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L E T T E R S

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S L A V E - T R A D E, &c.

L E T T E R S

ON THE

S L A V E - T R A D E , &c.

L E T T E R S
ON THE
S L A V E - T R A D E,
AND THE
STATE OF THE NATIVES

IN THOSE PARTS OF

A F R I C A,

WHICH ARE CONTIGUOUS TO

FORT St. LOUIS AND GOREE,

WRITTEN AT PARIS

In DECEMBER 1789, and JANUARY 1790.



By T. CLARKSON.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY JAMES PHILLIPS, GEORGE YARD, LOMBARD STREET.

MDCCXCI.

T O

SAMUEL WHITBREAD, Esq.

THIS LITTLE TRACT,

RELATING TO A SUBJECT OF PHILANTHROPY

WHICH HAS LONG OCCUPIED HIS FEELINGS,

IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS SINCERE

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

P R E F A C E.

HAPPENING to be at Paris for a few months in the year 1789, I became acquainted with several gentlemen, who expressed a wish to be informed of the merits of the question of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade. I desired such of them, as appeared to me to have that subject most at heart, to propose to me certain queries in writing, which I would answer at my leisure. These queries were accordingly proposed, and my answers were given as I had promised.

On my arrival in England, I accidentally shewed what I had thus written to a friend. He was so struck with the answers to the first and second of these queries, but particularly the second, as to desire me to publish them. "I have read," says he, "the Privy Council Report: I have read also the various publications on the same subject; and though I can collect very satisfactorily from these the different methods of making slaves on the continent of Africa, I have

never

never been able, till the perusal of these answers, to acquire any just idea of the state of society in which the natives live. I advise you therefore to publish them; first, as I have just hinted, because you will be giving information on a branch of the subject that is but little known; and, secondly, because I think you will prove the natives to have attained a step in the scale of civilization, far beyond what any people imagine.

This advice on the part of my friend I declined attending to for some time; for I had hopes of seeing Mr. de Villeneuve in London, the gentleman, who furnished me with the matter for answering the questions alluded to; and I had no doubt but that he would have then given his own information in this country in a publick manner, and where it would have had its greatest use. But when I found that Mr. de Villeneuve was in daily expectation of receiving orders to join his regiment abroad, and could not come to England, I consented to the requisition of my friend.

The following work then is composed of such letters, as contain the answers to the first and second of the queries proposed to me, as I have already stated, during my residence at Paris. The rest of the letters, written nearly at the same time, it would be quite superfluous to publish, for as the contents of them have been given to the publick in England in other works, they must be now generally known.

It may perhaps appear strange to the reader, that I should have occasion in the course of the work to describe countries not very far distant from those in the annexed map, and yet that these countries should not be included in it. The Reader, however, will please to observe, that the annexed is a map only of Mr. de Villeneuve's travels, which

which he made himself, while resident in Africa. The single dotted lines represent the boundaries of distinct kingdoms: the double dotted lines describe his own route. As this map contained all the countries, which form the principal subject of these letters, I thought there was but little occasion to extend it so far as to take in others but slightly mentioned; and particularly, when there seemed to be no difficulty in making it appear plainly to the Reader where they lay.

THOMAS CLARKSON.

LONDON, MAY 16, 1791.

A Map
of the
TRAVELS
of
M^r DE VILLENEUVE,
from the River Sallum
to the Senegal.

Scale of British Statute Miles 69 $\frac{1}{2}$ to a Degree.

10 20 30 40



L E T T E R I.

PARIS, DECEMBER 20. 1789.

S I R,

AS you have done me the honour to propose to me several questions for a reply on the subject of the African Slave-Trade, I shall begin with the two following: for they appear to me to have a natural claim to the first place, as objects of consideration, in these letters:

I. What are the different methods of making slaves of such persons as come into the hands of the French, by means of their establishments at Fort St. Louis and Goree.

II. What is the state of society, in which the natives bordering on these establishments may be said to live.

It has happened, Sir, very fortunately indeed for the gratification of your wishes, that I have already had, since my residence at Paris, several communications with one of the best informed men either in this, or

A

perhaps

perhaps in any other country, upon these two points of the subject. I mean Monf. Geoffroy de Villeneuve, who was aid-de-camp to the Chevalier de Boufflers, one of the members of your Assembly, during his residence as Governor of Goree.

M. de Villeneuve, who is a man of fortune and family here, accompanied the Chevalier to the coast of Africa, in the capacity now described. As a young man, who had made great progress in the study of natural history, and who had a great curiosity to learn the customs and manners of a people who were but little known, he was considered as peculiarly proper to accompany the Governor to these parts. He was accordingly often employed by the latter in embassies and expeditions of observation in the interior of Africa, into which he penetrated a considerable way. In the map annexed you will find his route by the doubly dotted lines. At one time, as you will see, he went by land from Dakárd, a village opposite to the island of Goree, to Fort St. Louis: at another from Dakárd through the interior of Cayor, from thence into the country of Qualof, and from thence through Baol into the Forests of the Serreres, penetrating through which he came again to the sea-shore. At another time he travelled through the whole kingdom of Sin; and at another, into the kingdom of Sallum, though the latter route is not expressed like the former by dotted lines. These, added to many petty excursions not expressed in the map, form the bulk of his travels in these parts. It may not be unnecessary here to mention that the annexed map is copied from one which he made himself on the spot, with this difference only, that whereas in the original you would see the names of almost innumerable villages, you see only the names of such in the present as there is occasion to mention for the illustration of your questions.

In these expeditions, as you have them now traced in the map, was Mr. de Villeneuve employed during his residence in Africa, which was in the whole about two years, ending in the beginning of the year 1789. As he was generally sent upon them for the sole purpose of observation, he did not fail to collect many facts, which it is probable that others, had they passed the same tract of country with other views, would have never known. He had also better opportunities than most other travellers in Africa of knowing the real situation of things there, inasmuch as he was an eye-witness of what were in the interior parts, as well as of searching into the truth of many accounts of things given him by the natives which he did not see, inasmuch as he understood their language, a grammar of which he made and retains by him at the present day. And as he kept a journal of all he heard and saw on the spot, he cannot be charged with having misrepresented any thing for want of memory, any more than he can be charged with having been biased by party, when you consider him to have been collecting his facts previously to any knowledge he could have of the agitation of the question of the Slave-Trade.

It is by means of this gentleman then that I am now enabled to give you a minute, accurate, and faithful answer to two of the questions which you have done me the honour to propose to me for a reply. With his permission I have already attended him many times upon this subject. What I have written down on one morning, though from his own mouth, I have submitted to his inspection on a second, and sometimes even on a third, so fearful have I been of mistaking him in the least point. Nor has he himself been less anxious to convey to me the truth; for if he has appeared on any occasion to have had a doubt respecting the answer he was to give me, he has always consulted his journal in my presence, and of so much importance did he consider it that men should

be rightly informed upon this subject, and so necessary that every one of his statements to me should be confirmed if possible, that he gave me the other day directions to no less than four gentlemen now at Paris, some of whom had accompanied him in one or two of his expeditions, and others had resided in Africa at the time, and he insisted that I should see them and put to them the same questions as I had before put to himself. This requisition I was obliged to comply with, by which means I had some valuable opportunities of seeing all Mr. de Villeneuve's observations to me confirmed. To this I must add, that having frequently mentioned the substance of Mr. de Villeneuve's information to Mr. Neckar, that gentleman has as repeatedly assured me that he has had precisely the same information from General Boufflers himself on the same points.

Having now previously stated to you the authority upon which I propose to answer the first and second of your queries, and that this answer will give you a knowledge of things as they were, so late as at the commencement of the year 1789, I have only to inform you that I shall begin to-morrow with your first question, to which I shall keep close in a series of letters till I think I have answered it both to your satisfaction and my own.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

L E T T E R II.

PARIS, DECEMBER 21. 1789.

S I R,

I COME to-day to the consideration of your first question, which I beg leave to repeat here,

What are the different methods of making slaves of such persons as come into the hands of the French by means of their establishments at Fort St. Louis and Goree?

To give you the clearest answer to this question, I shall refer you to the map. At the bottom of it you will find the country of Sallum. This country begins at the river Gambia, which is lower down than is expressed in the map, and extends upwards along the coast to the dotted line of boundary, which you see placed almost as high up as the river Palmarin. On passing this line of boundary, you get into the kingdom of Sin, which extends nearly along the same coast as high as Point de Serenes.

At

At Point de Serenes begins the present kingdom of Cayor under the dominion of Damél. This country extends from thence along the shore to beyond the mouth of the river Senegal. In the year 1785, that part of this tract of land, which lies between Point de Serenes and Rufisk, belonged to Tin, or the king of Baol, and was called the country of the Serreres of Baol, in contradistinction to the Serreres of Cayor, both of whom were undoubtedly once one people, but Damél having afterwards routed Tin, he added this tract to his dominions of Cayor.*

From these three countries then, extending along the shore from the mouth of the Gambia to that of the Senegal, the French are furnished annually, on an average of a few years, with about five hundred slaves; namely with about two hundred annually from Sallum, one hundred from Sin, and one hundred from Cayor; the various methods of whose reduction to slavery being similar in each, the following description may be considered as applicable to them all.

The grand mode of obtaining slaves in these countries is the Great Pillage, which is executed by the military at the command of their respective kings. It is so systematically practised, and is a source so much more fertile than any other of supplying slaves, that from the constant experience of those resident on the coast of Africa, into

* It may be proper to make a distinction here, which appears not to be generally known. In several of the maps of these countries you find the words "Kingdom of Sallum, Kingdom of Sin," and in others the words "Kingdom of Burfallum or Barfallum, and Kingdom of Burfin, Barfin, or Barbafin." Now the last of these two different kinds of expressions is wrong. The words Bour, Bur, Bar, and Bourba or Barba, are synonymous in these countries with the word King. Hence Sin and Sallum are the names of the countries themselves, and Burfallum or Barfallum, and Burfin, Barfin or Barbafin, the names of their respective kings, or the hereditary names of the kings of Sallum and Sin, and not of the countries which they severally govern. In the same manner Damél is the hereditary name of the king of Cayor, though you sometimes see absurdly printed the "Kingdom of Damél," and Tin is the hereditary name of the king of Baol, though you find the equally ridiculous expression of the "Kingdom of Tin."

whose hands the slaves have usually fallen, the following has passed into a rule. About one hundred and twenty may be considered as pillaged out of the two hundred from Sallum, about forty out of the hundred from Sin, and about one hundred and twenty again out of the two hundred from Cayor; that is to say, out of the five hundred sent from these countries in one year, two hundred and eighty may be considered as having been reduced to slavery by means of the Great Pillage.

The way of practising the Great Pillage is as follows. When any of these kings are in want of slaves, and intend to procure them in this manner, they assemble their military consisting of horse and foot. These are armed with sabres, lances, bows and arrows, pistols and guns. The number they assemble is proportionate to their own strength, and the strength of the village to be attacked. The hour of calling them together for this purpose is uncertain. It depends on the distance of the village whose inhabitants are destined for the prey. This village is sometimes near. It is at other times far off, and perhaps at the distance of a journey of four days. The rule however upon such occasions is, to set out at such a time, as to come upon it in the dead of night. The villages in these countries are open, and have no breast-work or defence.

As soon as the military arrive at the destined place, which is as before described in the dead of night, they surround it, but never attack it at that time. They wait always till the dawn of day. It is then that the women rise, and employ themselves in pounding millet for the purpose of reducing it to cuscus*, to serve as bread. The sound of the

* Millet powdered is called Cuscus. This Cuscus is of two sorts, either for immediate or future use. When it is for immediate use, nothing more is done to it; when for future, it is mixed with the pulverized leaves of a certain tree, which have the quality of preserving it for a length of time. This preserved millet the negroes take with them on any journey or excursion of a few days.

pestle is the signal for the attack. The military directly rush in and seize all they can. There are many reasons why they make their attack at this hour : first, because being dawn of day, they can see better : secondly, because though the women are up, the men are in bed, and the doors of the huts are opened : and thirdly, because the negroes in this part of the world, never like to perform any enterprize in the night.

It sometimes happens that the kings accompany their troops in person. It is customary for them however, not to enter the village. They remain always on the outside till the business is over.

As soon as the unfortunate inhabitants are captured, they are driven off. The men and women are made to walk. The children are put on horseback. If the journey should be two or three days long, as it sometimes happens to be, they are driven or carried to one of the king's villages which lie in the way at night. There they are made to lie. The inhabitants are obliged to turn out for them, or to find them room. The captives are always guarded. In the morning they set off again. In this way they travel till they get to the king's residence, which they enter with the sound of drums, horns and other instruments of their country-musick, which the military take with them from home upon such occasions.

