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A LETTER

FROM A

Merchant at JAMAICA

TO A

Member of Parliament in LONDON,

Touching the AFRICAN TRADE.

To which is added,

A SPEECH made by a BLACK of *Gardaloupe*, at the Funeral of a Fellow-Negro.

LONDON,

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A LETTER *from a Merchant at* Jamaica *to a Member of Parliament in* London, *touching the* AFRICAN TRADE.

SIR,

HEARING from *England*, that there's like to be a Struggle next Session of Parliament between the *African* Company and the other Traders thither; I take the freedom to send you a Speech made by a *Black* at *Guardaloupe*, a *French* Island, upon the Funeral of a Negro, kill'd by his Master for taking a small Loaf of Bread

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as he paſs'd thro the Kitchin: From which, and what I ſhall add, you may perhaps collect more of the Iniquity of that Trade, and ſee more of the Cruelty wherewith the poor Wretches the Negroes are uſed, than either the Planters or Merchants, the Company or Traders, will think it their Buſineſs to ſhew, or for their Credit or Intereſt to have known.

The Acquaintance I had the honour to have with you, whilſt I was in *England*, gives me reaſon to believe you ſo great a Lover of Juſtice and Humanity, and that you have ſo much at heart the *juſt Rights and Libertys of Mankind*, that I perſuade my ſelf you will take pleaſure in doing what in you lies for the *Relief and Eaſe* of ſo many *miſerable Men*, who are really *treated worſe than Brutes*. Your God-like Mind, I'm ſure, knows the *Joy of doing Good*. And a greater Good can hardly be imagin'd, than to help and relieve ſo many *Thouſands of miſerable Men*, who groan under the *Weight* of an inſupportable *Tyranny* and *Oppreſſion*.

The *Black* ſeems to have ſo fully argu'd the Juſtice and Injuſtice wherewith they are acquir'd, that I need ſay little upon that Head: But I ſhall give you two or three Inſtances of the Uſage they meet with

with after they are brought to *America*; with my Thoughts in general.

A Ship being arriv'd at a certain Plantation, a Planter goes on board to buy; he caſts his eye upon a ſtout jolly young Fellow: *Captain*, ſays he, *what ſhall I give you for that Man?* Sir, ſays the Captain, he has a Wife; if you have him, you muſt take the Cow too.——*Which is ſhe?*—— This.——*D—n her*, ſays the Planter, *ſhe's an ill-thriven Jade; I'll not meddle with her: Prithee let me have the Fellow alone.*——He's very fond of her: you'l have no good of him without her.——*I'll venture that*, ſays the Planter: *Come, ſet your own Price.* By this time the Black perceiv'd they were treating about him; and fearing they meant to ſeparate him from his Wife, ſteps to her, takes her in his Arms, looks upon her with all the Paſſion and Fondneſs of a loving Husband; then goes to the Planter, points to his Wife, then to himſelf, and by his Looks and Actions ſeem'd to ſignify he beg'd the Planter would buy them both; and that if he did, it would be the greateſt Obligation in the World, and he might expect a Return in good Services.

The Planter, to pleaſe and delude the poor Wretch, ſignify'd by Looks and Signs he would. But the Captain ſets his Price;

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the Planter ſtrikes him: And now the matter is, how to decoy the poor Man from his Wife. The Planter ſignifies to him, that he had bought them both; and that they were to go immediately on ſhoar. The overjoy'd Negro falls upon his knees, kiſſes the Planter's hands, and is almoſt tranſported. Both Man and Wife are brought to the Ship-ſide; the Man goes down into the Boat, the Woman ſtill in the Ship; the Boat, as order'd, ſtrait puts off. The Negro ſeeing himſelf thus deluded, and ready to be rent from what *Nature* had ſo cloſely *join'd* him to, ſnatches up an Oar, and knocks the Rowers down, returns to the Ship-ſide, and aſcends with all the Reſentment and Fury, that ſo baſe and inhuman an Action cou'd produce; runs to his Wife, claſps her in his Arms, looks with Anger and Indignation upon the Planter and Captain, and draws his Finger along his Throat; meaning he'd cut that if they parted him from his Wife. The Planter ſeeing the Conſtancy and Reſolution of the Man, and what he was to expect if he did not take the Wife too; and having ſet his mind upon the Fellow, vouchſafed in his great Goodneſs to buy them both. So much for our Traffick.

