

THREE MONTHS IN JAMAICA,

In 1832: comprising a residence of seven weeks on a sugar plantation.—By HENRY WHITKEY.

[Continued from No. 13.]

In conversing with the overseer about these floggings, I had more than once expressed the pain and horror I felt at seeing that negro slavery was accompanied by so much suffering. The overseer endeavored to persuade me, contrary to the evidence of my own sense, that the punishments were not severe, and assured me that there were, moreover, negroes who had never been flogged in their lives. I afterwards questioned the head book-keeper, Mr. Burrows, on this point and asked him if he could point out a single working negro on the estate, male or female, single or married, who had not been flogged? After some reflection he replied, that he could not specify a single one who had not been punished with a cart whip. Now there were 277 slaves on that estate, of whom a very small proportion were children, and yet a man who had been among them for only two years, did not know of one (with the exception of mere children) who had not been once or oftener subjected to this cruel, degrading, and revolting punishment.

After these conversations I made every exertion to ascertain this fact, by making inquiries among themselves, as opportunities occurred. The general reply to such interrogations was—"Ah! Massa, me been flog many a time by Busha." On putting the question to an aged negro who had formerly been employed to take care of the sheep, but was now in the stable, he said he was flogged many a time.—And what were you flogged for? I inquired. "When sheep go astray—when sheep sick—when sheep die—then," said he, "Busha put me down and flog me till me bleed." And how many lashes, I asked, did Busha ever give you? "Ah! Massa," said the poor old man, "when me down na ground, and dey flog me till me bleed, me something else to do den for count de lashes." This same man, as he was saddling my horse on the day I finally left the estate, made a remark that struck me. "Now, Massa," said he, "you see how poor negro be 'pressed [oppressed.] We no mind de work—but dey 'press us too bad."

I asked another negro, a married man and the father of a family, if either he or his wife had ever been flogged. He replied that both he and his wife had been flogged frequently: and further remarked, that it was very disheartening that after trying "to be good negro," they could not escape the lash any more than the worst slaves on the estate. This man was a Baptist—a very religious and exemplary man. He had been a member of the Baptist Chapel at St. Ann's Bay, which I saw lying in ruins. He could read a little, and I gave him a hymn book.

This last mentioned slave was a carpenter. I therefore asked the head carpenter (a Scotchman, named Walden) if he had ever flogged this man. He replied that he had, and added, that he was obliged to flog all the slaves under his charge. He never took them out with him into the wood, he said without the cart-whip, so that if any of them did not please him he might put him down and give him a flogging.

I asked other similar questions, and received, in every instance, answers to the same effect—all proving the truth of the head book-keeper's statement that he knew not a single working slave on the estate who had not been flogged.

I may here mention that on meeting with a slave of the name of Johnstone, belonging to the neighboring estate of Green Park, I asked him if he had ever been flogged. He replied—"Yes, Massa, me been flog, and been work in chains three months and three days." On inquiring further, I found this man's offence was going to the Methodist chapel, (Mr. Whitehouse's) and that for this offence he had been cruelly flogged by order of his owner, Mr. Hurlock, (not by the overseer) and worked in chains for three months.

During my residence at New Ground, the St. Ann's work-house gang (of convict slaves) was employed in digging cane holes on the plantation. I had thus frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with them. I shall never forget the impression I received from the first near view of these wretched people. The son of the captain, or superintendent of the

work house (a person named Drake) accompanied me to the field the first day I went out to see this gang; and as we went along, he remarked that I should probably be somewhat shocked by their appearance, but ought to bear in mind that these negroes were convicted malefactors—robbers, thieves, and felons. On approaching the spot I witnessed indeed a most affecting and appalling spectacle. The gang, consisting of forty-five negroes, male and female, were all chained by the necks in couples: and in one instance I observed a man and woman chained together. Two stout drivers were standing over them, each armed both with a cart-whip and a cat-o-nine-tails. Nearly the whole gang were working without any covering on the upper part of their bodies; and on going up to them, with a view to closer inspection, I found that their backs, from the shoulders to the buttocks, were scarred and lacerated in all directions, by the frequent application of the cat and the cart-whip, which the drivers used at discretion, independently of severe floggings by order of the superintendent. I could not find a single one who did not bear on his body evident marks of this savage discipline. Some were marked with large weals, and with what in Yorkshire we should call *wrethes* or ridges of flesh healed over. Others were crossed with long scabbed scars across the buttocks; on others, again, the gashes were raw and recent. Altogether it was the most horrid sight that ever my eyes beheld. One of them had on a coarse shirt or smock frock, which was actually dyed red with his blood. The drivers struck some of them severely, while I was present, for falling behind the rank in their work.