The Pillages, which I have been now attempting to describe, are practised as circumstances offer ; either as the kings want money, or as they are tempted by the Europeans. For instance, in the year 1785, Damél owed money to one of the Moorish kings for some horses, which the latter had sold him. The debt had been then standing for three years. The Moorish king, having frequently urged him for payment, pressed him at last in such a manner, that Damél was unable to delay it for a longer time. Thus situated, he resolved on the Great Pillage. He assembled

accor-

accordingly about three thousand foot and one thousand horse. With these he went to one of his villages, and returned with a booty consisting of thirty slaves. It must be remarked here that, though the Great Pillage is by far the most fertile source of supplying slaves, yet very few are obtained by means of it at one time. Sometimes two or three captives only are made in an attack: at other times none, for the villagers are often apprized of it beforehand, and escape. It sometimes even happens, that the king is resisted and beaten, and obliged to go back with loss. It is rather then to the frequency of the Great Pillage, than to the number taken by means of it at any one time, that the Slave-Trade is indebted for so considerable a branch of its support.

As a second instance, the king of Sallum was asked by some merchants of Goree, who were there in 1786, to obtain them some slaves by means of the Great Pillage. He did not like the merchandize which they brought him, and refused therefore to comply with their request. Thus situated they knew not what to do. One of them however, had the good fortune to recollect that he had some new louis d'ors in his pocket, which glittered a good deal, and were similar to some which the king had admired, and bought at a former time. He immediately pulled these out of his pocket and presented them, when they struck the king's fancy so much, that he almost instantly ordered the Pillage.

As a third instance. In the month of November 1787, the usual presents were sent by the French to Barbasin at Joal, which is one of his residences, and which is situated, as you will perceive, on the sea-shore. He happened to have no slaves in his possession at this time. The Mulatto merchants however, who attended the embassy from Goree, were determined not to return home without some slaves. They intreated the king to have recourse to the Great Pillage. But he refused them. They

importuned him again. They made him intoxicated at length by means of mixed liquors. In the moments of inebriety they attacked with redoubled force, and continued to weary him in this manner, till they obtained his orders for the Pillage, which was at length executed four or five times with various success, in the course of the same week. Thus, Sir, do the Europeans, or their partners, or agents, seize every opportunity they can find of accomplishing, at the expence of the ease and happiness of peaceful and innocent villagers, their diabolical design.

It must not be omitted in this account of the Great Pillage, that the parties, who are sent out to execute it, meet sometimes with negroes in the way. These negroes are travelling about with their merchandize, or are going out on their ordinary business, or returning home. All such are immediately seized, and are made to accompany the expedition as slaves.

The Pillage, which I have been hitherto attempting to describe, may be called with propriety (as I have already termed it) the Great Pillage: for Damél, as I have already had occasion to observe, once sent out about four thousand of his military at a time; and the kings of Sin and Sallum have employed twelve hundred each on the same occasions. That then may be stiled the Little, in contra-distinction to the former, where only five or six of the military are employed at a time. This happens when the king is in want of a single man or woman-slave, and when he does not chuse to alarm a whole village; for the Great Pillage is attended with bad effects, inasmuch as there are many villages deserted in the dominions of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor on that account, whose inhabitants have fled into the woods, or have gone farther into the country to reside. Mr. de Villeneuve in his different
routes

routes, as already described to you in the map, has passed by several of them in this deserted state. In the Small Pillage then, the king employs only five or six of his guards. These are ordered to conceal themselves in the skirts of a village. They lie there till a man or woman comes out, when they rush from their hiding places, seize them and hurry them to the king.

If however none should stir out, they go into the village itself. They have their proper military habits and accoutrements on. The circumstance of being armed procures them respect. They pass up and down as travellers, or as people whom curiosity had brought there. While in the village, they are obliged to behave with circumspection. Were they to commit acts of violence there, they would be opposed. They are always however on the watch. If a woman, for instance, stirs out, they perceive it, slip out after her, surprize her, and take her off.

For this kind of expedition, there was one person resident in Mr. de Villeneuve's time in the vicinity of Goree, who was particularly known. His name was Gannar, and he was the brother of the Marabou or the priest of Dakard. To this man Damél frequently applied to head these petty expeditions, and in consequence of his artful and audacious conduct, acquired in the course of repeated practice, many an innocent traveller was way-laid, and many an innocent neighbour betrayed or assaulted, and sent into the regions of slavery.

Another mode practised by the kings of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor to get slaves, when they do not intend to alarm a village, is treachery or fraud. To give one instance. The king of Sallum in the year 1787, sent to a woman in a certain village at some distance from his own, to inform her that he wanted some millet, of which he understood she had a small
quantity

quantity to sell. The woman, flattered with the prospect of selling it to advantage, came immediately to the king, who directly occasioned her to be seized and sold. This is one instance of the acts of treachery made use of by the kings to supply the place of the Pillage, and to accomplish their avaricious designs. These acts vary as occasion offers, or ingenuity contrives. Of this description there may be five or six in every hundred of those that are sold for slaves in these parts in the course of a year.

The great bulk of the slaves then from these kingdoms are procured in the ways described. The other ways by which they are reduced to the same condition are these, either by private robbery, or by war, or by actual or supposed crimes.

The private robbers of the country, at least in these parts of it, are but few. In the interior of them they can hardly exist at all. If a subject of Sallum, Sin, or Cayor, were to offer a negro for sale in a village to which he did not belong himself, he would be suspected by the Guer raff or principal officer of that village of having stolen him, and in all probability would be stopped and sold. He could hardly sell him except he were to meet with an European there. If again one of the Guer raff's own village were to attempt to sell a slave to-day, whom he was known not to have had in his possession the day before, he would be called upon to shew where he had gotten him, before the sale were allowed. These robbers then do not exist in the interior of these kingdoms. They exist generally near the shore, or on the banks of such rivers as the craft of the Europeans or their agents frequent. In this case the disposal of a kidnapped person is easy, for he is purchased without a question being asked. In these parts it is notorious at Goree that there are private stealers of men.

As to wars, in the common acceptation of the word war, very few slaves are ever furnished by means of them from these kingdoms. They happen very seldom. There was one of them however, in the year 1786. This was the war which Damél of Cayor made against Tin of Baol, as mentioned in the beginning of this letter. It originated in the ambition of the former. In the grand battle, which decided the fate of the dominions of the latter, twenty-five prisoners only were taken, and seven killed. The wars in short in these countries are not destructive. Few people are either killed or taken. As to the duration of them, they last seldom longer than ten or fifteen days. When both parties are tired, they go away. There is no treaty of peace. These wars, confining them to the common acceptation of the word, arise generally, as other wars, from jealousy, avarice, or ambition.

The crimes, real or supposed, for which persons are sentenced to slavery in these countries, are adultery, murder, theft, and witchcraft. There is no crime in this part of the world for which they are punished with death.

Adultery, as has been just stated, is a source of slavery. The common people have in general two or three wives; the great, or people of condition, as many as they can maintain, perhaps from ten to twenty: but in such cases not more than three are considered as legitimate; that is to say, the children of not more than three are considered in that light. If a man suspects any of his wives to be guilty of adultery in a village where the king does not reside, he calls his neighbours together. They judge the case. They then make their report to the Gueraff, and the Gueraff afterwards to the king. The Gueraff has no power but to report; he waits the determination of the king. If it happens, on the other hand, in any of the king's villages, that is, in any of them where he resides,

sides, he is the judge himself. If the woman accused be a person of condition, that is, if she has influence in the country by having a number of slaves or many relations, and is condemned, she is allowed to find a slave in her place. If poor she is sold herself. None but her husband can be her accuser. She is sold, if condemned, for the king's profit. In these countries women only are accused. There are few slaves however from adultery.

Murder is distinguished into two kinds, premeditated and accidental. If the murderer of the first kind be a man of condition, he must immediately on the perpetration of the act repair to the king. He must then throw himself at his feet with the value of a slave, and he will make his peace. If poor, he is sure to be sold, and sometimes his family with him. The probability of his family being sold at the same time depends on the poverty of the man, and the exigencies of the king; for it is for the benefit of the latter that he is sold. If the murderer should escape by flight, the king will not lose his profit, and therefore in this case comes universally on his family, whom he sells for slaves.

In accidental cases there are two distinctions, both with respect to the rich and to the poor. If the man-slayer be a person of condition, he is not precisely in the same predicament as before, for the king may absolve him wholly from the payment of any fine. The poor man, not being able to offer the value of a slave, has the alternative left him of flying into another village, which he must immediately do on the commission of the act. He must then go to the house of one of the principal men there, and, drawing a stake from his wall, throw himself at the owner's feet, and declare himself his voluntary slave. This is considered as a good situation for him, inasmuch as voluntary slaves are treated like the children of the master, and are never sold.

Theft is another source of supplying subjects for the Slave-Trade in these parts. The natives sometimes steal cloth, millet, and other articles from one another; but in general oxen, which they drive off to sell at another place. Any theft, small or great, if brought home to the robber is punished with slavery. When the robbers are taken and accused in a village where the king does not reside, they are tried by the people, who are assembled for the purpose in what is called the publick place of the village. Having determined the case, they report their sentence, as has been mentioned before, to the Gueraff, and the Gueraff afterwards to the king, who may reverse it or not as he pleases. If it happens in the king's own village, he tries them himself. The accuser must be the person from whom the things have been stolen. The proof necessary to convict the accused must be generally strong. If he be caught in the fact; if the value of an ox be found upon him, and some circumstances should concur in shewing that he could have obtained the things so found upon him in no other way; if these or similar proofs appear, he is condemned to slavery. The circumstance of reimbursing the man for the loss of his stolen property depends on its being small. When the money is paid for the criminal, the king has universally about three parts of it to himself, and the Gueraff to the value of about six livres or two bars. If then the remaining part should be equivalent to the property which has been stolen, an indemnification takes place. If not, the king will not give up his claim to three parts out of four of the criminal's value, and the man therefore must abide by the loss.

The last source of slavery in these countries is witchcraft. If a person should have a child or relation die, whose death has been rather sudden, he may give out if he pleases, and he must be attended to if he does, that such death has been occasioned by some wizzard. In this case he is obliged to fix upon his man, and this is generally one whom he
knows

knows to owe him a grudge, or whom he considers as a mischievous man in the village. Having pointed out the supposed culprit, he accuses him publicly with having practised the art of witchcraft on the deceased, and begins his accusation always by pronouncing that "the wizzard has eaten up his child's or relation's heart." Having lodged his accusation in this manner, the man is tried. The mode of trying him is as follows. He is bound to a tree. A red hot iron is then applied to his tongue. If the iron burns it the man is pronounced guilty, if not, innocent. It is said that there is an herb in the country, which if previously applied to the part to be burned, is an antidote for a moment against the effects of the fire; and it is believed that there is such an herb, because some, who have undergone the ordeal, have been known to escape unhurt. The punishment of slavery extends in this case to the culprit only and not to his children. The person, supposed to have been injured, has a small share out of the value of the slave, but the greater part as before goes into the hands of the king.

This then is, as I have said before, the last source of slavery in these kingdoms, the natives of which, having been reduced to this state by all the different methods now described, are sold into the hands of the French by means of their establishments on the islands of Fort St. Louis and Goree. All such, as are made slaves by any of the means described in the kingdoms of Sin and Sallum, are sent universally to Goree, as being the nearest market, to be sold there. Those, on the other hand, who are reduced to slavery in Cayor, are sent, some of them to Goree, and others to Fort St. Louis, for sale; for if you consult the map, you will find that Damél's territories border upon both. Not more than fifty, however, out of the two hundred are sent to Fort St. Louis; for at Fort St. Louis the Senegal company have an exclusive privilege of buying slaves, whereas at Goree any person may buy them who pleases.

Now,

Now, where all can buy, there will be undoubtedly a competition, and where there is a competition for any commodity, it will fetch the greater price. Hence only such of Damél's slaves, to the number mentioned, are sent to Fort St. Louis for sale, as are made in those parts of his dominions which are close upon that island.

I have now concluded my account of the different methods of reducing people to slavery in the dominions of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor. On a recapitulation it will be found that about two hundred and eighty, sent annually from these countries, are such as have been taken by the Pillage, and that about five in every hundred may be set down annually as slaves in consequence of the stratagems of their respective kings. Hence it is manifest that three hundred and five out of five hundred, or more than three out of five from these kingdoms may be called the victims of violence and fraud, while not only others of them are entitled to the same name, but the majority of the rest may be said to owe the loss of their liberty to a system of laws not only partial and wicked in itself, but rendered still more intolerable by being interpreted and enforced by a despot, just as his passions call for new or additional gratifications, and as his subjects are more or less able to resist the determination of his will.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

L E T T E R III.

PARIS, DECEMBER, 23, 1789.

S I R,

IN my last letter I gave you an ample description of the different methods by which the natives, to the amount of about five hundred annually, were reduced to slavery in the dominions of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor; that is to say, from the mouth of the river Gambia along the coast to the Island of Fort St. Louis at the mouth of the river Senegal. At the mouth then of this latter river, I shall resume my account, and tracing the stream as far as Cor, which you will find in the map to be situated a little above its confluence with the river Sagueray, I shall continue it to that village, noticing whatever may relate to your first question within these limits.

The extent of territory then, which will be the subject of my present letter, comprehends two districts, namely, the kingdom of Oualo, and the Isle of Biffeche. These countries I shall describe by the
map,

map, before I give an account either of the number of persons annually furnished from them, or of the manner in which they become slaves.

