

deliverer? But was it enough to save his life alone? Must he live only to wade in the blood of his countrymen? of his father? I have not this ferocious courage. I could not save my friend, to render him more wretched than I have ever been. Behold him to whom I owe all! He, whose virtues have snatched the fatal sword which deceives your hopes. Fall at his feet. It is a negro, it is one of your countrymen, whose letters he would break. Punish me alone, I have betrayed you. Take my life; it is yours. But respect his father in him; as he respects you all in me!

Scarcely had I finished, when a confused murmur rose among them. They cried: 'Negro, thou hast lost us; but thou hast fulfilled thy duty.' All crowded round Ferdinand; each wished to speak to him; to touch the generous hand, which had deigned to soften the miseries of one of their countrymen. One of them cried: 'This, oh youth! this is the herb which would have delivered us!' and he threw it into the waves.

I flew to Urban. 'Remark these people, whom Europeans treat with disdain.'

This was a day of joy, if such there can be in slavery. Refreshments were distributed with abundance to the negroes. The sailors (one of the best, as well as the roughest classes of men) moved with the scene, mingled with the negroes, and passed the day in diversions with them.

The efforts, which Urban had made, to express his rapture on being so critically delivered, exhausted all his generosity. During some days, I perceived the eyes of his son pursuing him, and eloquently pointing out to him his duty: his frozen soul did not understand them. I made no complaint; and, proud to have shown in slavery all the energy of a free man, I left Urban to reconcile himself to the disgrace of continuing to hold me in bondage.

At length we saw land; and the next day we anchored in the port of Cape Francois, in the Island of St. Domingo. Ferdinand descended first from the ship; and I followed him. He hastened to embrace his mother; while Urban, more occupied with his commercial concerns, than conjugal tenderness, remained at the port, to superintend the debarking of his negroes. Every thing announced opulence in his house; but the worthy mother of Ferdinand was its most precious ornament. She was soon informed of my misfortunes: she deigned to honour them with tears; and I perceived that the detested the proceed-

ings of an husband, whom decency restrained her from condemning openly.

I do not dwell on the appearance, which every where presented itself to me, of wealth, pomp, and splendour; although a new spectacle to a negro, who scarcely suspects all the refinements of luxury, which the little sentiments of pride, and the inconstancy of civilized people have transformed into wants. What made the greatest impression on me, was, that noble familiarity between men—that flattering respect towards women—these multiplied shades of delicate attentions, which would be so delicious, if they took their rise from the heart, and which are so abundantly found among these people. But too soon I perceived all these charms were but a smiling mask—a beautiful veil—merely designed to conceal deformities. I observed, that the will of these colonists was rarely in unison with their actions; that their politeness, their friendship, even their love, formed rather a language of contention, than an expression of sentiment; that the man, whom they overwhelmed with esteem—the women whom they intoxicated with incense—were sacrificed without regret to the sallies of wit; and that, while they were jealous of affecting a sort of profound genius and reflection, they were ambitious of circulating an universal laugh. I saw, that pleasure was their sole business, and lassitude their faithful companion; that their desires proceeded rather from their will, than from their heart; and, in fine, that they were the idol of themselves.

Yet has prejudice raised a barren barrier between the Europeans of the islands and us, which all the amiableness of the French has not power to destroy. In every thing, which concerns a negro, gentleness, humanity, even decency disappears. This engaging Frenchman is suddenly metamorphosed into a tyger, who regards us with fierceness; invents new outrages to inflict upon us; and contemplates them with coolness. Love, if we may give that name to sensual emotions—even love cannot disarm them: and the female negro sometimes hears the orders for her tortures, from the lips which have just lavished tenderness upon her.

Nay, the European women of the colonies—women whose sensibility should constitute their glory, and who are convulsed at the little sufferings of a spaniel—these very women will look with cool attention, on the bloody sides of an unhappy negro. An equivocal jest spreads a mor-

\* One of my friends had been two days at Cape Francois, and already had the sufferings of the negroes strongly affected him. One morning he heard a noise in the street,