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The next Inſtance is of the Uſage of our Negroes, when we have bought them. Tis this——On a Sunday a Planter taking a Tour about his Plantation, finds a Stranger Black Woman with one of his Black Men in the Negro's Hutt. *Huſſey!* ſays the Planter, *who are you? To whom do you belong?* And, without ſtaying for an Anſwer, falls a caning her. His Negro beſeech'd him to ſpare her, for that ſhe was his Friend. *Why, Sirrah!* ſays he, *what Friends have you? If you want a Woman, have not I Women enou' for you? You Dog you! Sirrah, whoſe is ſhe?* and began to maul him. Sir, ſays the Negro, for God's ſake forbear: I'll tell you.——*Out with't then, you Dog.*——Why, Sir, ſhe's ſuch an one's Servant in the Town.—— *But, you Raſcal, what does ſhe here? I'll teach you to bring other Peoples Servants upon my Plantations.* (Then falls on him again) *And for you, Huſſey! I'll teach you better manners than to come here again. Here!* (calling to his Servants) *ſtrip this W — re; tie her to yonder Tree, and let her have forty ſound Laſhes with the Cat-of-nine-tails.* The poor trembling Woman, ſcar'd almoſt out of her wits with this dreadful Sentence, falls upon her knees, and in the moſt humble and earneſt manner beſeeches his Mer-

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cy; for that ſhe meant no harm. *Why, you d——'d B—ch*, ſays he, *what came you here for then?* To tell you true, ſays the poor thunder-ſtruck Creature, I'm your Servant's Wife. *Are you ſo!——Then let her have forty Laſhes more; and as for the D--g, I'll ſacrifice him for daring to meddle with any Women but mine.* The Negro takes to his heels, and hides himſelf. The Woman's ſtript, unmercifully laſh'd, and let go. Some time after, the Negro comes into his Maſter's Preſence, hoping the Storm was blown over: But ſo far had the Spirit of Rage and Cruelty the aſcendant, that tho the Fellow was better worth than 50*l. per ann.* to him, in looking after the boiling of Sugars and other things; yet the moſt earneſt Requeſts and Intreatys of the Planter's Wife and other Friends preſent were all little enough to diſſuade him from killing him; and with *difficulty* he was *reſtrain'd from* imbruing his Hands in the poor Man's *Blood.*

The laſt Inſtance I ſhall trouble you with, is, of the Manner and Meaſure of ſome of our Puniſhments.

At a principal Town of a conſiderable Iſland in this part of the World, a Woman Negro-Servant had ſtole a Silver Cup, or ſome ſuch ſmall thing, from her Maſter; (probably

(probably to buy ſome little Neceſſarys for the Child ſhe went with.) Now he might either correct her in his own Houſe, or order her to be chaſtiz'd in the open Market by the hands of the common Whipſman. He choſe the latter. Out ſhe's led to the Whipping-Poſt in the Market-Place; and tho ſhe was ſo big with Child, that ſhe ſeem'd near her Delivery, yet ſhe was ſtript ſtark naked, her Hands ty'd in a Rope, by which ſhe was hoiſted till ſhe ſtood on tip-toe, and all her Parts ſo diſtended, as one would have thought a Blow muſt have made 'em crack and fly aſunder. Thus naked, thus diſtended, thus big with Child, the Executioner of Cruelty comes to her with a Whip made of Wires, and falls on ſo unmercifully, you would have thought each following Laſh would ſure have made the Child ſpring from her Body: yet ſtill her cruel Maſter's Eye pity'd not; nor did the Beadle's Hand ſpare her. Thus ſtood this miſerable Spectacle in the face of the Sun and of the World, whipt and ſcourg'd ſo long, ſo cruelly, till to the *ſhame* of thoſe who call themſelves *Men*, *good-natur'd Men*, and *Chriſtians*, till to their laſting ſhame the poor Wretch felt ſuch Pains and unſpeakable *Agonys*, as made her ſweat even *Drops of Blood*;