The country of Oualo, beginning above Fort St. Louis, is bounded on the West by the river Senegal, on the North by the river Sagueray, on the East by the country of the independent Poules, and on the South by Cayor. The Moors made incursions into this country about five years ago, and killed the king. Deeming themselves from this moment the lords and disposers of the soil, they took the liberty of appointing to the throne. The person proclaimed by them was a Negro, a weak man, but a relation of the former king. This person, or Brac, (for Brac is the hereditary name of the king of Oualo, in the same manner as Damél of the king of Cayor), reigns at the present day, but he is tributary to the Moors, who, considering him as a creature of their own, rob and plunder in his territories as often as they think proper.

The Island of Biffeche is formed by two rivers, by the Senegal on the one side, and the Sagueray on the other. This island is in the possession of a certain Seignior or Lord, who is called Bequio. This Seignior holds it of Brac, and gives him a certain number of oxen annually, besides certain articles of merchandize, for the tenure.

From these two countries then, as now described, come about two hundred and forty slaves in the course of the year; namely, about one hundred annually from Oualo (forty of whom are furnished by Brac, and sixty by the Moors) and about one hundred and forty from Biffeche, the different methods of whose reduction to slavery are as follow :

To begin first with Oualo. Of the forty who are furnished annually from this country by Brac, about thirty are reputed criminals, and are made in the different ways, as in Sallum, Sin, and Cayor. The rest are taken by the king in a kind of pillage, as he has an opportunity of getting possession of their persons by treachery and force. The reasons why Brac does not pillage to a proportionable extent with the kings mentioned in the former letter, is that he has but little power to do it, and that his masters, the Moors, would not suffer him, if they knew it, to anticipate their prey. These forty persons then, furnished by Brac from Oualo, are sent directly to the French establishment at Fort St. Louis, to be sold. They are marched by land, sometimes two, sometimes three or four, but seldom more of them at a time, and are conducted by the military of the king.

The other sixty, who are furnished from Oualo, are supplied by the Moors, and this generally but in one way. The Moors inhabit the Northern bank of the Senegal. They have no houses or fixed habitations, but live in tents, which they strike as often as they choose to remove to another place. These people live almost entirely by plunder; and if a few Negroes be excepted, whom they purchase when they go trading over land into Sin and Cayor and whom they pay for in horses, all that come out of their hands may be set down as the produce of treachery and force.

These people go out in bodies of five or six. They cross the Senegal at Cor, and other places, when they purpose to steal the inhabitants from Oualo. This river they cross by swimming, both themselves and their horses. That their arms and ammunition may be kept dry, they make a small bed of straw, in which they place their muskets, pistols, and daggers, and push it before, or drag it after them across the stream.

stream. When over, they mount their horses, and, galloping across a small part of the country of the independent Poules, they arrive in the kingdom of Oualo. They then advance into the country for two or three leagues, sometimes more, and sometimes less, according to the plan of their expeditions.

If these Barbarians meet with any Negroes in their way, they seize them; if not, the following is the mode pursued. They conceal themselves and their horses in the woods near the different villages where they seek their prey. If solitary men, or if women and children should come out, they rush from their hiding places, seize them, and gallop off. If, on the other hand, five or six men should come out mixed with women and children, they discharge all their muskets at once, kill the men, and gallop off with the rest. In the case of women and children, who are made captives, they tie these behind them on horse-back. The body of the woman or child touches the back of the Moor, to which it is fastened by one of their country cords. The Moor, while galloping, has always one of the hands of the woman or child in his own, the fingers of which he bites, either by way of punishment, or with a view of silencing them, should they attempt to create an alarm by noise. The men are often tied by the hands to the tails of the horses, and pulled along, the riders on the one hand whipping the horses on, and other Moors following the Negroes with a whip behind, on the other. At other times they are bound to the back of a camel, which these robbers take with them, when their incursions do not extend far from the river. Carrying off their booty in this manner, they repair as quickly as possible to the Moorish tents.

This is the way usually adopted by the Moors, when they go out in parties of five or six. It happens sometimes, however, that they cross
the

the Senegal in larger bodies, in which case they do not conceal themselves as before. They contrive only to surprize a village in the night, when they attack it at once, and carry off all the inhabitants they can seize.

In these ways then, consisting of robbery by smaller or larger bodies, are furnished the sixty from Oualo as before described. By the same mode as these are furnished, the remaining one hundred and forty, to whom the account extends in the present letter, are supplied from the island of Biffeche, so that one description will do for the whole. The Moors make the same incursions into this island, and for the same purpose as into Oualo. The marks of their devastation there are but too evident. It was said that in consequence of the Pillages of Barfallum, Barbafin, and Damél, several villages were deserted in Sallum, Sin, and Cayor, whose inhabitants had either fled higher up into the interior country, or had retired into the woods. Much more is it the case in these two countries, which are the subject of this letter. In the island of Biffeche a number of deserted villages are to be seen, and there are not fewer in Oualo. Almost every creek has been ransacked, and most of the villages disturbed in their turn, to get possession of the bodies of men. The miserable inhabitants know not what to do nor where to fly. The lord of Biffeche and the king of Oualo are unable to protect them; for the first is tributary to the second, and the second to the Moors. In the time of seed and of harvest, they are often obliged to remain in their villages to be near their lands for the purpose of cultivation, and to secure a crop. At this time, therefore, they must defend themselves as well as they can. When the season, however, is over, it is customary for them to join (the inhabitants of two or three villages together) against the incursions of the Moors. On the return of seed time and harvest they separate again, and return to their respective

tive lands. They live however continually, whether united or separate, in a state of anxiety and alarm. It is impossible adequately to describe the ideas which these miserable people have of the character of the Moors. The name, by which the Moors have been always known to them, is Nars, in the same manner as they have been known by the appellation of Moors to us. Such a man belongs to the Nar nation. Now this word is not only now expressive of the national name of these barbarians, but has become a word in the language of the Negroes, in consequence of the infamous conduct of the former, to convey to the hearer the united characters of a liar and of a thief. It is now constantly used in familiar intercourse in these two senses, and as frequently as Sakend, the original negro word to express them both; such ideas have these poor people of the rapacious conduct and treachery of the Moors.*

But to return. The poor Negroes, who to the number of two hundred, if we reckon them altogether, are thus plundered annually by the Moors from Oualo and Biffeche, are conveyed immediately after their capture, in the manner before described, to the Moorish tents. From these tents, which are on the northern side of the Senegal, they are made to travel to the island of Fort St. Louis, upon its Northern bank. The two hundred described are never marched down at a time. They are generally sent in bodies of five or six according to the num-

* Mr. de Villeneuve informs me, that the Moors are so habituated to robbery, that scarcely any person of any complexion can escape without losing something if long among them. They are even expert at thieving with their feet, which are always bare; for if any thing should have fallen upon the ground that is worth having, a Moor will look the owner of it in the face, and at the same moment contrive to take it up with his toes, and convey it with wonderful dexterity by means of the same to his companions, who are behind him. Their whole life, in short, is a scene of robbery, and the Negroes have well applied their national name to denote the characters described.

ber captured in any of the expeditions made. To every five or six are nine or ten Moors. The reason of so large a number of the latter is, not because nine or ten are necessary to guard five or six miserable vanquished beings, some of whom are frequently in a wounded state, but because the Moors are even so distrustful of one another as well as of the Europeans, that they will all be witnesses of the bargain made. If the place, from whence they begin their route with their captives be at no great distance from Fort St. Louis, and other circumstances should intervene, they drive the latter before them, and march on foot; if at four or five day's journey, they have mostly their camels with them. They put the women and children upon these, and frequently ride themselves. In this way they travel. At night they contrive to get to such of the tents of their countrymen as they know to be scattered in the way, where they sleep in security with their plunder. In the morning they set off again. When they arrive at Fort St. Louis, they offer their prisoners for sale, but are so avaricious, and so suspicious of being defrauded, that, including the time of making their bargains, and of examining the goods to be given them in exchange, it is sometimes four days before a single Negro can be sold. Having disposed of their booty they return home, and prepare for fresh ravages.

To sum up the whole. About two hundred and forty persons, as I have before stated, may be said to be annually reduced to slavery in the kingdom of Oualo and the Island of Biffeche, as described in the present letter, forty of whom have been said to be furnished by Brac, and the rest by the Moors. Of those furnished by Brac, about thirty were said to have been enslaved in consequence of crimes, and ten in consequence of the Pillage. Of those again brought in by the Moors, all except a few (as has been mentioned before) whom they buy when they trade over

over land into Sin and Cayor, are stolen from their respective homes. Suppose then that twenty should be bought on these occasions in the course of the year. Of these, twelve will have been pillaged in their own country, according to the proportion given in the former letter. The balance then for Oualo and Biffeche will stand thus. About forty in round numbers may be considered as furnished in consequence of crimes, while two hundred are actually the produce of treachery and force.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

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LETTER

L E T T E R I V.

S I R,

PARIS, DECEMBER 24, 1789.

HAVING in my last letter explained to you the different methods of making slaves in those countries which are bounded by Cayor on the one hand and the Senegal on the other, following it from its mouth to the village of Cor, I shall now take an adjoining portion of country for the subject of this letter, namely, such a portion of it as adheres to the southern side of the Senegal from Cor to Podor, and which contains the territories of the Independent Poules.

The people, the extent of whose territories I am now going to describe, are named in some maps as I have just mentioned them, but in others are termed Phulis, Fulis, or Foules. They are called Independent, because there is no one person who can call himself their king. They are broken into distinct and petty governments. To each tribe there is a petty Seigneur or Chieftain, with limited power; and there are many such governments and tribes. Their country,

as

as I said before, is bounded on the north by a portion of the Senegal, which reaches from Cor to Podor. The latter place, which is a considerable one for trade, is not laid down in the map, but is to be supposed at such a distance up the river, as, if the windings of it were taken in, it would be sixty leagues from the Island of Fort St. Louis. On the west it is bounded by Oualo, on the south by the empire of Oualoff, which is sometimes expressed in maps under the titles of Jalloff and Walloff, and on the east by the Dependent Poules. This latter country likewise is not expressed in the annexed map, but if a line were drawn at right angles to the Senegal at Podor, this line would shew where it begins, and represent the boundary intended to be described.

From the country then, contained within these limits, about five hundred slaves may be considered annually to come. Of these the Moors furnish three hundred to the Senegal company, and the Poules the rest.

The only way in which the Moors get possession of the persons of such of the Independent Poules, as they sell to the French, is by rapine. They do not hesitate to ravage the country of the latter as occasion offers. In the same manner as they have been described to rob in Biffeche and Oualo, crossing the river on horseback, they extend their ravages along the southern banks of the Senegal from Cor to Podor, and attack the natives; and to such a pitch of audacity have these ruffians arrived, as, when no objects of plunder have offered there, to have galloped on for the same purposes into the very territories of Oualof.

The remaining two hundred of the independent Poules, who are sold to the French Senegal company, are procured in the same manner,

with this difference only, that depredations are made on their persons by their own countrymen, whereas in the former case they were made upon them by the Moors. The different tribes of the independent Poules are in a state of continual warfare with one another. There are no regular battles between them. There are skirmishes only, for the whole is a scene of robbery, and these skirmishes happen without any provocation on either side. In short, they seize and plunder where they can. Not content with what they have gained in the course of these internal depredations, they sometimes imitate the example of the Moors, and make incursions into Oualoff, where they seize such of the inhabitants as they find defenceless, and carry them off for sale. The two hundred then, who are furnished annually by the Poules, are principally Poules themselves, and the rest (a very few) are from Oualoff.* All these, originally free people, may be considered as the effects of plunder, and this plunder to owe its origin to the Slave-Trade.

The way, in which the whole of the five hundred now mentioned to have been captured and sent annually from this quarter, are conducted to Fort St. Louis, is the same. It differs, however, from that, in which all the others spoken of in the former letters are conveyed to the place of sale; for whereas it was customary for these to be conveyed by land, it is usual for those now under consideration to be sent by water. Their conveyance to the Senegal company is by means of the Podor fleet. This fleet consists of small vessels with decks, the smallest of which is of ten and the largest of sixty tons. They are navigated by Negroes of the country. About five or six of these are usually employed in the vessels of the first mentioned tonnage, and from five

* There are no convicts to slavery in the country of the independent Poules,

or six to forty in the rest of them as far as those of the last. This fleet consisting of such vessels, and thus manned, is called the Podor fleet; and it is so called, because it is constantly employed for a season in going from Fort St. Louis to Podor, to fetch millet, ivory, gum, and such other articles the produce of the country as are there for sale. Having shipped these, they in their way back take in such of the Negro slaves as the independent Poules have to dispose of on the one side of the river, and the Moors on the other. When they have landed their cargoes at Fort St. Louis, they go up again to Podor, and return as before, taking in the Negroes, more or less in number, as they are caught. The voyage up and down is generally about fifteen days, and the season is from January to July.

It is hardly necessary to remind you here, that all the slaves, who are the subjects of this letter, are the produce of treachery and force.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

LETTER

L E T T E R V.

