of more intimate rapture, and still richer worth,
Than that which in this world I've fail'd to attain,
In yon starry Eden again.
Thus, his fancy, poor fellow! his heart springs relieving,
The sad exile ceased cursing and wept,
Then slightly convulsing, he drew his last breath,
But so placid the smile on his lips, after death,
You might almost imagine life left him, believing,
On the bosom he worshipp'd he slept;
he slept.

Chapter XI. The Rescue.

O, God! the Christians say that thine is vengeance.

Why, if it is so, sleeps thine arm parental

In a scene like this? -

-There is another world!

OLD PLAY.

I MUST now request my readers to return with me for a short time to Mr. Cotton's plantation at Anne's Grove. On the arrest and removal of the proprietor, Outalissi and the rest of the negroes were left under the joint charge of Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Hogshead, a paradoxical arrangement; - the impressions from every word and action of the one directly colliding with the impressions from every word and action of the other, explosion* must be the result. If Christianity is true, the planters will be the authors and just victims of their infidel and obstinate interception of the sun of righteousness from the souls of their dependants; if Christianity is only a cunningly devised fable, its propagators are justly responsible for all consequences; but in the meantime, the pull-baker pull-devil sort of effect, to which the missionary efforts are exposed here, is at once destructive of the planters' authority, and derogatory of that of Christianity, its only and best substitute. Religion, in the present day, in order to afford any protection to the security and welfare of society by its moral controul over its members, 'must not,' as Burke says, 'be banished to obscure corners, like something we are ashamed to show, but must exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments; she must mix throughout the whole mass of life, and blend with all classes in society.' On the contrary, what is the case in Surinam?

'Come to church and save your souls,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'Souls, souls, d-n your souls - grow tobacco,*' said Mr. Hogshead, 'or woe betide your bodies.'

'Renounce your lusts,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'O yes! cursed hypocrite, that you may have no rivalry in the indulgence of yours,' said Mr. Hogshead.

'Seek the Lord whilst he may be found of you,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'You may seek long enough before you'll find him here,' said Mr. Hogshead.

'Obey God rather than man,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'Fulfil your tasks, your daily tasks, or I'll soon show you that I am to be obey'd first here,' said Mr. Hogshead.

'O! spare her! spare her!' said Mr. Schwartz to the director as he was superintending the flagellation of a pregnant negress; 'remember that with the same measure that you mete to others it shall be meted unto you!'

'Give her two dozen more for the parson's interference,' said Mr. Hogshead.

'As you would that men should do unto you, do you even so unto them,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'Kiss my --,' said that horrible compound of lust and cruelty, Mr. Hogshead.*

On the apprehension and removal of Mr. Cotton and his daughter to the colonial capital, little Charles Cotton was left at Anne's Grove for the sake of his health, the temperature of the atmosphere on the coast being three or four degrees lower than at Paramaribo, and the bracing effect of the sea air making it to most Creoles, and indeed to many Europeans, both an agreeable and salubrious climate. One of this child's attendants was a little girl of about fifteen, of the name of

* See note F.

* See note G.

* See note H.

Charlotte Venture. She belonged to a tribe of negroes rather rare in Surinam, but not at all uncommon, as I have been informed, in the neighbouring colony of Demarara, distinguished for the symmetry of their forms, and the almost Grecian cast of their features, instead of the squab nose and thick lips which it is difficult for European prejudice to dissociate from a negro countenance. She had a fine strait nose, small mouth, thin lips, teeth that seemed to vie with the eyes in giving light and life to the expression of the whole countenance, a small slightly-prominent laughing chin in quick and intimate unison with the lines of the mouth; – eyes of a chastised intelligence and beaming benevolence, almost as much beyond the comparatively inanimate expression of a frigid zone beauty, in warmth, vivacity, and penetration, as her own never-sullen summer-lavishing sun beyond his captious wintry rival, set off too by long silken raven lashes; and corresponding hair (not wool), and a fine glossy jet black skin that looked like polished marble.

It was not likely that such a girl should escape the lascivious observation of Mr. Hogshead; but she was a remarkably good girl, well instructed in Christianity, and a great favourite of her young mistress, and for a long time, therefore, he was compelled to confine his persecution to his eyes. But poor Charlotte, from having frequently heard her mistress advert to it with expressions of sympathy, imbibed a very natural interest in the history of Outalissi, and undertook with great alacrity a commission from her on leaving home (in which the latter possibly had some speculation of temporal as well as spiritual benevolence in view, for which I have no doubt the saints in heaven will pardon her; although I am by no means equally confident of pardon from either their friends or enemies on earth,) to endeavour, if she had any opportunity, to remove some of the unhappy captive's prejudices against Christianity, and convince him that those from whose conduct he judged of the doctrines of Christianity were the opprobrium and disgrace of their profession, and no more really deserved the name of Christians from the accidental circumstance of their education in a Christian country, than a progeny of the wolves and tigers of his native forests would deserve that name, from a mere local removal. Charlotte, however, did not make much progress in the conversion of her royal pupil.

'She convinced him,' he said, 'that a *soi-disant** Christian might be both good and lovely, but he could not tell how much of her goodness to ascribe to Christianity, and how much to the kindly elements of her own natural disposition; that the proportion of good nominal Christians being so very small, was rather a presumption of their being good *in spite of* Christian influence than in subjection to it.'

'But,' said Charlotte, 'if what your own heart confesses to be good in any body corresponds exactly with the directions of Christ, you must in consistency confess those directions to be good also.'

'What are those directions?' said Outalissi.

'Mr. Schwartz will explain that to you,' said Charlotte, 'if you will listen to him with attention, which therefore Missy begs you to do,' and which finally Charlotte obtained a promise from him that he would.

In the meantime, if Outalissi did not derive religious conviction from Charlotte's arguments, he imbibed the sentiment that ranks the next in its elevating and refining influence upon every human bosom - a sentiment to which, when it comprises the association of mental purity as well as bodily *worshipfulness* (to use an expression of the Liturgy) in its object, and without both of which it is not the complete thing that God and nature intended it should be, philosophy itself must ascribe a very high degree of respectability, viz. a sentiment of strong personal affection for his instructress. Not that his manly principles ever betrayed such feelings to Charlotte either by look or gesture; 'for never,' said he to himself, 'shall Outalissi be the father of a race of slaves;' and his actual circumstances precluded all hope of any honourable result to such a passion; which,

* I have already said that I have taken the liberty occasionally of assisting the perspicuity of Outalissi's language a little, but never of altering the sentiment. - *Note by the Author.*

however, notwithstanding his perception of its utter hopelessness, and his conscientious concealment of it in consequence, did somehow or another (as perhaps had been anticipated by his mistress) considerably soothe his irritation, and gradually beguile him of his impatience of the indignity of his condition. Neither did Charlotte, who knew well from the frequent experience of her mistress's benevolence, that she could have handsomely and virtuously provided for them both, and probably had some such intention, remain long insensible to the very near connexion between pity and love, and instead of always waiting for an opportunity she would sometimes make one by walking with her little charge in the ground where Outalissi was employed (although frequently forbidden by Mr. Hogshead) for the pleasure of engaging him in conversation.

'How often must I tell you not to interrupt that sulky fellow in his work,' said Mr. Hogshead to her as he overtook her returning from one of these debates.

'Sir,' said Charlotte whose heart beat with apprehension at the approach of the white monster, 'I was only trying as my mistress directed me to persuade him to become a Christian, and attend Mr. Schwartz, because my mistress says that his instruction in Christianity is the only compensation she can make him for the terrible injustice and injuries that have been done him.'

'So your mistress means to compensate him with Christianity, and you with something better, eh! Charlotte! but come,' said the director chucking her under the chin, 'don't be such a fool as to throw yourself away upon a slave when you know very well that I have long designed you for myself, and I am not much accustomed to disappointment in the accomplishment of my purposes.'

'I would rather remain as I am for ever, sir,' said Charlotte, 'than be so ungrateful to my mistress as to dispose of myself without her consent, and I am sure she would not hear of my compliance with your proposals.'

'Your mistress and you too are a couple of hypocritical puritans, I must have you without her consent then, that's all my dear,' said the hideous reptile with a characteristic grin that made poor Charlotte tremble from head to foot, at the same time putting his arm round her waist. 'You'd better consent to live with me quietly,' continued he, 'or if you compel me to have recourse to violence, I dare say I shall find an opportunity of taking some of that disdain out of you before you are again within the reach of your mistress's protection.'

'Oh!' said Charlotte, 'pray release me sir, and let me speak to Mr. Schwartz.'

'No! no! curse Mr. Schwartz,' said Mr. Hogshead, 'there's no time like the present after all, promise your consent now, or you shall not stir till I have indulged my desire.'

'No! sir, I would sooner die,' said Charlotte.

'Then take the consequences of your own obstinacy,' said the white savage throwing her upon the ground, but a scream from little Charles Cotton brought up Outalissi, the reach and quickness of whose eye and ear were about three times those of a European, and who had been watching every word and motion through some intervening foliage, and in a few seconds Mr. Hogshead felt himself in Outalissi's powerful grasp, as feeble as a child in the hands of a giant.

'Now, sir,' said Outalissi, 'if you call for assistance, or utter a single word till that poor daughter of my unhappy race has reached the house, it shall be the last you will ever utter, for I will put my foot upon your neck till I press the breath out of your body, and you know it will not be in the feeble strength of your diseased and bloated carcase to disengage yourself, although all your limbs are loose.' Mr. Hogshead knew too well the manly temper of the nerve that bound him, to doubt the instant execution of this threat if he betrayed the least resistance. His victim for the present therefore was soon out of his power, and when Outalissi saw that she had reached the house, 'if now I let you go,' said he to Mr. Hogshead, 'before to-morrow my back will bear bloody evidence of your Christian gratitude, good faith, and promise keeping. Here we are at the edge of the sea, without the possibility of any detection, for there is no eye but that of the great spirit over us, and to rid the world of such a walking lazar house, such a pest of moral putridity as you, must be an agreeable service to Him, why should I not now discharge a part of my deep, deep debt of vengeance by giving you up to the mercy of that shark there, whose most Christian countenance of

cold, watery, pitiless eyes, and blood guzzling snout, just shows itself above the gentle ripple of the shallowing waves, as if sent especially for the occasion.'

'O, spare me! spare me! noble Outalissi,' said the abject paltry tyrant, falling on his knees, and embracing those of him whose manly form in every line displayed the stamp of natural superiority, 'and I will swear by my God, or by your God, or by any God, to be eternally grateful to you: and, far from punishing, to reward you in every way I can, and be of all the service to you in my power. O! remember, good Outalissi! that although the Christians' conduct to you has been outrageously wicked, their ill treatment is only co-extensive with your life, but if you now take mine, you will consign me to eternal damnation. O! give me some time to repent at least, good Outalissi!'

'There's sense in that,' said Outalissi, 'I confess; for I do believe there's something in my breast which tells me that nothing but damnation in the next world can await such as you, Christian or heathen; but now I release you, don't suppose that you deceive me - you will neither repent, or forbear your vengeance; but still,' said he thoughtfully, 'for once at least I will show that I can practise what the Christians only preach about, viz. the duty of returning good for evil, and leaving vengeance to Him whose all-including eye can best dispense it. - Go.'

It may be easily supposed that Outalissi got nothing for his magnanimity but a most tremendous flogging that same evening, and poor Charlotte was so frightened that she prevailed on Mr. Schwartz to write to her mistress, acquainting her with what had happened, and intreating permission that she should come to her in town, which no doubt, under such circumstances, would have been arranged by her mistress, if she had not requested it; but before an answer could be received to Mr. Schwartz's letter an unfortunate accident threw her still more completely into the director's power. She was thanking Outalissi one morning for his generous rescue, and condoling with him on his punishment, and the misery of being subject to the despotism of such a monster, and saying, 'that she hoped on her mistress being acquainted with his conduct that she would prevail on her father to discharge him.'

'O! they're all alike,' said Outalissi. 'As for me his lashes cannot reach my soul, and therefore on my account, Charlotte, don't you inflame either his vengeance or odious passion against yourself. I thank both you and that sweet Christian flower, your young mistress, for the interest you take in my misfortunes; and if poor Outalissi's life, which is all that is left him, can at any time be of service to either of you, I hope at least to be one evidence, by the cheerfulness with which I should expend it, that our dark bosoms, Charlotte, can harbour gratitude as well as vengeance.'

'You have already shown that to me,' said Charlotte.

'O! that,' said Outalissi, 'was nothing more than I would have done for any other in similar danger; but you must not, Charlotte, come so much within the reach of this white atheist, for I may not be always near you. Keep near the house: he is already chafed to fury by your escape from him, and has forbidden the slaves to attend Mr. Schwartz any more of a Sunday, and punished several severely for disobeying him, on pretence that he, Mr. Schwartz, has taught you to deride his authority; but they declare they will persist at all hazards, and have invited me to join them, which I think I shall, for by the same light, and exactly in the same proportion that Mr. Schwartz shows them the duty of patience, gentleness, goodness, truth, temperance, justice, mercy, or in one word, which implies all goodness, charity towards each other, and the deepest feeling of self-abasement and humility towards God, he shows them also in colours deriving from the contrast a strength and depth of which many of them before had but very faint, inadequate, and undefined impressions, the full extent and number of the burning, burning wrongs which they have received from man, and in that light,' said Outalissi, 'although I am not yet a Christian, I see a hope of vengeance.'

'What do you mean?' said Charlotte. 'O, do not listen to any scheme of violence, much less suggest one; believe me, the white people are both too strong and too cunning to make any effectual resistance of them possible; for, even, if, by surprise, you could master them for a moment, they have at all times indefinite supplies of force at their command from their countries across the sea.'

Before Outalissi could reply to the last observation, Charlotte screamed violently, and fainted, on seeing little Charles Cotton, who had been playing about, only a hundred yards from her, at Outalissi's back, in the mouth of a tremendous tiger, that by a sudden spring from the bush had caught him by the loose part of his trowsers, and throwing him diagonally across his back,* was slyly slinking off with him. What was to be done? Outalissi had no fire-arms, and merely a short coarse cutlass, with which he had been cutting grass. To pursue the tiger, even if he could have overtaken him, and the child was not already dead, would infallibly occasion his being torn to pieces by increasing the speed of the animal's retreat through the bushes. There was but one chance, which would have occurred to no one that had not the heart of a lion, and been accustomed from his boyhood almost to rival one in exertions of muscular elasticity and power, and prepared if necessary personally to encounter one. It was to rush through the bush, which would conceal him from the tiger, and throw himself directly across his path, a near point of which, by the help of his cutlass, he was enabled to reach before the formidable felon; - where, as he expected, having laid himself down at his full length, and absolutely without motion, as if he were dead, in less than a minute the tiger trotted slowly over him with his prey in his mouth; but without betraying the slightest inclination to run any risk of losing that, by examining another, apparently already dead. Accordingly, when Outalissi, laying across the *length* of the tiger, saw himself between his legs, by a violent spring at the exact moment, when it could alone have availed, he threw his body with tremendous force across the tiger's back, which compelled him to drop his prey, and brought him to the ground, when kneeling across his neck and shoulders, Outalissi soon dispatched him with his cutlass, but not without some severe lacerations from his hind claws.

Charles Cotton did not appear to be the least hurt, as the animal had merely held him by his clothes; he had probably fainted immediately after his seizure, and just began to awake from his change of position and cessation of movement, as, when Outalissi took him up, he looked wild and staring, and scarcely seemed to know what had happened to him; but shortly afterwards he fell into fits, and for a long time he never seemed easy out of his preserver's arms.

When Outalissi returned to Charlotte (who had but just begun to revive, for the whole transaction scarcely occupied ten minutes), himself all covered and streaming with blood, and her young master in his arms, looking as if he had been snatched out of a coffin, she fell back again into a state of insensibility. Outalissi, therefore, taking her up in one arm whilst he held the child in the other, with about the same ease that one could lift a fowling piece, carried them both into the house.

Mr. Hogshead did not fail to avail himself of the pretence afforded by this unfortunate occurrence for prosecuting his designs against his helpless victim; he wrote a full account of the matter to his master, Mr. Cotton, taking care to magnify as much as possible Charlotte's imprudence, and ascribed the accident entirely to her neglect and disregard of his repeated injunctions not to come upon that ground, (although, from the boldness of these animals, it might have happened just as well any where else,) and concluding that he had been obliged to send Outalissi to the hospital, and had thought it right to punish Charlotte till Mr. Cotton's pleasure should be known, by locking her up in a part of his own house;* and that he had transferred Master Charles to the care of another slave.

The next morning, which happened to be Sunday, Mr. Schwartz called as usual to pursue the Christian instruction of the negroes, who told him that the director had ordered them not to attend, because, he said, Charlotte Venture had referred to his instructions to justify her insolence to him; but that they were resolved to attend in spite of him or his master either, and asked Mr. Schwartz, if he did not think they were right?

* See Note I.

* The directors upon the plantation have generally a house detached from that of the proprietor.

-- *Editor.*

'I think,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'that it will very likely expose you to a gauntlet of persecution and punishment, and, perhaps, even death, if you do; but,' continued he firmly, 'I think you are right.'

'Massa, if we die, we go to God; we *loby* (love) to die, massa. This life no more bettra as Hell, massa?'

'But, perhaps,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'you may as well forbear to exasperate the director for the present, as I will write to Mr. Cotton, and he may possibly relieve us from his controul.' After visiting Outalissi in the hospital, from the account which he received from him, Mr. Schwartz desired to see Charlotte Venture.

'Why do you hesitate,' said he to Mr. Hogshead; 'you surely have no fear of her making any disclosure to your prejudice?'

'Disclosure!' said Mr. Hogshead, 'O, no! she must be past disclosure of any sort by this time, as I left her dying an hour ago.'

'There is the more reason that I should see her,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'in order to ascertain the cause of her death, that I may explain it to her kind mistress, as you know the value she sets upon her.'

'You may see her, if you please,' said Mr. Hogshead; 'but it shall be only in my presence, as, if she is not already past articulation, you will make her say any thing you please.'

'In your hearing, if you please; but not in your sight,' said Mr. Schwartz; 'nor must she know that you are near; as that might deter her from speaking freely; but why should you suppose she has any thing to say about you?' said Mr. Schwartz, looking sternly into the villain's dropping eyes.

'Well, here is the key,' said the director, 'if you will go into my house they will show you the room she is locked up in.'

On entering the room, Mr. Schwartz found Charlotte lying upon a small pallet, and apparently in articulo mortis; her features seemed distorted with the last struggle, and her eyes remained quite closed, till, approaching close to her head, he said, 'O, my poor girl, how came you in this dreadful condition?' when, on recognizing the only tone of sympathy that she ever heard in the absence of her mistress, a gleam of vivacity for a few minutes lit up her ruined features.

'I am murdered, sir,' she said, 'by Mr. Hogshead; he passed the last night with me in this room, and when he found that neither promise or entreaty could prevail on me to submit to his desires; he succeeded by the grossest violence in stifling my screams, and effecting his purpose, and this morning he endeavoured to strangle me, and left the room, I believe, under the impression that I was dead.'

'I have already sent for a doctor,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'and I hope still that you may live; if not, I believe confidently, that you will go to the Christian's God, Charlotte, who can compensate you even for such an injury as this; but you must endeavour to forgive the author of it.'

'O, sir, don't make me live,' said Charlotte; 'but don't ask me to forgive him. Must I say I forgive him, if I feel that I never can.'

'No,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'it's useless to say any thing to God which is not true, as he sees through all disguises, even those by which we sometimes endeavour to deceive ourselves; pray then for his repentance and your own forgiveness,' said Mr. Schwartz.

'O, sir,' said Charlotte, 'I cannot think of him and pray. I have not told you half his cruelty -'

'What are those lies you are telling against me?' said Mr. Hogshead, who had been somewhere within hearing, and presented himself at that moment at the foot of the bed, in order to overawe her from disclosing more particulars of his brutality.'

The instant Charlotte saw him, she uttered a piercing shriek, threw her arms out at him, turned her face violently round into the pillow, fell into convulsions and expired.

'I charge you,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'with the ruin and murder of that helpless girl; and if her countrymen themselves do not avenge her death, there is One above that will.'

‘Do you mean then,’ said the conscience-struck poltroon, ‘to invite the negroes to murder me?’

