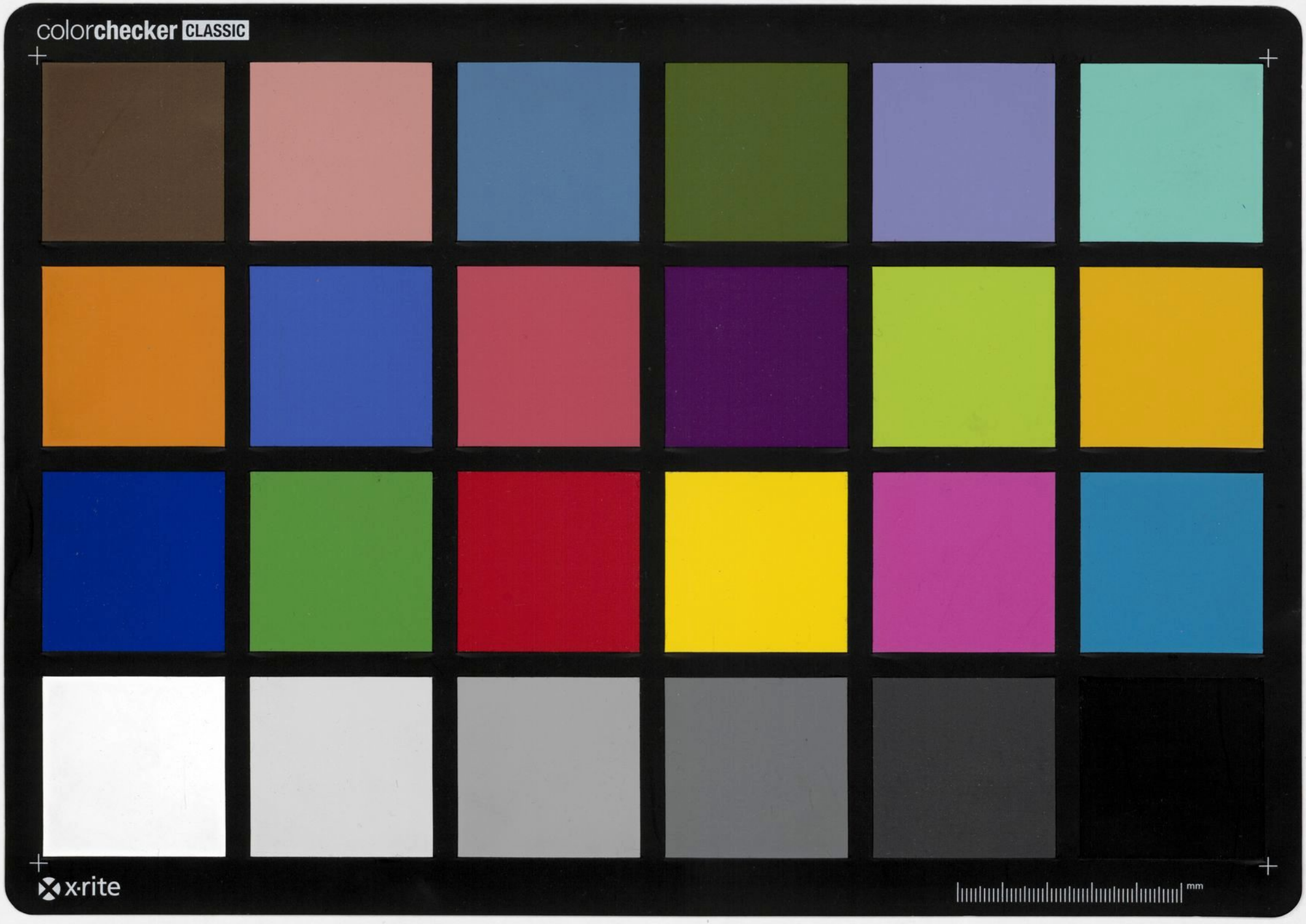
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mm

I wish not to interrupt order or make Tumults - you have had too many already I only come to give you Information on ye Subject &c -

I compile it gentlemen, for your Information. I shall take as little of your time as possible & shall therefore make the concisest account, taken in only the grand features & leaving out the minutia (I spent 3 years in the Court & giving information - I am capable of