PARIS, DECEMBER 26. 1789.

S I R,

THE letters, which I have hitherto had the honour of writing to you, comprehend an account of no less than twelve hundred and forty persons, who are annually made slaves from the mouth of the Gambia along the coast to that of the Senegal, and from thence along the windings of the latter river to Podor. There is yet one other place, and but one more, from which the French Senegal company have been accustomed to obtain their slaves.

At Podor, mentioned in my last letter as a place of considerable trade, begins the country of the Dependent Poules, and continues along the Southern banks of the river. It is called Dependent, because all the people contained in it, contrary to the usage of the Independent ones, are subject to one king. Their late king, or Seratic (for that was the hereditary name of the king of the dependent Poules) died in the year 1785, when a person of the name of Almammy, who had been his Marabou or priest, having seen by long experience the injustice as well as impolicy of continuing things as they were in the late reign, usurped the throne. In this act he was supported by his fellow citizens;

zens ; and he retains his situation with the name of his family, having discarded the title of Seratic, to the present day.

This prince began his reign by opposing the ravages of the Moors, who in the time of his timid predecessor, were often suffered with impunity to make incursions into the country for the purpose of getting slaves. His opposition was so highly resented by these barbarians, that they instantly assembled their tribes, and swarmed into his territories with a view of dethroning him, and of taking away his life ; but Almammy, apprized of their coming, collected the force of the country, and, putting himself at the head of it, not only slew the king of the Moors with his own hand, but defeating his army with great slaughter, obliged them to fly with precipitation across the Senegal to their former tents.

His next step was to prohibit the sale of the persons of men, and to abolish personal slavery in his own dominions, giving encouragement to agriculture and manufactures in their place.

Not satisfied with these proceedings, he made a decree as a discouragement to the Slave Trade in the beginning of the year 1787, that whereas slaves made in other distant countries had been accustomed to be passed, in their way to Fort St. Louis, through his dominions, no such passage should be allowed them in future, and accordingly, at the proper season of the year, he put his decree into execution by stopping the passage of the slaves who were coming in the Galam fleet from Bambarra.

The French Senegal company, alarmed at the enforcement of this edict (for the negro vessels were then waiting in the Road for the return

turn of the Galam fleet) sent a remonstrance to the king, and demanded that the Bambarra slaves should be permitted to pass. This remonstrance, however, was ineffectual. They tried him next by many and rich presents. But he sent all of them back, adding, that he would not only hinder the route of the slaves for that year, but as long as he should live; and that if the whites should attempt any depredations on his subjects in consequence of his determination, he would retaliate. His conduct was so spirited and serious at the same time, that three respectable gentlemen sent by the Court of Sweden to make discoveries in the interior parts of Africa, and who were then waiting at Fort St. Louis for the purpose, but could not follow their intended route without passing through the dominions of Almammy, were hindered from executing their design. These gentlemen returned soon afterwards to Europe, in consequence of the then situation of things in that quarter, two of whom, Dr. Spaarman and Mr. Wadström, (with whom Mr. de Villeneuve was intimately acquainted both at Fort St. Louis and Goree) coming to England in their way home, were examined by the Committee of Privy Council, which, as I have often informed you in the course of conversation, were appointed to investigate the subject of the Slave Trade last year.

Such then was the determination of king Almammy, and such it continued to be, so that the Senegal Company had no other prospect of filling the vessels then lying in the Road for the reception of the Bambarra slaves, than by application to the Moors. These Barbarians, on receiving new bribes and a new assortment of arms and ammunition, made extraordinary ravages into Oualo and Biffeche, by means of which an extraordinary number of the miserable natives were torn from their respective habitations in that year.

But,

But, to return from this digression. In the dominions of Almammy, which I have described to begin at Podor, and to continue along the southern banks of the Senegal, there are no slaves; and the chain of the trade not only continues broken along the banks of the Senegal in these domains, but till you come to Galam, which is about two hundred and fifty leagues from the island of Fort St. Louis; so that you have to conceive the river to run much farther than it is laid down in the map, before you come to another place from whence the French have been usually furnished with any slaves.

When, however, you come to this place, which has two names, Galam and * Fort St. Joseph, you come rather to a place, where slaves have been accustomed to be shipped than to be procured; so that to account for those to whom I allude in the beginning of my letter, it will be still necessary to advance, that is, to leave Galam and the river Senegal, and, turning to the right hand, or south of them, to go overland about two months journey to Bambarra. From this region it was, that the French were furnished annually with about a thousand slaves, till their passage was stopped by Almammy as before described, and with which they continue to be furnished, if they have discovered for them another route.

Conformably with the plan, pursued in my former letters, I should here give a description of Bambarra, but as Mr. de Villeneuve informs me that he has collected no information about it, I am obliged to relinquish my design.

* The French had a fort about fifty years ago at Galam, which they called Fort St. Joseph, and hence the name.

My next task would be to give an account of the methods of making such of the slaves, as have been usually brought from that quarter;—but here again I am obliged to be silent. How the slaves are obtained, as far as Podor, is accurately known: for the daily traffick from Fort St. Louis to Podor for one season of the year, namely, as before said from January to July, as well as afterwards from Fort St. Louis to Galam for the remaining, to which I now allude (which again occasions a traverse of the former parts) gives great opportunities of tracing the matter with precision there. In what manner, however, the Bambarra slaves, or the few who may have joined them from the neighbourhood of Galam have been usually procured, is not sufficiently known for me to say. It was impossible for Mr. de Villeneuve or his fellow-travellers to learn the history of perhaps a thousand persons coming in at a time, even if he had had an inclination to have done it, so easily as of two or three when brought in from Cayor, or by the Moors. The length of the way, and the passing through a variety of hands, rendered the inquiry more difficult, than when a slave came directly from a known and less distant spot, and was never in any other hands than of the persons who brought him in. Add to this, that the language of the Bambarra slaves was not understood, whereas that of those from Cayor, Biffeche, and Oualo was known by many at Fort St. Louis, so that even from their own mouths nothing of their history could be gained. For these and other reasons I am obliged to be silent as to the modes in which persons have been usually reduced to slavery in this quarter.

With respect to the mode of bringing down the slaves from Bambarra to Fort St. Louis, as it was previously to the year 1787 (which will be the next topick according to the plan hitherto pursued) there is more light to conduct us on the way. The route between these

these places consists but of two expeditions, namely, from Bambarra to Galam, and from thence to Fort St. Louis; and these have been long established and are well known. There are but two descriptions of people to be consulted on this occasion; namely, the two parties who conduct the slaves upon their way; and as these meet with each other personally at Galam, there is no difficulty in coming at a knowledge of the truth. The following is the account communicated to me by Mr. de Villeneuve, and which he believes to be the true.

The first route of the slaves, previously to 1787, was from Bambarra to Galam; the former of which is not the name of a town, but of an extensive country. The persons, who conducted them from the former to the latter place, were always one description of Negroes, namely, the Mundingoes. These Mundingoes were scattered over Africa nearly in the same manner as the Jews over Europe and other parts of the world; and they were in fact the principal slave merchants of the country, following that line of life as a distinct occupation or trade. Those of the Mundingoes, to whom I allude at present, were supposed to reside high in the interior country, and not far from the river Gambia. From their habitations in these parts they travelled annually to Bambarra, setting out at such a season of the year as they calculated would give them sufficient time to reach that region, to make their bargains for slaves there, and to arrive with their respective purchases in the month of October at Galam.

Having collected their slaves in this country, they began the first of the routes described. There were usually eight or ten parties of these Mundingoes, consisting of from twelve to twenty each, and

each party marched down one hundred, or one hundred and fifty slaves at a time. The different ways, in which they marched them down to prevent any effectual opposition or insurrection on the one hand, and escape on the other, were said to be the three following :

In the plate No. 2, and Fig. 1, A A represents two separate pieces of wood, which in the Fig. 2, 3. are made fast to the necks of two Negroes by means of cords, which are composed of the roots of trees, and are in use in those countries. Many of the Negroes were accustomed to be driven before the Mundingoes, one by one, each with this instrument on his neck. It was found convenient for two reasons : First, Because the roads, which lay through the woods in these parts, were often so narrow, as not to admit three or four persons to walk abreast ; Secondly, Because it was an insuperable obstacle to an escape, for the trees were so close to each other in the forests, as not to suffer any person to go between them, who had such an incumbrance on his neck.

The second manner of conducting them is described in the same plate. Fig. 4 represents an instrument, which is of wood. Within the crutches of this instrument, which are at each end of it, are placed the necks of two Negroes in Fig. 5, which are confined in it at the extremities X X by means of certain cords, which are in use in that part of the world. Thus confined, two at a time, others of the Negroes, who were annually brought from Bambarra to Galam are said to have travelled.

The third way is described in the plate No. 3. In Fig. 1, B represents a large log of wood, X a crutch at one end of it, and A a twisted cord to which it is fastened at the other. This log is made fast







fast to a Negro's neck in Fig. 2. It is reported to be so heavy and unmanageable, that it is extremely difficult for the person who wears it to walk, much less to escape or run away. In travelling it is said to be necessary to lift up the log, that is thus fastened to the neck of each, and to place the crutch of it on the shoulder of every preceding slave. Burthensome as this instrument may appear to be, it is rendered more light and portable by these means. In this way then many of the Negro slaves from Bambarra to Galam have been made to travel as described in Fig. 3 of the same plate. When it has been necessary to halt, the crutch has been taken from the shoulders of each, and the person, who has worn it, has remained then as in Fig. 2, as unable to walk or manage himself as before, and has become almost as secure, as if he had been chained to the spot in which he had been made to halt. When it has been thought necessary to proceed, the log has again been put on the neck of every preceding slave.

In these different ways then as above described, supposing the route to be now as it was previously to 1787, the slaves are made to travel from day to day. At night their conductors endeavour to get to certain villages, which they know to be scattered in the way, where they rest with their respective trains. On their arrival at Galam, they sell them to the agents of the French Senegal Company, to whom also such other slaves, as may have been collected in the neighbourhood, are sold at the same time. Having thus disposed of their different lots, they return to their respective homes (for they never come farther than Galam) and, when the proper season of the year returns, they recommence their expeditions.

The slaves then, passed in the ways described from Bambarra to Galam, finish the first part of their route. The second, which they commence under the direction of their new masters, is by water. Here they are put on board small vessels, which are annually sent from Fort St. Louis to receive them. These are the same vessels, together with all others that can be mustered, which were mentioned in my last letter to have been employed from Fort St. Louis to Podor in fetching gum, millet, and other productions of the country, as well as bringing down such slaves as were furnished by the Poules on one side of the Senegal, and the Moors on the other. This continued to be the mode of their employment, as was said also at the same time, from January to July; but from August to December they are employed all of them to Galam, and become the means by which the Bambarra slaves make the second and last part of their route along the Senegal to the island of Fort St. Louis.

This account, though it be not had immediately from those, who have gone from Fort St. Louis to Galam and have met the Mundingoes there, is yet derived from the next authority; for Mr. de Villeneuve, when at Fort St. Louis, has frequently conversed with those, who were employed in conveying the Bambarra slaves from Galam, upon this subject. He has also, as a farther confirmation, seen some of the instruments described, of which he has enabled me to give you the annexed sketches; so that you may be assured, that the above description is as accurate and faithful a one as you can get from any European of the route of the Bambarra slaves.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

your obedient servant,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

LETTER

L E T T E R VI.

PARIS, DECEMBER, 30, 1789.

S I R,

I COME now to your second Question, which is, “ What is
“ the state of society in which the natives of Africa, bordering on
“ the French establishments there, may be said to live?”

In answering this question I shall confine myself to the inhabitants of Cayor, Sin, and Sallum, for the state of society there is the best known; and as this state is nearly the same in the three countries, I shall speak of Cayor, as being the most considerable tract, for the whole; noticing of course any custom, if there should be any, different there from those in the other two.

And first, I shall speak of the different ranks of life as they are found to exist in these countries, for I conceive this to be the most natural topick to begin with in answer to the present question.

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These ranks, as widely distinct from one another, may be reckoned four, comprizing the king, the blood royal, the people, and their respective slaves. On each of these I shall say a few words in its proper turn.

In treating of the rank, which the Damél holds as the king of Cayor (of which rank of life I intend to speak the first) it is evident that some other subjects must be necessarily involved, such as the sort of government he holds, the methods of supporting it, and the military force and revenue, that are connected with the same. I shall therefore explain these, as naturally attached to the situation to be described, and shall explain them in the order mentioned, before I proceed to the consideration of the three other classes of life, which I have before stated to exist in these countries.

And first Damél, or the king of Cayor (and the same may be said of the kings of Sin and Sallum) may be considered as an absolute monarch, if it be only from two circumstances which have appeared in the former letters; first, Because he can pillage his subjects and be not amenable to any laws; and secondly, Because in all cases of jurisprudence he is the ultimate judge, having it in his power, whether right or wrong, to acquit or to condemn.