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Blood; whilſt all her Back and hind Parts were ſo gaul'd and flay'd, that they no longer look'd like human Body, but all appear'd one Piece of mangled Fleſh with reeking Gore. The poor Creature, enduring all theſe racking Torments with an invincible Patience, did not ſo much as open once her mouth. The cruel Execution ended (if it may be ſaid to be ſo when ſo much Smart's to follow) her furrow'd Back and bleeding Wounds were waſh'd with Salt and Water. A ſharp Remedy, you'l ſay——But yet, you'l think it mild, compar'd with what they do in ſome Plantations.——Sometimes, if they think Scourging and ſuch-like too gentle Puniſhments, forgetting all Humanity, they will with a Knife lay open the *Fleſh* of a Slave's Limbs *in long Furrows*, and then pour a *hot Liquor*, made of Pitch, Tar, Oil, Wax, and Brimſtone, or ſuch-like Ingredients into the *Green Wounds*.

Thus, Sir, I have given you juſt a Taſte of our *Humanity*: for to attempt the recounting all our Methods of dealing, and our many Ways of puniſhing thoſe miſerable Creatures, were as endleſs as what *Avarice* and *Iniquity* can ſuggeſt, or what the *Caprice* and *Cruelty* of Men,

Men, *bounded by no* Fences of *human Law*, can invent and execute.

Yet this is the Caſe of thoſe Wretches, whom were the D——l himſelf to torment, and yet profit by or expect their Labour, I do not eaſily ſee how he could make them more miſerable.

Why they ſhould be thus treated I cannot imagine. The moſt of them are taken in War, and by the Cuſtom of thoſe barbarous Nations the Captors are reputed to have Right, or however they have got the Power, to kill or do what elſe they pleaſe with their Priſoners. The Cuſtom of Servitude, as it was at firſt introduc'd by Men, who would not forbear one Cruelty, except they exercis'd another not much leſs; ſo was it not every where, or at all times receiv'd. *Gro. de jure B. & P. l.* 3. *c.* 7. §. 8. Whatever cruel Barbarians may think or practiſe, 'tis plain all the Chriſtian, I might perhaps ſay all the Civiliz'd World, account it barbarous and inhuman to kill a Priſoner, or treat him ill after you have given him Quarter; and they have intirely laid aſide the Cuſtom of Slavemaking, as being againſt all Rules of Charity: *Gro. Vol.* 1. §. 9. For the end of all juſt War being Peace, *i. e.* a quiet Enjoyment of Life and Property, what occaſion

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ſion is there to kill a Man I have diſarm'd, and from whom I have nothing to fear, and who perhaps had no Malice, but fought againſt me only becauſe his Prince or Captain would have tuckt him up if he had not? And if in ſuch Caſe it be inhuman to take his Life, it is almoſt as bad to take from him the Liberty of a rational Creature, and to ſpare his Life no longer than he blindly ſubmits his Underſtanding, and all his Facultys both of Mind and Body, to the imperious Dictates of my Will, how unreaſonable and extravagant ſoever. But then even among thoſe who allow'd of *Servitude*, yet it was upon ſuppoſition of a *juſt War*; for otherwiſe the Conquerors were ſo far from having a Right to kill, that if they knew the War to be unjuſt, it was Murder if they did; and by conſequence alſo they could have no Right to enſlave or ſell, or ſo much as keep their Priſoners. So ſenſible were the *Romans* of this, that *Grot. c.* 10. §. 6. gives ſeveral Inſtances of their making *Reſtitution* of what they had took in *unjuſt Wars*; ſo that they even ſold Lands bought with the Price of Captives, and *rebought* whom they had *before ſold, and ſet them at liberty*. And *Grotius, Vol.* 1. is clearly of Opinion, that if one *poſſeſs Goods* taken in an

an *unjuſt War*, tho he had no hand in the taking them, or did it innocently, yet he is *bound to reſtore* them. But admitting we had as good a Right in our Slaves as we are willing to imagine, yet ſtill they are Men. And tho *the Law* has a great while indulg'd or conniv'd at *our being Judges in our own Cauſe*; yet it ſeems but a piece of natural *Juſtice and Equity*, that no Man ſhould be ſo in matters of any moment, where a more *impartial Judg* may be found: Or, however, if the *Law* thinks fit to allow them this, yet it would ſeem but reaſonable that, like *all other Judges*, they ſhould *forfeit* their *Office*, if they be ever guilty of *abuſing it*.