1 If you vote it away in one Night - you have voted as much before - Clergy - Chase - &c -

2 If Individuals will suffer by ye Vote - but Individuals have suffered, Clergy &c, & must suffer in such a revolution

3 France will be made poorer by it but the riches of France, will increase from this moment (Clergy beneficiaries) in a Proportion never before known from the Wisdom of the National Assembly

Yes, worthy Men, and deserved ye Patriotic & Illustrious You have overcome the Prejudices of Ages in one Night - You have done by one Blow that wh. of left to the gradual Improvement of time might have taken 100 years more to have brought about - Suffer not then this last Evil to remain alone - let not the same Pen wh. marks ye History of the revolution to stain &c - and after all what are you doing - what is past - removing human misery - without any Loss but with a Prospect of great Advantage to the Nation -

Complication of Distress & Death
Heat, Stench
dead brought up
y. were well
at night
killed by Specu
lation
Refuse Pirate
have to die
leap overboard
vise

Observe – no Man can defend Slavery because it exists in Africa, for in Africa it is much lighter y. in y. Colonies

to take Notice of the Cruelties mentioned, saving of human life – tho they are so contradictory y. you cannot believe – Noises –

Decayes –

Separation of Families & consequent Misery

Leaps overboard, Speculation in Lives –

In this Acct. I have omitted to make mention of the Nefarious Conduct of the Whites, who have not a touch at Blood – 1. Carrying off free People
2 – Affair at Calabar

Going down in Health & brought up dead
Killed on Speculation

Not to forget to make good Use of American Example

Let not frightened for Bear
of Methodk

Sect 1.

I shall begin with the British Sl: Trade and Slavery because we have a more correct and settled account of them than of any other ones from an Inquiry instituted at the request of his British Majesty by his Privy Council & an Examination at the Bar of the House of Commons — The following is the substance of that report upon y^s Subject — I mean (setting aside the interested & lately only the disinterested accounts)

by y^s Report — Evidence at the Bar — Evidence to come

Some of the Slaves sold to the Europeans for Exportation are such as have been born Slaves and whose Fathers before y^m have been in that Condition. These appear to be sold in some Places at the Will of y^s Masters, and in others, for real or imputed Crimes. There is one Circumstance however, in the Case of these, which is but little known. a Slave in Africa is in general seldom or ever beaten; he is more on an Equality with his Master, eats with him & talks freely with him — a moderate Portion of Labour is all y^t they are to do — absolutely change y^r Condition to the Slavery — Inquirer — Men that which they left behind them inhuman — Many of the Exported Slaves have been so in Africa — You are ∴ by such Exportation changing only their Place of Abode and not their Condition — wh is ∴ false.

and first it will necessary to begin at the Root, viz, the mode of procuring Slaves — divided it in 3 kinds — made of Selling Slaves — Children, taken — Selling — gotten on the Voyage — Selling Children after the Voyage in the Colonies

A Second Order of Exported Slaves consist of such as have been reduced into that Situation in Consequence of Debts — These

Debts have been either contracted by themselves or ye. Relations, and so exceedingly have the Code of Law been stretched for the furtherance of the Slave Trade, ye. an whole family has been sold for because one of them has not been able to discharge a Debt, contracted by himself alone, at an appointed Time.

A third Class consist of such as have been sentenced to Servitude in Consequence of Real or imputed Crimes. Herein it is impossible not to remark that the same Spirit of avarice, which dictated to the Princes of Africa to make ye. Codes of Law subservient to the Slave Trade, as we have seen in the Case of Debt, has dictated to them also, to make ye. Subservient in the Case of Crimes. If a Man steals but an Ear of Corn (says even one of the interested Evidence) he is sold for a Slave; and by others it appears that Crimes have ye. Divisions — for if one Man commit a Crime in a larger Extent ye. another, his whole family, though entirely innocent, are led with him into Slavery.

A fourth Class consists of such as have become Slaves in Consequence of having been taken in War. The Wars, in the Prosecution of which they were taken are stated to be of two Kinds. The first

arising from common Causes, such as Ambition, Avarice, Insult or Injury, the latter as ~~made~~ undertaken entirely without any Injury for the purpose of procuring Slaves — The Whole Order, however, is acknowledged to be inconsiderable.