‘Whoso sheddeth man’s blood,’ said Mr. Schwartz, ‘by man shall his blood be shed.’

Mr. Hogshead muttered something about the end of the d – d humbug of Christianity being that they should all get their throats cut, and ‘that it would serve such fellows as you no more than right, if you were all flogged out of the colony; and I will do it off this plantation if you repeat such an accusation against me.’

‘You dare not,’ said Mr. Schwartz, coolly; which was the real fact, for the negroes loved him and would not have obeyed any direction to ill-treat him, or he would probably have been murdered himself long ago. But he happened to be a stronger man than the director, who, therefore, could only have got rid of him by the help of the slaves.

On leaving Mr. Hogshead’s house, Mr. Schwartz went immediately and laid an information against him, both before the officer commanding the detachment at the outpost, and the police magistrate of the district, called the Heimrovad, and earnestly requested the immediate arrest of Mr. Hogshead, if it were only to appease the irritation and prevent the resentment of the negroes; but they both declined interfering, till they had an opportunity of communicating with Mr. Cotton.

Chapter XII. The Revenge.

'Patience itself is meanness in a slave.

* * *

O could I worship aught beneath the skies,
That earth has seen or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,
Built by no vulgar mercenary hand,
With fragrant turf, and flowers, as wild and fair,
As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air.

* * *

Then would I say, and as I spake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundless sky,
This triple realm adores Thee.'

COWPER.

WHEN Outalissi was able to leave the hospital he found the Christian slaves* in a state of great fermentation, from the barbarity and impunity of the director in his conduct towards poor Charlotte, and his interruption of their instruction by Mr. Schwartz.

'Will you join us,' said they to Outalissi, 'in exacting justice? We are threatened by one with God's eternal vengeance, if we do not reverence His Son, and we are refused the means of doing so by the other; every obstacle is interposed to our marrying, and the rite of baptism is generally denied to our children; we are taunted, sneered at, spited, cursed; ourselves subjected to murder, and our wives and daughters to worse than murder - to satiate the lusts of every brutal manager whom they choose to appoint over us; and they take effectual care to make redress impossible, let them pass what other laws they will to deceive the people in their own countries, by that which rejects slave evidence against themselves; and if, by some extraordinary coincidence of testimony, any outrage, or even murder, by a white man, is detected, they are sure either to let him off upon some pretence or other, or, if convicted, to commute his punishment, in kind, for a fine of a few thousand guilders in money. We are resolved, therefore, to make them acknowledge our claim, to be treated as fellow-creatures, and to begin by inflicting summary justice on this murderer here.'

'If you will do entirely as I bid you,' said Outalissi, 'I will engage, at all events, to lead you to glorious vengeance before death, although, by want of energy in our efforts, or a thousand accidents, we may be ultimately disappointed of success; but surely death itself, even without vengeance, is preferable to such a life as this. Shall I command you?'

'We earnestly wish to avoid shedding the white men's blood,' said they, 'perhaps, if we are unanimous and peremptory, they may think it prudent to listen to our just complaints, without driving us to desperation.'

'Then be content that the white men should shed yours,' said Outalissi; 'revolutions cannot be made with rose-water, by black men any more than white.'

'But all unnecessary bloodshed is contrary to the religion Mr. Schwartz has taught to us,' said they. 'We cannot give life,* and therefore will not take it, except in avenging or repelling murder.'

'Unnecessary bloodshed!' exclaimed Outalissi. 'I abhor the man who wantonly would set his foot upon a worm, and am not capable of the cruelty of these lamb-skinned wolves - these

* The slaves who are *not Christians* care just as much about marriage, baptism, or any other moral ordinance or practice as a dog, or goat, or bull, and no more. - *Editor*.

* See Trial of Missionary Smith. Evidence of Rev. Mr. Austin. - *Editor*.

Christians, who have wallowed in the blood of Africa for centuries; and their only necessity was avarice - ours freedom and revenge for wrongs, compared with which the whole mass of crime and outrage committed by man against man in the unchristian world sinks into nothing.'

'But Mr. Schwartz says, that the authors of these wrongs were not Christians, but merely pretenders to the name,' replied his black disciples.

'Well, be it so,' said Outalissi. 'If Christianity teaches you that it is not your duty to the dignity of your own rational nature, to your children, your country, and your God to wipe off from your colour the foul brand which your infamous cowardice has too long affixed to it, of being created only for use or abuse by the whites, to be chained and tasked, and have your sweat exacted

"With stripes, that mercy with a bleeding heart
Weeps, when she sees inflicted on a beast;"

Christianity is falser than the sand of the desert, when it assumes to the parched lip and burning sight the semblance of water.'

'Well, lead and we will follow,' cried the animated slaves.

'Swear then,' said Outalissi.

'So help us God,' they all exclaimed together, throwing up their right hands and eyes to Heaven.

'Then, by my father's blood,' said Outalissi 'I will succeed or die with you.'

From this moment Outalissi calmly resigned himself to death, he saw that the resolution of the Christian slaves was much too equivocal to justify any reasonable confidence, but he determined to expend such a purchase as he had upon them in making the utmost atonement in his power to the spirits of his ancestors, for the indignities under which he had already too long borne to live.

Outalissi soon arranged his plans with great sagacity; but in order to secure the simultaneous movement of the different bodies of insurgents, a good deal of previous instruction and communication with them was indispensable, which would most probably have awakened suspicion from the frequency of his absence, if the ferocity of the director had not very opportunely given another cause for it.

They have in Surinam a barbarous punishment, called the Spanso boeko, or Spanish buck, to which, whenever an owner, administrator, or director wishes to subject any of his slaves, he has nothing to do but to send them to the fortress at Paramaribo, with a short note to the public executioner, who is obliged, for a trifling fee, without any judicial inquiry whatever to inflict it.

I will describe the punishment to the reader, which is exceedingly severe, and when I tell him, that this punishment is constantly executed upon *women* in Surinam, even to this day, he will, I think, agree with me, that the moral ingredients of the Dutch character, in the West Indies, whatever they may be elsewhere, form by no means an exception to the uniformly debasing influence of slavery upon the moral sensibility and dignity of all who have the misfortune to come for any time within its contaminating contact.

This is the punishment: -- The prisoner's wrists being lashed together, he is laid down on the ground, on one side, with his knees thrust sufficiently forward, through his arms, as to drive a perpendicular stake into the ground behind them, to confine them within the arms, in such a way that he can scarcely move, any more than if he were dead. In this locked position, trussed like a fowl, he is beaten on one side of his breech by a strong negro, with a handful of knotty tamarind branches, till the very flesh is cut away; he is then turned over on the other side, where the same dreadful flagellation is inflicted, till not a bit of skin is left, and the place of execution is dyed with blood. After which the raw lacerated wound is immediately washed with lemon-juice and gun-

powder (the pain of which must be inconceivable), to prevent mortification, and then he is sent home to recover as well as he can.*

Outalissi had been sent by Mr. Hogshead, with several more of Mr. Cotton's slaves to undergo this punishment. Edward Bentinck, from curiosity, was accidentally present that morning at the disgusting spectacle.

'I am sorry to see you here, Outalissi, for such a purpose,' said Edward Bentinck.

'Sir,' said Outalissi, 'do you think I will undergo that punishment?'

'Why, what can you do?' said Edward, 'resistance will only increase its severity.'

'The severity, sir,' said Outalissi, 'is a matter to me almost of indifference. No bodily pain should give these white demons the triumph of extracting a single groan from the soul of Outalissi; but it is the brutality and degradation of it that I resent so, and I will never suffer it alive. I can at the worst dash my brains out of my head against the wall; but I have some reasons for wishing to defer that for a few weeks longer, if it is possible.'

Outalissi had, in the mean time, by an imperceptible movement of his powerful arms, been rubbing or rather cutting in two the cords by which his wrists were bound, against the sharp edge of some pallsades, upon which he seemed only to be resting them, and when they called upon him to put himself into the customary position, he overthrew half a dozen of them, dashed through the rest; wrenched, in half a second, by a sudden twist with both his hands, the musket and bayonet from the sentry at the gate of the fortress, plunged into the river, which laves its walls, and in spite of sharks and alligators, of which it is always full, safely reached the opposite bank with his prize.

The fiscal put himself, and scouts, and soldiers into a great deal of perspiration in the pursuit of him, which he might as well have spared, as he would have had much more chance of retaking a lion, because here was actually a lion's strength, with a man's intelligence. They saw no more of him, till they saw him exulting in a vengeance worthy of a king.

Outalissi's plans were sound, simple, bold, and likely, and he did not fail to make good use of the facility of constant night-intercourse with his countrymen, which his escape, from oversight and controul, gave him, to complete them. Several slaves, who had been brought up on Mr. Cotton's plantation happened to be living as domestic servants in some of the houses at the windward extremity of Paramaribo. In that latitude the wind is so uniform, that if there is any, you may almost certainly depend upon its direction; by the help of those servants, who were easily prevailed on to join the conspiracy, it was arranged that a great quantity of strong combustible matter should be gradually collected and secreted in different parts of these windward houses, and co-instantaneously fired on a signal from Outalissi, who was to command the operations in town, on Sunday, the twenty-first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one.

Different parties of the confederates (for where is the Englishman, in the present day, out of the West Indies, after such goading to madness as has been described, who would be sycophant enough to call them rebels?) in the country had engaged to fire several of the most outlying plantations on the preceding Friday, in order to draw the troops too far from Paramaribo to return in time to interrupt the destruction of the capital; during the confusion of which, the governor and all the chief colonial officers were to be seized and secured by Outalissi's party in town, and compelled to guarantee them freedom of worship and the equal protection of law with the whites, by the equal admission of their testimonial competency; but not a hair of a white man's head was to be injured, if they would accede to these demands, unless the soldiers should attempt their rescue; and except where actual murder had been committed by a white man and remained unpunished, as at Anne's Grove, where the business was to begin by the just execution of Mr. Hogshead.

There was at that time no naval force at Paramaribo, so the military were all that Outalissi had to guard against. The intense anxiety, therefore, with which he watched their departure from the town, during Friday and Saturday, may be easily conceived; but when Sunday came, and the

* See Note K.

troops remained quiet in the fortress, he saw immediately that something must have deranged or defeated the concerted movements of his plantation auxiliaries, and that therefore he must abandon the chief part of the plan, of which he had undertaken the execution in Paramaribo; but still he did not see why he should forego that (and indeed the vengeance was pretty ample) which yet remained in his power. He, therefore, told his friends, who were awaiting his signal in small parties about the town, that with such a force to contend with, all thoughts of personal struggle must for the present be laid aside; that the wanton waste of either their blood, or that of the white soldiers (who with the least guilt would be the greatest sufferers) was a thought at which his *unchristian* heart had ever sickened; that they must, therefore, confine their present proceeding to the destruction of property alone, by firing the trains which they had prepared, upon the signal which he would presently give them; after which they must take care of themselves, - that as he could not swim across the sea, it was probable he should not himself long escape apprehension; but he assured them that no racks or torture should extract from him the name of a single individual that had taken part with him in this partly abortive conspiracy.

‘Now then,’ said he, ‘to your posts, and farewell! If we meet no more in this world, we shall in that, where no fiends torment — no Christians thirst for gold!’

After giving time to the matchmen to return to their several trains, and the others to disperse and consult their own security in the best way they could, Outalissi gave the signal agreed upon, and at two o’clock P.M. on Sunday, the twenty-first of January, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, the house at the extreme windward corner of Paramaribo was in a blaze — nobody knew how!

Chapter XIII. The Conflagration.

'Dum Latium Teucris recidivaque Pergama quærunt
Non satius cineres patriæ insedissem supremos,
Atque solum quo Troja fuit?
ÆNEID.

THE fortress where Mr. Cotton was confined is to the extreme windward of the town, and altogether detached from it by a small intervening plain, so that he was quite safe from the fire; but his house, where Matilda resided, was about the centre of the town, and of course exposed to its greatest fury. I should have told my readers that Paramaribo, like most of the towns in the West Indies, is built entirely of wood, and contains perhaps about ten thousand inhabitants. Matilda's intention was, if the fire approached at all near, to join her father in the prison, and wait there till it was extinguished; but so unexampled was the rapidity of its progress, that when, after making the best arrangements she could for the preservation of papers and furniture, she attempted to put her intention into execution, she found the interposing houses nothing but a solid mass of fire, completely interrupting in fact all access from the leeward to the windward side of the town. Many families fled wild and distracted into the leeward savannahs; but this afforded little security, as there was not a drop of rain, and if the wind had risen at all, the flames must soon have overtaken them, or in case of rain they would have perished perhaps still more miserably from sleeping out of shelter on the swampy ground; and such was the disgraceful panic and confusion that prevailed, that the streets (for a lady at least) were almost equally dangerous. Matilda Cotton therefore calmly resigned herself to Providence, and continued in the house. The troops employed themselves principally in staving in the casks, and knocking off the necks of the wine bottles, and before the end of the day were in consequence so drunk, and so much increased the confusion, that could Outalissi have re-collected his party, he might easily have overpowered them.

Edward Bentinck was of course upon duty, and by dint of taunts and threats, but not without great difficulty, he kept his men in tolerable order. Three or four of them, who wore the Waterloo medal, but seemed strongly disposed to tarnish it by following the example of their undisciplined comrades, he fortunately restrained by asking if they were not ashamed, with such a noble badge of true military glory upon them, to turn mere marauders, and that against their own friends and countrymen in the extremity of their distress, for whose protection they were sent out there - like the ruffians on some parts of the coast of England, who were charged with being constantly on the look out for shipwrecks, not to save the unhappy and defenceless sufferers, but to murder and plunder them, and if an opportunity occurred, decoying any ships in distress, without distinction of country, to their destruction for that very purpose? With these three or four steady men Edward Bentinck found it practicable to controul the rest of the party.

He had procured a station as near as he could to Mr. Cotton's house, which in less than three hours from the commencement of the fire, was, with all the adjoining ones, enveloped in flames. Matilda had retired to an upper room, and was calmly anticipating her fate, (her domestics having fled in all directions by her express commands,) when Edward presented himself with half a dozen files of men before her windows.

'Mr. Bentinck,' said Matilda, 'do not, I entreat you, waste your assistance here, the lower part of the house has been burning some time, and the staircase is already smoking, so that to attempt its ascent must be suffocation, and it is impossible that you should reach me alive.'

There was no reply to be made; bursting the doors with the butt ends of his men's muskets, and leaving them at the bottom of the staircase, in half a minute Edward was at her side, followed by the flames which burst from every part of the staircase almost before he entered the room; retreat therefore by the same road was now really impossible, and the whole house was in danger of falling in from moment to moment.

‘Mr. Bentinck,’ said Matilda, ‘I must thank you, but you have acted very wrong; my life was of no value comparatively, yours of much and immediate importance; we must now both perish in the same grave.’

‘A grave,’ said Edward, ‘equally worthy of a soldier and a devoted friend, Miss Cotton! since you deny me a still better claim to it; but I am confident we may still avoid it, if you will trust yourself for two minutes in my arms, if not, I promise you that I will share your fate.’

If Matilda had not been habitually superior to all affectation, in such circumstances she felt that she had no right to relinquish any reasonable chance of saving her own life, much less if by so hesitating she should involve that of another.

‘But I see,’ said she, ‘no possible way in which your arms can avail me, or certainly I would gladly embrace it.’

‘Put yourself into this sling,’ said Edward, tying the two ends of his sash together, ‘and if you will make a seat of one end of it, I will put the other round my neck; and then, if you will also put one of your arms round and hold firmly, I have no doubt that mine are sufficiently strong, by the help of the lamp irons and a rope made of two or three of your shawls, to convey you safe from the windows to the street,’ which accordingly in that way without much difficulty he effected.

But when Edward Bentinck, with his lovely burden, had reached the street, he was almost as much at a loss how to dispose of her as ever; for if the fire had been produced by incendiaries it would probably be followed by an insurrection of the slaves, and it was impossible to tell what outrages might accompany it. At length he prevailed on her to allow him to carry her on board the *William the First*, a ship of five hundred tons burthen lying in the harbour, in which he had come from Holland, and the captain of which was a man of great respectability; with whom, therefore, having as he thought left her in temporary safety, he returned to his duties in the town.

The conflagration continued to rage with ungovernable fury, so that, in fact, in the space of less than eight hours from the commencement, the core of the town was burnt to a stump, and the houses in the skirts and suburbs continued blazing all night. At eight o’clock the dome of the beautiful octagon brick church, which was covered with shingles, a sort of wooden tiles, and stood in the very centre of the town, burst into a flame, and threw up one unbroken circular column of blaze of eighty feet diameter. At twelve o’clock at midnight a report, which sounded like the discharge of a piece of ordnance from one of the ships, attracted all eyes to the harbour, where they saw the flames playing about the shrouds and rigging of the *William the First*, which had caught fire from the intense heat and constant shower of blazing spars and burning ashes from the town, some of which had fallen into the hold, and in ten minutes her whole deck from stem to stern burst into a flame, and her cabin looked through her stern windows like the furnace of a glass-house, or that which was prepared by Nebuchadnezzar for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. The *Betsy*, a large ship of three hundred tons, lying close to her, next caught fire, and both were burned to the water’s edge. Not a hand could be spared from the other vessels, the captains of which were now only intent on saving themselves and cargoes by cutting their cables, and warping, drifting, or towing out of danger; and a second time the life of poor Matilda was suspended on a hair. The captain and several of his sailors had been blown up at the time of what was thought to be the discharge of a piece of ordnance, but which, in fact, was an explosion of a case of gunpowder in the hold, whilst they were pouring water down the gangway. Matilda, at the moment of this explosion, was in the cabin, to which the flames had not yet extended; and the surviving seamen, either forgetting Matilda in the cabin, or concluding that she must have shared the fate of the captain and their messmates, sprang from the forecastle, and were disposed of between the sharks and the other ships, which one or two of them only reached in safety, the ropes of the ships’ boats had soon been burnt asunder, and the boats gone adrift. In this extremity Matilda was seen for a few seconds in an imploring attitude in the mizen chains, till her clothes caught fire, and then she plunged into the water, the ship having by this time been carried out by the tide a considerable distance from the shore.

The agony of Edward Bentinck, when he saw the *William the First* in flames, and reproached himself that by the persuasion he had used to prevail on Miss Cotton to take refuge

there, he had been the author of her present danger, was greater probably than even that of Matilda herself. After waiting many seconds in a vain attempt to launch a canoe through a bank of mud, on which it had been left by the ebb tide, he was upon the point of plunging from the quay to swim towards the vessel; but would never probably have reached it, much less succeeded in returning with Matilda in the same manner, who must therefore have perished if a quicker eye and stronger arm than Edward's, and a heart at least equally bold and faithful had not interposed to rescue her a second time from her impending fate.

'Sir,' said Outalissi, who had watched and knew every thing, and rushed to the harbour when he saw the flames had reached the shipping, seizing Edward by the shoulder, and holding him back at the instant he was about to spring into the water, 'If I cannot save the lady, I am sure you cannot; and if you should accompany me and sink in the effort, you will only embarrass and may entangle us both. If I was encumbered with your ridiculous and suffocating dress, I could not possibly succeed myself; but lend me your sword,' said he, at the same time gently snatching it out of Edward's hand, and springing like a flying fish nearly twenty feet from the quay, he reached the mizen chains of the *William the Third*, just in time to receive Matilda in his left arm as she threw herself into the water; and propelling himself principally by his feet, and making violent sweeps through the water with Edward's sword in his right-hand, the bright blade of which, by reflection from the blazing ship, made a stream of light about them which probably scared away all the water-christians, (as Outalissi used to call the sharks and alligators,) he brought her safe on shore, where he was received with a loud shout of acclamation; and returning his sword to Edward Bentinck, he committed Matilda to his charge.

'Outalissi,' said Matilda, 'you have nobly won your freedom, and I will not rest till I have procured it for you.'

'At present I am free,' said Outalissi. 'Mr. Bentinck can explain to you how I became so; and,' said he, kneeling on one knee, and respectfully just touching the hand which Matilda offered him with his lips, 'I have one boon only to request of my sweet and good young mistress, that when she hears my unhappy race cried down below the beasts of blood and burden, she will say that she knew at least one African, whose gratitude extended to the cheerful risk of his life;' and before Matilda could reply, he had disappeared.