Theſe unhappy Mortals, the Negroes, make a great part of the *African* Trade, about which there is like to be ſo great a Buſtle. Let them take it for me that like it: Let them ſtudy Ways and Means to preſerve and increaſe it. It has never yet throve, nor do I believe ever will, till 'tis manag'd with more Juſtice and Humanity both in the firſt and after Buyer. We have had many publick Calamitys in this Iſland, and many of our Neighbours have ſmarted too. I do not wonder, I rather admire the Divine Goodneſs and Forbearance.

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It muſt be own'd our Plantations are of great Conſequence to both Us and *England*. They are work'd and cultivated moſtly by the hands of Negroes, and it would be hard to do it by any others. But it does not therefore follow, that thoſe poor Wretches, by whoſe Labour we are enrich'd, muſt not be treated with Humanity and Reaſon; or if they are ill us'd, that the Law ſhould give them no Protection or Redreſs. 'Tis very hard, that whilſt they help to make us ſome of the happieſt People in the World, we ſhould in return make them the moſt unhappy, the moſt wretched and miſerable part of the Creation. No, Sir, you well know no Advantage can legitimate Injuſtice and Inhumanity. Whatever Advantages are built upon ſuch falſe, ſuch rotten Foundations, however they ſtand for a time, will ſurely end in Ruin and Deſtruction. I make no Apology for my long Letter: I know you will excuſe it. I heartily pray Heaven may incline your wiſe Senate to do ſomewhat for the Relief and Eaſe of ſo many, who are baſely oppreſt, and inhumanly treated by their unjuſt and cruel Maſters. It would be an Act worthy of ſo Auguſt an Aſſembly. It would be laying ſo good a Foundation of Power and Riches,

Riches, as might probably outlaſt human Expectation. Certain 'tis, it would render them the Delight of all good Men. Heaven would look down on ſo becoming an Action, and all Generations would call them bleſſed.

I am with great Reſpect and Affection,

Octob. 10.
1708.

SIR,

Your moſt humble Servant.

A SPEECH *made by a* BLACK *of* Gardaloupe, *at the Funeral of a Fellow-Negro.*

THE great and beneficent *Creator*, the *Beſt* of *Beings*, as Reaſon tells, and as our Maſter's Books aſſure us, when he had form'd this Speck of Earth, was pleaſed to crown the Work, by making Man, on whom he ſtamp'd the Image of Himſelf. All he expected in return, was but a juſt and grateful ſenſe of the kind Maker's Bounty, and an honeſt Care to copy after the Divine Original in doing good; that is, in other words, promoting his own and others *Happineſs*. The

The good and wiſe *Maker* had ſufficiently furniſh'd Man with Facultys neceſſary to ſo kind and glorious a Deſign. He gave him the Powers of Perceiving, Deliberating, Judging: He implanted in him a ſtrong Deſire of preſerving his own Being and Happineſs, and gave him unexpreſſible Tenderneſſes towards others. And as God made of the ſame *common Mold all People*, ſo whilſt he ſubjected the inferior Animals to theſe little Vice-Roys, he left *them* all *free* to uſe and follow the *Conduct* of that *Divine* Ray of *Reaſon*, whereby they were ſhew'd and taught that reaſonable Service which he requir'd. He made them, I ſay, free to follow this bright and faithful Guide, ſo ſoon as they ſhould grow up to Man, and their Eyes were ſtrong enough to bear the Light; that ſo the Creator might have the Glory of a free and chearful Service, and the Creature the Reward of Virtue, and an unconſtrain'd Obedience. But, alas! how far is Mankind fallen? How much degenerated from the pure and happy State in which God created them? Sin introduc'd Sloth in ſome, Wantonneſs and Luxury in others. Theſe were tempted to affect Command over, and Service from others; while thoſe were again inclin'd to a baſe