A fifth order consists of such as are reduced to Slavery by Violence or Surprise. This Mode may be called Pillage. It is distinguishable into three Kinds, viz, Pillage by the Kings, Pillage by Banditti, or Individuals in Parties who adopt it as a Trade, and Pillage by Individuals as occasion offers. To put this into Execution the Villagers attack the roads ~~or here~~ at the springs of Water by night, private Ambuscades — Thus waylaid & entrapped many are carried off, while the weak are seized upon when a superior Force meets them and other circumstances offer.

The sixth and last order, into which the Exported Slaves are divisible, are such as are made so by Treachery, in which Term is to be ~~considered~~ implied Confidence on the one and ~~on the one~~ ~~of Safety with~~ a Prospect of ~~Advantage~~, and a Violation of it on the other. In Consequence of ye. many have been enticed away under various Pretexts of advantage and have been sold into European Slavery.

These are the various Methods of procuring Slaves for the Culture of the European Colonies, in Consequence of which about 80,000 (by my same report) are annually Shipped, many of whom are brought by Computation 1200 Miles from inland.

It would be a Matter perhaps by no Means sufficiently important in ~~Chief to~~ state in this Place the Mode of Sale, the Medium of Exchange, the Price, the different Articles of Goods, the Trade & Brokerage ~~Favors~~ to the Disposal of them on board the European Ship: ~~Whereas~~ It is the leading feature only that the Time will permit me to enumerate, and I shall therefore ~~follow~~ suppose them immediately ~~according to the same report~~ on board ye. Ships.

But ~~and been~~ ~~shall~~ ~~omit~~ ~~leading~~ feature, the Nature & Time of Meals of Exercise, Time up and below — & other Minutiae as before

The first ~~great~~ ~~that~~ ~~that~~ We are taught to contemplate with Horror will be found in those Caverns which are allotted to them as Apartments in their respective Vessels. The Enemies, however to the Cause of Liberty ~~deny that~~ ~~with~~ ~~an~~ common Effrontery that ~~such~~ any Evil existed in the Department of which I intend to speak, and absolutely dwelt at the Bar of the House of Commons on the Pleasures & Comforts of a Negro Voyage.

Consult P. 4 —

& I will ∴ hasten to view ye. after they have been ye. taken in ye. Let Us therefore go to them on the Voyage

Their own Statements however as afterwards delivered in (and such will always be the Case where People come with an Intention to misrepresent) ~~completely refuted~~ became the Means of refuting them for it clearly appeared from thence that no one of the unfortunate Beings in those Apartments had not the Power for want of Room, independently of his Chains, to turn himself, which Rows of human Bodies, ~~piled~~ stowed in the same manner were piled ~~upon~~ over his Head, at such a Distance as not to suffer him frequently to sit up in an erect Posture.

It would not be difficult from such a Statement ~~either~~ to imagine that the Situation of these Unfortunate People must be beyond the Bounds of ordinary misery in itself ~~or attended with more than ordinary Consequences~~. Accordingly we find from the disinterested Evidence of Mr. Rippon that the Misery which they endure there in Consequence of that Stench & other Causes is such as no Pen can adequately describe, that there is that in the Night yelling for Air & Water, that some of the unfortunate People, when brought upon Deck in the Morning, fainted away: that others are brought up dead, who went below in perfect Health but the Night before, & were consequently suffocated: ~~and that these~~ Concerning my Lords to ponder the Situation of a dead Man chained to a living one. What the living one must have

509
482
127.

suffered also – What his unhappy situation not being able to come to the Chance of catching air in the light of day because he cannot drag the weight – The
sed to lie on the dead Corse – in an body of filth & in ye Lowness of Disease
the different Miseries described in the voyage is not heightened – It is known to be far the greater Portion of Vessels in the Trade, and it must unavoidably be known to all, if they should meet with a two days Rain in a Passage which is liable to it. So little my Lords is the Picture heightened, that ~~which~~ a worthy Member of the British Senate an Advocate for Truth, a Supporter of Liberty & Religion, after he had taken a Cursory View of the privy Council report & the Evidence thereon, could not help exclaiming in ye House, ye. It was impossible so much Misery could be ~~condensed~~ condensed in so small a Space as in the Hold of a Vessel –

This Observation of his was well made, for undoubtedly he did not forget to add to bodily Suffering, the Sufferings of the mind – Undoubtedly he could not forget to think that they must be additionally tormented with the Thought of having been torn from ye Country and Friends, as well as reflect that if the Means of conveying ye away was so horrid the End for wch they were so taken must be diabolical indeed.

