

ADDRESS of a Member of the Society in London, for the Abolition of Slavery, on the Insurrection of the Blacks, in St. Domingo.

As the West-India Planters and others have insinuated that the foundation of the Insurrection in St. Domingo, was laid in the efforts of such of the Gentlemen of Britain, as have associated themselves for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, I think it will be peculiarly proper at the present time to make a few remarks on the subject of Insurrections of Slaves.

It is impossible for any one to have read the History of Greece and Rome with attention, without knowing that there were many and bloody Insurrections of the Slaves in the Countries which their Histories respectively comprehend.—Now it is impossible to attribute these, with any propriety, to persons associated either for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, or of personal Slavery; because, it does not appear from History, that there ever were associations in these days for so laudable a purpose.

Whoever, again, has read the History of the West-India Islands from their first establishment to the year 1786, must have read it very superficially, not to know, that there have been various Insurrections of the Slaves there, within this period. There was formerly a bloody one at St. Domingo, besides that which has lately happened. There have been several in Jamaica, and other Islands have had their share of them also.

Now it is impossible that any of these could have had their origin in the efforts of the gentlemen associated for the Abolition; because it was not till 1787, that the first Committee was formed, which was in London, for the Abolition of this execrable trade.

To what cause then may we attribute the Insurrection in the Islands? Undoubtedly to the Slave Trade, in consequence of which thousands are annually poured into the Islands, who have been fraudulently and forcibly deprived of their natural rights. All these come into them of course with dissatisfied and exasperated minds; and this discontent and feeling of resentment must be further heightened by the treatment which people coming into them under such a situation must unavoidably receive; for we cannot keep people in a state of subjection to us who acknowledge no obligation whatever to serve us, but by breaking their spirit and treating them as creatures of another species. Now, that this is the cause is evident from Mr. Long, the celebrated champion of the Planters themselves, who states in this history of Jamaica, that all the Insurrections of the Slaves that he could ever trace in the Islands, were begun by the imported Africans, and never by the Creole or Island born slaves.

Such then being actually the cause, and this being likely from common reason to be the cause while men have the passions of men, and this being adequate of itself, at all times, to produce the effect, what reasons can there be for imagining that the Insurrection in St. Domingo proceeded from any other source; particularly, as these Insurrections have been as numerous before any association for the Abolition of the Slave Trade took place as since their institution? As, however, the present Insurrection in St. Domingo, is somewhat connected with the late Revolution in France, it may be necessary to say a few words upon it as related to that event.

As soon as the news of this Revolution was conveyed to St. Domingo, the white people there divided into parties, as in the mother-country, the one for the Revolution, the other for the Government in its ancient form.

Again, as soon as the principles of that Revolution, as particularized in the declaration of rights, was proclaimed in that Colony, a third party, and that a formidable one, arose. This consisted of the people of colour, who notwithstanding many of them had received a liberal education, and were in many instances larger proprietors in the Island than the whites, were in a depressed and degraded state. They felt forcibly the justice of these principles; and when they considered that those were held out by the Representatives of the parent country, they determined to assert their right to equal privileges with the rest of the Colonists. In consequence of this they held a meeting, af-

ter which they sent several worthy persons of their own body to Paris, to represent them in the National Assembly of France.

On their arrival they found their way to the Bureau de Verification, where it was necessary for them to have their claim to representation ascertained and sanctioned, before they could be admitted as deputies into the Assembly.

The white Planters, however, who happened to have seats in the National Assembly at this time, found means to crowd in this bureau or committee, just mentioned, with a view of hindering the deputies from the people of color from having a place in the same legislative body with themselves. They pretended to find some flaw in their powers, and put off the further consideration for a few weeks. At the end of this time, in consequence of the great exertions of the deputies of color, they were obliged to resume the consideration of the case: they then acknowledged their error, gave up the legality of the flaw at first started, but pretended to have discovered one of another nature. In this way they put off the deputies from committee to committee, hindering them by these means from coming before the Assembly at all. When at last, one of the deputies of the name of Oge, a man of property, education and abilities, but of much stronger passions than his colleagues, returned to St. Domingo, to represent to their constituents the treatment they had met with from the white Planters in France.