Submiſſion and Dependence, rather than be at the Pains of exerting thoſe Powers the wiſe Author of Nature had given them, which were abundantly ſufficient to all the Purpoſes of Life; and ſo they, like the profane *Eſau*, whom we read of in our Maſter's Books, ſold their Birth-right and Inheritance for a poor Meſs of Pottage. Thus fond Mankind forſook the Divine Light plac'd in their Breaſts, and by firſt becoming Servants to their own Luſts and Appetites, became Servants to each other. It had been well, comparatively ſpeaking, had Matters ſtop'd here; for hitherto there is no Wrong, no Violence: Beſides, the Infirmitys of Nature made it a neceſſary and even prudent Charity to ſerve their Neighbour in time of want, whoſe Aſſiſtance they again in their Turn might need and expect.

And if any ſet ſo little Value on the Gem of Liberty, as quite to part with it for a little Bread, which they might have reap'd and made with their own hands, they were to thank themſelves for ſo fooliſh a Bargain, and had nothing to complain of but their want of Induſtry and Wit. But ſtill this extended no farther than their own Conſent had carry'd it; and the Agreement being mutual, they were

were no longer bound by it than their Maſters perform'd their part, and treated them fairly. But the Luſt of Dominion and the Deſire of poſſeſſing, ſeizing Mens Brains, they grew fierce and raging, broke thro the Ties of Nature and Humanity; and upon ſlender, or only pretended Cauſes, made War upon their weaker and more innocent Neighbours. Hence is the Source of all our Woes and Miſerys; to theſe we owe our Captivity and Bondage; to theſe we muſt lay the innocent Blood of our Brother who lies murder'd, barbarouſly murder'd, before us. Good God! what have we done? What Right have theſe cruel Men thus to oppreſs, inſult, and inhumanly butcher their Fellow-Creatures? Let us examine all their Title, and ſee what it amounts to; and then we ſhall the better know, whether their Uſage of us, or our Complaints, are the more juſt. They ſay, they bought us with their Mony. ——Confeſs'd; but who had Power to ſell? We were it may be condemn'd by colour of Law, that is, the Will of ſome Great Man, to be ſold by way of Baniſhment for ſome ſuppos'd Crime. ——But how did the Buyer know there ever was a Crime committed, or that the

the Sentence was juſt? or if he did, what Right can this confer? 'Tis plain, I think, it gives him only Right to carry us whither he pleas'd, and make us work till we repaid him by our Labor what we coſt, with other Charges.

It may be we were taken in War; what Right then had the Conqueror? or what did he transfer? Suppoſe the War againſt us was juſt, and that our Buyers knew 'twas ſo; yet they likewiſe know, that 'tis barbarous and cruel to take a conquer'd Enemy's Life, when the Injur'd can be ſafe without it; and that 'tis ſtill more barbarous and inhumane for another to take it away, to whom he has ſold and deliver'd his Priſoner; ſince by the Sale and Price receiv'd he ſeems to have taken the Mony for his Security, and upon that Conſideration runs the Hazard of the other's ſetting him at liberty if he thinks fit. So that 'tis plain, this gives them no ſuch Right over our Lives, as any Man that has the leaſt Tenderneſs or Humanity (I might, I think, ſay Juſtice) would make uſe of. And as for perpetual Slavery— it muſt be cruel Juſtice, that for ſo ſmall a Sum, ſo ſoon repaid, wou'd purchaſe and exact what makes his Fellow-

low-Creature, from whom he has nought to fear, ſo miſerable for Life. If they contend for this as a Right which they are fond of, let them ſhew it, and let them take it and the ſole Glory of it. But who told our preſent Lords the War was juſt? Do Victory and Right go always hand in hand? No, our Maſters by Experience know they don't. This then at beſt can give but a dark doubtful Right, which never can defeat that natural and undoubted one the God of Nature has beſtow'd on Men, to have, to own, no other Lord but *him*.