Whether these were additionally their Reasons or not, the Consequences produced are exactly as if they had flowed from a Reasoning of this Kind: for it is stated in the Report that some of them have ~~left~~ ~~left~~ leapt overboard in the Rivers while the Vessels were lying in the Rivers though they knew that they were leaping only into the Mouths of Sharks, and others actually at Sea where there was no Prospect but that of Death, a sure and incontrovertible Mark of the Terror wh they entertained of ye Situation and of their Abhorrence of ye Transporter.

This is one of the Effects ~~of th~~ of the Causes mentioned. The Report however mentions others for it appears from thence that, perhaps unable to accomplish ye Purpose of their manner now described, find an Opportunity of Purchasing the use upon their Oppressors, ~~with the~~ though no other Prospect presents itself than that of being slaughtered on the Spot wh accordingly happens: while others, hindered by chains from accomplishing either the one or the other, determine to starve themselves to Death, and notwithstanding the Threats and Torments used upon them, they refuse Sustenance, and find at length that Death, which they had so anxiously sought for as the final Period of ye Woes —

mad —

I should have closed my Account here of the Horrors of this dreadful ~~Lade~~ Passage, but that I feel it due to myself & to all Writers upon this Subject to mention a particular Instance. We, of all others, labour under heavy Disadvantages. We relate, and we know upon the best Evidence that we are absolutely relating, but the Common Occurrences of this Trade. But these Occurrences are so tragical that many disbelieve ~~us~~ It is peculiarly hard upon us, y^t the common Occurrences of this Trade should be so tragical, that in relating them simply as they are, we should be thought to have exceeded the Truth, and to have painted Scenes y^t could have had no other Foundation than in a Brain of a deranged Person, yet such is actually the Case; and I shall therefore state that an English Captain in the year 1783, Commander of a Vessel called the Zong, did absolutely throw overboard 132 Slaves on Speculation, and for the Purpose of defrauding the Underwriters. I select this Instance particularly, because it was made ~~appear~~ proved and now lies recorded in the Ad-

x If another Consequence may be drawn, which will at once prove ~~them of~~ Humanity & Situation in y^t Passage, it must be the Case de ration of the Number lost in it by actual Death. But here the Opponents unite all y^r Efforts — they gave in particular Ships selected, where little or no Mortality had happened, but they were as unsuccessful as before, for in referring to the Estimate of them in the same Report and even admitting y^t Selected Ships, and compounding the whole, it appears, y^t 17 are lost out of every hundred. ~~[illegible]~~ ~~my Lords in my~~ (c)

my Lords in 4 Weeks 13,660 out of 80000 – this my Lords is evidently murder – if the total Wrong were to die in the Proportion 7 or 8 Years it would extinguish the Whole – but even this is too small – Life is 1/5 in real worth

Court.

ness of a Publick Court. It is an Instance, which does not depend upon the Word of an Individual. It is a Fact substantiated and which no Slave Merchant can deny: But if this my Lords were actually true, you will very easily believe that I have not exaggerated yet, and that it would be difficult for me or any other Person to exaggerate in future upon this Subject

Consult. margin P. 8

Let us now view y^e in the Colonies –

But here a prodigious Field would open from the Evidence before mentioned. I might entry into a Detail of the cruel Process in making up the sickly for Sale – of the different and inhuman modes of Sale – of the Separation of Relations forever at the Will of the Purchaser – of the Number that die in the Seasoning – of the Food, Cloathing and extraordinary Labour of those who survive, but, in order to be short I shall mention them only as they strike me in three general Situations.