'Where shall I have the honour of conducting Miss Cotton,' said Edward Bentinck, 'as I am sorry to say not a vestige remains of her house; and excepting a few trunks and boxes which we contrived to drag out of the hall, and which I have already sent up to Mr. Cotton, not a fragment remains of any furniture!'

'O, my father! my father!' said Matilda, 'since the intervening town is now reduced to a plain of ashes, the gaoler's wife or daughter will supply me with a change of clothes for the present, and my father will be deranged if he has heard of my danger till he is assured of my escape, and I am sure he will find an opportunity of thanking both my kind friends, (for I must never overlook the service of Outalissi,) as they deserve for their generous self-devotion.'

'I cannot stay now,' said Edward Bentinck, 'to receive Mr. Cotton's thanks,' as he parted from Matilda at the door of the prison, 'but I shall be overpaid if my exertions on this occasion should restore me to the rank which I once flattered myself that I enjoyed in the good opinion of Miss Cotton.'

On Matilda's entering her father's apartment he started up, clasped his hands, and folding her to his heart, exclaimed, 'Now let them take all, since my darling child's preserved to me. How thankful we should be that your brother Charles is still at Anne's Grove. But to whom am I indebted for this great mercy?'

When Matilda had described the occurrences in which she was either party or spectator, 'I have wronged them both then,' said Mr. Cotton; 'I have wronged them grievously, but I trust I may yet live to repair to both the injustice I have done them.' In fact, Mr. Cotton was exceedingly ill; totally unaccustomed to confinement, its effects only for a few weeks, (added to his apprehension of the probability of greater punishment,) in a miserable close dungeon, had become very evident in

his strength, spirits, and appearance, and his agony for the few hours he was in suspense about his daughter, and perhaps the no less agitating surprise of his joy on his ocular conviction of her safety, threw him into a considerable fever, in which I must leave Matilda to attend him for the present, while I pursue the other parts of my story.

On the morning after the fire, the place where Paramaribo had been, resembled only the plain of Sodom and Gomorrah; nothing remained within the range of the fire but the brick, stumps, and foundations of the houses and smoking ashes, except two or three houses occupied by British residents, who not giving way to the general panic, by great exertions kept off the flames successfully through the awful night.* The amount of property destroyed was computed at twelve hundred thousand pounds; and Outalissi could not help leaning against one of the unprostrated columns of the central octagon church for half an hour after sunrise, surveying with great complacency, or rather exultation, the sublime spectacle of desolation of which he was the author, 'O!' said he to himself, 'that those accursed Christians that fired my peaceful village, and with the remorselessness of fiends consigned me and all my tribe to a life of hopeless exile and anguish, and the slow but sure extermination of the coarse, cold, cowardly, material, heartless, hopeless, inexorable* cruelties of Dutch bondage, could witness this scene!! Although the destruction of ten times the property scarcely deserves the name of vengeance for the enslavement of a single mind, or the wanton extinction of a single life, yet, when they see what one bold heart and able hand can do, let them tremble for the certain day of full retribution.

'When Afric's wrongs shall call to cleanse her shame
That embryo spirit, yet without a name,
That friend of nature, whose avenging hands
Shall burst the Libyans' adamantine bands!
Who sternly marking on his native soil
The blood, the tears, the anguish, and the toil,
Shall bid each righteous heart exult to see
Peace to the slave, and vengeance to the free!†

'O! had there but been two Outalissis, even now the glorious prize of freedom would have here been won; but these Christian cowards at Anne's Grove, as I foreboded, have defeated the best half of my design; either their own hearts have failed them, or they have been betrayed by their sly prophet Mr. Schwartz.' There was an expression of defiance in the noble figure and attitude of Outalissi during this soliloquy which did not escape the observation of the passengers, and upon an intimation of their suspicions to the town-guard, he was dodged, and from falling into one of the undisclosed cellars amongst the ruins, was ultimately taken and lodged in another part of the same prison with his soi-disant owner.

I must now return with my readers to the conspirators at Anne's Grove. On the Friday preceding the destruction of the colonial capital, they commenced operations by seizing Mr. Hogshead, with the intention of immediately executing him for his cruelty to Charlotte Venture; after which they were, according to their arrangements with Outalissi, to make a blaze of the buildings, and then proceed directly before there should be time for the soldiers to intercept them, to assist their confederates in confining the whites, and firing the buildings upon all the neighbouring plantations. They recognized willingly the super cession of the *Lex Talionis* by the Christian religion, and instead of slowly flogging Mr. Hogshead to death, or employing any torture,

* See Note L.

*† See Note M.

† I have substituted these beautiful lines of Campbell's for the actual expressions of Outalissi, of which the import was the same, but the energy was conveyed less in the words than the accompanying action. - *Note by the Author.*

they were merely proceeding to put a pistol to his brain, when Mr. Schwartz (who knew nothing positively of their intentions but from the general murmurs of dissatisfaction with which Mr. Hogshead, who was the cause of them, could not but be aware, as well as himself,) being now anxiously upon the watch, presented himself to them, and declared, that if they took Mr. Hogshead's life or any other, or had recourse to a single act of violence till they knew whether redress in the particular case of Charlotte Venture, and adequate protection against the recurrence of such outrages or any other gross injustice, could be obtained by a firm and general demand of it from the government, he would strike their names out of his list of Christ's disciples in that colony. After a long debate, the negroes were prevailed on to be content with putting the director into the stocks; but hesitation and vacillation in all these cases is almost always fatal. Before they had effected this design, (after losing so much time in discussion with Mr. Schwartz,) a detachment of soldiers had been brought up by one of the pampered and favourite drivers of the director, who had run down unobserved at the commencement of the tumult to the outpost, where Edward Bentinck had been stationed some weeks before, but which was now occupied by the officer who had relieved him.

On the arrival of the soldiers, all the ulterior parts of Outalissi's projects were at once defeated.

The director was of course rescued and set at liberty; the negroes were confined upon the plantation under a strong guard, — and upon Mr. Hogshead's declaration to the officer in command, that Mr. Schwartz had been the instigator of the whole business, although this same officer had refused only a short time before to attend to or interfere with the complaint of Mr. Schwartz against Mr. Hogshead for rape and murder, Mr. Schwartz, after having had all his papers, even his private journal, seized and taken from him, was sent off on Sunday as soon as their apprehension of further explosion had subsided a little, under a military escort, with a letter from Mr. Hogshead to the fiscal, and another from the ensign on the spot to his commanding officer to Paramaribo, where he arrived with the tide on Monday evening, and was immediately consigned to a share of Outalissi's dungeon. At the same time, Mr. Hogshead, who knew nothing of what had happened at Paramaribo, took the opportunity for the sake of his security of sending up little Charles Cotton to his father, who with some difficulty procured, as a temporary asylum for him and his sister, and her dispersed domestics, one of the houses in a place called the Combay, a sort of suburb to Paramaribo, but to the windward of the fortress, and a little lower down the river.

Chapter XIV. The Trial.

'Christians accursed! they left of all my tribe
Nor man, nor child, nor thing of living birth,
No! not the dog that watch'd my household hearth,
Escaped that night of blood upon our plains!
All perish'd! I alone am left on earth!
To whom nor relative, nor blood remains,
No! not a kindred drop that runs in human veins.'
CAMPBELL.

ON the morning following the fire, from some suspicions which attended its origin, and a rumour which reached the government, of the disturbance at Anne's Grove, martial law was proclaimed, and in a day or two following upon the accusation of Mr. Hogshead a court-martial was assembled for the trial of Mr. Schwartz and Outalissi, for 'exciting and provoking the negro slaves within the colony to open revolt and rebellion against the authority of their lawful masters, managers, and overseers, and aiding and assisting in such revolt and rebellion, contrary to their allegiance, and against the peace of their Sovereign Lord the King his crown and dignity.' I shall not trouble my reader with the mockery of forms employed on this occasion. Absolute power was never known to be baffled in its purposes for want of form, and this opportunity of indulging the infidelity and antipathy which prevailed in the colony against Christianity, in the person of one of its ministers, was not to be lost. I shall only say, that in order to give an impression of legality to their proceedings they made the chief justice of the colony, one Mr. Van Yaruu, a very worthy man, as I have been informed, a colonel of the militia-staff, and most unaccountably prevailed on him to be president, or senior member of the court.

After the arraignment was gone through, the first evidence adduced was the private journal of Mr. Schwartz, from which were read the following select extracts.

'July 6, 1817. - While at dinner at half past three o'clock Lucinda came in with a sorrowful countenance. Lucinda is a member of the church, and much affected with the Gospel. She is an old woman, and though her manager tells her not to come to church, she tells him she will come, even if he cuts her throat for it.'

'August 30, 1817. - The negroes have complained to me lately of excessive labour, and very severe treatment. I told one of their overseers that I thought they would work the people to death.'

'September 13, 1817. - This evening a negro belonging to Mr. Kuster came to me, saying, the manager was so cruel to him he could not bear it. According to the man's account, some time back, two or three years, he with a few others made a complaint of the same thing to the fiscal, on which account the manager has taken a great dislike to him, and scarcely ever meets him without cursing him as he passes by. The punishment which he inflicts upon him is dreadfully severe; for every little thing he flogs him. I believe Ned to be a quiet harmless man. I think he does his work very well. A manager told me himself that he had punished many negroes merely to spite Mr. Wilberforce. I believe the laws of justice which relate to the negroes are only known by name here, for while I am writing this the driver is flogging the people, neither manager nor overseer near.'

'March —. -- While writing this my very heart flutters at hearing the almost incessant cracking of the whip. Having just finished reading Mr. Walker's Letters on the West Indies, I have thought much of the treatment of the negroes, and likewise of the state of their minds. It appears to me very probable that ere long they will resent the injuries done to them. I should think it my duty to state my opinion respecting this to some of the rulers of the colony, but am fearful from the conduct of the fiscal, in this late affair of the negroes being worked on Sundays, that they would be more solicitous to silence me, by requiring me to criminate some individual, than to redress the wrongs done to the slaves, by diligently watching the conduct of the planters themselves, and bringing them to justice (without the intervention of missionaries) when they detect such abuses of the law as frequently take place.'

'November 17. - Yesterday evening we had not more than fifty at chapel; indeed I cannot expect many more till the coffee and cotton are gathered in. The people have scarcely any time to eat their food - they have none to cook it, eating for the most part raw yellow plantains. This would be bearable for a time, but to work at that rate, and to be perpetually flogged, astonishes me that they will submit to it.'

'November --. - Jackey of Dochfour, and Peter of the Hope, came into the house evidently much depressed in mind, to relate what they conceived an unexampled case of persecution, it was in brief, that their respective managers, under a show of friendly familiarity, accosted the Christian negroes with taunting jokes, on the subject of religion, in presence of the heathen negroes, representing that their profession was only hypocrisy, and that a trifling consideration would prevail with them to abandon it, for which they ought to be treated with scorn and contempt. By diabolism some of these poor negroes had been provoked to adopt language in a manner said to be disrespectful, and for this insolence they had been repeatedly flogged and confined in the stocks. The complainants wanted to know what they were to do in such a case. I advised them accordingly.'

'May --. - Whilst at breakfast this morning I received a communication from the Burgher Captain, the substance of which is, to persuade the planters not to allow the slaves to attend chapel on Sunday, without a pass, and in an indirect manner, not to allow them to come at all in the evening, and even on a Sunday to send an overseer with the slaves, as judges of the doctrines we preach. The circular appears to me designed to throw an impediment in the way of the slaves receiving instruction, under colour of a desire to meet the wishes of his majesty's government.'

'June --. - Isaac of Triumph came in to ask whether the Governor's new law, as he called it, forbid the slaves meeting together on the estates to which they belonged, in an evening, for the purpose of learning the catechism. Their manager, he said, had threatened to punish them if they held any meeting. I informed him that the law gave the manager no such power, and that it had nothing to do with that subject.'

'July --. - Mr. Elliott, another missionary, has just left our house: he came merely to see us. I was glad to hear he had at length commenced evening preaching once a week on the coast, on a Thursday evening. It appears the same impediments are thrown in the way of instructing the negroes on the west coast as on the east, and it will be so as long as the present system prevails, or rather exists.'

'July --. - Mrs. de Florimant and her two daughters called to take leave of us: they are going to Holland. Hogshead the manager came with them. His conversation immediately turned upon the new regulations expected in the British West Indies. He declared that if he was prevented flogging the women, he would keep them in solitary confinement without food, if they were not punctual with their work. He, however, comforted himself in the belief that such a project could never be carried into effect in this colony, and in this I certainly agree with him. The rigours of negro slavery, I am afraid, can never be mitigated - the system must be abolished.'

Extracts of this sort might be multiplied *ad infinitum* from the journal of every honest man in Surinam who keeps a journal.* I will not therefore weary my readers with any more, but only say, that by constructive ingenuity in the use of private papers, although containing merely the plainest truths in the simplest language, by the admission of hearsay evidence, and the intimidation of the gospel-shaken courage of some Christian negroes to bear false witness, the charges comprised in Mr. Schwartz's arraignment were quite proved to the satisfaction of the Court, and he was ordered to proceed with his defence.

Dressed in his usual simple, unaffected manner, with an expression of stern composure, but not the slightest appearance of passion or defiance in his countenance, Mr. Schwartz, as if he was speaking from some internal prompting, without the power of deviation, shortly addressed the Court as follows:

* See note N.

‘Mr. President Van Yaruu, and Gentlemen of the Court. In the first place I protest against the jurisdiction of a military court to try a civil subject for any language or action expressed or committed before the proclamation of martial law, which if it could give retrospective authority to such proceedings for a single day, might do so equally for the whole period of a man’s life. I protest also against the admission of hearsay evidence, and much more against the admission of such evidence when in favour of the prosecution, and its rejection when in favour of my exculpation; and, lastly, against any charges derived from the prosecutor’s discretionary construction of my private papers. Having thus from a sense of duty to my wife and children, and after St. Paul’s example in appealing to Cæsar, stated these preliminary objections, in order to avail myself of such protection as the laws of my country may afford me, which is the birthright of every subject; I disclaim in so doing the slightest intentional disrespect to the Court, being entirely without personal feeling on the subject, firmly believing that they can have no power over me except it be given them from above; and that if it should please my divine master, who has done me the great honour to employ my life in his service, here to terminate my feeble but cheerful and earnest endeavour to walk worthy of so high a vocation, he will overrule my death to be of still more service to Him than my life.

‘I have no other defence than to prove that my instructions to the negroes upon all occasions have been in strict conformity to the doctrines and directions of the religion which I am appointed to teach. That by showing the contrast of the lives and conversations of the whites with the laws and institutions of Christ, those instructions may have had the effect of lowering the whites in the estimation of their slaves, I dare not for a moment deny; for if Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold I would not even to save my life utter a falsehood, or go beyond what I believed to be the word and will of God. If, for example, I preached to the negroes the observance of the sabbath, and that God is no respecter of persons, and the whites treat its observance with derision, the negroes *must* conclude either that I am imposing upon them for a divine commandment what is not a law of God, or that the whites are bad men, or at least in that particular, objects of the Almighty’s displeasure. The same argument will apply to every precept in the Decalogue, and every principle of Christianity, and there is no way of avoiding the possibility of such a consequence from instructing your slaves in Christianity, but by a reformation here in Surinam upon Christian principles of your whole social edifice. The heaviest penalties are denounced by inspiration against those who preach mutilated gospels. I dare not do it; indeed it would be vain, because such gospels would be utterly incomprehensible as a restorative dispensation for the re-impression of the moral image of his Maker on the fallen soul of man, and I have one of the highest authorities of the Church of England, viz. that of Bishop Horsley, for saying, that to do any good, and notwithstanding the liability of some things hard to be understood to be wrested by the unlearned and unstable to their own destruction, the ‘WHOLE Gospel with all its mysteries *must* be laid before all congregations.’ Unless the whole edifice of God’s Christian temple be reared together in the human heart, the connexion of its parts with each other cannot be comprehended, or its grace, symmetry, and loveliness appreciated as they deserve. I shall prove that in my professional intercourse with your slaves I have never by word or action exceeded my bounden duty as a Christian minister in endeavouring to lay in their minds the foundation of this comprehensive building, and having done that, I confess I shall not be very careful of the issue of this trial, for although for the sake of my family I sometimes feel a human wish to live, it would ill become the confidence in that parental providence, in which I have lived and walked up to this day, to doubt its extension to my orphan children, and their widowed mother, my beloved companion through this vale of trial, my fellow-labourer indeed I may truly call her in Christ’s vineyard, for but for her heaven-vouchsafed support I might perhaps myself sometimes have sunk under the burden and heat of the day; whether, therefore, to myself the issue of this trial be life or death - *Te Deum laudamus!*’

When Mr. Schwartz was about to call his witnesses, he was desired by the Court to withdraw, and upon his return he was informed, that such a line of defence as he had adopted was quite inadmissible; that they (his judges) sat there as a court of military and colonial policy, and not

of polemics; and that unless he could prove that his preaching had in no way either directly or indirectly contributed to the revolt, his proving merely that he had preached nothing but the doctrines of Christianity could not avail him.

Mr. Schwartz bowed, and said that he had no other defence to offer.

'But before you leave the Court, Mr. Schwartz,' said Mr. Van Yaru, 'I must beg you to answer a few plain questions which I ask, really that we may know a little what we are about, in the toleration here of this modern spirit of Evangelism. We are living upon *suppositos cineres*, and must suppress the uncontroled circulation of any inflammatory matter, be it what it may. If you thought the introduction of Christianity amongst the negroes would produce revolution, would you continue to preach?'

'Most assuredly,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'I would preach it at the risk of any possible temporal consequences, or I should not deserve the name of a Christian missionary.'

'Do you think,' continued Mr. Van Yaru, 'that revolution *will* be the consequence?'

'That,' replied Mr. Schwartz, 'depends upon whether his Netherlands Majesty's government is Christian or Infidel, of which you are better judges than I am. If there are no channels prepared by government for the flood of light which must accompany the progress of Christianity, I think it may.'

'If you were *sure* revolution would ensue in this colony from the introduction of Christianity amongst the slaves, would you still persist in preaching it?' said Mr. Van Yaru.

'If,' said the undaunted martyr, 'the pile of moral enormity, of which your social edifice is composed, stood like the house of Dagon upon pillars, and I were sure that preaching Christianity would have the same effect as that produced by Sampson in removing one of them, I would continue to preach it, although I buried myself in the ruins of the system which it overthrew.'

'But,' said Colonel Van Yaru, 'the negroes in the West Indies do not feel the degradation of their situation, as you would make the people in Europe believe?'

'Then be easy!' said Mr. Schwartz; 'they will not have recourse to violence to escape it.'

'But you make them feel it,' observed the president.

'It is impossible,' said Mr. Schwartz, 'to preach Christianity without. The simple question therefore at last is, whether Revelation be of God or man; if of the latter, it will come to nought; but if of the former, ye cannot overthrow it. But upon this question, gentlemen, you must, like every other man, decide for yourselves. I presume not to enter into it with gentlemen of your education and abundant sources of information.'

Mr. Schwartz was then remanded to his prison (a low, damp, wretched cell, over a sink of water, with the boards of the floor gaping half an inch asunder), and told by the Court, that he should be acquainted with the decision in the course of the evening. The members at the same time affecting to shudder at the notions he had expressed of the paramount claims upon his exertions and life of the service of Revelation (which gave him a pretty clear intimation of what that decision would be), as if, had the noble martyr felt otherwise, he could have really been a believer in the divine authority of Revelation, or as if, had he spoken otherwise, he would not have been a dissembler.

The next person brought before the Court, and the only negro of whom I shall here give any account, was Outalissi. Nothing could be finer than the contrast between the carriage of the Christian martyr and the patriot of nature. REVENGE was considered by the former as a species of sacrilege, a daring and impious innovation of the expressly served prerogative of God; indeed, from habitual reference, in all his conduct, to the indisputable direction of some unerring authority, he seemed incapable of admitting resentment or any egotistical feelings into his motives; he was perfectly self-possessed and composed, but his serenity seemed derived, like that of Elisha and his servant, from the rampart of horses and chariots of fire, with which the eye of faith disclosed to him that he was girdled, and not from the consciousness of any resources within himself; persecution aimed at him seemed to recoil upon itself, not from reverberation against his fortitude, but from his inobviousness to the blow, like striking at a ghost. His animal body was certainly present, and

appeared tangible, but his most intimate sensibilities seemed to be disblended from it, and merely to sit over it in discipline and regulation of conduct.