It may have happen'd we were ſold to pay our Debts: What will this give them? In Equity they have at moſt hereby a Right to ſo much Service as will pay the Debt and Charges of tranſporting us. The firſt was all the Creditor could ask. But do they know what this Debt was? No, they never ſo much as once enquir'd or ask'd to be inform'd. We were perhaps bought of ſome unkind unnatural Father. Be it ſo. What have they got by this? Can a Father transfer what he has not? or have they what he neither did or cou'd poſſibly give them? ſurely no. A Father has Power indeed, and ought to

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help and feed his young and tender Offſpring, as all Creatures do, but not to caſt them out into the Fields, or ſell them wantonly to a baſe Servitude. God gave him Power to beget and become a Father of Men, not Slaves. A Father, as 'tis fit, has Power too to guide and ſteer his Childrens Actions while Reaſon's weak; and if by Age, or otherwiſe, he's brought to want their help, they are oblig'd by Nature, and by Gratitude, to give their helping hand and beſt Aſſiſtance. But ſtill they are not his Slaves or laſting Property; for when wiſe Nature has fitted them to propagate and educate their Kind, Reaſon requires, and Nature loudly tells they are at Liberty, they then are Men. It's true, we ſeem oblig'd to our Lords, that they were pleas'd to take us off the Hands of cruel Conquerors, or ſuch wanton and unnatural Parents as begot us only for their Pleaſuee; either of which might likely have deſtroy'd, if they cou'd not have ſold us. But it wou'd be remember'd, no Benefit obliges further than the Intention. Was it then for our ſakes, or for their own, our Maſters built ſuch mighty Ships in which they plow the Main? Was it for us they laid out ſo much

much Wealth? Or was it to ſave our Lives, they ſo much ventur'd and expos'd their own? Alas! the Anſwer is too obvious: Our hard Labour, and harder Fare, but moſt of all, our cruel Puniſhments, and perpetual Bondage, but too plainly ſhew for whoſe ſake all this was done. But beſides, 'tis certain many Wars are made, many Children parted with, only becauſe there are ſo many Buyers. So that all we have to thank them for, is, that they ſought to ſerve themſelves; and doing ſo, they ſav'd us from thoſe firſt of Ills their Avarice had wrought. Further, Many of us, it may be, are bought neither of the Governour or Conquerour, of Creditor or Parent; but of a treacherous Friend, a perfidious Husband, or an odious Man-ſtealer. Theſe are far from conferring any Right, unleſs what can ariſe from the moſt unjuſt and inhuman Acts in the world. What's now become of all their boaſted Right of abſolute Dominion? It is fled. Where all our Obligations to perpetual Servitude? They are vaniſh'd. However, we may perhaps owe them ſomething; and it were but juſt, if ſo, they ſhould be paid. Let us therefore, if from the account I have already given we can, make an Eſtimate of

the Ballance.——Suppoſing then one half of us were juſtly ſold at firſt by thoſe that had a Right to all our Services, if that may be ſuppos'd: Suppoſe likewiſe that our Maſters knew it too, and who the very Perſons were: They then would have at moſt a Right to the Labour of ſuch Perſons during Life; and of the reſt, till they had earn'd and clear'd ſo much as was given to the Captain who brought 'em hither. But ſince it is impoſſible for them to know on whom to place their ſeveral Demands; and ſince they bought us all at random, without regard to Right or Wrong: let us for once ſuppoſe favourably for them, who never favour'd us; let us ſuppoſe our Maſters innocent of all the Wrongs we firſt ſuſtain'd. Suppoſe us Men, Women, and Children come to their Shoar from ſome far-off unknown Land, under the Power of a ſtrange Captain of a Ship, who pretends he has a Right to ſell us. He offers to deliver us, Great and Small, into their hands at 20 *l.* a-piece. They pay the Mony. We are deliver'd up. What are we now in debt? 'Tis plain, I think, that ſince they neither know nor did regard his Title, they can at beſt have one but till they're reimburs'd the Coſt and Charge which they've been at.