The methods, which he takes to govern the countries that belong to him, are the following. Cayor is divided first into provinces, and each province is ruled by an officer whom he appoints, and whom he calls Laman. This Laman issues out the king's orders through his own district, and takes care that they shall be obeyed. It sometimes happens, however, that though a certain spot be marked out which is called a Province, yet there is a small part of it for some reason or other

other not subject to the Laman's orders. This spot then is governed by another officer, whom the king appoints, and whom he calls Fara.

Each province then, which contains many villages, is governed either by a Laman, or by a Laman and a Fara together, and of course all the villages in each are subject to their orders. There is besides in each village an officer, totally distinct from the former. This officer is called the Gueraff. He may be considered as the Mayor of the village, for it is his business to take cognizance of any violation of the laws, to bring the offenders to trial, and to report the case with the decision upon it to the king.

The villages, which I have mentioned to have had each a Gueraff at their head for their more immediate administration, are those, in which the natives only are found to dwell. There are villages however on the coast, where the whites, with a view of enriching themselves by trade, are settled for a time, such as Gandiole at the mouth of the Senegal, and Rufisk and Dakár in the quarters opposite to Goree. Here the administration is rather divided. There is a Gueraff or Mayor for the natives as before, but there are two additional officers, who were originally appointed on account of the Europeans residing there. The first is called the Fitor, and was formerly the interpreter between the whites and the blacks; and the second the Alcaide, who, when such interpretation was made, used to transact all the business for the whites, and was considered as the consul between the natives and them. The first of these persons, though he still holds the name of Fitor and the emoluments annexed to the situation, * now bears the office only as a sinecure place. The

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* The office of Fitor was instituted, when the Portuguese had commercial concerns with the people of Africa. In those times therefore, the Fitor was obliged to understand the Portuguese language

latter still discharges it. Thus the king rules provinces and villages, executing such orders as relate to the nation at large by the Laman and Fara, settling the private affairs of his subjects by the Gueraff, and, by means of the Alcaide, adjusting disputes between his subjects and such of the whites as reside for a time in his territories, and superintending trade.

The orders of the king are executed in this country, as in the others, by his military. In Cayor the peace establishment consists of from six to seven thousand foot, but in Sin and Sallum it is much less. The king clothes all his military in uniform, giving to each soldier an orange-coloured vest. These vests are manufactured at home, and made of the cotton, and coloured with the dyes, of the country. He feeds them also at his own expense, and makes them small presents of cloth and other articles from time to time. This is considered as their pay. There is no great variety of officers among them as in the European armies. The Laman is considered as one, the Gueraff as another, the Alcaide as a third. These, as commanding under the king in provinces and villages, are the commanders also of his troops, so that three or four hundred men are not broken into many little divisions, but are under the direction of one man.

Though the people, who are thus employed as soldiers, are military in point of habit, there is little or no discipline among them. They are assembled, that is, parties of them, perhaps seven or eight times in the year, according to the number of the feasts of Mahomet, to be exercised before the king. On these occasions the king sends

language, and to interpret between the two nations: but since these commercial connexions have been dissolved, his successors have held the name of interpreter, and the emoluments of the office, without understanding any other language than their own.

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previously to the Laman and some of the other officers described to come over, and to bring with them each a quota of their respective provincial troops. Upon this they assemble. Their exercise is a sort of sham fight. They fire in the air, and run after one another. This is all, and it is done without any regularity or order.

To support these, and other expenses of government, certain taxes are established. In the interior villages they consist of oxen, millet, and produce of every sort, and in those upon the coast, of fish and of such goods as are brought there by the Europeans. In these villages the Gueraff collects them annually, and sends them to the king. In the villages, however, which border on the king's residence, a different sort of tax prevails. These are obliged to maintain the king, that is, to furnish his table with wine, victuals, and whatever he may want. One village supplies him one week, and another another, and so on each in its turn. On the inhabitants of these there is no annual tax*.

Having now mentioned every thing that seems to be necessary as relating to the king and the administration of his government, I come to those of the blood royal. Of these it may be sufficient to say, that they live in different parts of the country, that they preserve the remembrance of their descent, and that they possess the privilege, in consequence of it, of never being sold for slaves.

* This account will hold good except in the villages of the Serreres, who are esteemed a more wild people. The king is obliged to send to those an officer called Sarfar, to collect their taxes. This officer, or travelling collector, stays perhaps fifteen days at a village, and then passes to another, and so on, till he has made a collection from the whole. The Serreres have no Gueraff among them, nor the same government as the rest of Cayor.

The next order, of which I am to take notice, consists of those who may be denominated the People. Among these there is no distinction in point of rights, except in the sacerdotal villages, and the members of these while they stay there, like those of the blood royal, can never be visited by the pillage; nor is there any one class, that is considered above another, except it may be that of the different officers of the king. There are old and young, rich and poor. The old have no other advantage than that which is given them by age. That, which their years give them, is experience, and experience recommends to favour and respect. As to the rich, who have slaves and cattle of their own, they are not considered as forming another class. That they have advantages, however, there is no doubt, but then these advantages are the immediate consequences of their wealth, and not of any extraordinary right; for, in the first place, they are not exempt from the pillage, but escape being sold, by having it in their power to furnish a ransom slave. They are, again, as we have seen in a former letter, amenable to the same laws as the rest, but sometimes escape their decrees in consequence of their ability to compound in the same manner. These are the only distinctions, which I have to make with respect to the people of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor.

The slaves in these countries, who form the fourth rank of society, are exceedingly few. There is here and there a person of condition, who may have from five to ten, and perhaps another, who may have from ten to fifty of them. But there are but very few of this description of persons, and of course but very few slaves. The slaves do not bear the proportion of more than one to fifteen hundred, if compared with the people. It was calculated by the best census which General Boufflers and Mr. de Villeneuve could make, that there were fifteen hundred thousand persons in Cayor, and about a thousand slaves.

These slaves then, small as their numbers are, are of two classes, namely, either such as have once known freedom but have lost it by means of the pillage, or in consequence of real or imputed crimes, and such as are slaves by birth.

These slaves, both of the one and the other class, are allowed to marry. They choose their own wives. A slave in one family may, by the master's consent, marry one in another. In this case the two do not dwell together, but see each other at times. A slave has often, like the master, more than one wife: the same law, which has been said to attach to the wife of a free man in the case of adultery, attaches also to a slave. And again, supposing the proprietor of a slave should have a son or a relation pillaged in the night, he would make a sacrifice of his slave for the redemption of such relation or son. Except in such extraordinary cases, it may be set down as an established rule in this country, that a person born in slavery, whether descended from persons pillaged or convicted of crimes, or from persons themselves born slaves, are never sold.

The occupations of these slaves may be divided into domestick and agricultural. The men in the former case do out of doors work, collect and bring in wood, and fetch water. The women pound millet, spin cotton, and do other things in the family way. In the latter case, the men cultivate the ground. They begin their labour at five in the morning, and leave off at eleven for the whole day: they seldom or ever work afterwards, except in harvest, so that their labour is not more than the ordinary exercise which men should take. The women slaves do little more than gather cotton at the proper season of the year, in which they are sometimes assisted, but not often, by the men. In short both the men and the the women pass whole days together and do

do little or nothing. In respect to the mode or fatigue of their labour while employed, there is no distinction between the master and the slave. There are very few people, as has been said before, who have any slaves at all; and those, who have a few, work in general with them in the field, nor can any one discover the difference of their rank from their employments. As to whips, chains, or any other instruments of torture for slaves in these countries, they are totally unknown.

The food, which is given to the slaves, consists of millet, milk, fish, and flesh, but of the latter little, except what may have been collected from the chace; for meat is not much used by any description of people whatever in these countries. But here also, as in the former case, we find slavery less a distinction in reality than in the name: for they eat in company with the children of their masters, and partake of the same repast. It may not be amiss, perhaps, to add here, that they sometimes live in the same house, and sleep in the same room.

Having now said all that I intended on the subject of the four different orders of the king, the blood royal, the people, and their respective slaves, I shall beg leave only to add, as it appears to me to be a better place to do it in than any other, something relative to the religion of the country, before I close my letter.

The religion of these countries, if we except the two Serreres, who from their wild state are considered as having no religion at all, is Mahometanism. There are whole villages, inhabited by the priests of Mahomet and their relations, and by these alone. These priests in their own tongue are called Serims, but Marabouts by the French. The villages, which contain them, and which I have distinguished
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by the name of the sacerdotai, have the privilege of never being molested by the pillage. It may happen, however, that a Serim may be in another village, when the pillage is executed, and if so, it will be difficult for him to escape being sold with the rest. In these villages the Serims perform their worship every day.

At Dakár there are two mosques, the one open and the other thatched, for the performance of the religion of Mahomet. To the open one the Serims in the neighbourhood repair and worship in a body, falling prostrate in one uniform position on the ground, and continuing stedfast and immoveable in it during the time of prayer. Among these Serims there is no head. There is no other distinction than that which superiour knowledge may create, and this is superiour respect. As for the bulk of the people, they seldom or ever assemble except for circumcision. They know little about the religion of the country, and, a few external rites excepted, are little of Mahometans but by name.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

L E T T E R VII.

PARIS, JANUARY 1, 1790.

S I R,

IN my last letter I described the people of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor, in a civil capacity, and as distinguishable therefore into four bodies in consequence of the four classes of life to which they respectively belonged. In the present I shall consider them in the light of inhabitants of the soil. This will lead me to consider the disposition and state of their villages, houses, lands, and property they possess, a topick, which appears to me to follow the preceding, not only as naturally but as advantageously as any other towards elucidating the points contained in your second question.

With respect to the villages in these countries (which is the first part of the subject to be pursued) all those, which may be called Marine, are built close on the shore. In the interior parts, however, many circumstances have contributed to fix them where they are found. The natives in general wish to be near the forests,

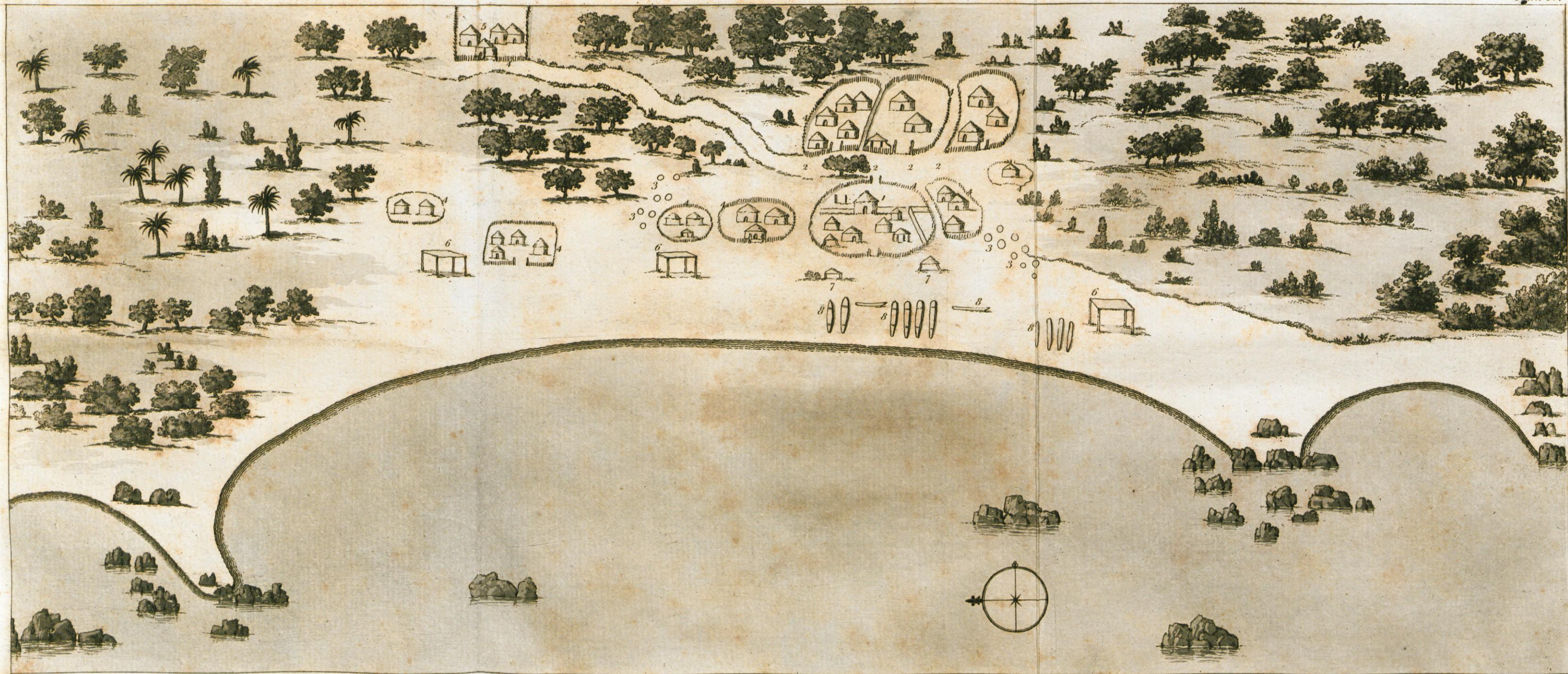
as affording them a retreat in case of invasion, and therefore we generally find their villages situated there: but if there should not be good water near the spot which they may fancy, or land sufficiently fertile to produce what they want to raise, they build them in other parts. Good water is a sufficient recommendation of itself to determine the site of a village; good land another: hence there are many villages in the open country as well as among the trees. Hence there is a great variety of appearance in their situations. The Serreres, however, who have been described to be in a wilder state than the rest, are found almost universally in the woods.

