

the subjects of the more Northern Colonies, while they yet remained under the dominion of his Majesty, prosecuted a very gainful trade to the coasts of Africa, no less for the supply of Negroes to the West-India Islands, than to supply the more Southern Colonies with that article of traffic. Add to all this, that under the protection of the same general Laws, these northern colonial traders supplied their own separate districts of country, with just as many Negroes as they could find a market for.

I have carefully run my eye over the earlier Laws of Antigua, Virginia, and New-York; and it is worth remarking, that there is no Law among any of these provincial codes, that is *creative* of any such state as that of Slavery. Many of their Laws, indeed, and particularly those which were nearly contemporary with the first organization of the respective governments, do recognize Negroes as Slaves. But then these same acts go no further than to regulate their pre-existing state of bondage. The reason is obvious. They considered, and rightly too, that this description of Men were already made Slaves by those acts of Parliament which made them emphatically articles of traffic. Consequently, they had nothing further to do, than barely to make the before mentioned regulating acts, and to adjust them to the then existing circumstances of the case.

THE same thing may be said of the more northern colonies: and particularly of Massachusetts, Rhode-Island, and Connecticut. I mention these three, because I am pretty well acquainted with their whole system of colonial jurisprudence. Their Laws also speak of Negroes as Slaves; but none of them are declaratory of a state of Slavery. The only Law of this Province, which so much as mentions a Negro, is intituled, "An act for the regulating Inn-holders, Tavern-keepers, and Re-

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