'Tis ſure we had a plain and natural Right to Life and Liberty; which to take away upon a weak, preſumptive, or a may-be Title, were to make us of leſs value than Beaſts and Things Inanimate: a Property in which, by Reaſon's Law, is never gain'd againſt a true and juſt Owner upon ſlight Preſumptions, whatever may be done by Laws of particular Societys, to which each one agrees. But were it otherwiſe in mere Poſſeſſions, yet Life and Liberty are hardly things of ſo low rate, that they're to paſs as lightly from the Owner, to whom God gave the ſole and certain Property, as Beaſts, or Birds, or Things Inanimate, which bounteous Nature laid in common, and wherein ſtrictly no Man has more Right than what is neceſſary for him and his Dependants.

Let any Man but make the Caſe his own, and he'l ſoon ſee the Hardſhip. Would not any one think himſelf greatly injur'd, if another ſhould make him his perpetual Slave, only becauſe he gave 20 *l.* for him, to one who had him in his power? Methinks the very naming it is enough to ſhock a Man; and he ſhould need no further Argument to convince him of the Injuſtice of the thing. But Men are hardly brought to ſee what makes againſt their Intereſt. Taking

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king the matter now to be as laſt ſtated— Suppoſe Twenty of us bought at once; the Mony paid would be 400 *l.* ſuppoſe ſix of the Twenty Children; ſuppoſe alſo one of us to die each year; reckon the Labour of each of thoſe of ſufficient Age at 10 *l.* a year, which is really leſs than it may be well accounted, ſeeing a great part of our poor Suſtenance is owing to our own Hands and Induſtry, which we are forc'd to employ in planting Herbs and Roots, whilſt we ſhould reſt from our more toilſom Labour. By this Computation we ſhould have paid all our joint Debt in three years time. Yet would our Lords but uſe us as Men, we ſhould not ſtick to a nice Computation, but frankly ſerve them three or four years more, before we claim'd our Freedom. Many of us here preſent have ſerv'd twice, ſome ſeven times the ſpace our cruel Lords can juſtly claim. Of our hard Labour, let our weary'd Limbs, their well-planted Fields and full Coffers all bear witneſs. Of their hard and cruel Uſage let our torn Backs teſtify. Of their bloody Inhumanity, let the Corps of our dear Countryman before us, weltring in its Goar; let it, I ſay, for ever witneſs againſt the cruel Authors of our Woe: who not content to make us Slaves, Slaves

Slaves for Life, do uſe us worſe than Dogs, and deny us the Compaſſion they would ſhew a Horſe. 'Tis true, they willingly will teach and make us Chriſtians; while they themſelves want to be taught, both They and We are Men. In this however we are ſomewhat better uſed than are our wretched Friends in *Engliſh* Iſles; where their hard Maſters forbear to do good, leſt that oblige them to do more. Ridiculous Superſtition! that will not allow their Servants to be Chriſtians, leſt they be forc'd to allow them to be Men. This is to found Dominion upon the Goſpel of that Divine Teacher Jeſus, who told them plain as Words could make it, his Kingdom was not of this World. And as if none were intitled to the common Privileges of Nature, except they pleaſe to allow 'em them by Waſhing or Baptizing, they carefully forbid our Brethren that. What I pray is this, but to make ſport with the Creation, and to monopolize the Bleſſings of our common Mother Earth? Our hardy Tutors know things better. They teach us what themſelves ſeem hardly to believe; and by giving us hopes of another better World, endeavour to make us content that they alone ſhou'd enjoy this: teach us to do Good for

for Evil; and when we have done no fault, to turn our Cheeks to the Smiter, and our Backs to the Scourger; to ſubmit not only to froward and unjuſt, but even to mercileſs and cruel Maſters; remembring us that their Goſpel ſays, *Thro many Sufferings and Tribulations we muſt enter into the Heavenly Country*; that Country where our dear, our patient, our murder'd Brother's gone. But why ſhou'd we complain of Death, whoſe Life's ſo miſerable to us? To kill us, ſeems the greateſt kindneſs that our bloody Lords can do. We have loſt our native Country, our Friends, our Liberty; we are made Slaves to haughty cruel Men; we are fed and work'd hard; their Will's our Law; which when we do tranſgreſs, we ſuffer all the wanton Cruelty they can deviſe: No Prayers or Tears can touch their harden'd Hearts; relentleſs as Rocks, they know no Pity. What now remains in Life to be deſir'd? 'Tis better far to die, than, being Men, be forc'd to live like Beaſts: Beaſts! and of thoſe the moſt unhappy too. Still, tho our Hardſhips are as great as the Injuſtice of our Oppreſſors; tho our Sufferings are as many as the hated Days we live; tho all their Pleas of Right are falſe or ſhort: methinks I cou'd forgive them all,