‘Though round his breast the rolling clouds were spread,
Eternal sunshine (seemed already to have) settled on his head.’

Very different was the air of the noble representative of original man, as he approached the bar of the Court; revenge was to him not only a legitimate human passion, but an imperative duty, an exercise of piety, and there was a sullen smile of exultation upon his face at the success which had attended his pursuit of it. Pride in his port, defiance in his eye, he looked as if aristocracy was an institution of nature, and he was a peer of the first rank.

No animal that I ever saw approaches man in beauty of conformation, where the symmetry evidently intended by nature is perfectly developed. Where this is the case in Europe, it is not distinguishable through the burlesque of the European costume, and from some cause or other, * it is certainly not generally (although, perhaps, oftener) seen unimpaired amongst the unluxuriated children of nature, but in the present case it was so. Nothing could be more imposing than the appearance of Outalissi, his figure was quite equal to that of the Apollo Belvidere, and he stood before the Court with as much naked majesty of person, but more human impetuosity of character in his face; the expression of his countenance indeed was one of perfect self-possession and composure, as well as that of Mr. Schwartz; but Outalissi’s composure arose evidently not from the absence of passion, but the intenseness of self-controul - exultation, disdain, and conscious self-sufficiency, and fortitude of nerve to conceal every emotion of weakness that could give the slightest triumph to his Christian judges, under any tortures which they might inflict, seemed the ascendant feelings. And when (after his arraignment was read to him, charging him with being concerned with the other disciples of Mr. Schwartz in the proceedings at Anne’s Grove, and also with the destruction of Paramaribo, and the evidence, such as it was, gone through), Mr. Van Yaruu, the president, said, ‘Outalissi, you have heard what has been witnessed against you; what have you to say in your defence?’

The noble prisoner, without either insolence or abjectness, but in a tone of great energy, and the simple and impressive eloquence of truth, expressed himself to the following effect: -

‘A band of Christian sailors, not many moons ago (of one of whom I had saved the life and nursed and sheltered him in my peaceful cabin, and who was thus enabled to discover it to his companions,) coming upon us by surprise at midnight, when we were defenceless and unarmed, set fire to my much loved village, and in the confusion seized and bound the unhappy and unoffending inhabitants; I alone escaped their hands at first, but afterwards became their prey, by a stratagem of the most cruel perfidy - they bribed me to surrender myself, by a promise which they have since confessed that they never meant to have fulfilled of releasing my aged mother, but she would not be persuaded to accept either life or liberty without mine; thanks, however, to the Great Spirit, she soon obtained the best sort of release, by death; and the Christian slave traders, after committing every outrage and violence upon the other women and children, and murdering the sick and disabled, transported all the wretched survivors, including myself, to irredeemable slavery in your pestilential swamps here; every inmate of my hearth, even my faithful dog, having been first destroyed by them, - there runs not a drop of Outalissi’s blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge, and I have sought, and in some degree, although not adequately, found it; *JDID* destroy your town, and I rejoice that I have so far appeased the spirits of my fathers, and wiped out at least some of the indignities suffered by them from Christians, in the person of their son. Had I not been disappointed of the support I had depended on, my vengeance would have been ampler still; as it was, many lives were in my power, but single victims were not

* See Note O.

worthy of my deep-stung indignation. Do not think I spared them from fear, Outalissi never knew fear, and now would not turn upon his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Outalissi? Not one; but I have no *Christian* thirst for blood, am not a Christian, and was not induced to any thing which I have done by Mr. Schwartz, whom I believe (although he has had the misfortune to be born in a Christian country) to be a good man, and in spite of his Christian prejudices to be worthy of the care and love of the Great Spirit - the just and common father of us all.'

Upon this speech, which was uttered with the utmost moderation, i.e. without any thing like bravado or insolence, although with great energy and firmness by one of the finest looking negroes that was, perhaps, ever seen; Mr. Hogshead, who was in Court, breaking through all decorum, called out - 'Rascal! that is not what we want to know; we do not care about your indignities or injuries, or your cursed humbug about African villages, and peace, and hearths, and dogs, or any thing else that belonged to you; the only chance you have of saving your life is, to give us a list of all the others whom you and that d--d white hypocrite, Mr. Schwartz, prevailed on to be concerned with you in this rebellion; and if you will not do it without, the torture shall make you confess crimes as black as yourself, as well as those of your hateful accomplices.'

To which Outalissi, who now swelled in every vein with indignation and contempt, replied, '*Christians,*' which he always considered the most opprobrious name by which he could address any one, 'the tigers have trembled for these hands,' holding them up, 'and dare you think to threaten me with your wretched instruments; no, I despise the utmost tortures you can now invent, as much as I do the pitiful wretch who threatens to inflict them.* You shall not extort from me the name of a single person that was engaged with me; although I now declare to you (because I know by so doing that I shall drive a dagger through your coward soul) that they were more in number than their Christian tyrants.'

Mr. Van Yaruu upon this, after very properly reprovng Mr. Hogshead for his indecorum in interrupting the prisoner's defence and violating the solemnity of the Court, asked Outalissi if he had any thing more to say; and, upon his declining, remanded him back to the same dungeon with Mr. Schwartz; where, in the course of the evening, the verdict of guilty, and sentence of death were communicated to both of them, and they were ordered to prepare for execution on the following day, before which, however, they were told, that the rack would probably be employed upon both of them at the place of execution, if they did not in the mean time give up the names of *their accomplices*.

* See Stedman, vol. ii. pages 209, 210. - *Editor*.

Chapter XV. The Execution.

'Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
Bled nobly; and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompense. We give in charge
Their names to the sweet lyre. The historic muse,
Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
To latest times, and sculpture in her turn,
Gives bond in stone and ever during brass
To guard them, and immortalize her trust,
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid
To those, who, posted at the shrine of truth, -
COWPER.

IN addition to Mr. Schwartz and Outalissi, whom we left at the close of the last chapter anticipating their martyrdom on the ensuing morning, there were two other unhappy prisoners under sentence of death; the one was an Englishman for forgery, the other a Dutch Roman Catholic soldier for the murder of his sergeant, and as the authorities thought it would give an air of impartiality to their proceedings that the four should suffer together, these also were ordered to prepare for execution, which was appointed to take place on the plain before the government house.

The morning was a particularly fine one, the sun rose with unusual splendour. The garrison was early under arms, the instruments of torture were on the ground, and the four men were marched round the plain behind the military band, playing the dead march, and attended by a strong guard to the last spot which was to receive their earthly footsteps. Four graves were dug a little in the rear, with a coffin in front of each, and in front of the coffins were the rack and other machines for extorting confessions.

The soldier preceded the other prisoners in the procession, with the Catholic domine by his side, bare-headed, and with the crucifix in his hand, which he ever and anon held up before the eyes of his unhappy disciple, exclaiming with great fervour -

O! Crux alma dei sacro medefacta cruore
Offer opem citius brachia pande sibi!

And when the man seemed (by a look of agony, for he scarcely spoke a word) to ask if such mercy could be meant for *him*? 'Yes! for you,' said the domine emphatically, 'and every truly humbled sinner, if you will only restrain your doubts.'

Turn to this symbol your admiring eyes,
Believe! rush forward, and possess the prize!

This man had been a desperate character and a murderer, but it was impossible not to sympathize with the manly propriety of his comportment on this awful occasion. There was no inebriety, no bravado, but the most soldierly gaze of defiance upon death, in the certainty of its immediate incurrence, without a perceptible tremor, as he knelt upon his appointed coffin.

'Is it philosophy, or insensibility, or religion, that supports this man now?' said Edward Bentinck to Sergeant Vanderdonder, both of whom were of course upon duty with the rest of the garrison, 'and if religion, is it a false peace?'

'I don't know,' said the Sergeant, very nobly, for the culprit had attempted once to murder, and actually stabbed the Sergeant Vanderdonder out of jealousy, 'whatever it is, the man is now about to expiate his crimes against the world with his life, and has not God a right to forgive those against himself, without asking leave of man's partial views of comparative justice?'

'Well said, sergeant,' said Edward, 'God forgive him, poor fellow!'

‘Amen!’ said the honest sergeant, ‘as I hope to be forgiven!’

The next person in the solemn procession was the English forger; he was a poor, miserable, lilylivered sort of fellow by nature, and on his first detection and apprehension for the crime, of which he knew the certain penalty, appeared (if I may use such an expression) almost *disgustingly* afraid of death; but between his arrest and execution, he had been attended with such exemplary diligence, judgment, and earnest and affectionate benevolence, by an English missionary of the name of Smith,* as to have undergone a revolution of character so complete and astonishing, that it apparently comprised even his constitution of body, and enabled him to evince a composure and even chastened joy in his condition, which exceeded that of his military companion.

On leaving his cell, the following conversation was reported to have passed between him and Mr. Smith, who attended him to the last. Mr. Smith said to him, ‘I hope you are leaving a prison for a paradise to-day.’

He replied, ‘I have a paradise already.’ On looking forward to the place of execution, he said, ‘I thought *that* sight would have sunk my heart, but God enables me to sustain that too.’

‘You have now,’ said Mr. Smith, ‘entered on the last hour of your earthly existence.’

‘I have,’ replied he, ‘but who would think that and look at me? See, I am now all calmness and comfort. O, what happiness do I now feel! How good is God to me! I have always dreaded the distress of soul that I might feel at this, last hour, yet this is the best hour which I ever had in my life. How good is God. He has kept the best blessings till the last. He knew that I should want most comforts now. If he had given them sooner, perhaps I might have slighted them, or trifled with them, but now they are just what I want. O let me praise him! Almost every night,’ said he, ‘when I was in my cell, after my first introduction by you to an acquaintance with the real nature of the Christian dispensation, my whole life came in review, with a thousand things which I had not thought of for many years, and all appeared so black and dreadful, that I scarcely dared to hope; but I now see sin in all its odiousness, and would rather die than run the risk, which I should by living, of a relapse into it, for I do believe that my repentance is accepted, and that Jesus *has* paid my dreadful debt to the violated majesty of his Father, whom I may now therefore, without presumption, call also mine; do tell my friends what I feel, it will make them happy to hear it. I am astonished at the greatness of my own consolations. How can a dying man be thus calm?’ Then holding out his arm, he said, ‘Look, not a nerve of my body trembles, and I have not a fear in my soul!’

Mr. Smith reminded him, when he had taken his station to be shot, and whilst kneeling on his coffin next the soldier, that he had always encouraged him to hope that God would hear prayer, and support him at the last hour.

He replied, ‘God has heard every prayer since I entered the prison which we have just left; he has given me every thing for which I asked.’*

Mr. Schwartz followed to the ground the last prisoner, and being brought before the governor, was asked, ‘Whether he was prepared freely to give up the names of the parties in Outalissi’s conspiracy, or to have them wrung from him by the rack?’

Mr. Schwartz said, ‘that he could not give up the names of men to their vengeance, whom he believed, in his conscience, to have had no other design than that of procuring redress for the most aggravated oppression and injustice, and who, if they had succeeded, would, he was persuaded, have acted with a forbearance towards their enemies, and jealousy of taking life, that would reflect shame upon most of the victories of soi-disant Christians.’**

* See note P.

* See note Q.

* See note R.

'You hear his confession, governor,' said Mr. Hogshead, who was present, 'he admits that he knows the negroes who were involved in this diabolical conspiracy.' 'If you will not give us their names,' said the governor to Mr. Schwartz, 'I must bind you to the rack.'

'Pain is terrible to the flesh,' said Mr. Schwartz calmly, 'but I believe that God can support me even under the tortures which you threaten, but if not, I will not betray to your vengeance those who have suffered too much from you already, and whom I consider as innocent of all guilt.'

'Bind him to the rack,' said the governor to the fellow in attendance for that purpose. On the officers proceeding to the execution of this order, the resolution of the glorious martyr seemed almost to fail him, a cold sweat burst out from every pore, and a visible tremor pervaded his joints; however he had the fortitude to submit himself to be bound to the wheel, and on persisting in his silence, it was put in motion, and when his bones and joints were all broken or dislocated, Mr. Hogshead asked him, 'of what service his friend Christ was to him then?'

'I never,' said Mr. Schwartz distinctly and firmly, 'had so clear a view of his glory, or such experience of his goodness and truth as at this moment,' and expired with the last word.[†]

At length Outalissi was brought forward to the governor, and a fine study he presented for an artist as he stood before him, his left leg advanced a little like that of a soldier standing at ease; the length and grace of his limbs well bound, with the exact proportion of muscle to give the utmost possible degree of strength and vigour without clumsiness; the exquisite cleanliness and beauty of the bent knee joint; the compact and firm, yet agile loins, unloaded with the least excess of corpulence; the fine convexing chest and corresponding shoulders, the Herculean strength of the latter entirely relieved to the eye by a light graceful neck, surmounted by features of luminous intelligence, and an expression of conscious self-sufficiency, which might have overawed a lion, left nothing wanting but a pedestal to make his whole figure rival, if not surpass, the utmost powers of the chissel, each separate part of the noble structure deriving from its indissociable connection and harmony with the whole the vindication of its own propriety; so that every impulse of risibility, even to the eye of a European unaccustomed to the naked exposure of the human person, was overborne by the imposing dignity of the combined expression, and you felt that artificial clothing would have been as ridiculous, and as much misplaced upon Outalissi, as upon the statue of the Apollo Belvidere. The torture and death of Mr. Schwartz he had surveyed with stern complacency,

'As monumental bronze unchang'd his look,
A soul that pity touch'd, but never shook,
Train'd, from his tree-rock'd cradle to his bier,
The fierce extremes of good and ill to brook;
Impassive - fearing but the shame of fear -
A stoic of the woods - a man without a tear.'

Once only pronouncing, in a tone of bitter sarcasm, his climax of disgust and loathing in the word **CHRISTIANS!!!** And when the governor pointing to the body of the martyred missionary, asked him, if he was prepared either to disclose his accomplices, or undergo a similar treatment? he did not even deign to answer, and persisted in his indignant silence, till Mr. Hogshead, whose rage had never yet been appeased for the rescue from his grasp by Outalissi of poor Charlotte Venture, or the constant repulse of his infamous advances by Charlotte herself, baffled in the discovery of more victims to his resentment, and unable any longer to restrain the expression of his disappointment, broke out into a torrent of the most unmeasured and coarsest abuse, saying, 'that the death of Mr. Schwartz was much too good for a black rascal like that, that he should be roasted by a slow fire, flayed, or buried alive up to his neck, or have hot melted wax or lead poured upon his navel, or be hung up alive to a gibbet by one of his ribs to feed the vultures, as used to be the mode of execution

[†] See note S.

in the time of Stedman; that to treat such a fellow with humanity, that had nothing human about him but his shape, was a perversion of the term.’ At this moment a letter from Miss Cotton was put into the hands of Edward Bentinck, who stood close to the governor, saying that her father was too ill to write himself, but had authorised her to intreat Mr. Bentinck to make the governor acquainted with his inextinguishable gratitude and obligations to Outalissi, in having, on two separate occasions, at the extreme risk of his own life, saved what was a thousand times dearer to him than all his wealth, viz. the lives of both his children, and to explain to his excellency the particulars of her brother’s rescue from the tiger, and her own from the blazing ship by Outalissi, and if pardon could not be extended to him, at least to spare him all indignities and torture, that her agitation and hurry between the confusion of the fire and her attendance on a sick parent, and the extreme rapidity of the trial, conviction, and sentence of Mr. Schwartz and Outalissi, with all of which she only became acquainted that morning, made it impossible for her to apply to him before; that she had not perhaps the same right to interfere in Mr. Schwartz’s case, but should be glad either privately or publicly to express her conviction in the Christian integrity and goodness of his intentions, and (if there was yet time, although she feared there was not) to sign a petition, in which also her father would join with his other friends for mercy. Almost at the same moment when this letter was delivered to Mr. Bentinck, little Charles Cotton, who had been stealing up to Outalissi, (having seen the crowd of persons, and from the curiosity incident to children, followed the servant to the plain,) now sprang upon his arm, but overcome with alarm by the appalling objects by which he was closely encircled, could not utter a word, but bursting into tears, endeavoured to pull Outalissi away; and when the governor, who knew the child, endeavoured to separate them, he only clung the harder, and said, that if they did any harm to Outalissi he would tell his papa, that Outalissi was not an **ougy** man, (the negro term for wicked,) that Mr. Hogshead was an ougry man, and Outalissi a good man. The governor, who was far from a bad hearted man in cases that came immediately under his own observation, was a good deal struck, and indeed affected by so strong and totally undesigned a testimony to the humanity and good qualities of Outalissi, which Mr. Hogshead had so atrociously denied only the moment preceding, and inquired into the occasion of such an extraordinary attachment to him by his owner’s child, which gave Edward Bentinck an opportunity of executing the commission which he had just received, and his selection for which, by Miss Cotton, made him but too happy.

‘Take away those instruments of hell!’ said the governor, when Edward Bentinck had finished his narration. ‘Outalissi! it is impossible for me to spare your life consistently with my duty to the colony, the safety of which must at all times and in all cases be my first object, and of that safety you are the confessed and open enemy; but you have heard the application that has been made for you, and the instances of your personal courage and humanity that have been so opportunely testified by your late owner’s family; your character as a man now stands redeemed from all imputation, and I shall treat you as an open but honourable enemy, and be satisfied with inflicting on you a soldier’s death, therefore disengage yourself from the child, and kneel with the two first prisoners upon your coffin.

‘Governor!’ said Outalissi, for a single moment subdued to tears, ‘I could have borne any torture, but this unexpected kindness unmans me. Death is nothing to me with honour, life nothing to me without, and since the great Spirit which is over all has thus vindicated my character, and proved to you decisively that I am not the monster which that bad man would make me out to be, but susceptible of some at least of the noblest feelings of our common nature; I cheerfully embrace the death you offer me, in the fullest confidence that there is another world, in which, if you are only acting as honestly up to your convictions of duty, as I have strove (however often unsuccessfully) to fulfil mine, it is appointed by the goodness of that awful Spirit, the common Judge and Father of us all, that we should meet again. Shades of my fathers! pardon these tears,

‘The last, the first,
The only tears that ever burst

From Outalissi's soul.'

Having then persuaded little Charles Cotton to return home on the assurance that he was only going back to his own country; and that, if he was a good, boy, he should one day or other infallibly see him again, he took his station kneeling on his coffin in a line with his two companions, earnestly refusing to have his eyes bound, in which also he was indulged. The platoon instructed for the purpose were marched into a line opposite about thirty yards off, the intermediate space cleared of the amateurs, the signal given, and in less than five minutes afterwards the four men were inclosed in their coffins and graves, the military dismissed, the concourse vanished, and no vestige either of them or the morning's spectacle visible in this temporal world.