and, first it appears, that the unhappy People are considered bona Fide in absolute Property no other Right than as Beasts of Labour, for it not only appears that they are disciplined or regimented in ye Manner, but that their Children like the Progeny of Cattle inherit ye paternal Lot – Thus are they doomed, whole Generations of them to pass their Life in Slavery like Cattle and to pass away unnoticed and without a Trace that such Beings have

and when the Planters, having lately attempted to meliorate (w^h in my Opinion does as they do is no Melioration at all) ye Condition of their Slaves they have, in introducing a new Law ~~recapitu~~ prefaced it by such a Recapitulation of the old, as to have stated to the Publick, the most execrable Crimes and to have shewn that every Enormity, against which we have been for years so loudly complaining & they so loudly denying, was absolutely authorised by the Colonial Code.

con existed, unlesp some Friendly Pen had declared yt. So many had lived and died —

It appears secondly, yt. the unhappy being are without any kind Protection being wholly at the arbitrary Discretion of ye Master. They are beaten, whipped, and lacerated on the most trivial Occasions and solely at his will, and to such a Pitch has Despotism arrived from its own Original Inclination & Power and Custom, that it difficult to see any of the field Slaves in the British Colonies without Marks of Violence on his Person. I repeat again yt. in this respect they are even turned off without Old, & the Law is silent. They are wholly at the Will of ye Master. The Reports of Governors as well as of Individuals declare it — If they are beaten, how ever undeservedly there is no Individual to whom they can complain with Effect, for the Law absolutely provides no Redress for Grievances of this Kind —

The third Circumstance, wh. holds them up to us in the same conspicuous Light, is that the Law not only does not favour them in such Cases, but is absolutely against them. If one of them, flies from the rod of Despotism & is absent for six Months it is Death — if one refuses the Victim to lend his Hand when unmercifully punished, his Hand is to be cut off — and if his Master kills him out of wilfulness & Bloody Mindedness (ay yt. is the Expression) it be his first fault he escapes by the Payment only of a fine. This my Lords I repeat is true — The bloody Codes have been produced to the publick,

It wd. have been impossible for your Lordships to have perused these Laws to have remarked yt. Inconsistency as well as wile yt. Brutality — The unhappy Slave is considered as a Brute — he is branded as such — he is dieted at such — he is whipped to his Work — his Child is in ye same Situation — and yet the very Person is considered as a Man — he is considered as having intellect, and understanding, or why punish & mutilate him in yt. manner or tell him of Laws of Terror — we do not fend our Horses with ye Ears slit, yt. Teeth beaten out, yt. Back chequered — we do not cut off an Horses Leg if he kicks — we do not hang him if he breaks Loose & does not return for a Month or six Months — here then is an Inconsistency — if they are absolutely Cattle any Punishment ought not to exist — and if they are Men they ought not to be sold and subjected to the Laws & Limitations of

Cattle to a State of Slavery. It is an Inconsistency which Nothing can reconcile - and which Nothing, but so unnatural a State as that of Slavery could have produced -

1 This is a concise account, as collected from the authority above mentioned, and is sufficient to give your Lordships an Idea of the Principle features of the Trade of Slavery but as many interested Persons throw out Arguments in defence of the System, to which the same authority furnishes a Complete Answer I cannot be so unjust to the Cause as to close my Letter without laying ye. before you and 1. as to the defenders of ye. Sl. Trade. 2 the Defenders of Slavery.

The defenders of the Trade, make up of the following argument. The Slave Trade is so far from being an Evil ~~as~~ productive of Evil as to have Humanity for its Basis. ~~The~~ Prisoners of war ~~who would otherwise~~ be put ~~to Death~~ would undoubtedly be put to Death if there were no Purchasers for them: of Course all that we buy we have the merit of having saved from Death -

Plausible the Trade is a very humane Trade, in as much as human Life is preserved.

