

can war, and the nonintercourse of the American shipping with the British West India Islands, the articles of flour, corn, staves, and other American produce, were carried there by American, and shipped in British bottoms to the British islands; consequently keeping in employ a vast number of small vessels.

I sailed some time during the nonintercourse, in one of the English schooners employed in this trade, and in one of my visits to the island, became acquainted with an old negro, who made a livelihood by selling oranges, tamarinds, ginger beer, and other refreshments to the crews of the vessels visiting the island.—I chanced one Sunday afternoon to be on shore, "on liberty," and meeting the old man, he invited me to his house. After giving me the best he could afford in the shape of a dinner, we took a walk along the sea shore, and as the old negro was well acquainted with almost every event of note that had occurred in the island for fifty years previous, I gleaned during our perambulation, several tales of his younger days, of which he had a large store; and although delivered in the vernacular idiom of the blacks, I have been enabled to state in English, the following, which is more intelligible than was the broken English of the old man.

In the year 1790, two slaves, NICOLA, and JOSEF, the former the property of a merchant, the latter owned by a planter, formed together the diabolical league of putting to death every white inhabitant in the town, sparing neither age nor sex. It was agreed between them that on the dawn of a certain day, they were to commence this "ruthless piece of butchery," and there is not the slightest doubt they would have fully accomplished their murderous intention, had they both commenced the work of slaughter. Providence, however, as is often seen, partly frustrated their designs, by causing the heart of one to relent—who, had he obeyed the dictates of his conscience, might have prevented the dreadful and heart-rending atrocities which followed. But it is as well I should describe the actors in this dreadful tragedy.

Nicola, an African, and a native of the Comorandel coast, was a tall raw-boned negro, standing about six feet two inches, with arms of extraordinary length, a large mouth displaying a strong set of teeth, rivalling the snow in whiteness, and agreeable to the customs of his native place filed so as to resemble those of a saw; a hooked nose, and a large round head covered with a thick crop of curly hair, predominant in men of his colour; in

temper he was excessively violent, and the only method of keeping him in subjection was by a frequent use of the lash, which it lay in the power of the slave's owner to inflict without mercy;—he was the son of a Chief of great power, and Nicola had been trepanned on board a slaver some fourteen years previous, and brought to "Statia" and sold. The sense of injury he received, rankled in his breast, and he only waited for a fit opportunity of satiating his revenge on the white man.

Josef was from the same part of Africa, and was originally sold in St. Kitts, but had changed owners, and his present master, a planter, had removed to Statia. He was not so tall as Nicola, but possessed a powerful frame with almost Herculean strength; was cunning and intelligent, otherwise the traits in his character were such as to recommend him to the favourable notice of his master. Still the idea of slavery, and the harsh treatment he was subjected to, through the cruelty of his master, served to render him callous to all feelings of humanity. It was accordingly agreed that Josef, whose master lived a few miles from town, was to rise at midnight, murder his master and family, and proceed to town to Nicola's abode, when they were to begin their revolting deeds. The evening previous to the morning on which they were to carry out this work of carnage, Josef was listening to a young relative of his master who was reading the commandments; and the words, "*thou shalt do no murder*," operated so strongly on his mind as to cause him to break faith with his accomplice. But although he did not participate in the murders committed by Nicola, still he would not betray him, and thereby prevent the horrid slaughter that ensued.

Nicola passed a sleepless night; the ideas of revenge so long predominant in his mind, and now about to be realized, caused the hours to pass tediously away. Daylight however, found him impatient for the arrival of Josef; his passions were wrought up to the highest pitch, and after waiting for some time, without any signs of his accomplice joining him, he began the revolting work alone. Having possessed himself of his master's broadsword, he broke into his bedroom and put to death his master, wife, and two lovely children, before they had time to give the slightest alarm. He next sallied into the street and cut down indiscriminately every white person he met; those of his own colour flying from him in every direction. It seemed as though he was possessed of supernatural powers, for no one dared oppose