Amongst the reflections suggested to Edward Bentinck on his return to his apartments in the barracks, from the solemn duties in which he had just borne a part, were the following: - How much more efficient is the support derived in the near prospect of death from those views of Christianity which rest their claims to the confidence of the disciple, simply on the acquiescence of his own heart in the unearthly purity of its precepts, and the adaptation of its doctrines to the actual moral defects of his nature, than from those which exclusively address themselves to the satisfaction of the reason. In this respect the Papist and the English sectarian are much more successful auxiliaries in the preparation of the mind for its last exercise of faith, than the minister of the English Protestant establishment; the former accustom their pupils to try the truth of the creed they propose for their acceptance, simply by its correspondence with the dicta of their own self-disabused conscience, and there is something in that mystical moral department of our nature which we vulgarly call heart, which responds loudly, distinctly, and *affirmatively* to the appeal. All captious objections, all self-vindictory fetches, all merely speculative doubts advanced in the spirit of disputation, they overbear with the authoritative tone of sensible conviction. 'This IS life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' The consequence of doubting or disbelief must therefore be the converse of eternal life. A man therefore, who is accustomed to repose his confidence in the truth of christianity principally on such impressions, has the evidence always within himself; and like love, fear, anger, or any other natural affection, ready to spring forth at a moment's notice with an energy proportioned to the importance of the exciting occasion. Edward Bentinck considered himself both by habit and attachment a member of the church of England, and thought even its articles (if an attempt must be made to define what was perhaps never intended for definition by human language) as little exceptionable, and varying as little from the essential truths of christianity as possible. He thought also, that the majority of its clergy were men of unimpeachable moral integrity, and some of 'the salt of the earth;' but there was something in their mode of discharging their duties, a shyness of the subject of religion in conversation, and a timid caution of the slightest deviation from prescribed formulæ, that always conveyed to his mind a doubt of their *own confidence* in the doctrines, of which they were the appointed communicators to the public - they seem entirely to overlook the secondary character of the support supplied them by the state, and to be afraid of referring their authority and commissions to Him, whose recognition of them could alone make them genuine, and of which temporal government consistently with the truth of christianity (id est) with its right to interfere at all, could only provide external facilities for the exercise, to confide, in fact, more in their human than divine armour, and to be afraid, if they should dismantle themselves of the first, of challenging infidelity to a combat with the other. Nobly jealous of the slightest hypocrisy, they disdain to affect a confidence or unction which they do not feel, and cannot therefore possibly excite in others. They do not urge men to the shelter of the cross as they would call them from a crust of snow over a gulph in a glacier; a blazing dwelling or a sinking ship, a moment's demur in the change of your position, may be fatal. *There* is destruction, *here* is salvation; they must themselves feel confident of both before they can place them in sufficiently startling antithesis to each other to produce any extensive effect. 'But whence is it,' thought Edward Bentinck, 'that the clergy of the church of England are less

confident in the truth of their professed principles than other Christian ministers?’ This question he could only explain to himself by supposing the opposition to implicit credulity, in which their separation from the church of Rome originated, to give to their education too great a bias towards a spirit of philosophical and demonstration-demanding inquiry, and to make the ground of their faith too exclusively the rational evidences of christianity; which, although affording a preponderance of evidence in favour of its truth, so strong, that it would be unreasonable in any one not to act upon a presumption of equal strength in any of the common concerns of life, cannot amount to *certainty*. The immense field of research and science which these evidences embrace, and the very confined periscope of the most powerful and highly cultivated mind, make it impossible that any one can be sure, in any question of this nature, that no object of essential estimate in an incontrovertible judgment has been overlooked; that there is nothing beyond the compass of his present mental horizon, which, if admitted into view, might alter the comparative value and relative appearance of things present to his examination; he can never, therefore, feel the repose of *absolute certainty* from such evidences, and by habitually rejecting any other species of evidence than that which addresses itself to the reason, he seems to exclude himself from that most valuable of all, viz. the Spirit of God testifying with his Spirit that *he has* passed from death unto life; for surely this evidence must be one of impression upon the heart. How defective, indeed, would be a revelation designed for the poor, as well as the rich, without some evidence independent of mental capacity and scientific acquirement. It is well indeed, as far as we can, to pursue both species of evidence, and for every one, to the utmost of his ability, to employ his reason as well for the confirmation of his faith as for its correction, and restraint from extravagance; but for any one to accustom himself to regard the reasonable evidences of christianity as the only admissible ground of satisfactory confidence in its truth, is to accustom himself to look to reason for what it cannot give, and therefore to deny himself all joy and peace in believing, of which humility, prayer, and obedience, are a much safer and better source, even if demonstration upon such a subject were within the power and province of reason, which it is not. Obedience is, perhaps, always the safest and surest path to religious knowledge; but next to that, the deep self-abasement and humility which, if the knowledge be genuine, will be found infallibly either to precede or follow it.*

* See note T.

Chapter XVI. The Conversion.

'Beside the bed,
Where sorrow, pain, ad guilt, by turns dismay'd,
The reverend champion stood; at his controul,
Despair and anguish fled, the struggling soul,
Mercy came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whisper'd praise.'

GOLDSMITH.

THE morning after the execution, Edward Bentinck called at the apartments of Mr. Cotton in the gaol, to acquaint him and his daughter with the proceedings of the preceding morning, and the result of his application to the governor in obedience to the wishes which had been conveyed to him in Miss Cotton's letter. On his entrance, Matilda was sitting by the side of the bed to which her father, from the rapid declension of his strength, was now almost entirely confined; and although the former was herself in a considerable fever from the agitation in which her spirits had been kept since she came to Paramaribo, the expression of pensive melancholy in her beautiful countenance, lighted by a momentary flush of animation, and perhaps even indefinable hope and pleasure on the appearance of Edward, the perfect symmetry and graceful composure of her person, the elegant simplicity, chastity, and propriety of her dress, the exquisite cleanliness and beauty of her luxuriant hair, contrasted with the strong lines of self-corrosion and disquietude which prevailed in the masculine features of Mr. Cotton, inflamed by a high fever and the irritation of great bodily pain; as well as the grated window and dungeonlike appearance of the room, although furnished with as much comfort as wealth could contrive in such a place, made her look less like an inhabitant of the earth than heaven, and conveyed to the spectator's imagination the idea of the guardian angel of the sufferer, waiting for the tear of penitence which should open the gates of paradise to his reclaimed and rescued spirit.

'Mr. Bentinck,' said Mr. Cotton, 'although you see the state to which you have brought me, I should not have died in peace without an opportunity of thanking you for your exertions during the fire, in the rescue of a life compared with which, as you well know, (notwithstanding the contrast of our minds upon some subjects,) I have ever lightly regarded my own; I mean, that of the dear child that now sits by me.'

'My exertions on that occasion,' said Edward, 'were more than repaid to my own heart by their success, if you would allow them now so far to plead for me as to procure for me your attention, and it would not exhaust you to indulge me with it for a few minutes, whilst I explain the appearance of duplicity which I fear in your estimation must naturally have attended my instrumentality in your present situation, you would make me the only return I should ever presume to ask for them.'

'I shall listen to you with pleasure,' said Mr. Cotton, 'as I have ever thought too well of you not to rejoice in the vindication of your character from the injurious effect of any conduct that appeared unworthy of a man of honour. With regard to the slave trade, Matilda has put the guilt of it in such a light to me since my confinement to this place, that at all events I renounce it for ever, but still considering the footing you were upon with us at Anne's Grove, there seemed something of treachery in your denouncing us to the government without any intimation of your intention.'

The time having now expired during which Edward Bentinck had bound himself to secrecy, and having received besides a message from his informant that morning, to say that he was now safe again on board his old favourite sloop, the Saucy Anne, and to release him consequently from his engagement of suppressing his name, of which he might therefore make whatever use he pleased; Edward had no longer any scruple of explaining the equivocal appearances which he confessed were rather against him, by a plain statement of the motives and circumstances by which he had been influenced; namely, that he had, inadvertently perhaps, committed himself to a solemn assurance of concealing the name of his informant (which of course rendered him obnoxious to the

suspicion that the information originated with himself) before he knew that it implicated Mr. Cotton, or indeed any thing of its import; that he could not give Mr. Cotton any warning of his impeachment without the danger of his communicating it to Captain Légere, time enough to have enabled him to escape with his vessel. That the implacable unscrupulous vengeance with which such a man would have pursued the author of his information, if he had suspected it to have been a friendless British seaman in a foreign colony, was as well known to Mr. Cotton as to himself. That he (Mr. Bentinck) knew further, that the punishment of slavetrading by the Dutch laws did not extend to life, but merely to a fine of five thousand guilders and five years' imprisonment;* the former of which he knew could not have occasioned to a man of Mr. Cotton's substance one hour's anxiety; and of the latter he had every reason to believe that his influence with the colonial authorities would ensure a mitigation, if not (after a little time) a total remission. At the same time he would not deny that the trade was so full of enormity in his opinion, so revolting to every sentiment of humanity, and in such daring defiance of the laws of God, written upon every man's natural conscience, as well as both the letter and spirit of revealed religion, that, before he received the deposition of the British sailor, he sometimes felt that he could not have deferred much longer acquainting government with what fell under his own observation, without contracting negatively a very considerable degree of guilt; that, in that case however he should certainly have previously expressed to Mr. Cotton the impossibility of his conniving at it in future, consistently with his sense of duty either to God or man, but which, in the present case, the promise exacted from him by his informant had prevented; that, at all events, when Mr. Cotton reflected that the step he had taken was at the imminent risk of an irreparable rupture with him, and of the consequent sacrifice of all further intercourse with his family, for one member of which he would no longer affect to conceal the devotion of heart which he had cherished, and the hopes (which, in spite of his frequent challenge to himself of their presumption and unattainableness) he had irresistibly indulged, he felt confident that he would at least admit that he had acted in obedience to a stern sense of disinterested duty, and in denial of every personal inclination, however mistaken or extravagant he might think his views of duty upon the particular practice in question.

'Well, Mr. Bentinck,' said Mr. Cotton, (the expression of severe pain on his features relaxing for a moment into a smile of half playful benignity; for he had not been blind to the mutual impressions made upon each other by Edward and Matilda, and independently of what he had hitherto considered as Edward's abuse of hospitality in originating an information against him for what he had observed during his visits to the plantation, did not feel any insurmountable objection to their indulgence,) 'I confess you have placed the disinterestedness of your motives in so strong a point of view as to incline me at any rate to acquit your honour; but perhaps, if I acquit your honour, it must be at the expense of your gallantry; for in defending yourself, you seem to expose one of my own most confidential subjects to the charge of a sort of misprision of treason, or at least a concealment of something upon which it would have been both her wisdom and duty to consult me. - What do you think, Matilda? Did Mr. Bentinck ever make such a confession to you before as that which is comprised in the latter part of what you have just heard from him?'

'Yes, papa,' said Matilda, with the unembarrassed gracefulness and simplicity of truth and conscious integrity; 'he did before we left the country, but I charged him never to recur to the subject, and would not but in your presence, or with your knowledge, even have received from him any explanation of that part of his conduct from which we have all so much suffered.'

There was a little something of reproach in the expression accompanying this reply of Matilda, which excited in Edward a considerable doubt whether his vindication had been as satisfactory to her as it appeared to her father; or whether it arose (which is more probable, as young ladies are very tenacious of their prerogatives in such points) from a dislike of being taken by

* It has lately been increased to ten thousand guilders fine, and fifteen years hard labour. - *Note by the Editor.*

surprise rather, in such a confession on his part, which was necessarily calculated to extort from her a more unreserved and irrevocable disclosure of her own heart than she might otherwise perhaps have so soon chosen to confide to him.

'If,' said Edward, 'the declaration of ardent admiration of Miss Cotton, which I have just made, appears a little too abrupt, I beg to disclaim the slightest intention or desire of drawing through you any reply from her unless she is perfectly prepared to bestow one. I earnestly trust you will neither of you so misinterpret me as to suppose me capable of such a design. You cannot, I think, but see that I had scarcely an alternative of avowing it, as it was a fact of indispensable importance to my exculpation, or at least to the demonstration of the disinterestedness and purity of my motives in those steps by which I have had the misfortune to incur a forfeiture, or rather, as I would still earnestly hope, a suspension of your good opinion and confidence.'

'Mr. Bentinck,' said Mr. Cotton, 'to a question of such extreme moment to my daughter's happiness as that implied in your candid explanation of this morning, I will take upon myself at once to answer for her, as I think I am sufficiently in possession of her sentiments, although she has never formally communicated them to me, and I know that I am sufficiently sensible of her inestimable worth and goodness to justify and require me to exercise one of the most important and responsible duties of parental authority. That the effects of your philanthropy have in one particular extended farther than you contemplated, I will not for a moment dispute; for I have little doubt that I shall be the victim of it. There is something within me that convinces me that I shall never leave this prison, at the same time I begin to fear that most of my principles, and the personal conduct which has been the necessary fruit of them in other respects, besides the practice of the slave trade, are very indefensible; and if my forebodings are true I have but a short time to attempt any atonement, let me at least by one act of magnanimity before I die redeem my character from utter obloquy. Matilda! my dear, give me your hand! Mr. Bentinck! the good opinion with which I have always regarded you is now completely confirmed. I am satisfied that you are a man of truth, honour, and courage; and if I did not think it would be a profanation of religion in a man of my habits to presume to judge of it, I would add conscientious Christianity, and I know my daughter entertains the same opinion of you. Take, this hand - Matilda, my dear, do not now for the first time in your life refuse me your obedience - I confidently commit its owner to your protection and constancy, but remember it is upon one condition, viz. that you relinquish your profession. You will find yourself amply provided for without it.'

'My dear papa!' cried Matilda, as she extended her hand across the bed to Edward Bentinck, at the same time hiding her face in her father's bosom, and bursting into tears, 'you have always been too good to me.'

As for our hero, quite unprepared by the commencement of Mr. Cotton's speech for the benevolence of its conclusion, and overpowered by the conflicting emotions of regret for the state into which he felt that he had (however innocently) brought him, gratitude for his inestimable benefaction, admiration of his magnanimity, the deepest devotion of attachment, amounting almost to adoration of Matilda, soldier as he was, he must either have sunk upon the ground or given way to a flood of tears, if he had not rushed out of the room; he could only press to his heart and lips the hand which had been given him, and stammer out, 'this is too much sir,' as he relinquished it, but not till a single tear had fallen on the back of it, which its lovely owner did not disdain to leave unproved in its possession.

Nothing could be more distressing or embarrassing than the situation of Matilda, in regard to the duty of impressing upon her father's attention the subject of religion. The crisis of tropical fevers may often be fatally determined by agitation of mind. The physicians, therefore, are always enjoining the patient and his friends to avoid every topic which has the least tendency to produce discomposure. Hitherto, therefore, satisfied with the repeated promise which she had exacted of the medical attendants that they would inform her the moment they apprehended any danger, Matilda had cautiously abstained from adverting to Mr. Cotton's infidelity; but she was too good a nurse not to know that a presentiment in the patient himself of a fatal issue to such a fever was the

most unequivocal symptom of danger, and indeed sure almost (if there was none otherwise) to realize itself. Knowing also how unscrupulously medical men often practise deception with regard to danger where they apprehend any prejudicial consequences from its disclosure, both upon the patient and his family, she determined not to delay another moment in the discharge of what she considered a duty paramount to all. As soon, therefore, as Mr. Bentinck was withdrawn, - 'My dear papa,' said she, 'for my sake you must not indulge such desponding opinions of your situation as you just now expressed. The doctors assure me there is no danger: now, therefore, whilst you cannot suppose it to proceed from any such apprehension on my part, I have a request to prefer, your compliance with which will contribute more to the promotion of my peace and happiness than all your former bounties, even than that anticipation of my heart's inmost wishes (as I will now confess it to be) that you have made this morning; it is that you would allow me to send for Mr. Austin, * and hear how far he can satisfy your objections to the truth of Christianity. He is a clergyman of the church of England, and you know some traits in his character, which your own disdain of sycophancy has always inclined you to appreciate.'

'O! my dear child,' said Mr. Cotton, 'do not press me upon that point; my objections can never be satisfied. If any one could convince me of the truth of Christianity, you would: the sweet consistency and purity of such a life as yours has more weight with me than folios of written argument; were all nominal Christians like you, the influence of its principles upon the happiness of society would be so benign as to comprise in itself an overbearing evidence of its divine origin.'

'But all people have some moral belief, papa,' said Matilda; 'some standard of moral responsibility to which they but partially conform their conduct? Why should the inconsistencies of Christians be a greater evidence against the truth of their creed, than the inconsistencies of infidels against the truth of theirs?'

'Not greater,' said Mr. Cotton, 'but it is an evidence against all, therefore I believe none, or at least doubt all.'

'O! papa,' said Matilda, 'don't do yourself so much injustice. I know you believe in the value of some of the noblest principles of social morality - the sanctity of confidence, the obligation of pecuniary punctuality, the meanness of deceit, subterfuge, and sycophancy, the dignity and nobleness of truth; but to make it obvious that the inconsistency of its professors is no argument against the truth of any faith, does it, for example, afford the slightest evidence to the conscience of any one that murder is not a crime of the deepest dye, and obnoxious to the vengeance of heaven, that individuals frequently commit it notwithstanding their intimate conviction of its guilt?'

Matilda did not mean by this illustration to excite any train of personal reflections in her father in reference to the wholesale murder practised in the slave trade, (although she had before endeavoured to make him see it in that light,) as he probably had never considered the unhappy Africans as fellow creatures, - or to the case of her broken-hearted mother, or any other case of indirect instrumentality in the destruction of life; but conscience is very quick and faithful in her exemplifications, and after a momentary struggle with himself, which appeared to give him great pain and a transient expression of anger, Mr. Cotton said, 'You are right, Matilda! that vengeance has now overtaken your unhappy father - send for a clergyman.'

Overjoyed at having gained this great point with her father, Matilda could only say, 'it is impossible, papa, that such constant goodness as yours to me should not draw down a blessing upon yourself,' and once more kissing him amidst her tears, and inwardly offering to heaven a fervent deprecation of the vengeance of which he had expressed a fear, she left him to despatch a note to Mr. Austin, in which she requested his attendance in the evening, and it was not many hours before the arrival of that gentleman (in willing obedience to the summons which he had received) was announced. As the clergyman approached Mr. Cotton's bed the latter said to him, 'I have sent for you, sir; perhaps only to increase the bitterness of death by inviting you to

* See Note U.

demonstrate the truth of a system by which I must be condemned. Still to shut his eyes to the light is the part of neither a brave man nor an honest one. I confess to you that I have been for many years an infidel in the truth of Christianity, and have acted in too much defiance of its restraints; but as I now believe myself to be dying, I will not disguise that I am not without considerable misgivings as to many both of my opinions and practices.

“Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these reciprocally those again.”

I do not wish to go out of life under a false peace, or an impotent bravado, and as I think I have courage to look my condition fairly in the face, however desperate; will you state to me as shortly as you can the sources from which you derive the most satisfactory evidence to your own mind of the truth of that extraordinary dispensation which, in some of its provisions, is just what a man in my situation stands in need of, if he could but convince himself of their reality.’

‘I derive my conviction,’ said Mr. Austin, ‘from within and from without, from the response of every honest heart to the anti-selfish and unearthly purity of the spirit, and the precepts of Christianity; had it been of earth, its doctrines, like those of all other religions, must have been more sensual; but all its tendencies being heavenward, from heaven it must have sprung. I derive it from the existence of evil; at every step, even of life’s purest enjoyments, *surgit aliquid amarū*; whence is this, unless as Christianity explains it, evil must be inherent in the Being who is the author of evil. To ascribe evil to the author of nature, therefore, is to ascribe to Him defect, for evil is defect, and defect is irreconcilable to the perfection manifested in his works, and to the limits which are evidently set to the irruptions of evil upon that perfection by some power superior to its author. The author of evil, therefore, must be the enemy of the author of nature, and have superinduced it upon his works; what solution, therefore of this great moral phenomenon can be offered to us more probable and agreeable to reason, more analogous to our own innate sense of justice, than that which is presented by Christianity and Christianity alone: viz. that the struggle which man is involved in, between good and evil, is the result of his having lent himself to the designs of some enemy, both of his maker and himself, and thereby implicated himself in his guilt, and inextricably entangled himself (inextricably by his own power) in his punishment, and in a state of perpetual collision with the will of God; that his present state is, therefore necessarily, one as well of moral penalty as moral discipline. But, blessed be God, there is for man a provision of moral recovery and mercy, of which every individual has, probably, the same freedom of availing himself as he would have had to stand or fall, had he stood in the place of our first progenitors. Free agency is indispensable to moral intelligence, without it man could not have been a moral being, the next descending link of animated creation being that of instinct. The *possibility* of falling was essential to free agency, Satan fell irredeemably, because of his own inherent pravity - his own ungoverned lust of power and knowledge; man fell, but not solely by his own impatience of controul, but by the seduction of another. That some mystery on the origin and permission of evil, and the mode of countervailing it, as well as other points, still remains unexplained by Christianity, is not because in themselves they do not admit of explanation, or because the divine founder and object of the Christian faith could not have explained them to a *commensurate* order of intelligence, but because an intelligence so finite as man’s could not have comprehended the explanation, if given, or a language so finite have conveyed it; can any human science be explained to an individual of which the principles exceed his capacity? That there must be subjects which exceed all finite capacities, is self-evident, or the capacities would not be finite, but infinite. That some mystery, therefore, should remain unremoved in a religion professing to explain man’s moral relationship to his maker; the connection of finite intelligences with an infinite intelligence, and of things finite with infinitude, so far from being a rational objection to its truth, seems essential to it, and rather a presumption in its favour, if the explanation, as far as it goes, is homogeneal to man’s moral nature and the circumstances in which he actually stands. That man is a fallen creature, a moral ruin, that some

great lapse has prostrated his rational dignity - some great change superseded his original moral conformation; - surely, surely,' continued Mr. Austin, 'is a fact, which acquires more and more incontestability to every one's daily experience of himself and others, and the impression of which is co-progressive with the growth and expansion of the understanding, from childhood or barbarism to maturity and general knowledge, whence otherwise is our universal conception of ideals, of moral purity, and excellence, of which the present world supplies no realisation? A union of goodness and happiness, which the old often ascribe to the young, and the young to the old, which even bad men sometimes sigh for, and good men (although distantly) approach? Whence, I ask, these models of ideal excellence in every human bosom - this perception of moral beauty, unless from the outlines of a nobler original structure being still perspicuous to the melancholy spirit that now so painfully occupies its ruins? Surely then, what all the best men hope for, may be true; what none but bad men wish fallacious, *must*.'