all, did they not pretend Neceſſity for their inhuman Acts. They tell, it ſeems, the *European* World, we're of ſuch baſe, ſuch brutal Natures, that nought will govern us, but downright Force and Fear; That like the Horſe we muſt be broke and rid with Whip and Spur, but with far cloſer Reins. Abominable Forgery! Hated Impoſture! What, are we not Men? Have we not the common Faculty's and Paſſions with others? Why elſe has Nature given us human Shape and Speech? Whence is't that ſome of theſe wiſe rational Maſters of ours give us ſometimes Charge, not only of their Works and Caſh, but of their Perſons too; and make us judg when they're debauch'd enough in Wine, and when it's time to lug them home upon our ſervile Backs? Whence is it that ſome of us, without the Help of Books or Letters, are found able to deliver a Meſſage, or do Buſineſs better, even by their own Confeſſion, than they who intruſt us with it? But were it a wonder, that while they uſe us ſo like Beaſts, we ſhou'd not act as Men? If they give us no Motives to Induſtry and Obedience, but a baſe ſervile Fear, is it at all ſtrange, when that's remov'd, the hated Service ſtraight ſhou'd ceaſe? It wou'd be

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be ſtrange indeed, ſhou'd it be otherwiſe. Cou'd they be brought to deal with us as Men, they ſoon wou'd ſee, we may be wrought upon by gentler Methods far than Blows and Scourges. But while they uſe us thus, how can they e're expect we ſhou'd not hate them? how can they hope our Services ſhou'd once proceed from Hearts they never touch'd, unleſs with Deteſtation? Let them make tryal of their own Countrymen, and ſee what will be the difference 'twixt them and us. As much Slaves as they are already, this likely will be all the odds, they'l hate them more, and bear their Uſage worſe than we. To finiſh and compleat our Miſerys, theſe Lords of ours, not content that we are Slaves, Slaves baſely us'd for Life, they make our innocent Babes their Property, as if they ſprung from Brutes. If their Right to us be ſo uncertain or ſo ſmall, as I have ſhew'd it is; with what Pretence, with what Face can they enſlave our guiltleſs Children? who have committed nothing to deſerve the loſs of Liberty in a baſe ſervile tedious Life, a Life beneath the State of Brutes. Suppoſing we were juſtly theirs for Life, which they can never ſhew; yet ſtill, the moſt they can demand from Innocents is ſome ſmall time of

of Labour, for the little Suſtenance which they receiv'd by means of theſe our Lords. But not content with this, they carry on the wrong, and make them Slaves for Life as they made us; and claim our Childrens Children, and ſo on, to all Poſterity. Thus, our Lords who call themſelves White-men and Chriſtians, led by their Avarice and Luxury, commit the blackeſt Crimes without a Bluſh, and wickedly ſubvert the Laws of Nature, and the Order of Creation. Let us, my deareſt Countrymen and Fellow-ſufferers! Let us in this our great Diſtreſs and Miſery, look up to the great Author of Nature, whoſe Works and Image are ſo baſely us'd; and earneſtly implore his mighty Aid: Let us beſeech him, for ſure he hears the Crys and Groans of his oppreſſed Creatures, either to ſoften thoſe Adamantine Hearts, which cut us in pieces; or to put it into the Minds of ſome great, ſome God-like Men, to come to our Deliverance, that we may ſing our Maker's Praiſe, and with Aſſurance ſay, There is a God who governs the Earth, and reſtrains the Pride and Cruelty of wicked Men.

FINIS.