I asked one of the drivers what were the offences for which these people had been condemned. He replied that some of them were convicts from Trelawney parish, who had been concerned in the late rebellion; others were thieves and runaways; and, pointing out three individuals (two men and a woman), he added that these had been taken up while martial law was in force—for praying! I asked him if I might be permitted to speak to those three persons; and, meeting with no objection, I went forward and conversed with them. One of them, whose name was Rogers, in reply to my inquiries, informed me that he had been condemned to the work house gang for meeting with other negroes for prayer.—The other man, whose name I have forgot, told me that this was the second time that he had been sent to work in chains solely for this offence—namely, joining with some of his friends and relatives in social prayer to his Maker and Redeemer! In order to assure myself further of the truth of this extraordinary fact, I made inquiry respecting it of some of the most intelligent negroes on New Ground estate, to whom the particulars respecting these people's condemnation were known, and received such full corroboration of their statement as left me no doubt whatever of its truth. Indeed I soon found good reason to believe that on many estates there are few offences for which the unhappy slaves are punished with more certainty or severity than praying!!!

Drake, the superintendent of this work house gang, came often to New Ground, while they were employed there, to see that they did sufficient work (for it was paid for by the piece), and one day he was invited by the overseer to dine with us. After dinner, while he and I were standing at the door, he proceeded to abuse the friends of negro emancipation in England, in very violent terms, and added, that if ever I uttered a word unfriendly to them (the slave-holders) he would have great pleasure in cutting my head off. Then extending his arm, and pointing to his miserable gang, who were at work, full in view, at no great distance, he uttered a tremendous oath, and said—"Oh! if I had but Buxton and Lushington chained by the necks in yonder gang, I would cure them, that would I, by G—! We would be all right, he added, "if these devils would but let us alone."—This man, Drake, as I was told by the overseer, has a salary of 500*l.* currency.

A Ship Burnt.—We learn from Captain Leavit, from Savannah, that the ship Hull, Knox, of Boston, took fire about 5 o'clock on the morning of the 16th inst. while at anchor in Savannah river. She had on board 934 bales of cotton, bound to Liverpool. The vessel burned so fast, that they had to scuttle her. About 25 bales of cotton were saved in a sound condition—the residue injured.

LEGALIZED SLAVERY.

The guilt of slaveholding is increased by being committed according to law.

A law which consigns a race of men to the place of goods and chattels, mere merchantable commodities, is the highest insult to that Being whose law is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It sanctions iniquity. He, therefore, who, under protection of such a law, possesses himself of human bones and sinews, adds rebellion to injustice. He not only revolts from God, but he joins a standard of revolt. It is a wicked thing to forsake the post of duty, but it is still worse to go over to the marshalled enemy. Moreover, there is a deliberation about legalized wickedness which strips it of all right to excuse itself by the infirmities of human nature.

Remembering that in our country the people make the laws, let us turn to some of the laws which pertain to slavery, and see if we can estimate the amount of cool, determined, calculated wickedness which it must require to carry them into practice. The tenure by which the slaves are held is thus described in the code of Louisiana.

"A slave is one who is in the power of a master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry and his labor: he can do nothing, possesses nothing, nor acquire anything but what must belong to his master." [Civil Code, Art. 35.]

The following is from the laws of S. Carolina:

"Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged in law to be *chattels personal* in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever."—[See Stroud's Sketch, p. 23.]

Such is the tenure by which *two millions* of human beings are held and handed down from father to son, as though they were things without souls.

Again, see how cruelly the protection of law is withdrawn, by refusing to hear a colored witness against any white man.—The question in regard to the witness which decides whether he should be heard, is not, Is he honest intelligent, credible? but, Is he white? It is not whether he has an open heart, but whether he has a fair skin! In Virginia an act of assembly has these words, "Any negro, or mulatto, bond or free, shall be a good witness in pleas of the commonwealth, for or against negroes or mulattos, bond or free, or in civil pleas where free negroes or mulattos shall alone be parties, AND IN NO OTHER CASES WHATSOEVER." Similar laws exist in several other slave states, and in one of the FREE; but in the slave states where there is no express law, the same thing is sanctioned by the universal practice of the courts.

The following are a specimen of the laws which check the upward tendencies of mind in the slave. The Revised Code of Virginia hath this enactment, viz.—"That all meetings or assemblages of slaves or free negroes or mulattos mixing and associating with any such slaves at any meeting house, or houses or any other place, &c. in the night, or at any school or schools for teaching them reading or writing either in the day or night, under whatsoever pretext, shall be deemed and considered an *unlawful assembly*; and any justice of a county, &c. wherein such assemblage shall be, either from his own knowledge or the information of others, of such unlawful assemblage, &c. may issue his warrant directed to any sworn officer or officers, authorizing him or them to enter the house or houses where such unlawful assemblages, &c. may be, for the purpose of apprehending or dispersing such slaves, and to inflict *corporal punishment* on the offender or offenders at the discretion of any justice of the peace, not exceeding *twenty lashes*."