'You stagger me, sir,' interrupted Mr. Cotton; 'but, oh, if Christianity is the divine key for the solution of the moral phenomena of our nature, why are not its evidences written upon the sun and moon, that all doubt in all, might be overborne by sensible proof?'

'Because, sir,' said Mr. Austin, 'a faith so *compelled* (id est, by miracle and sensible evidence exclusively) would comprehend no such subduction of man's reasoning pride, no such discipline of his understanding or heart, as invariably results from the honest and patient exercise of both in the examination of the evidences as they now stand; if, indeed, the decalogue were inscribed upon the sun, men would scarcely deny its divine authority, but they would evade its design or excuse their disobedience of it, or by some commutation of its spirit for its letter, entirely defeat all its practical value, as the Jews invariably did. Besides, surely, it is more consistent that some portion at least of the evidences of a dispensation, designed for an intelligent being, should be of a nature (such as history and prophecy) to address themselves rather to his rational than his animal faculties. But that nothing might be wanting to satisfy an honest heart of the divine origin of Christianity, and meet any sincere doubt that might arise from consciousness of the limited periscope of the human reason, and a distrust in the sufficiency of its powers, upon historical and moral evidence alone, to decide so-much-involving a question, the miracles which accompanied its introduction to the world are abundant, and abundantly attested; - and one perpetual miracle (including at once the evidence of both miracle and prophecy) still continually presses itself upon our attention in the actual state and condition of the Jews. But those who would urge as a plea for their infidelity a diffidence in the competence of their own power and learning, to appreciate the arguments in favour of Christianity, I would earnestly remind of the number of illustrious human witnesses that have lived and died in the profession of its faith to defer nothing to whose opinion is surely inconsistent in such infidels with the admission of their own subordinate capacity: not to go back into the early ages of the church and attempt to enumerate the noble army of martyrs, or even beyond our own protestant country, I would merely remind them of such names as Bacon, Boyle, Locke, Milton, Baxter, Hale, Newton, Jenyns, Jones, Johnson, Chillingworth, Watts, Doddridge, Warburton, Horseley, Porteus, and Paley. * Now, these men and a host of other Christian advocates, both conformists and nonconformists, with whose names I am less familiar, but perhaps equally entitled to deference, either *disbelieved* or did *not disbelieve*. If they *disbelieved*, they were the worst of hypocrites, in systematically upholding a faith which they believed to be a wild delusion and imposture, and lending their great names to the enslavement of men's reason and consciences, and the entanglement of their own lives in a system of restraints and observances which they saw clearly to be nothing more than vain superstitions. If, on the other hand, they did not disbelieve, then the concurrent testimony of so many men of such undeniable competence to the estimation of moral and historical evidence, affords a presumption in favour of those evidences; to deny the force and weight of which amounts in any inferior mind to a degree of arrogance and self-sufficiency, little

* See Note X.

short of absurdity. Or if the infidel chooses to take the other horn of the dilemma, and consider them as positive hypocrites; it seems to imply on his part a very offensive degree of pharisaism and want of candour; besides, the whole lives of some of them and the earnest style of their professions and publications on the subject of Christianity are in direct and decisive contradiction to such a supposition. I see but one plausible escape open to the infidel from this dilemma, he may possibly say that despairing of eradicating superstition altogether from the human breast, they thought it wise not to disturb its possession by the most benevolent or least harmless, or that the danger of unsettling established opinions amongst the vulgar was more than equivalent to any probable good, and that to do so might, perhaps, be only displacing one error to be succeeded by another, and perhaps a worse. In reply, I contend, that such an hypothesis would scarcely vindicate the moral integrity of such men, who as philosophers and disciples of truth, were bound by all the best interests of man to expose falsehood wherever they had *conclusively* detected it; but, at all events, such a supposition would only explain their *tacit* acquiescence in the prevailing opinions - their *negative* concurrence; but to suppose that such men would enter into long painful expositions of Christianity and expend their valuable time and searching powers in the strenuous and solemn defence of it, when they know it to be false, does equal violence to common sense and common honesty.'

'But how is it,' said Mr. Cotton, 'that the progress of Christianity, during the long lapse of eighteen hundred years since its introduction, has been so very incommensurate with the omnipotence of its Author (if, indeed, its Author be OMNIPOTENCE), that it does not yet comprise even nominally a fourth part of the population of the world?'

'*Numerically*, certainly not,' said Mr. Austin, 'but if you make intelligence the measure of the Christian and infidel world, it is clear that nominal Christendom contains by far the largest portion, and you must remember that it was indispensable to the accompaniment of such a dispensation by one of its most valuable and satisfactory evidences (*viz.* prophecy), that it should be both *time-born* and *progressive*.'

'One word more,' said Mr. Cotton; 'Why, O, why, if those who profess and call themselves Christians, are really such, do not their doctrines and their lives coincident exhibit more lucid *proof* than they do of their sincerity?'

'Christianity itself answers the question,' said Mr. Austin; 'perfect consistency of obedience, whilst the soul of man remains attached to a body of sin and death, is perhaps impossible. God gave a perfect law; what could he less? declaring at the same time, by the spirit of his own comments upon it, that he would estimate the character of his subjects, not even by the proximity of their conduct to a perfect conformity to so high a standard, but by the earnestness and perseverance of their efforts to approach it. For, one man, by complacency of natural constitution and favour of fortune, may be advanced higher on the scale to human eyes, by a much less effort than it has cost another, less propitiously composed or circumstanced to reach a lower grade; *therefore*, spiritual judgment is forbidden to Christians of each other, and the charity that hopeth all things is enjoined. Besides,' continued Mr. Austin, 'you, sir, no doubt, as well as every other man, have some moral belief; allow me to ask you, have you always acted up to your own belief of your duty? (whatever that belief may have been); because, if not, you see, the apparent discrepancy between the profession and practise of some Christians, is no more evidence of the falsehood of their belief, than the inconsistency of your conduct with your principles is of the falsehood of yours; indeed, if theirs is a higher, and more comprehensive, and difficult standard of moral duty than yours, not so much by whatever is the difference in those respects; *insincerity*, therefore not *inconsistency*, in a creature so full of weakness and moral gravitation (if I may be allowed such an expression) as man, is the only proof either of hypocrisy in him or falsehood in his principles, however defective his obedience to them.'

'Sir, I BELIEVE,' said Mr. Cotton, after a pause of a minute. The reader, who has ever noticed the sudden burst of a sweet landscape from the deep and sombre gloom of a severe impending shower into the bright beams of a summer sun, may imagine the effect of this

exclamation of Mr. Cotton on the beautiful features of his daughter, the lines of which had been strained into an expression of intense and almost fixed anxiety, during the progress of this discussion, from the all absorbing importance of the point at issue. But occupied by the impression made by the external advocate, and unable to measure exactly the powerful co-operation of the still and silent, but strong and faithful advocate within, in her delightful surprise at the surrender of her father's prejudices so much sooner than she had dared to hope, and struck with admiration at the candour and magnanimity of such a confession, from the noble sacrifice of pride which it involved, after an opposition almost throughout his life; for she knew that not a particle of fear entered into the grounds of his conviction, and that if he suspected himself of yielding an iota to such an influence he would never have confessed his conviction, or

‘Mock'd God's Throne with prayer
Wrung from the coward crouching of despair;’

she could not help regarding him in a light with which, although always kind and affectionate to her, her imagination had never been able to surround him before - a light of moral grandeur, and throwing herself upon her knees, ‘Now, papa,’ said she, ‘you have indeed rewarded me, this is what I have watched and wept for daily, nightly, and I may almost say hourly, since the loss of her whose place I now so ill supply by your bedside; but, perhaps, I do not supply it, perhaps her spirit now contemplates yours, and with the other angels of God, O, more than shares my joy at the great change now produced;’ then raising her irradiated eyes to heaven, ‘but THOU,’ she said, ‘Benignant Saviour; do'st all things well, THOU makest both the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to praise THEE!!!’

‘Matilda, my love,’ said Mr. Cotton, struggling to controul some new emotions which her affectionate fervour had excited, ‘I dare not trust myself just yet to the hopes you have suggested, and if you pursue the subject, I fear you will unman me, which might hereafter lead me to suspect my present judgment, from the possibility of the integrity of my mind having been impaired by some delusion of the senses. In faith I am now a sincere Christian, the concurrence of the external with the internal evidence, the actual moral state of the world, with the explanation of it afforded by Christianity, and Christianity alone; the arguments derived from history and prophecy, with the other points, so succinctly but perspicuously expressed by Mr. Austin, do seem to me to comprise at least a preponderance of evidence, which must overbear any reasonable and honest objections; my only astonishment is, how I could contrive so long to shut the light out of my own heart. My doubts are now all transferred to the possibility of the admission of so late and unworthy a disciple as myself to its unspeakable mercies. What, sir,’ addressing Mr. Austin, ‘is the disposition required of a convert like me to qualify him for partaking without presumption of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper?’

‘Exactly what is required of all other communicants,’ replied Mr. Austin, ‘and which is so appositely expressed in the Church Catechism, (viz.) to examine yourself, whether you repent you truly of your former sins, stedfastly resolving to lead a new life. Whether you have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and are in perfect charity with all men. Is that, sir, your state of mind at present?’

‘Those are the prevailing impressions of my mind at this moment,’ said Mr. Cotton, ‘as nearly as I could myself describe them. Will you now administer the sacrament to me, as I wish to be left a little to my own reflections, or defer it till this time to-morrow?’

‘To-morrow, at this time, I will return again and administer the sacrament, if you continue to desire it,’ said Mr. Austin, ‘till then, therefore, I commend you to the grace of God, through Christ, and the teaching of his Holy Spirit.’*

* See Note Y.

On the return of Mr. Austin, the following morning, 'Sir,' said Mr. Cotton, after introducing him to Edward Bentinck, whom he had in the mean time appointed to meet him, 'the best evidence a convert like myself can manifest of his sincerity (indeed, as it seems to me, an indispensable evidence) is to endeavour, wherever he has done wrong, and atonement is possible, but which alas!' said he, sighing deeply, "is but too seldom the case, to make four-fold reparation. I have long known the affection subsisting between the two young persons before you, and I have consented to their union; but it is upon one express condition, of which, as I feel my strength rapidly declining, I wish to make you the witness; it is merely this, that if it should please God to remove me, without permitting my return to my plantations, that they would endeavour to make my slaves the only, but indeed an ample, compensation for any injustice of which I may have been either directly or indirectly the author to them, by instructing them systematically and steadily in that providential provision of spiritual peace and mercy, which I now feel to be of more value to me than the abundant wealth which I have derived from their exertions. That this may be done, I am quite satisfied, not only with facility, but with the greatest advantage, as well to the value of the property as the security of the colony; but then they must be contented to reside, till Charles is of age, or for a few years at any rate, upon the spot, and superintend the progress of the simple plan, which I will now propose to them. Let there be two lists made immediately of the Christian and Heathen slaves; let those negroes, in the instruction of whom Matilda, with the help of her late excellent Moravian friend, (who is now, no doubt, enjoying the crown of his fidelity,) has already made considerable progress, and every one of whom would scarcely hesitate more to lay down his life for her than to obey her lightest command, (and well they may almost adore her,) form the first list.

Let these always work together and apart from the others. And with these at once and *immediately* let all whippings and violence, and ensigns of violence be discontinued; if one of these perseveres in a fault after having been once reproved for it, let the reproof be repeated in the presence of two or three of the other Christian slaves, and if the fault is committed a third time, let him be solemnly admonished of its guilt and consequences by the minister in the face of the whole negro church, and if this does not restrain the offender, let him be transferred back to the list of and company of the heathen negroes, who must continue under the discipline of corporal punishment, till, by their improvement in the knowledge of Christianity, they show themselves qualified for baptism, and susceptible of moral controul and impulsion, when, after the ceremony of baptism, which must be made as impressive as possible, they may be transferred to the list and immunities of the Christian slaves, so that their promotion from one list to another may be constantly operating as a stimulant to their good behaviour. As an additional advantage to the Christian negroes, exact from their wives as little field work as possible, so that every facility may be given to them to make themselves, their children, and their little cabin houses attractive to their husbands, and 'the evening paradise of home,' the sacred endearments of wedded love, and the indulgence of parental affection may afford them, as it was meant they should, the best reward for the toil of the day: in addition to this, let the present cost of each negro in food and clothing be divided by the days of the year, and with a sufficient addition amply to cover any loss resulting from the difference between a wholesale and retail expenditure, be trusted to the most discreet and intelligent amongst them, to expend (like the wages of a European peasant) for themselves, if they prefer it in lieu of receiving their supply of food and clothing from their master; but this, like every other privilege for several years, must be conditioned upon their good behaviour, and revocable on its abuse.

'By a perseverance in this simple scheme of moral discipline for only a few years, I am quite satisfied that the negroes might be brought into the habits of free labour, not only without loss, but with the greatest gain to the interests of all parties, especially the owners of the soil, the only thing to remain imperative upon them being an obligation to work for *somebody* at a rate of wages to be fixed by the law, in reference to the price of those things which are the actual necessities of life to them, and not either by themselves or their masters. But as for their unqualified

emancipation in their present state, without any preparative course of religious instruction, we may as well talk of making atonement to a kidnapped infant by abandoning it in the midst of an ocean or a desert.'

'I agree with you entirely,' said Mr. Austin, 'in the principles you have expressed, the details of every plan for the elevation of large bodies of men from a state of almost brutal darkness, must be modified by the light which the experiment itself will produce in every stage of its progress.'

'They must,' said Mr. Cotton, 'and to the direction of that light I must leave them, as I find I have not strength to pursue them farther. I now, sir, earnestly desire you to administer to me the symbols, (if I still scarcely dare say of God's *pardon* and *mercy*;) at least of that great *atonement* in which I place my only *hope* of them.' Mr. Austin then immediately proceeded to distribute the sacred elements, (of which Mr. Bentinck and Matilda partook,) resting with solemn emphasis on the word you, in the short prayer accompanying the presentment of the bread and wine to each individual, and on the completion of the service, Mr. Cotton kissed his daughter with great affection, and taking Mr. Bentinck by the hand, said, 'Yes! I believe it, Matilda! even for *me* the devotion of a new life would be a poor return for such ill deserved, such unpurchased forgiveness, and I feel that I have not many hours to live; but you must both take upon you my debt of gratitude. Compose yourself, my dear Matilda! we shall meet again.'

'O papa!' said Matilda, 'how can I live without you, how can I bear to think that you who knew no sacrifice, not even of your own opinions, your own pride, too great for your affection to me, are really about to leave me and be out of reach of my grateful attentions, and that too when a community of principles would have made you more than by nature's bond a parent, would have made you a spiritual father to me; I thought I could have borne even this, if I could but see you a Christian, but I find that I am still too, too selfish!'

'Matilda!' said Mr. Cotton, putting her hand into Mr. Bentinck's, 'I feel confident that the Christian soldier, in whose care I leave you, will prove himself worthy of the great trust I repose in him, and be to you both parent and friend; but for my sake endeavour to preserve the cheerful confidence which has lately supported you through such severe trials, and which I never saw fail you before, in the Almighty Parent, Friend, and Saviour of us all. And remember, my darling, and let it mitigate your sorrow when I am gone, that you have more than requited all my affection, that it was the sweet harmony of your life with your principles that has been chiefly the human means of my conviction, for I could not help sometimes reflecting, that principles so beautiful in their effect must be divine in their origin; but I am a good deal exhausted by this morning's exertion, and unequal to conversation.'

Mr. Bentinck having endeavoured in vain to prevail on Matilda to leave the room, by a strong effort she completely renewed her self-controul, and sat quietly by her father's bed without uttering a word or a sigh, till, after lying for several hours in a sort of dose, from which she had expected he would awake comparatively refreshed and animated, he distinctly pronounced the words, 'Matilda! your mother!' -- she stooped over him, a single tear was trickling down his cheeks, but she saw immediately that his lips were settled into imperturbable placidity, and would never move again. She could not speak, but kissed his forehead, and seizing convulsively the hand of Edward Bentinck, laid her head upon his shoulder, and at length relieved her long repressed and unutterable agony by a burst of tears and sighs, that in such a moment it would have been sacrilege to have interrupted or discouraged.

It only remains with me to acquaint my reader that our hero, in spite of the *glory-panting* (to use a military expression) with which he entered the service, *some how* or *another*, when it came to the point, found little difficulty in exchanging his ensign's commission for a fortune of a hundred thousand pounds sterling. That after a proper interval he was united in lawful wedlock to our sweet heroine, with whom he has since been conscientiously employed in carrying into execution Mr. Cotton's directions for the Christian instruction and civilization of his negroes, and what is more, employed with *complete success*; but there is a secret in the success of this plan (and it is the *only secre*t) which I will now, at the earnest request of His Grace of Devonshire, Earl Fitzwilliam, and a

few more of the great Irish planters, disclose. The secret consists in the constant presence and superintendance - watching, correcting, and controlling every disposition to the perversion of the sacred knowledge - of those who are most interested in its success. O yes! I forgot! there are two things more which the reader will perhaps like to be informed of, namely, that Captain Légere was tried, convicted, and imprisoned, but afterwards, I am sorry to say, by connivance either of the fiscal or some of his police officers, * escaped; and that Mr. William Askens, being a British subject, was sent for trial to Barbadoes, where, no doubt, he was made a proper example of, as it was so highly important that he should, by the crown officers of those very high principled and pious claimants of all the Christian and philanthropic honours of the British name and character.

* See Note Z.

Chapter XVII. Editorial Epilogue.

'And truth alone where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty, or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.'

COWPER.

HAVING now concluded my friend's manuscript, I cannot forbear availing myself of the opportunity of offering a few observations *meo Marte* on the subject which probably suggested and forms so much of the ground work of the foregoing little fiction, (fiction at least as far as *names of persons* go, but fact in many particulars, and of too possible reality in all,) viz. the system of slavery as it prevails at present in the Dutch Colony of Surinam, where I have now had several years opportunity of personal observation, but never having resided in any other part of the West Indies, however applicable the general principle of my observations may be, my testimony must of course be understood to be confined to Surinam alone.

