

to his proper topic—we may add; that our African Squadron, and other efforts for repressing the slave trade, are here worse than useless; for just in proportion as slavery goes down in Brazil and Cuba, will the stimulus to slave-breeding be increased in Virginia.

What is to be done with the American negroes? This is, perhaps, a question of as great perplexity to the friends of the blacks as to their sternest taskmasters. Besides the actual slaves, the growing body of free coloured people is a source of extreme anxiety. At the beginning of the century their number in Virginia was only 10,000; it is now estimated at six times that amount. They are most numerous in Eastern Virginia; and as the whites in that region are diminishing, while the free blacks are increasing, it is not unnatural that the former should dread the influence of the latter upon the minds of the slaves. Attempts have accordingly been made to repress this increase, by discouraging the emancipation of the slaves, and forbidding such as are emancipated from remaining in the State without the special permission of the county-courts. But the agent most relied on has been the American Colonisation Society—that is, the scheme for conveying all free blacks who choose to the Liberian settlement in Africa,—a scheme proposed by President Jefferson at the close of last century, established in 1817, aided and countenanced by the legislature of Virginia, and recently supported by Messrs. Clay and Webster. The latter statesman, in March, 1850, explicitly said,—‘If Virginia and the South see fit to adopt any proposition to relieve themselves from the free people of colour among them, or such as may be made free, they have my full consent that the Government shall pay them any sum adequate to the purpose out of the proceeds of the sale of the territories ceded to the general Government.—and which has already produced 80,000,000 dollars.’ In session 1850 the legislature of Virginia passed a bill appropriating 50,000 dollars a-year for five years, to remove from that State, under the auspices of the Colonisation Society, each free person of colour who might be willing to emigrate to Africa; and imposing on those who remained a tax of a dollar a-head, to be added to the same fund. And in the present Congress (1851) Mr. Clay has proposed the establishment of a line of Government *emigration steamers* to the coast of Africa to promote the egress of free blacks.

We are happy in believing that the settlement of Liberia has already had some effect in repressing the slave traffic on the adjoining Coast of Africa, and promoting better industry there than that of kidnapping. But, as respects its main avowed purpose, this Colonisation Society has not as yet succeeded. The free coloured people in the States increase at present at the rate of
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