I come now to the houses in these villages. And first, as to the exterior of them, they are made of straw. They are universally of a round form, and have one door only. When built to a certain height, which is very moderate, the roof gradually tapers from thence to a point at the top. There is no regularity in the situation of these houses, that is, there are no regular streets. If a family be only sufficient in number to occupy one house, that house is built by itself, and surrounded by a fence of straw: if a family, consisting of fathers, mothers, children, cousins, or of an husband and many wives, or of a master and many slaves, be sufficient to occupy two, three, four, or more houses, these are built at a little distance from each other, and encircled by a wall of straw. Nor are the houses of the families in these villages situated according to any precedence. The king's house is in the middle, or on one side, as it happens. There is no determined spot appropriated to rank. Care, however, is generally taken that a free space be left open for what is called the Publick Place of the village, a place where all publick consultations are held, and all matters of controversy settled.

The king's house is undoubtedly distinguished from those of his subjects by its size. It is also surrounded in general by a hedge of thorns instead of a fence of straw. It is distinguished again by having a domestick at each gate in the hedge or fence, but no military: for the military are used only on the feasts of Mahomet, as already described, or for pillage, or when the king goes out publicly, or to war. The king's domestick officers are however numerous. There is a captain of his gate, a captain of his dogs, and a variety of other titled observants of his will.

As to the interior of the houses of these villages it is extremely simple; their furniture consists of a bed, and this is all, if we except one or two rude domestick utensils. The manner of constructing the bed is as follows: Three large wooden stakes are driven down into the ground or floor of the hut in a row, about the distance of three feet from each other. At a proper width, and exactly opposite and parallel to these, three other stakes are driven down in the same manner, all of which together with the former appear about a foot or a foot and an half above the floor of the hut. The heads of these stakes having been all of them previously notched, three stout poles are then laid in the notches from side to side, and upon these again other thin poles lengthways, so as to cross them and form a grated surface or floor capable of bearing a considerable weight. Upon this the natives place a mat of straw and leaves intermixed, upon which they sleep.

This is the general and almost only furniture of the people. Nor is the Gueraff much better off. He may have perhaps a rude chest, in which he puts his brandy and other articles; and in this consists
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Plan of the Village of Portudal.

the only distinction between the two. As to the king himself, he has but little more to distinguish the interior of his house than the bed and chest described. He has certain stools for the convenience of sitting down. These stools are nearly of the form of a common hour glass, though of course much larger, that is, they are narrower in the middle than at the ends, which may be used alternately either as a supporter or a seat. It is this piece of furniture which places the sovereign above the rest.

In order to give you a better idea of the houses and villages of which I have been just speaking, I have procured for you the annexed plan. It contains a sketch of the village of Portudal, as it was taken by Mr. de Villeneuve on the spot. Fig. 1 represents the king's court, that is, his residence when he comes to Portudal. Fig. 2, the Publick Place of the village before described. Fig. 3 the place on each side of the village where the natives keep their millet. The grain belonging to every family is thus brought together, and in certain baskets of their own manufacture deposited in a common spot. Fig. 4, the inclosures which contain the house or houses belonging to each family in the village; each family, as has been said before, occupying one or more houses, and surrounding them with a fence of straw. Fig. 5, the house of the Alcaide, or Consul for the whites who transact business at Portudal. Fig. 6, a sort of shed called Calde, or a penthouse, where the natives work to avoid the heat of the sun. Fig. 7, sties, detached from the houses, in which they keep their pigs. Fig. 8, the canoes of the inhabitants in the manner they generally lie upon the beach.

Having now given you as good an idea as I am able of the houses and villages of these countries, as occupied by the natives of them,

I come, for my next point, to the lands, which they possess. These are in general as near the villages as the fertility of the soil will permit; in some places close to them, in others sometimes a quarter of a league, or half a league off, and in others more.

Their lands may be divided into three sorts; lands for cotton and indigo; lands for the more immediate necessities of life, such as millet; and lands for pasture. In the distribution of these lands, that is, fixing their situation nearer to the villages in proportion as one is rich, or more remote in proportion as another is poor, no such distinction prevails. Each family has occupied that, which it thought would answer its purpose best, or that which it pitched upon the first. There are no disputes with respect to land. If a man has not enough, he may take more, and as much more as he pleases. There are thousands of acres unsettled, so that he has only to choose a spot, which is not occupied by another.

The land however, which is possessed in these countries, is not possessed by individuals but by whole families. All the relations in a village, fathers, mothers, brothers, sons, cousins, hold one spot, which serves them all, and which is as much as they can cultivate among them, or is adequate to their wants. The figure of this spot is generally round. If it be laid out in indigo, cotton, or millet, it is inclosed with thorns, lest the deer or other wild game getting into it should destroy the crop. These thorns are often such as the men have cut down, and afterwards worked into a fence, or such as in the clearing of new land they have left standing in such parts as they determined should be the boundary of their lands. Thus are their lands like the places of their habitations. They are encircled by a fence ;

fence; they assume a round appearance like the spot upon which the houses stand; and are possessed by whole families.

It may not be amiss to observe here, that the portion of land, which I have described to have been enclosed and occupied by a family, is allotted but to one sort of produce. The same family, that wants millet for cuscus or bread, wants cotton for clothes, but in this case they never divide the same inclosure for the production of the two. The indigo plantations are separate from the cotton, and the cotton again from the millet. The indigo are the nearest in general to the town, the cotton next, and the millet the most remote; so that there is neither a mixture of two sorts of produce in one enclosure, nor are enclosures of different sorts of produce interspersed. Hence one family may have three separate enclosures belonging to them, according to their industry or their wants. With respect to tobacco, there is but little of it, and there are no enclosures for that; and with respect to the cultivation of indigo, one exception is to be made to the preceding account, which is, that the Serreres do not cultivate it at all.

As to the lands for pasture (the last division to be spoken of) they are not enclosed like the rest, but are all open. There are some inhabitants of the villages, who have cattle, the use of which is rather for the milk than the meat, for in these countries meat is seldom eaten except on the feasts of Mahomet. The king has many cows, the Gueraff some, and the rich such as they have inherited or acquired by trade. All these, however, feed in one herd. They are tended by two or three men and as many boys. These take charge of them as well in the night as in the day, for which purpose they sleep in

in small huts or cabins erected upon the lands where the cattle feed. The occupation of herdsmen is here followed as a trade.

In speaking of property it will be necessary to make a distinction here, which otherwise may not be thought to subsist. The lands or houses, which have been described to be within an enclosure, do not belong to any one individual, as I have stated before, but to all the members conjointly of the family which occupies them. This, however, is not the case with property of another kind. Perhaps an industrious man, by applying himself to some commercial pursuit, becomes possessed of cattle. Perhaps another with great care and trouble has formed a palmery, with a view of supplying the market with palm wine. Such cattle then and such palmery belong exclusively to those who acquired them. These and other similar sorts of property are distinct from the first. They are wholly at the disposal of the proprietor during life, but at his death they descend to the next heirs. The property which a father (for instance) has of this kind, is divided equally, when he dies, among his legitimate children, who may, as has been said in a former letter, be the offspring of three different wives.

Such, Sir, to conclude my letter, is the arrangement, as it is found to take place, of the villages, houses, and lands, of the inhabitants of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor. To these original houses and villages so occupied, to these original lands so laid out and possessed, and to the simplicity of life so necessarily following such an arrangement, these inhabitants are so extremely attached, as to consider it the greatest evil in life to leave them. This is particularly obvious after any serious pillage, which may have obliged them to betake themselves to the woods; for in these woods they have been known to wait
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with patience for years, till they have thought the danger entirely over, and then to seek their ancient habitations again. As one proof among many others the following may suffice. Mr. de Villeneuve in his journey over land from Cape Verd to the island of Fort St. Louis, which journey is marked in the map, met with two villages, Tiockmat and Little Boro, which had been deserted by the inhabitants in consequence of the pillage. On passing by the former he observed several of the natives at work, as if employing themselves in repairing the ancient huts. This occasioned him to stop and to converse with them, during which he learned that these were the ancient inhabitants of Tiockmat, from whence they had been driven by the pillage; that after having lived for many moons in the forests they had resolved upon coming out, and re-establishing themselves on their native spot, and that they were then repairing their old habitations with a view of occupying them again. This was the substance of their conversation with Mr. de Villeneuve, and it was a fact well known in the country, that Tiockmat had been pillaged by Damél full five years before this event of the establishment of the natives, as then resolved on and taking place.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

LETTER

L E T T E R VIII.

S I R,

PARIS, JANUARY 3, 1790.

HAVING described to you in my two last letters the different ranks of life among the people of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor, and having also brought them to your view as they live in their houses and villages, and possess their lands, there remains but one more topick to suggest to your notice, before I consider myself to have replied sufficiently to your second question.

This topick will comprehend the different occupations of these people, or the various ways in which the inhabitants of these countries employ themselves in the course of the year.

The occupations then to be found at Sallum, Sin, and Cayor, may be divided into stationary and itinerant. The first stationary employment, according to my acceptation of the word, is agriculture. If
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the natives wish to clear new land, or such as has lain fallow (for they never cultivate the same land but once in three years) they resort immediately to the spot. There are two instruments which they use upon these occasions. The first of them is an axe, with which they chop the larger trunks of * underwood. This axe differs from our own, inasmuch as the wood passes through the iron with us, while in this the iron passes through the wood. The other is a kind of garden-spud, with a fork at the handle. This is applied to the roots; that is, the end, which is of iron, cuts them through, and they are carried away by the fork at the other end, as before described. The clearing of land is an occupation belonging to the men.

With these instruments then the natives, before the † rainy season begins, prepare their land. On the first of July, or thereabouts, they commence with their millet. Of this there are two species, the small and the great. They begin with the former. To plant this, a man uses a sort of spade, which differs from our own as far as the iron work is of a semicircular instead of an oblong form. His first process is that of digging a hole in the ground. Having made this, he advances about fifteen inches and digs another. In this way he continues in a straight line till he comes to the end of his inclosure. Having made one straight line of holes, at the distance from each other described, he makes another parallel to the former, and so on till he has opened the whole of his land. While he is engaged in this work

* There are thousands of acres of champaign land in these countries, that have only a sort of underwood upon them. These the inhabitants select when they want new land, for to clear the forests for this purpose would be an endless task.

† The rainy season begins in June and ends in October.

a woman follows him, and puts seeds into each of the holes which he has made, covering them afterwards with the earth.

The seed, thus lodged in each of the holes, is suffered to remain without interruption for three weeks, when the person, who has sown it, visits it again. He finds during his absence that between these holes a number of weeds and roots have shooted up. These he clears away with the forked garden-spud as before described. Having done this, he makes new holes between each of those which he made in the beginning of July. A woman follows him as before, and puts into them the large millet. At the latter end of September, or beginning of October, the small millet sown in the first of these holes is ready. The men cut it, and the women and children carry it away. In three weeks afterwards, or at the latter end of October, the large millet sown in the last is ready also, and it is cut and taken away as before. Thus they have two crops in the year.

When the millet is thus gathered, it is carried to a place fixed upon at a small distance from the village, where all the millet belonging to the inhabitants is kept, as was described in the last plate. Each family has a large basket, made of twigs, of a conical form, about five feet high with a top to it, which takes off, in which it is deposited. Here each family deposits its own crop, so that the millet of the whole village is kept together. Though it be often at a distance from the villages and among the woods, and there be nobody to guard it, it is generally in perfect security from theft.

The description of people, who work in the manner mentioned, are the proprietors of the lands. Each family works for its own sustenance

sustenance and support. Amidst the labourers a slave is sometimes found, but not often, because, as I have said before, the slaves in this country do not bear the proportion of more than one to fifteen hundred, if compared with the free men.

The millet then takes up the time of the natives from July till the beginning of November. In December they gather their crop of cotton, and their indigo in May.

The people, who thus cultivate their lands, and are employed (taking in the different sorts of produce) for the months of July, August, September, October, November, December, and May, are not idle for the other seasons of the year. They betake themselves, in the interim, to other stationary employments, such as the making of mats and soap. The former are made of leaves and the twigs of trees, the latter of certain insects and grease. The former are made promiscuously by all, but the latter by women only.

According to the advantages or disadvantages, which the situation of the country occasions, other stationary occupations arise or are forbidden to exist. Thus, as an instance of the first, the villagers on the sea coast employ themselves in fishing. They go out to sea for this purpose, and are engaged in it, off and on the coast, from February to June. The fish which they catch, they preserve by drying in the sun. At the end of the fishing season it begins to be time, from what I have said before, to cultivate their lands. They betake themselves therefore to this employment. Hence (including the fishing season and the months already stated to have been the months for husbandry) this description of people have sufficient work for the year round.