The courteous reader, who has done me the honour to begin at the *beginning* of the preceding tale, may perhaps think it hard not to be permitted to leave off at the end; but I will not detain him long with my editorial supplement, indeed I have but little to say, and before I say that little, I have a postulatam to make, without which I have *nothing at all*; for, without that, I confess myself absolutely at sea, without either chart or compass, or a single star by which I can discern with confidence in so complex and far-spreading a subject any certain course of moral duty. My postulatam is the TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY, and if it is *not* true, it is an imposture of more subtle and refined cruelty than could have been the invention of any but fiends; for would it not be cruel in a parent to entangle the young conscience of his children in fetters so comprehensive, and impose upon it a standard of self-constraint and self-sacrifice so all-pervasive and unrelaxing, that an unreserved, implicit, and *unsubterfugitive* conformity to it, must, whilst real Christians continue the minority of mankind, involve him in a life of lingering martyrdom, or a deliberately *partial, cheat-devil*, and *mental-reservation* conformity, in a misgiving of heart (if he is not a monster without one) of which truly the aptest possible figure is that of a worm which never dies; - and this hell or martyrdom so realized upon the conscience and life of the most generous and susceptible-hearted, to be, after all, (as infidels say,) only the fiction of beldames and priests! Fiction of FIENDS, I say, if fiction it is - but fiends are a bug-bear, if Christianity is false, - they form an essential part of Revelation - and if Christianity is true, then courteous reader, I boldly charge the system of slavery which now prevails in Surinam with being utterly incompatible with the inculcation of its doctrines and duties upon the slaves. Of this I need only here give one proof, but it is conclusive; the slaves in Surinam are FORBIDDEN TO MARRY. There is a penalty of five hundred guilders actually imposed by the Court of Policy upon any religious minister who performs the ceremony of marriage between slaves.* If Christianity be true, can any government offer it a greater outrage? To say that marriage is the hinge upon which all the charities of this life turn is undeniably true, but not the whole truth; it is more, it is the only link which connects the charities of time with those of eternity. It is from the religious recognition of this sacred contract that those charities derive all their sanctimony, all their refinement, all their civilizing effect, all their social value. That marriage is a civil contract is perfectly true, as all contracts must be between members of civil society; but that it is a civil contract in contradistinction to its being a religious one, is not true; for, not only does our Saviour expressly recognize it as a contract of divine obligation, but refers to the very words of its institution by God* in the original creation of man, as the great rudimental moral principle of human society. Indeed, it must be obvious to every one accustomed to trace the operation of moral

* I was unable to obtain permission to marry one of my own domestics, a freeman, to a slave, (whom I offered to buy for that purpose, and let her work out her freedom,) because she was a slave. - *Editor*.

* Genesis, ii. 24.

institutions upon moral principles, that all communities must advance in civilization in proportion to the inviolability with which they maintain the sanctity of this institution, or retrograde towards barbarism, as it is disregarded. Now, if Christianity is of God, it cannot be overthrown; but, on the contrary, all communities which systematically defy or oppose it must be themselves overthrown with a confusion and violence and ruin to individuals, exactly proportioned to the obstinacy and daringness with which they have resisted its light and contemned its authority. Besides the *formal legal* DESECRATION of marriage by the government of Surinam, there is the greatest possible jealousy of the instruction of the slaves in any language but their own jargon, which is so scanty as not to contain perhaps above five hundred words, and must, *I think*, be quite an inadequate vehicle to convey any comprehensive impression in all its foundation, parts, and purposes, of the sublime spiritual temple of christianity.*

But (barring the truth of christianity for a single moment) there is but one possible ground that I know of by which the SYSTEM of slavery at present existing in Surinam can be vindicated, viz. that the Africans are, if not an inferior species of rational animal, an inferior variety of the same species. Christianity, however, knows but of ONE species without any natural variety; but I positively deny the fact of essential inferiority, either specific or various, or that any one has a right to assume it till the same moral apparatus of Christian education has been applied to the Africans from their childhood, as that which is employed in Europe. It has sometimes, indeed, been boldly said by the advocates of their oppression, that nothing but essential inferiority would account for their long submission to the irresponsible sway of the pride, caprice, spleen, lust, and avarice of a handful of Europeans, and those often the scum and refuse of their own countries; as there are no ties of blood, country, or community of national associations or religious faith to explain it, as there are in Russia and other NATIONAL DESPOTISMS; and I grant, if it were true, that they so submitted to a handful of whites the reproach of their own country and their country's faith, it would carry a strong presumption of some great inherent inferiority. But, courteous Reader, here again I positively deny the fact. The negroes in the West Indies do not submit to a handful of whites; they know perfectly that any violent attempt at escape from the controul of their immediate masters would bring down upon them all the power and vengeance of the country to which those masters belong. They submit (at least the British negroes) to YOU, most courteous British Readers, and you are laying a flattering unction to your soul indeed, if you think to transfer *all* the guilt of

* I must confess here, however, that the Moravians think that they can and do make the negroes understand Christianity with it; all I can say is, that if they do, it is no mean evidence that the great truths of christianity must find in every human heart some essential principles of homogeneal sympathy and ready recognition; for they certainly will not admit of definite explanation in the negro language at Surinam without the frequent introduction of English, Dutch, or German terms and idioms, the comprehension of which by the negroes can only be explained on such a principle. But however this be, let me here pay my humble tribute of respect to the conduct of these amiable missionaries, as far as I have been able to observe it, whatever extravagances mixed themselves in the speculations of their founder, they are now actually doing more good, if their conduct is elsewhere as unexceptionable as it is at Surinam, than any missionaries with whose labours I am acquainted, except those at Serampore (whose whole lives have been little short of apostolic devotion); and the Moravians seem to me to be following their illustrious example (illustrious, I mean, to angels and the spirits of just men made like angels) as closely as possible. Mild, humble, inobtrusive, judicious, earning their own bread by some useful social calling, that their ministerial labours may not absolutely depend upon any thing so capricious as popular support; instant, in season and out of season, to employ any opportunities that occur of Christian usefulness, but asking for nothing; in great esteem with the governor himself, and indeed all persons of the least pretensions to respectability. I have even heard one of the most notorious Deists and slave traders in the colony candidly admit the moral improvement of the negroes under their charge; and adduce a servant of his own, in whose honesty he had the most absolute confidence, as an example. I commend them to the munificence of the British Christian public. If any persons can infuse a ray, a leaven of christianity, (under the present system,) into the mass of midnight pagan darkness in which the slaves of Surinam are enveloped, it is they only; but their means, I fear, are much too scanty.

their oppression to their *immediate* masters. Had these gentlemen, at the commencement of the series of measures now in progress for the amelioration of the condition of the British negroes argued in this way - Do not make us the scape goats of the national sins, you are all *participes criminis*. We admit the evil of slavery in all its civil and religious magnitude, but we are not the authors of it; many of us are involved in it against our will, having derived our West Indian property from parents and grand parents, and having, many of us, families wholly dependent on it for their maintenance. We equally with you deplore its evils, and will lend ourselves gladly, cheerfully, and BONA-FIDE to any experiments that his Majesty's ministers shall recommend for the removal of such evils, provided always that, in case any loss, or ultimate and permanent depreciation of our private property occurs from those experiments, the losers shall be entitled to full compensation, except where it can be proved that such loss or depreciation occurred from any obstinate obstruction offered by the losers themselves to the success of those experiments, and also except where the present holder has purchased his property since the period when the character of West Indian slavery first came into serious agitation in the British Parliament, as such holders (by their own clamorous and eternal asseverations) purchased their properties at a price proportionably reduced by the constant fear and uncertainty they were kept in of farther parliamentary interference.

Had the OLD British planters, I say, argued in this way at the commencement of the experiments now in progress, I do not see well how the justice of their argument and the contingent claims founded upon it, could have been either denied or resisted. Philanthropy at another's expense is very cheap benevolence, and unworthy of either a Briton or a Christian; whether by the argument and conduct they *have* adopted, they have not now completely shut themselves out from all such claims upon their countrymen, I leave to that illustrious senate which represents the national character, and takes charge of the national interests, to determine; but surely the nation need not be afraid of conceding to the old West Indians such *contingent* claims, as it is clear that the success of all experiments conducted by the government must depend very much upon the government itself.* And consider, most courteous Reader, if you are *really* afraid of the *possible* amount of such contingent claims upon your unparalleled national affluence and inexhaustible resources, how it strengthens the argument of the old slave-holders, and weakens your claims to the credit of *disinterested* benevolence; but if you would only submit for a few years to an *express tax for doubling all your West Indian garrisons merely during the substitution of legal and moral, for physical impulsion to labour*, I am quite satisfied you might *safely* undertake the *contingent* indemnity I have mentioned; partial tumults, indeed, and casual destruction of property, might still occur, but its amount in a national point of view must, I am persuaded, be trifling. I cannot help, therefore, expressing my most humble but earnest hope that nothing will deter the christian part of the British public, which I trust is becoming, (how can I help wishing so, if christianity is true?) and will daily more and more become the influential part upon the British councils, from persevering in their glorious cause; difficulties will vanish as their determination becomes *definite* and *immoveable*.

Whilst the British government exacts of their subjects in their individual capacity a submission to their restraints, and punishes them for impugning the divine authority of Christianity, the public have a right to call upon the ministers, in common decency, to defer in their official capacity to the obligations that *Christianity* imposes upon them as the representatives, stewards, and depositaries of the wealth, power, and talents of a Christian country, and that country unrivalled in

* It would be ridiculous to suppose that the voice of an individual, the humility of whose circumstances is such as to confine him to an exile so pernicious and noisome (both morally and physically speaking) as mine, should ever reach the ears, or (at least) arrest the attention of his Majesty's ministers; but if it could, I would say, BE FIRM, and you will at once CHRISTIANIZE and SAVE the West Indies. BE VACILLATING, and you will at once BARBARIZE and ruin them. - *Editor*.

wealth, power, and talents by any in the world; and - let the friends of rational liberty remember, that if they do not support Christianity, Christianity cannot support them. The progress of Christianity is quite as indispensable to the progress of rational liberty, as the progress of the latter is to that of the former. Liberty unaccompanied by some strong moral principles of self-restraint (and if the truth of Christianity is surrendered, I know not whence they are to be efficiently derived,) is sure to degenerate into licentiousness and anarchy, and thence to take shelter under despotism, from the outrages which a vicious people would otherwise be continually committing upon each other. On the other hand, the progress of rational liberty is equally indispensable to the safe diffusion of the truths of Christianity, which might otherwise be abused by a few crafty hypocrites into a source of bigotry, papacy, inquisitions, and the most abject mental thralldom, - a perversion of the glorious liberty with which true religion makes men free, into outer darkness, and a bondage worse than Egyptian, which was merely of the body. At the same time, let it not however be forgotten, that with regard to the diffusion of Protestant Christianity, the province of temporal government is merely to *afford facilities* and *remove obstructions*. It is a very objectionable thing on every ground, both of religion and liberty, to invite the legislature to give the law an inquisitorial character, by making them too busy with private vices. Let it not be overlooked, that there are portions of Christian discipline that can only be safely administered by individuals to themselves; for I would humbly submit, that there are sins of which (however much opposed to sanctification) the violent controul (where their practice involves no violence to individual will or family security) would infallibly drive numbers either into Bedlam, or into total abandonment of themselves to infidelity or Antinomianism. Acts of Parliament, for example, for bringing execrations and ribaldry off officers and seamen, and, indeed, many acts of personal immorality to courts-martial on board a ship, *never have* or *can* be enforced; nor could any similar human law be impartially executed in regiments, colleges, inns of court, or any body of men of whom I have any experience. Now and then private malice may pounce upon a victim, but the mischief done in such cases by the encouragement afforded to the indulgence of resentment and sycophancy in the informer, and the impression made of partiality in the administration of the laws, is, in my humble opinion, more than equivalent to the benefit of the example in the way of determent. What justice of the peace could impartially levy the fine at present imposed by act of parliament for profane swearing? His equals and neighbours would be afraid of his doors, lest a careless expletive should expose them to a penalty. The amenities of private social intercourse would be destroyed by the rigid and impartial execution of such laws, and *I*, for one, can never agree to the legal *enforcement* of any moral restraints upon the poor that are not equally enforced upon the rich. Far, far from me, be such a reflection upon the noblest portion of the British people - noblest, I mean, in the leading features of their professional character - most alive to generous impulses, least actuated by mercenary motives, most disdainful of deliberate guile, and ever most alive to show 'their manly bosoms to the fiercest foe' - the navy - as to suppose that a ship's crew is not to be brought into some *degree* of Christian consistency in their individual comportment; but it must be done by regular, painful, and persevering ministerial instruction, and the cheerful example of the commanding officers in deferring to those instructions themselves, but *not* by *courts-martial*. The same argument applies in part to the Christianisation of negroes; it would be much better that they should receive their religious improvement from the instruction and example of their masters, if they would afford it to them; but I am compelled to declare, from my knowledge of the resident whites in Surinam, Dutch, Scotch, and English, that this is quite a preposterous expectation. If, therefore, the Dutch or British Governments wish at length to deprecate a vengeance from heaven like that which is now desolating Spain, by deep though late repentance for the centuries during which (*upon the postulatium of Christianity being true*) they have in their West Indian policy defied it, they must take the Christian instruction of their negroes entirely out of the hands of their *soi-disant* owners. If it is urged that this will diminish the respect of the slave for his owner, I answer, no matter, if it is *proportionably increased* for those who form the APPEAL AUTHORITIES of both parties, viz. THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE MOTHER COUNTRIES. It is upon the confidence of the

negroes in the sincerity, truth, good faith, and parental protection and redress for grievous injustice of these APPEAL POWERS, that the quiescence and forbearance of self-redress in the negroes must very much depend; for I am quite satisfied, courteous reader, that negroes are men, and to be governed upon the same general principles as any other men, and susceptible of the same moral influence. The difference in either respect, if any, is one merely of *modification*. That a long course of misrule and abominations can be reformed without some danger, I dare not assert; but that the danger would be greatly diminished, if not entirely removed, by the uniformity and steadiness which a scheme of West Indian evangelisation could only derive from Government's undertaking it, I contend strenuously. By *danger* I mean, of course, danger to the white proprietors; for danger, as far as the interests of the negroes are concerned, is utterly inapplicable to *any* mode of introducing Christianity amongst them, (if Christianity is true,) whether by individuals or the Government; and even to the whites, although danger must attend the *partial* and *irregular* diffusion of new light into the negro mind according to the temper on which it acts, if there are no Government provisions made for its free circulation and safe conduct; yet I do believe that even its partial influence *may* also operate as their security, and that it *did* do so essentially in Demarara I am convinced.

The real enemies of the West Indians, I confess, have always appeared to me to be such persons as the writers who profess to defend them in Blackwood and John Bull, who deceive and tamper with them, and make them believe that the people of England sit so loosely by their affection to Christianity, that their late calls upon their Government for the distinct recognition of its authority in all parts of their empire, if they mean to maintain its authority at home, is a mere passing extravagance of enthusiasm or fanatical caprice; so that instead of setting themselves heartily and at once to assimilate their properties, and, by so doing, the security of their tenures, to those of the mother country, by the delay, and partiality, and inefficiency of their co-operation, (to say the least,) if not by direct opposition, they have often certainly betrayed a design of baffling the best wishes of their Christian countrymen; and every step that has been won by the mother country in the subduing of West Indian atrocity has been won in the teeth and defiance of almost every difficulty which the West Indians could safely object to it, either in argument or practice. Either these writers are really covert infidels, or they know nothing at all about the state of slavery in Dutch Guiana, where the proprietors have the power, and *generally*, as far as I can learn, exercise it, of forbidding either the baptism or the marriage of their negroes. Upon the latter observance between slaves, indeed, as I have before said, there is an actual penalty upon the minister performing the ceremony. The present system of slavery, therefore, which prevails at Surinam, I again assert to be utterly incompatible with the inculcation of the doctrines and duties of Christianity upon the mass of the population involved in it; and if, therefore, Christianity is true, must be overborne by that irresistible will which has decreed its progress, and to which all opposition must recoil upon its authors, or must be superseded by one adapted to facilitate, and not obstruct, the march of divine knowledge.

Pardon, gentle Christian reader, the desultoriness of these few observations. A climate within six degrees of the equator, of which four-fifths of the soil is an absolute swamp below the level of the sea, and which has never allowed me six consecutive hours of health since I first arrived in it, will, I trust, disarm any very severe criticism on the composition of either this little editorial epilogue or the narrative to which it is subjoined; and which I would not have presumed to address to you, but the chances are many against my surviving my engagements in this colony, and I could not forego the opportunity of earnestly invoking you not to relax in the noble contest in which you have already won such decisive advantages. In a cause like this, remember, Government derive all their strength from the voice of the public, and however earnest their own individual wishes may be for the extension of the practical influences of Christianity, (from which alone, if Christianity be true, any reasonable hopes can be entertained of material improvement in the proportions of human happiness and misery,) cannot go in their legislative character, at least with the slightest good effect, beyond the public feeling. In despotisms, indeed, the public feeling is led by the Government; but in countries where the spirit of liberty so pervades all her institutions as in

England, the converse of this must in a great measure be true; and what is the measure of good which the world may not hope to derive from the perfect concert of the popular and executive energies of ENGLAND, when perseveringly employed in subserving the bounties of heaven, and propagating the only means vouchsafed or encouraged by God for improving the condition of man? Believe me, courteous reader,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THE EDITOR.

Dutch Guiana,

January 18, 1826.

Notes by the Editor

Note A, p. 55.

See the reports of all the naval officers employed on the service of suppressing the slave trade, printed in the papers laid before Parliament on that subject. From their peculiarly unexceptionable authority they should be collected and published in a separate pamphlet; of the CHARACTER of this HELL-ENGENDERED trade, and its only efficient European ally and champion the FRENCH BOURBON GOVERNMENT, which deliberately and systematically baffles all the best energies and prodigal expenses of the British people to overcome it, they are DECISIVE. It would swell this little essay too much to introduce them here, but there is one anecdote recorded by the late Sir George Collier so honourable to the character of British seamen, and so worthy to illuminate the page of any national history, that I am sure my readers will thank me for extracting it.

Extract from the Second Annual Report of Capt. Sir G. R. Collier, upon the settlements on the coast of Africa, dated 16th September, 1820, addressed to J. W. Croker, Esq. and printed in the 'Further Papers relating to the Suppression of the Slave Trade,' laid before the House of Commons, April, 1821.

'In order to examine more minutely the various rivers emptying themselves on the windward coast, a fast-sailing vessel was procured at the joint expense of myself and some of the officers, for the purpose of affording a covering to the crews of the several boats employed in the service, where frigates and sloops of war could not approach, thus protecting them as well from the effects of sun and tornadoes, as from the injurious consequences of the night dews and common rains, the *Tartar*, (Sir G. Collier's flag ship,) keeping under sail in the offing, and in sight of signal. This arrangement, so far as the health of the officers and ship's company was concerned, proved a most material benefit, and though the vessel was purposely unarmed to avoid the chance of any deviation from my instructions, yet her utility in the object I had in view was so pre-eminently conspicuous, that the officers likely to be occasionally employed in boats, *requested to be allowed to take a proportion of the expense*. Had there been a chance of any pecuniary emolument arising from this measure, as in time of actual war, I should not have felt it necessary to notice this circumstance; but the desire springing from the best feelings of the heart, and which had been roused in this instance into an active benevolence by the dreadful scenes occasionally witnessed in the suffering misery of the unfortunate captives from the African shores, I have felt it due to the character of my officers to show, that the same philanthropic feelings which actuate the conduct of so large a proportion of our countrymen are not confined to those resident on shore. Indeed, were it necessary, I could prove that on some occasions, where I have had doubts as to further detention of slaving ships, from the chance of incurring heavy damages, and perhaps entire loss of fortune, and whilst the slaving vessels have been under examination by myself and officers, *THE WHOLE CREW of the Tartar have come forward, and in the most decorous but urgent manner, have added their entreaties to the measure, offering their growing pay as a security for their proportion of the expense, in case of the non-condemnation of the vessel by the mixed court at Sierra Leone; though it was explained to and fully understood by them, that as the law now stood, no pecuniary benefit could arise to any one from head-money as formerly, even though the condemnation should actually take place. It therefore strongly proves what the misery and sufferings of the slave must be, until he may reach his point of destination, when they could produce such strong effects upon so many unlettered and uneducated minds as the crew of a man of war may be supposed to be composed of.*

'On this distressing subject,' Sir George concludes his report, 'so revolting to every well-regulated mind, I will add, that such is the merciless treatment of the slaves by the persons engaged in the traffic, that no fancy can picture the horror of the voyage, *crowded together so as not to give the power to move, linked one to the other by the leg, never unfettered while life remains, or till the iron shall have fretted the flesh to the bone, forced under a deck, as I have seen them, not thirty inches in height, breathing an atmosphere the most putrid and pestilential possible, with little food*

and LESS WATER, subject also to the most severe punishment at the caprice or fancy of the brute who may command the vessel. It is to me a matter of extreme wonder, that any of these miserable people live the voyage through; many of them, indeed, perish on the passage, and those who remain to meet the shore, present a picture of wretchedness language cannot express.'

Note B, p. 61.