His representation of the case soon reached the ears of some of the whites of St. Domingo, who communicated the intelligence to others of the same description, which produced a determination in them to make a victim of Oge, by taking away his life. They attacked him, and a few of his adherents, at different times, in armed parties, some of whom he defeated, and from others he was obliged to fly: pressed however at last, he was obliged to take refuge in the Spanish part of the island, where he was treacherously given up, and soon after, though he was never publicly examined, he was broken alive on the wheel and as of his followers. This barbarous destruction of a person, whom the people of color so generally and deservedly esteemed, only widened the breach between them and the whites of the island, and exasperated them to wreak their vengeance upon the latter. While they were planning schemes with this view, news arrived in the Colony that those of the deputies who, after Oge's departure, had remained in France, had by their perseverance, obtained a hearing before the National Assembly; which on the same day decreed, that all the people of color, born of free parents, were Frenchmen, and of course entitled to all the privileges of Frenchmen: and among others, to that of being represented also. This news, when received at St. Domingo, as much exasperated the white inhabitants as the death of Oge had the people of color there; and their breasts began to burn with a spirit of revenge against the latter.

Here then we see no less than three factions prevalent at the same moment in St. Domingo. The whites divided into two parties, as they adhered to the new constitution or the old; and the whites and people of color burning with a fury hardly salvable but by the extirpation of one another. What then did the negroes do at this interesting moment? Seeing their lords and masters not able to agree among themselves, but at daggers drawing at one another, they determined to take advantage of the divisions among them, and to assert their violated rights by force of arms. Such is the true state of the case respecting the insurrection at St. Domingo, and what do we learn from it but the following truth? "That the slave trade, and the oppression naturally resulting from it, was the real and only cause of this Insurrection," as it ever has been, and ever will be, of similar events, but that the Revolution of France, by causing the three divisions before mentioned did afford the negroes an opportunity which they would otherwise not so easily have found, of endeavouring to vindicate for themselves their unalienable rights.

The above accounts then lead us to three separate conclusions:—First, that the slave trade is the real cause of all the West-India insurrections.—Secondly, that as long as it exists, so long may these insurrections be expected.—And thirdly, that the St. Domingo in-

urrection, in particular, so far from affording us a just argument (as the planters say) to discontinue our exertions at the present moment, calls upon us to redouble them, if we have any value for our own islands, or any wish that the present proprietors of them may preserve the estates to themselves, and perpetuate them to their posterity.

LONDON, Feb. 19.

NOTHING can more fully demonstrate the immediate advantages which this Country has derived from the Peace, than the Expedition which the French Government has sent to the West-Indies. The Mercantile Interest, and the Holders of Estates in our Colonies, must be aware, that as long as the system of misrule prevailed in the French Settlements, there could be no security for our own. The contagion of example would have spread itself, and the whole of our Colonial System must have been endangered, when every neighbouring French Island afforded an asylum for our mutinous Slaves. Thus the Genius of Conspiracy would have been emboldened by impunity, and those distant Colonies which have hitherto furnished so much towards the increase of our wealth and navigation, would have been reduced to the condition of burthenome and expensive establishments.

The failing of the Fleet, while it dispels these apprehensions, gives us a strong assurance of the pacific sentiments of the French Government. The removal and employment of so large a force on a distant quarter, for the express purpose of quelling the spirit of insurrection, proves that France is both averse from farther Continental Hostility, desirous of cultivating the arts of peace and commerce, and inimical to those visionary projects, by which the Legislative and Conventional Assemblies convulsed and desolated its most beautiful and fertile Colonies. From the nature of this Expedition, we may rest perfectly satisfied, that France also feels it to be her interest to remain tranquil.—If any other sentiments were entertained, she would never have permitted the departure of so many thousands of her best Troops, after the bitter experience she has acquired by the want of Troops, which, in a fatal hour, she rashly landed in Egypt. The more commercial the Republic becomes, the less is to be apprehended from her ambition; and, consequently, there cannot be a better guaranty of general peace to surrounding Nations than the speculative and commercial enterprizes of the French People.