As an example of the latter, the following may suffice. It would be the most natural to suppose that the boats, in which these fishermen follow their occupation, are built upon the shore; but it is not the case: First, Because there is but little wood upon that part of the coast where they live; and, Secondly, Because that little is not so good as in the interior parts. Hence arises by necessity the business of boat-building at the distance of thirty leagues from the shore, and in a part of the country where there are no rivers to bring them down when made. The Serreres of Baol, who have been described as living among the woods, are one description of people who follow this employment. These are free men, and are not aided in their work by any slaves. They cut down the trees first, they then shape the canoes, but do not hollow them, lest, in pulling them over land across the country (for there is no other way of conveying them) they should break. When they have shaped them they fasten to them the cords of the country, and by the assistance of the village drag them about six leagues. Here they are assisted by the next village, who drag them about six leagues farther, and so on, till they reach the shore. They give the people, who assist them, a dinner or repast only for their pains, with which they are quite content. Notwithstanding the wonderful trouble and perseverance from the felling of the trees to the delivery of these boats upon the shore, they sell them at a price which would be hardly credited by an European. A boat, that will hold two people, may be bought for about * twelve livres or four bars, and a large canoe of forty feet for an hundred livres only. Those, furnished by the Serreres of Baol, are dragged to different parts of the coast between Point de Serenes and Gambarou, and are generally of the length of twenty-five feet; boats of these dimensions only being in use between these limits.

* Ten shillings English.

Those in use from Gambarou to Cape Rouge are made in the vicinity of the Serreres of Cayor, and are about twelve feet long.

Those in use about Sallum are in length about forty feet, and are made by the natives up the Gambia. Of all these boatmakers it may be proper to add, that they follow this occupation only in the dry season; for in the rainy they cultivate their lands: so that like the fishermen before mentioned they are employed for the year round.

Among other stationary occupations, I will mention but one more, which is the making of salt.

In the countries, to which this description extends, there are but three or four villages, from which the whole of the inhabitants are supplied with salt. At the village of Bieurt, opposite to Gandiole at the mouth of the Senegal, the inhabitants make this article, and supply Cayor and the Moors. On the banks of the river Silif, which runs into the river Palmarin in the dominions of Barbasin, there are two or three villages, among which is Sangay, where the inhabitants are occupied in the same manner. There are not less perhaps than five or six hundred of them, men and women together, who are thus employed in the latter. These supply the other two countries mentioned in these letters, namely, Sin, and Sallum.

I come now to what may be called the itinerant employments. These may be divided into two kinds, namely, into such as are exercised either by the natives or by foreigners. Of those of the first description may be considered the occupation of working in gold. People, free men, who exercise the profession of goldsmiths, are found in the courts of the kings, where they principally get their bread.

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When the kings have done with them (for they do not employ them the whole year round) they go about the villages, and work for such as can afford to pay them. Their work is exceedingly neat, and is often as good as is found among the Europeans in the same line. Their profession, however, is a totally distinct one, for they neither cultivate land, nor meddle with any other trade.

A second itinerant occupation is that of smiths. There are two or three people in every village, who make the iron in the instruments of husbandry described. These make also the heads of lances and spears, as well as ornaments in copper, for such as please to employ them. These are free people, and are never assisted by slaves; there being but few in this country, as I have said before, and these being rather the appendages of luxury, than the instruments of labour. These people stay perhaps a year or two in a village, and then go to another. They have no land, for they have no time to cultivate it. Were they to choose to divide their time between agriculture and their profession, they might have as much of it as they pleased, for there are thousands of acres to spare.

A third itinerant employment, which is exercised as a trade, is that of dying. The secret of dying in these countries is in the possession of the women alone, nor is it in every village that it is known. There are only a few villages, in which these dyers are to be found. They of course go about the country from village to village, and perform the different commissions, which the inhabitants may have for them in that line.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth itinerant employments, of which I intend next to speak, are not separately pursued by individuals, like
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the preceding, but undertaken and held together; so that he, who professes any one of them, professes all of them jointly as a trade. The natives, who are brought up to these joint employments, are called Gueriotts in their own tongue. The first of their occupations is that of becoming drum-beaters or comedians to the king. They may be considered as a sort of strolling players. When the kings do not employ them in this line, they try to gain their subsistence from the people. To amuse the latter they beat their drums, talk nonsense, rehearse the feats of their ancestors, call them brave fellows, and, in short, do what is done by the same description of people in Europe. When, however, neither the kings nor the people have any employment for them in this line, they support themselves by their two other occupations. The first of these is that of working in cotton. For this purpose they always travel with their looms, which are short, light, and portable. The art of making cloth is almost wholly in their hands, and is so well executed, that no European cloth is better fabricated. The second of their occupations is that of working in leather. Of this they make scabbards for knives, daggers, and swords, small saddles, pouches, sandals, * grisgris, and other articles. Following these employments they travel from village to village. Their countrymen, however, have some superstitious notions about them, and will not suffer them, when they die, to be buried near the same spot with themselves.

A seventh itinerant occupation is that of conjurers. Those, who follow it, ramble up and down, like the Gueriotts, seldom or ever staying more than four or five days in a place. On coming into a village they are frequently sent for, to amuse the Gueraff, as well as

* A sort of leathern ornament, which the natives wear as a charm, or protection against injury or mischief.

the king, if he should be then resident in it. If, besides playing before these, they can get into the house of a man of condition to shew their tricks, so much the better, for they are better paid. If not, they get as many of the people together as they can. They then exhibit their art. It consists of slight of hand with balls, knives, and such other things as are best adapted to their design. Two only of these conjurers travel or exhibit their profession together. When the exhibition is over, a collection is made, at which time the spectators contribute cloth, millet, and other articles in return for the diversion afforded them.

It is from these conjurers that the notion of witchcraft, or that there are persons in every village capable of being accessory to the death of others by secret means (the punishment for which as well as the singular method of trial for it I described in my second letter) may be considered to be kept up. For the people behold these conjurers with surprize; they consider them as doing supernatural things; and as they see no reason why they should not be capable of communicating their art, they believe on certain occasions that there are wizzards in their own villages.

It may not be improper to mention here, that the above occupation is sometimes attended with bad consequences to its followers. It has happened that they have been accused of witchcraft and sold. Such instances, however, are but rare; for there is not an equal number of inducements to accuse these as other people, most of them being crooked, lame, blind of an eye, or such as have some bodily defect, so that very little emolument is to be derived from the sale of them.

Having now described some of the itinerant employments which are exercised by the inhabitants of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor, I shall just speak of one of the same description, which is exercised by foreigners. This is the manufacturing of wood. In the empire of Oualoff there are certain people who inhabit the forests and are known by the name of Laobés. These Laobés employ themselves in their own country in making pestles, mortars, and every sort of wooden instrument, that is in use either in Sallum, Sin, or Cayor: so that almost every wooden utensil to be seen there is of their manufacture. When they have made a quantity they send them away under the care of a party of their own people. These have the patience to carry them in large bundles upon their heads, and to travel with them in this manner for many days. When they have disposed of them, they return into the woods of Oualoff, carrying back to their countrymen such commodities as they have received in exchange.

These then are some of the occupations, both stationary and itinerant, exercised in the countries which are the subjects of these letters, by means of which each is enabled to obtain his respective wants. The Gueriott, for instance, can always furnish himself with clothes, but having no land, he is obliged to derive part of his subsistence from his occupation of Drum-beater or Comedian to the king. For another part of it he has recourse to the husbandman, who gives him a quantity of millet for working his crop of cotton into cloth. The husbandman is thus supplied with raiment, sufficient for himself, and with an overplus for trade; but as he must have fish (for this is deemed a necessary part of his sustenance) he has recourse, in his turn, to the inhabitant of the shore. The inhabitant of the shore, besides following the occupation of a fisherman, cultivates as I said before his own millet, but he has often no time for the planting of cotton for his

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clothes.

clothes. For his fish then he receives the overplus of the husbandman's cloth just mentioned. The smith, on the other hand, having no land, and but one occupation, must be in want of both millet, fish, and clothes. These he gets from the former three in exchange for his spears, and instruments of agriculture in iron.

Thus is a great deal of business transacted by means of barter, both in the vicinity of the shore, and in the interior parts. There is a frequent communication between the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages for this purpose, each offering for sale that which he possesses to procure that which he wants. In Sallum, many articles of merchandize are carried up and down the country in boats, for there are many rivers there. In Sin, where the same advantages are not to be found, many of them are carried upon asses; and in Cayor, upon asses also, till you come near the mouth of the Senegal, where oxen are in use. Numbers, however, of the natives travel with large bundles of merchandize on their heads, and their perseverance upon these occasions is astonishing, for they not only disregard the weight of them, but with this weight, enormous as it frequently is, they will travel six French leagues in the course of a single day.

I have now, Sir, furnished you (in describing the different occupations of the people of Sallum, Sin, and Cayor) with the last topic I proposed to myself as connected with your second question. On those points which I have already spoken to, I have no more light to offer, nor can I conceive that there is any more that you can want. I have therefore fulfilled the task I undertook at the beginning of these letters. As, however, it may be of use to you that I should point out from the contents of them certain positions, which

which you may have it in your power to resort to on certain occasions, I shall continue my correspondence for another day. Nor will you be offended with this interference of mine as any impeachment upon your own understanding and genius: for quick as your penetration is, yet as you are unacquainted with the various arguments adduced in defence of the Slave-Trade, it is but reasonable to suppose, that many observations will escape you, as you may not in every instance know the value of some of the ground you pass over, in surveying the contents of the preceding letters. It is this circumstance, and this alone, which has induced me to offer you my services on this new occasion, and I shall be happy in realizing them, if I hear nothing from you to the contrary to-morrow.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

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LETTER

L E T T E R IX.

PARIS, JANUARY 4, 1790.

S I R,

I PROMISED you yesterday, with your leave, to advert to certain parts of the foregoing letters. I sit down for this purpose to-day, and shall refer to those and those of them only, which, if applied to the different arguments advanced by the advocates for the Slave-Trade, would be answers to them, as far as the matter contained in these letters is capable of affording such.

Among the arguments used in justification of the continuance of the trade, there are three, deduced from the situation of the natives of Africa previously to their coming into the hands of the Europeans as slaves. It is asserted by some (to mention the first of them) that these slaves were originally prisoners of war: that, if they were not purchased, they would be killed; and that the Slave-Trade therefore

therefore ought to be continued, inasmuch as by such a continuation of it there is a continual saving of human life.

Not to dwell on the very affectionate concern which all those must certainly have for the poor Africans, who visit their coast for this very humane purpose, but who go to no other coast where they know wars to exist, and the natives to be in a similar state of society, let us see what may be traced upon this subject in the preceding letters. It is said first, * that wars, in the common acceptance of the word, rarely happen : Secondly, that, when they do, they seldom last longer than from ten to fifteen days, and that very few prisoners are ever made ; so few indeed, that in the great battle which determined the fate of a whole kingdom, twenty-five persons only were taken.

It is urged by others, as a second argument, that these slaves were originally criminals ; that the receiving of them into slavery is only executing the sentence awarded against them by their own laws ; and that the continuance of the trade therefore is but the completion of justice by the hands of the Europeans.

Let us now go again as before to the preceding letters. In answer to this we shall find that † out of twelve hundred and forty persons, whose situation prior to their coming into the hands of the Europeans is accurately known, two hundred and thirty-five are to be set down as having been convicted of crimes either supposed or real, and one thousand and five as the produce of treachery and force.

We are enabled to state again from the same authority, ‡ that all crimes from the greatest to the least are alike punished with slavery ;

* Page 13.

† Page 17, 25, 29.

‡ Page 13, 14, 15, 16.

that the king is the ultimate judge or arbiter of the fate of such reputed criminals, and that for his benefit they are sold; that in the case where he is not, namely, in the case of witchcraft, the effects of a red hot iron on the flesh are the test of their innocence or guilt; and lastly, that in some cases it is not the offender only who is punished, but his innocent family, and that this is more or less likely to be the case in proportion to his poverty or his wealth.

From these two statements then it evidently appears, first, that the number of reputed criminals is but small; secondly, that these are disproportionally punished; thirdly, that of this small number it may happen that some of them are persons totally innocent; and, fourthly, that it does frequently happen that others are, and hence that the continuation of the trade is not the completion of justice, but of injustice, on the part of the Europeans.

It is insisted on by others, as the third argument, that these slaves were slaves in their own country previously to their coming into the hands of the Europeans; so that those, who buy and transport them, occasion them only to change the place of their abode, and not their condition.

This argument also drops to the ground, if we examine the contents of the preceding letters; for it appears, first, * that the proportion of free men to slaves is about that of fifteen hundred to one.

It appears secondly † that the Pillage and Crimes are the two grand means of furnishing supplies for the trade in question.