By the act of South Carolina, "Assemblies of slaves, free negroes, mulattos and mestizos," "for the purpose of *mental instruction*," are declared to be unlawful, "and the officer dispersing such unlawful assemblage may inflict such *corporal punishment*, not exceeding twenty lashes, upon such slaves free negroes, &c. as they may judge necessary for detaining them from the like unlawful assemblage in future."

The following is from a Savannah paper:

"The city has passed an ordinance, by which any person that teaches any person of color, slave or free, to read or write, or causes such persons to be so taught, is subjected to a fine of *thirty dollars* for each offence; and every person of color who shall keep a school to teach reading or writing is subject to a fine of thirty dollars, or to be imprisoned ten days and whipped *thirty-nine lashes*!!"

Thus, is the written revelation not only withheld by law from *two millions* of human beings but if any of them by their own unaided endeavors should presume to open the book they are rudely thrust away, as if it were a profanation for them to meddle with letters. Thus have a company of men dared to place themselves between God's light and *two millions* of immortal minds. Forsooth the cultivation of the mind is dangerous to their claim of PROPERTY. But they tell us they do not shut out the souls of their slaves from heaven. No they give them oral instruction!—Now we ask seriously what the message of God can do, when it comes through mouths which daily swallow the unrequited labor of the poor? Such oral instruction is an abomination in the sight of God! It is the very thing for which His curse has fallen upon the Pope of Rome.—*Anti-Slavery Reporter.*

Extract from a letter, dated,

St. Thomas, 31st May.

"The Governor General Van Scholten, on his departure from this Island for Denmark, left for the consideration of the Council here, a project for the emancipation of the negroes in the Danish Islands. It was proposed that one day, besides Sunday, should be allowed them for the first year, and they were to hire themselves out and pay to their owners two bits, which must be deposited in the Country treasury. The second year they were to have two days—the third year three, and so on, until they received the six days. The money paid into the treasury was then to be returned to their owners as compensation."

It has met with great opposition here. The British Government, it is said, has offered Denmark £2,000,000 sterling for this emancipatory measure, and in addition, to receive, (besides the grain) the manufactures of that country in consequence of the late measures of the King of Prussia excluding their manufactures from Germany."

WAR BETWEEN MOROCCO AND NAPLES.

The rumor, which we have already mentioned of the Emperor of Morocco having declared war against Naples is confirmed, by the following extract of a letter from Tangiers, dated the 9th ult.: "The Emperor of Morocco has just written to the Governor of the provinces and maritime towns, stating that, having made vain efforts to maintain peace with the King of Naples—having yielded, with this view, to the concessions which other Powers had solicited—and having even several times granted delays, without ever seeing the ratification arrive or even an answer from the Neapolitan Government, his Majesty does not consider it just that the Neapolitans should continue to enjoy in his States the same advantages as friendly nations. He orders, in consequence, that the Neapolitan flag shall no longer be admitted into the ports or towns of Morocco. This letter, received at Tangiers on the 4th of March, was kept secret till now, doubtless to retard the notice which the Consuls would give to their Governments.—On the same day the Emperor summoned the commander of his navy to Fez, and gave orders to arm and equip immediately a sloop and two brigs at Rabat. A few days after a similar order reached Larache for two brigantines, and a report was soon spread among the Moors that these armaments were destined to capture the Neapolitan trading vessels. If, by prodigious efforts, the Government of Morocco should succeed in sending these armed vessels out to sea, they would amount to ten or twelve, including five gunboats, in bad condition, now at Tangiers. It is doubted whether the government will succeed in doing this; but it might still send out several light vessels filled with brigands, who, by their numbers, would be alarming to the trading vessels they might surprise.—Not meeting with Neapolitans, these pirates might insult other flags, unless care be taken to prevent it."—*Galignani.*

Soot Destroys Cut Worms.—Soot destroys or drives off from all plants of the cabbage tribe, from pinks, and from other plants, those common and voracious grubs of gardens, the larvæ of the moths of the family Noctuidæ. After being annoyed almost to despair, by the ravages of this grub, I resorted to the use of soot, and thus applied it:—I laid it dry, and near an inch thick over the ground, and had it dug in. The plants were then planted from 20 to 25 in a row, and so effectual was the soot, that instead of losing eight or ten plants in one row, as I before had done, I think I did not lose more than that number in a bed of 2 or 300. In the grub's attacks on plants of the cabbage family, their habit is to eat some nearly and others quite asunder, a little below the heart: it often greatly annoys the farmers in their turnip fields. I have made use of the same remedy since, and have never found it to fail. Last summer I was troubled with the grub in a bed of pinks: then I made some soot water and watered the bed well, and the bed was soon freed from the grubs. The precise mode of the soot's action on the grubs I cannot state; but I believe that the ammoniacal matter which it contains destroys some, and disperses the remainder. I shall gladly receive any information on this head. I have not found that the soot has injured the soil at all; and I name this because I have been told it would.—*Furmer and Mechanic.*

He who has no friend and no enemy, is one the vigor; without talents, power or energy.