Not to mention, that very few of the Slaves that are sold to the ~~Europeans~~ are Prisoners of war, ~~and~~, that some of the Wars, in which they were taken, were ~~unjust~~ unjust inasmuch as they were made for the ~~Express~~ Purpose of getting Slaves, I shall refer to the Privy Council's Report. It is there stated, that ~~so~~ any ~~Slaves are~~ Prisoners of war have ~~brought from the inland Country~~ to the Sea Shore at a Time

not to mention ye. that humane People who boast ye. merit of saving from ~~without any~~ Death, absolutely refuse to purchase such as are sold, though such Refusal according to ye. Calculation will insure ye. Death

Then the People suppose (1c) When
when, there were no Vessels on the Coast and
of Course no Purchasers to be found: but
~~are these murdered? The report says~~ positi-
~~tively no~~: and y^t they were universally
disposed of in two ways, that is, they
were either marched off to other Markets
or incorporated amongst the ~~retained as~~ Domestics of the Victors,
and from the same report it appears
that when the humane English Slave Merchants
have refused to purchase some that
were sickly, the Sellers were so far
from putting them to death, as to have sold
them, and to be in the Practice of selling
them to the Dutch at a cheaper Rate

The Defenders of Slavery
in their Town make use of the follow
ing Argument. The Colonial Slavery
is neither inhuman nor unjust any more
than the Trade. Many of the exported Slaves
have been Slaves in Africa. Vide &c

Observations

I ask ye Slave Merchant by what Law he receives ye African on ye Coast & first hands him into Oppression — or rather why he receives those Slaves, who have been so from ye Birth —

He can only say, because he has been a Slave by Birth. But the National Assembly say. (Art. 1) ye all Men are born equal — the Question is do they say wt is right? Undubitably — there never was an Article clearer, more consistent with nature, justice, Science, more true in short than that — and they make no Exception — they say all Men — they do not except the Negroe. They knew they could not — prick the Negroe and he will bleed — wile not you do the same? Punish him Vaccinate him he will feel it & express his Pain — wile not you also? — Try his Faculties, and you will find them human — are yours more — With respect to the order alluded to, the subject of those who declare that all Mankind are born free & equal in their Rights —, are consigning People to Slavery, because they are born Slaves —

With respect to the Slaves in the Colonies, they are French subjects and they form one of the Ranks of Society there and help to form one of the Distinctions of order — But say the National Assembly, "the Distinctions of Society can have no other Basis than that of Common Utility."

No man can deny yr Sub jects

But is it for the general Good that this Order should exist — If to encourage Depravity, if to generate Cruelty & oppression on one Hand and rob the Soul of all its Qualities on the other, if to ~~promote~~ oppose the system of Morals, if these be for the publick Good, then this Distinction is well founded —

But if it be for the general Good, that Slavery should exist as an Order it would be for the general Good, that the different Artizans & Peasants of France should be Slaves also —

But this is not the Case — Nor is it for the general Good that a Slavery should exist as an Order in the Colonies. It is on the Other Hand a general Evil — it is an Evil — because free Men could perform the Task — because less free Men could perform more in the same — because this additional Produce w.d add a Dechmaty to the Revenue — encrease the Number of Ships — put new Land in Cultivation — and all this without a Sigh or a Groan —

By Art. 3 it is said, that the Object of every political Association is the Preservation of the Natural & imprescriptible Rights of Men (Art. 2) the Object of creating or falling into these different Ranks is so — but is the Liberty of the Negroes preserved — is ye Property secure or rather are they not Property themselves — Is their Resistance to oppression encouraged & sanctioned — then the Object of such a Distinction among the Ranks is abused, and the Planters are right or the National Assembly are wrong

But say the ~~Slave~~ ~~Merchants~~ Planters to the National Assembly "You, the Declaimers of Liberty, should consider us — you say ye the Negroe should have Liberty to follow his own Pursuits — ~~today~~ Can You then deny us the Liberty of following ours also. is this Compatable with the Natural Rights of Men — Yes, says, ye National Assembly (Art 4) We have a Right to hinder You! Liberty consists in the Power of doing What wt is not hurtful to another, and so long as You ~~that~~ doe not the Law cannot interfere but as You interfere with ye Happiness of Thousands You hinder others in ye Enjoyment of ye same Rights they have a Right to intercept Your Pursuits and make a Law (by the whole Representatives concur Art: 6

For Art. 5. the Law cannot prohibit any Actions but those which are hurtful to Society