Now, as the Pillage is made promiscuously upon all, as well upon free men as upon slaves, and as the latter may be supposed not to be more disposed to vice than the former (for the mind cannot be so broken, where the state of slavery is neither burthenfome nor degrading, as to lose all its virtue) it follows that the number of pillaged and condemned of the first class will be to the number of pillaged and condemned of the second, in the proportion in which they are found to exist in society to one another: that is to say, among every fifteen hundred and one persons exported, there may be considered to be fifteen hundred who were originally free.

This proportion would undoubtedly be the true one, if we could take upon us to say, that those, who were born slaves, were never sold by their masters. And this we are enabled to do nearly on the authority of the preceding letters. For we are informed, that if the proprietor of a slave should have a son or relation pillaged in the night *, he would undoubtedly give a slave for the redemption of such relation or son, and that, except in such a case, it may be set down as an established rule in these countries, that those who are born slaves are never sold. Suppose then we were to say that, for every fifteen hundred persons exported, thirty of them were such as were Ransom-slaves (a sufficient number to allow in a country where very few possess slaves at all) we should see the absurdity of the argument advanced; for we should see that almost all who are exported were originally free, and that they do change not only the place of their abode, but their condition also.

Having now stated three arguments generally made use of, and all of them deduced from the situation of the natives previously

to their coming into the hands of the Europeans as slaves, I shall mention one, which obtains equally, but which is usually deduced from their situation after the above period; for it is contended by the advocates for the trade, that their lives in the colonies are so much happier than in the country they left, as to justify the continuance of it.

That you may judge of the truth of the argument, I shall suppose, first, that all the persons exported were originally free men. I shall suppose afterwards that they were all of them slaves. I shall then see in either case what the preceding letters furnish us with to enable us to form an idea of the truth of the assertion, or whether, whichever of the two cases we choose to take as the true, the argument will not drop to the ground.

On a supposition then that they were free men, we are justified in giving the following account of them.

In Africa * every native in his own village is considered as a member of the community, and as a man. He knows no distinction of rank or privilege. He sees but one magistrate over him, and this person no otherwise more powerful than himself, than by being able to bring offenders to trial with the consent of the people. Now, Sir, is this the case with him when exported to St. Domingo or your other colonies? Is he not immediately expunged from the rank of men? Is he not considered as a mere instrument of labour, or put upon a level with the brute?

* Page 13 and 44.

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* In Africa every native is the cultivator of his own little farm, and the crop that follows is the reward of his labour. To place him beyond the reach of want, more land awaits him as his own, if more should be judged necessary, and this to an extent equal to the summit of his wishes. But what is his situation when exported to St. Domingo? Several of your colonists now at Paris assure me, that after having expended his sinews in the fields of his master, he has no share in the fruits of his own labour; that he dares not touch the cane which his own hands have planted for fear of the application of the whip; that his meagre looks too often exhibit a proof of his scanty fare; and that his little repeated thefts, not on the pageantry of his master, but on the necessities of life (thefts of a kind † seldom or ever known in his own country) are but too many additional confirmations of his wants.

In his own country again, as a free man, it is evident that he goes to sleep when it suits him. In the morning he rises at his own hour. In the day he goes where he pleases, seeking various amusements when unemployed, or visiting his friends; and, when he comes to a good old age, he has the pleasure of finding himself an object of favour and respect. In your colonies, on the other hand, as the same gentlemen aver, his slumbers are daily broken by the sound of the shell. If nature tells him that he is not sufficiently refreshed, but entices him again to sleep, he dares not obey her call. Sick or well he must rise to his toil. If he should range about to amuse himself in the day, he is seized as a runaway from the rod of despotism, and oppressed with chains. If he visits his friends he must visit them in the night; and pay for his pleasure by the pain of encroaching upon his sleep; and when he comes to a good old age, all estimation of him is gone;

* Page 52, 62.

† Page 58.

he is considered as an useless animal; as a dead weight on his owner; nay, he is sometimes even turned adrift, when his aged hands are incapable of procuring him a livelihood, to steal or perish.

* In his own country again, he is situated amidst his relatives and friends. Here the former for generations back are encircled by one fence. Here, if he be grown a man, he beholds on one side of him his aged ancestors, and on the other, views with pleasure his rising progeny. But is this his situation in St. Domingo? Is he not a stranger there? Is not his life rendered continually unhappy by the painful thought of being for ever separated from all whom he esteemed in life: and if time should chance to erase the remembrance of these, or render it faint, dare he even then frequently form any new connexion, or can he dwell with pleasure on the prospect of a progeny to come. Your colonists tell me No. They have often heard him say, "These whites are the most merciless of men. They are not content with our bodies in this life, but they follow us after death. They persecute our images by entailing upon our children their parental lot. I will not taste the connubial state. I will not bring an infant into the world to become a brute. If I do, I will stifle it, and be theirs the crime."

Now, Sir, if to the above considerations you should add a remarkable circumstance to be found in the preceding letters, namely†, that his attachment to his native village is of so extraordinary a kind, that though you chase him from it with all the dogs of persecution he will return to it again, or, in other words, that whatever situation you put him into in the colonies, you make him miserable by taking him from his native spot, you will form a decisive idea of the relative happiness

of his situation as a free man on the continent of Africa, and as a slave in St. Domingo.

Having now considered him as having been free before the time of his exportation, I shall follow the plan I intended, and consider him to have been a slave in his own country. On such a supposition the following comparison may be made.

* In Africa, though a slave, he is not subjected to stripes or any other personal ill treatment. Whips, chains, and other instruments of torture, are there unknown. But the gentlemen inform me from your colonies, that, after he has been exported, you trace on his back such marks of the whip as time can never deface; that chains and imprisonment, with various instruments of torment await him, if he should have the virtue to transgress the colonial laws; and that, even if he should not transgress them, he is never safe from the sallies of passion and caprice.

† In his own country again, his work is easy and light, not exceeding the ordinary exercise which health requires. In your colonies, when exported there, I am told from the same authority as before, that it is hard and intolerable. In his own country he enjoys often whole days of leisure. In your colonies, days and years pass alike without a respite from his labours, and days and years are still to pass till nature is exhausted. In the former, he is cheered by the example of his master, who undertakes an equal portion of labour with him in the same field. In the latter, he is roused to exertion by the lash. Vain and idle is the plea that disease has assailed and

* Page 46.

† Page 45, 46.

enfeebled him, and that he is weak. To suggest this he frequently dares not, and not to suggest it is to fall the victim of avarice and oppression.

* In his own country again, he is led to consider that slavery is less a distinction in reality than in the name. He eats with the children of his master, and partakes of the same repast. He sleeps often in the same room, and always in an apartment as commodious as theirs. When in company with his master, it is difficult often to know which of them is the slave. But I am informed that very unlike to this is his situation at St. Domingo: that he is considered as of a different order of creation: that the whip only is base enough to touch his body; and that, if ever admitted into the presence of his owner, there is the immense distance between them of a reptile and of a God.

This, Sir, is the second comparative view which I undertook to make, namely, between the situation of a slave in Africa and a slave in your colonies. Now, if to this you add that which was made before, namely, that of a free man and a slave in the same two countries, you will be able to reject the argument with disdain, should it ever be opposed to you, that the lives of those annually exported to the colonies are so much happier there than in their own country, as to justify the continuance of the Slave-Trade.

Having now replied very fully to the fourth argument suggested to your notice, I shall offer to your consideration a fifth, which has had some influence, but which may be also answered from the contents of the preceding letters.

It has been constantly handed about, and this with some share of success, that the natives of Africa have not the same faculties as other men; by which it is insinuated, that they were born, or at least are fit only for slaves.

* As a proof of the contrary of this, we find them in their own country under a regular form of government, with divisions and subdivisions of officers, so that a large tract is put into a situation to be governed with ease, and edicts, that are to travel to a considerable extent, to be soon promulgated and obeyed.

† We see also a certain system of jurisprudence instituted. We see property divided into two kinds; laws not only relating to this but to other subjects; offenders tried for transgressing them, and this by their own Peers and upon the spot. We see also a system of revenue, imposed with judgment, collected without difficulty, and equal to the exigencies of the state. To which we may add the name and form of a religion known and acknowledged by them all.

If it should be objected to their system of jurisprudence as a weak one‡, that in the particular case of witchcraft the effects of a hot iron on the flesh are the test of innocence or guilt, let us remember how short a time it is, since our own ancestors had recourse to the boiling water and burning plough-share for the same purpose; and that at this period they never demeaned their own understandings so much, nor do we their descendants think so contemptibly of them, as to suppose that others had a right to enslave them on that account.

* Page 40, 41.

† Page 13, 43, 46, 54.

‡ Page 16.

If it should be objected again to their system of government, * that the governours have too much power over the governed, and † that men of condition and wealth can escape the penalties of the laws, let us see whether we Europeans are perfect in these particulars. It is but lately since we have seen a Bastile, and we know of an Inquisition existing at present in two kingdoms: and as to the other charge, if we look at home, we shall see how almost impossible it is for the poor man to obtain redress from the injuries of the rich, or, in other words, that the rich should suffer the punishment which the law prescribes in cases of injury to the poor. In short, we have no reason to boast. The system of jurisprudence, belonging to the most enlightened of us, is extremely defective and weak. In civil actions so little is the law understood, that the issue is never certain, and in criminal ones not only are the punishments ridiculously disproportionate to the offences, but inadequate to the wished for end.

Though the above observations on the systems of government, jurisprudence, revenue, and religion, to be found among the natives of Africa, are more than sufficient to establish their capacities as men, yet I cannot help adding, that we have seen them to great advantage in other points of view ‡. We have seen them as farmers and husbandmen. We have seen them as builders of boats. We have beheld them again as manufacturers in gold, iron, copper, wood, cotton, and this in a manner that would do no discredit to Europeans.

A sixth and last argument, which meets with its answer from the same source, is the following: “ That you ought not to abolish the trade in slaves, unless you can substitute another trade in some

* Page 13, 15, 40.

† Page 44.

‡ Page 57, 58, 59, 60, &c.

other branch on the coast of Africa, and to do the latter is impossible on account of the indolence of the natives, and their unwillingness to engage in active life."

Let us now consult the preceding pages upon this point. We find in the first place * a considerable spirit of commerce among the natives. In proportion as new markets have arisen, new trades have evidently sprung up, and new industry has been exerted. They hold a continual intercourse with each other for the purposes of trade, and to such a degree has this spirit of commerce risen, that to procure a market for their commodities they will travel leagues with immense burthens on their heads, and be regardless of the weight.

Nor can we, in the second place, avoid noticing with less satisfaction the constant occupations of some, and the intense labours of others, in the several departments which they profess. Some † of the natives do not employ themselves for a season only, but follow some occupation or other for the year round. The labour of others again is equal to that which any Europeans undergo. ‡ As a proof of this, we may adduce the employment of the boat-builders, from the time of cutting down the tree in the forest to the time of delivering in the shape of a boat upon the shore, at the distance of thirty leagues overland as before described: an instance of perseverance, which cannot fail of being urged successfully against those, who should call their industry into question.

As a third circumstance of material importance in the case of the argument adduced, we may notice, from || the price of the boats

* Page 65, 66.

† Page 59, 61.

‡ Page 60.

|| Page 60.

above mentioned, compared with the toil described to have been expended upon them, the great cheapness of labour in those parts.

In short, Sir, if we reflect properly on the spirit of commerce to be found among the natives of Africa, and if to this we subjoin the consideration, first, of the variety and fatigue of their several occupations ; and secondly, of the low demand for the articles made in following the same, the argument not only falls, but it appears on the other hand, that there are few people, from whom more is to be expected by the European merchant than from the natives in question, in the introduction of a new commerce in the place of the execrable trade in men.

I have now, Sir, communicated to you all the arguments in defence of the continuance of the Slave-Trade, to which any answer may be drawn from the contents of the preceding letters. I have therefore finished my task, and shall now conclude, observing only in addition to what I have said before, that if the conduct of the Europeans and Africans were to be compared, I fear the former would have all the reason to blush. The * Europeans are represented as flocking themselves, or as sending their agents, to the courts of the African kings ; as seducing these by intoxication and bribery to subvert the just principles of government, and to become wolves instead of shepherds to their people ; as suggesting schemes of treachery and violence, and as being receivers of the prey. The Africans, on the other hand, though they have some bad laws and customs among them, may attribute them in a great measure to the Europeans. Notwithstanding the ignorance and barbarity with which we often charge them,

* Page 9, 10, 32.

they are not devoid of virtues. * To the European master the African exhibits a noble lesson in the mild and gentle treatment of his slave. † To the sovereigns of Europe the wise and virtuous Almammy sets a no less illustrious example in extirpating the commerce in the human race; and when we consider this amiable man as having been trained up in a land of slavery, and as having had in the introduction of such a revolution all the prejudices of education and custom to oppose; when we consider him again as sacrificing a part of his own revenue; as refusing the presents of the Europeans; and as exposing himself in consequence of it to the vindictive ravages of the agents of the latter, he is certainly more to be respected than any of the sovereigns of Europe, inasmuch as he has made a much nobler sacrifice than they, and has done more for the causes of humanity, justice, liberty, and religion.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

T. CLARKSON.

* Page 45, 46.

† Page 31.