A Stuttgard Newspaper gives the following account of an Introduction to the Chief Consul:

We read in the gazette printed here (*Allgemeine Zeitung*), the following description of a public audience of the First Consul of France, addressed to the Editor by an eye witness:

"We were conducted into a saloon, where were assembled the Ambassadors, and those foreigners who were to be conducted to the audience. We were all in the first instance presented to the Counsellor of State, Benezech; the Minister Talleyrand also made his appearance, while the State hussars guarded the doors and overlooked the apartments. In a short time the domestics of Bonaparte came to serve us with chocolate, liquors, &c. In about half an hour we were conducted by Benezech through a long line of guards into the hall of audience.—During this procession warlike music was heard, which seemed to transport us all to Marengo. In the saloon preceding that of the Consul, the Officers of the Staff formed a double line. The Consuls were placed near the Chimney, with four Officers of the guards in full uniform, behind them: the Ministers were on the right, and the Counsellors of State on the left; whilst many Members of the Legislative Bodies, and a great number of General Officers, formed a semi-circle. The entrance completed the circle. The foreigners ranged themselves by the side of the respective Diplomatic Agents, who took their stations without any apparent design. The envoy from the Pope placed himself on the right of the Consuls; by the side of him was the Imperial Ambassador; then followed the Ambassadors of Prussia, Denmark, &c. Bonaparte alone did the honours of the audience; he made his round with inexpressible ease—he spoke to all without the least affectation, and found means to say something agreeable to each.

"As we were near eighty in number, he was near an hour making the round. Having at length, however, returned to his place, we made bows and were re-conducted by Talleyrand and Benezech, amidst the music of martial instruments, into the first saloon, from whence we departed, filled with satisfaction and admiration at what we had seen and heard."

PHILADELPHIA, February 22.

LOSS OF THE ABIGAIL.

Letter from Captain Vredenburg, of the brig Abigail, to his owner in this city.

It is with great regret that I am obliged to inform you of a melancholy disaster as ever yet befel my vessel.

We left the Cape the 12th Dec. with a pleasant breeze from the W. N. W. bound for Bourdeaux—it continued fine weather and a good wind until the 17th, then began to blow a gale. We prepared every thing necessary for such an event, having the top-sails handed, the top gallant-yards and masts, &c. on deck. On the 18th the gale increased with great violence, attended with squalls of hail and snow, which obliged us to scud before it under a reefed foresail; and at half past 12 o'clock at night, in lat 40. long. 57; the mate and 5 men being on deck, a heavy sea broke over her stern, which washed them all overboard except the mate, who held on by the rigging—the other five we never saw after. The mate was much hurt, but has since recovered. The same stroke carried away the boat over the stern, all the quarter-boards and stantions, the companion, binnacle, compasses, hen-coops, part of the larboard quarter, and the main boom. The vessel broached too; and immediately another sea broke in on her decks fore and aft and stove her long boat. The brig then being level with the sea, with so great pressure of water on her decks, expected every moment she would have sunk; the cabin nearly filled with water, discharged itself in the hold amongst the cargo. The remainder of the ship's company, consisting of myself, the mate and cook, with a passenger and three little boys, (who were of very little assistance) began to clear the decks, and cut away cotton bales, water-casks, and long boat, which was then stove in pieces.—We rigged the pumps and found a great quantity of water in her hold; we kept the pumps going until the next morning, employed at the same time nailing canvases over the companion way, and different places about the stachions and the bilts, which were broken off—all the while blowing a tremendous gale, which continued until the 20th at six o'clock, A. M. and then abated.—At 4 o'clock in the afternoon, we made what sail we were able, and steered to the southward to gain the first port; we endeavoured for Charleston. On the 27th Dec. the weather being moderate, and the wind continually from the westward, finding it impossible to make Charleston, we concluded to bear away for the West-Indies, and set the fore topsail, the weather having a good appearance. At 10 o'clock the same night, we met with a most violent squall from S. W. to sudden that before we were able to stee the fore-top-sail down, and secure it, the top-mast was carried away in the cap, and all went over the larboard side together; we then cut away every thing that tended to hold it, for fear of loosing and carrying away the head of the foremast.—It was near six o'clock the next morning before we had the wreck cleared, being worn out with fatigue, and scarcely able to stand or move. On the 29th, we found the leak fast increasing, and were not able to keep her free with both pumps. We therefore determined to discharge part of her cargo, and accordingly began in the cabin and staterooms and threw overboard all the bees-wax and pimento; then broke open the hatches and bulk-head, discharged the pimento, pepper, and whatever first came to hand, the pumps going the same time. The next day at 4 o'clock, P. M. we found the leak decreasing and desisted from discharging, desirous to save and preserve all that lay in our power.

The Brig at present remains a perfect wreck.

The following are the names of the unfortunate men who were swept overboard and drowned, viz. Wm. Perry, Dennis Stone, James Hamilton, John Paterson, and Thomas Baker.

Since writing the foregoing we made Cape Francois on the 18th of January bearing S. W. about 6 or 7 leagues dis-