Ireland may appear *prima facie* an exception to the truth of this opinion, but I am convinced it is not so; the population of Ireland would *not* increase but diminish if they did not live under the ægis of a civilized government, and nothing prevents the indefinite increase of their happiness and numbers but their abandonment by their unnatural lords, and their most calamitous religion. Always sowing tares amongst wheat to make their destruction impossible, and grafting perversion upon truth, how plainly is that religion a contrivance of the great enemy of man and Christ; - and the malignity of its influence upon man's best interests, wherever it prevails, is truly worthy of the guile of its dark origination.

Note C, p. 115.

The present military habit in the tropics of enforcing the exact costume of the European parade, (a coat of heavy woollen, close buttoned to the chin,) seems very absurd: the oppression it inflicts must be dreadful. I for one should die under it; and I can only account for it by ascribing it to the puerile vanity of affecting in the European constitution an independence of all local circumstances.

Note D, p. 118.

The whole of this scene must of course be considered as fictitious, nor can any the slightest reflection whatever have been here intended upon the present Governor of Surinam, Major-General de Veer, who was not at that time in the colony.

Note E, p. 127.

'La religion n'intervient que comme un usage dans les actes les plus solennels de la vie; elle n'apporte plus ses consolations et l'espérance aux malheureux. La morale religieuse ne guide plus la raison dans le sentier étroit et difficile de la vie, le froid égoïsme a desséché toutes les sources du sentiment, il n'y a plus d'affections domestiques, ni de respect, ni d'amour, ni d'autorité, ni de dépendance réciproques chacun vit pour soi; personne ne forme de ces sages combinaisons, qui liaient à la génération future les générations présentes.' - *Extract from Dr. Esquirol.*

Note F, p. 150.

The noble, manly, rational, and consistent bill introduced by Mr. Canning, since this work was composed, for co-gradually Christianizing and disenthraling from the bondage of beasts of burden the negroes in the British West Indies, will save them, I trust, from any such consequence; but no such SAFETY-LAMP arrangements have been interposed by the Dutch Government between the antagonist principles of Christ and Belial. The whole system of Dutch negro government is absolutely pagan.

Note G, p. 160.

See reply of the Attorney-General Seymour, in the reign of William and Mary, to a deputation of Virginian planters, requesting Government to supply them with an ecclesiastical establishment, as their Majesty's Virginian subjects *had souls* as well as those in England.

Note H, p. 161.

It is not in one or two but in all points that Christianity collides with the Surinam system of negro slavery, and Satan might as easily have dispersed the palpable obscure of his daring flight through chaos with a single torch, as a few Christian missionaries, by their unaided efforts, pierce with a

single ray of pure and properly comprehended Christianity the midnight paganism of the negro mind there, which it has been the guilty policy of the Colonial Government for centuries to perpetuate by every regulation in their power. The missionaries may and must sacrifice themselves if they are good men; and they may drive the negroes upon whom they make any valuable religious impression to revolt or suicide, as the life of an intelligent, thoroughly taught Christian slave, subject to the capricious and uncontrollable despotism of such a dreg of his colour as Mr. Hogshead, or even an infidel planter, to be insulted and taunted before the heathen slaves, to be spited upon every occasion, punished for the most trifling offences, overworked, underfed, under-clothed, under-medicated, every bad habit *subdued* of drinking, swearing, stealing, or sexual vagrancy, overlooked or derided, every faulty habit remaining *unsubdued*, called proof of hypocrisy, and doubly punished, must be HELL - HELL. But a revolution (humanely speaking) to clear away the accumulation of obstacles carefully piled for centuries (and but very partially relaxed within these few years) against the invasion of light* by every bad feeling which could instigate the human bosom, must precede the Christianization of the slave population in Surinam, unless the Netherland's government follow the example of the British, and take it wholly out of the hands of the local authorities and proprietors.

Note I, p. 173.

These ferocious animals are so audacious in Surinam, that they will sometimes dash into the enclosures surrounding a plantation dwelling house, and carry off a sheep or heifer, and within these two years an individual tiger, measuring nearly five feet from the root of the tail to the tip of the snout, was shot in a tree in the garden of one of the houses in Paramaribo, and is now, I believe, in the museum of an accomplished medical gentleman there of the name of Hostman.

Note K, p. 187.

Courteous reader, if you have any incredulity, and will just take a summer sail across the Atlantic, you will see half a dozen of them together straddling down the streets of Paramaribo in this condition before you have been there a week, and hear their screams of a morning if you live near the fortress, during the operation.

Note L, p. 203.

I cannot forbear here illustrating the astonishing force of vegetation in this country, by a circumstance connected with one of these houses; there was a row of tamarind trees before it, which contributed to its preservation, but which were themselves for several hours enveloped in flames from the conflagration of the houses immediately opposite, which were burnt to the ground, and to one of which was attached a timber yard with immense piles of pine planks as high as the first story, which of course were also reduced to ashes. The day following, the row of tamarind trees presented only the appearance of so many skeletons of absolute charcoal; in *three weeks*, I assure my courteous readers, that they were in leaf again.

Note M, p. 203.

Extract from Observations of M.A.F. Lammens, Judge of the Mixed Court for the Suppression of the Slave Trade in Surinam, on the part of His Netherland's Majesty. 'I must remark here with regret that the different, un- 'becoming, and cruel manner in which some proprietors 'behave themselves with respect to their slaves, often 'obliges the Court of Policy to deprive them of the ma-

* The introduction of a barbarous jargon of Dutch and English amongst the negroes by way of a language, and the forbidding formerly, and even still displaying the greatest jealousy of, their instruction in any other, is one instance of this. The whole vocabulary does not comprise above five hundred words, and those incapable of modification. How can any adequate idea of Christianity be conveyed to the mind by such a vehicle as this?

'nagement of their property, or to place them under the 'direction of the Court of Policy, as has been done with 'the persons BUCK, a woman; KUSTER, and *others*. It 'seems by this, as if the opinion that *proprietors are not 'proper to direct and administrate their plantations, and that 'third persons would be fitter, COULD BE JUSTIFIED.*' - See note to page 9 of 'Bedenkingen bij Het Lezen van Het

Artikel: Koloniën, voorkomende in Het 7de deel der Bijdragen tot de Huishouding van Staat van der Heer G.K. Grave van Hogendorp, door Mr. Adriaan François Lammens, President ad interim bij Het Hof van Civiele Justitie der Kolonie Suriname. Te Amsterdam, bij G.S. Leeneman van der Kroe, 1824.'

Note N, p. 214.

It was my misfortune for six months of my life, in the years eighteen hundred and twenty-four and five, to live next door in Paramaribo to a Dutch lawyer of the name of Van Ess, a young man of about twenty-five years of age, who had two girls and a mulatto lad from eighteen to twenty years of age in his service, upon whom altogether, but chiefly the girls, he bestowed during the six months no less than *fourteen* floggings, of which this was the manner; the girls wrists are tied together and their naked bodies to a post, (a single linen apron only, about the size and substance of a large pocket handkerchief being tied round their waists,) whilst a strong male slave belabours them with a long whip till the master tells him to desist, who sometimes seems to act a sort of personification of cruelty, by regulating the punishment by the number of pipes he smokes during its infliction, as if for the purpose of vaunting the utter callousness and insensibility of his national character to every sentiment of refinement, religion, or humanity. I do not know what was the occasion of these punishments, if necessary however, what becomes of the SYSTEM which could make them so? If not, of the BRUTE which could, without necessity, employ them? The reader, who has never lived in a community where Christianity is *generally* abjured, as it is in Surinam, cannot conceive the rapid gravitation of humane nature towards brutality the moment its restraints are withdrawn, because in England all its great sanctions are so interwoven into the frame of the social polity, and the tone of public opinion is so established in its favour, that those who most affect to deride its authority, cannot systematically at least outrage its principles in their conduct, with impunity to their characters; but in such places as Surinam, I verily believe the white settlers are only upheld from sinking in the scale of brutalization and barbarity below the surrounding savages, by the distant and feeble reflection of shame to which their mercantile connections still expose them from the voice of public opinion in Europe.

Note O, p. 223.

The cause is evident, they are just as full of degenerating passions, and as sensual and luxurious in a coarser way, and bear in every feature of their character indications as unequivocal of moral ruin as the Europeans, but not more so. They are, reader, in all respects by nature your moral peers, and will remain so, let Mr. Lawrence publish as many volumes on Comparative Anatomy as he pleases, and the revolting and self-disparaging materialists contend for their infamous and soul-denying doctrines as they choose!!!

Note P, p. 232.

The same possibly to whose martyrous fidelity an imperishable monument has been subsequently erected in the neighbouring Colony of Demerara by Governor Murray and Chief Justice Wray, and the other local authorities for the time being.

Note Q, p. 232. This story is only topically fictitious, see the History of the Conversion of a Man of the name of Davis at Oxford, in the Biographical Portraiture, by the Reverend James Hinton, whose union of talent, temper, prudence, and earnestness of right intention in a very difficult and

delicate situation for many years, entitled, and, I believe, procured him the general respect of that university. It should be read by all English libertines and formalists, Dutch materialists, and young surgeons, who, after the example of that modest young lecturer, Mr. Lawrence, are content to think themselves nothing better than great baboons.

Note R, p. 235.

In the case of the Demerara riots, it was proved that the truly Christian insurgents had determined, in one or two of their preceding conferences, *'not to take life as they could not give it,'* and to shed no blood, as it was contrary to the faith which they had been taught, in fact, it is clear this ill-requited scrupulousness lost them their end. I say *ill-requited*, for their *Christian* masters, in the progress and sequel of this *rebellion*, contrived to destroy (I think I have read) nearly ONE THOUSAND of them, but say only SEVERAL HUNDREDS: - who that ever lived in any unreformed part of the West Indies, disconnected from the pagan and anti-Christian SYSTEM of society that prevails there, can wonder in his heart at the celebrated toast of the great moralist, Dr. Johnson, 'Success to the first insurrection of Negroes in the West Indies.' He saw that the whole system from beginning to end was so atrocious, that it could never be reconciled to Christianity, or he would not have committed himself to so strong an expression of his disapprobation of it. And as far as my experience goes, he saw accurately. What says Alexander McDonnell, Esq. writing in defence of a British Colony?

'I think it will be generally allowed, that if slavery exist at all, there must be a very great discretionary power intrusted to those who have the superintendence of the properties. It is perfectly idle to attempt to regulate the conduct of those persons in all their minute duties. Power so extensive in its very nature as theirs, must necessarily exist beyond *the controul of any law. It is no exaggeration whatever to say, that the happiness or misery of 'a slave is in a manager's keeping. If he takes any dislike or pique to any individual, he can harass the poor creature incessantly in a thousand different shapes.'* - Vide Considerations on Negro Slavery, by Alexander McDonnell, Esq. p. 281.

Note S, p. 236.

See the account of the death of a Monk of la Trappe, under a surgical operation of excruciating pain, during the progress of which he never uttered a groan, as being contrary to the rules of his order; but when, upon the representation of the surgeon, that the operation must be fatal if he persisted in such violence to nature, as to suppress every expression of pain, the abbot told him to express what he felt, as he would dispense with his vow of silence, the good monk used some such expressions as the above, and instantly expired.

Note T, p. 247.

I was in Surinam during all the period comprised in the above narration, and none of the occurrences therein described took place, except the fire of the town and shipping, and the execution of the Dutch soldier, which events did really happen, but not contemporaneously. The two preceding chapters must therefore in all other respects be entirely fictitious. The disgraceful trial and condemnation of a Christian missionary by a court-martial in an adjacent colony, is of posterior notoriety. Upon this subject. I would submit for the opinion of his Majesty's Attorney-General, and all others whom it may concern, the following question:

A, B, C, D, E, F, form an unlawful court, receive unlawful evidence, and in violation even of that evidence, such as it is, convict, sentence to death, and *execute* G, H. for practices not only not condemned but most emphatically enjoined by Christianity. Query, do not A, B, C, D, E, F, subject themselves by the laws of Great Britain, of which Christianity is now distinctly recognised as a part, to indictment for the wilful murder of G, H, i.e. to a conspiracy to take away his life with malice prepense?

I submit another question in the present day of very considerable and growing importance to the administrators of British laws in the West Indies.

J, K, a kidnapped African, in slavery in Demerara, runs away, and in resisting a violent attempt to recapture him kills his assailant. Query, could an indictment for murder be legally maintained in such a case against J, K, or a British jury *legally* find any other verdict against him than *justifiable homicide*; or if they did, could a judge without himself incurring the most serious penalty proceed to execute on a verdict of murder?

Note U, p. 259.

Perhaps this is the same gentleman who was afterwards the government chaplain of Demarara, and who in spite of the hornet's nest of infidels and atheists which he must have known that he should, and in fact did, bring about him, to the honour of the church of England, had the courage and Christian integrity in the case of Mr. Smith to express himself as follows:

'I feel no hesitation in declaring, from the intimate knowledge which my most anxious inquiries have obtained, that in the late scourge which the hand of an all-wise Creator has inflicted on this ill-fated country, nothing but those religious impressions which, under Providence, Mr. Smith has been instrumental in fixing - nothing but those principles of the Gospel of Peace, which he has been proclaiming, could have prevented a dreadful effusion of blood here, and saved the lives of those very persons who are now (I shudder to write it) seeking his life.'

I cannot help adding, as it does him equal honour, the testimony of Mr. Arrindall, Mr. Smith's counsel, to the same effect.

'It is almost presumptuous in me to differ from the sentence of a court, but, before God, I do believe Mr. Smith to be innocent, nay, I will go further, and defy any minister of any sect whatever to have shown a more faithful attention to his sacred duties than he has been proved, by the evidence on his trial, to have done.'

Note X, p. 268.

See this argument eloquently urged by the late Lord Erskine, in his defence of the publisher of Paine's *Age of Reason*.

« But, » said that highly gifted advocate, 'it seems this is an age of reason, and the time and the person are at length arrived, that are to dissipate the errors which have overspread the past generations of ignorance. The believers in Christianity are many; but it belongs to the few that are wise to correct their credulity. Belief is an act of reason, and superior reason may, therefore, dictate to the weak. In running the mind along the long list of sincere and devout Christians, I cannot help lamenting that Newton had not lived to this day, to have had his shallowness filled up with this new flood of light. But the subject is too awful for irony. I will speak plainly and directly. Newton was a Christian. Newton, whose mind burst forth from the fetters fastened by nature upon our finite conceptions - Newton, whose science was truth, and the foundation of whose knowledge of it was philosophy; not those visionary and arrogant presumptions which too often usurp its name, but philosophy resting upon the basis of mathematics, which, like figures, cannot lie - Newton, who carried the line and rule to the uttermost barriers of creation, and explored the principles by which all created matter exists and is held together. But this extraordinary man, in the mighty reach of his mind, overlooked, perhaps, the errors which a minuter investigation of the created things on this earth might have taught him. What shall, then, be said of the great Mr. Boyle, who looked into the organic structure of all matter, even to the inanimate substances which the foot treads upon? Such a man may be supposed to have been equally qualified with Mr. Paine to look up through nature to nature's God. Yet the result of all his contemplations was the most confirmed and devout belief in all which the other holds in contempt, as despicable and drivelling superstition. But this error might, perhaps, arise from a want of due attention to the foundations of human judgment, and the structure of that understanding which God has given us for the investigation of truth. Let that question be answered by Mr. Locke, who, to the highest pitch of devotion and adoration, was a

Christian - Mr. Locke, whose office it was to detect the errors of thinking, by going up to the very fountains of thought, and to direct into the proper track of reasoning the devious mind of man, by showing him its whole process, from the first perceptions of sense to the last conclusions of ratiocination; putting a rein upon false opinion by practical rules for the conduct of human judgment.

‘But these men, it may be said, were only deep thinkers, and lived in their closets unaccustomed to the traffic of the world, and to the laws which practically regulate mankind. Gentlemen, in the place where we now sit to administer the justice of this great country, the never-to-be-forgotten Sir Matthew Hale presided, whose faith in Christianity is an exalted commentary upon its truth and reason, and whose life was a glorious example of its fruits; whose justice, drawn from the pure fountain of the Christian dispensation, will be, in all ages, a subject of the highest reverence and admiration. But it is said by the author, that the Christian fable is but a tale of the more ancient superstitions of the world, and may be easily detected by a proper understanding of the mythologies of the heathens. Did Milton understand those mythologies? Was he less versed than Mr. Paine in the superstitions of the world? No; they were the subject of his immortal song; and though shut out from all recurrence to them, he poured them forth from the stores of a memory rich with all that man ever knew, and laid them in their order as the illustration of real and exalted faith, the unquestionable source of that fervid genius, which has cast a kind of shade upon all the other works of man: -

“He passed the flaming bounds of space and time;
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze:
He saw - but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night,”

Let me add to this beautiful extract one word in reply to Mr. Paine. The basis of his objection to Christianity, is the absence of all need of a revelation, from the sufficiency of the book of creation to display the attributes of its Author, of which book the indispensable key is TRIGONOMETRY; a revelation for the POOR, of which the only key is TRIGONOMETRY!!! But if they had the key, and were familiar with the use of it, it would only aid a little their conception of the KNOWLEDGE and POWER of GOD; it would avail them nothing towards the discovery of his moral attributes. The impression of his goodness that arises from one aspect of the material creation is shocked and confounded by another. If a humming-bird is submitted to our examination, it is difficult to believe that the Divine Artist of such exquisite beauty can be other than a being of infinite benevolence; but if a scorpion is brought into contrast, it completely overthrows or perplexes any such positive inference.

Note Y, p. 276.

An acquaintance of mine at Surinam denies the INCARNATION, because (he says) involves associations derogatory to the dignity and majesty of THE DEITY; should this note ever catch his eye, I entreat him to reflect whether the same line of argument would not disprove the agency of THE DEITY in man's present creation, from bringing HIS unspeakable MAJESTY into direct association with the weaknesses and grossnesses of human nature. Should he reply that man's original nature was probably free from either weakness or grossness, which have both been since contracted by some misuse of his free agency; then I contend that such a position lets in the doctrine of the fall, the great foundation of the Christian dispensation, and from which alone (apart from all other evidence) results an almost overbearing presumption of its truth.

Note Z, p. 284.

I sincerely wish that I could speak more favourably than the AUTHOR of the foregoing narrative of the conduct of the Surinam authorities (especially this officer) in respect to the revolting, frightful, all-crime-comprising, all-depravity-inducing, all-humanity-deriding, heaven-outraging, and demoniacal practice,* the West Indian Slave Trade; but sorry am I that truth compels me to declare, that the only one officer of His Netherland's Majesty, civil or military, that has appeared to me, during my residence in Surinam, to evince the slightest evidence of his having received any *peremptory* orders to carry into execution the provisions of the treaty between the crowns of England and Holland for its suppression with real energy and GOOD FAITH, is the *present* Governor, Major General de Veer, a fine, soldierly, veteran-looking, hospitably-hearted man, distinguished for his successful defence of Curaçoa, in the year eighteen hundred and four, against a very formidable attack by a British force under the command of Commodore Bligh of the *Thetis*. He, (General de Veer,) although differing much as an individual from the opinions of the abolitionists, has acted like a man of the strictest honour, and in one or two instances involved himself in considerable hot water with the colonial magistrates by his decision and firmness, which gives me great reason to fear that he is NOT supported as he ought to be by the ministers of HIS king, for it is clear that they are bound, as well by the original treaty, as by express promises subsequently made to His Britannic Majesty's ambassador in Holland, (as appears by the parliamentary papers,) to send him over orders so PEREMPTORY for the extinction of the traffic, and *approbation so express and decisive* of his energetic enforcement of the Dutch abolition laws, that he may always shelter himself from any personal ill-will towards him of the colonists by an appeal to them. I am the more disposed to this suspicion, from the circumstance of there having been, at the time of my writing this note, (January 18th, 1826,) no Dutch ship of war here since *the third of last July*, the indispensability of whose employment, in the effectual suppression of slave-smuggling, in a colony with such a long line of sea coast and so many creeks distant from observation as Surinam, has (it also appears by the parliamentary papers) formed a subject of earnest representation by the British ambassador in Holland to the Dutch ministers, who expressed their ready acquiescence, and promised that in future the Governor of Surinam should not be unprovided with the necessary naval assistance, - a promise however of which hitherto I have certainly seen no effect here.

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* See extract from Report of Sir George Collier, in Note A.