ST. DOMINGO:

ITS

Revolutions and its Patriots.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE METROPOLITAN ATHENÆUM,
LONDON, MAY 16, AND AT ST. THOMAS' CHURCH,
PHILADELPHIA, DECEMBER 20, 1854.

BY

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LECTURE.

'Hereditary bondsmen! know ye not
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?"
CHILDE HAROLD.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

THE Island of St. Domingo is situated at the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico, is one of the four Antilles, and holds the second rank after Cuba, from which it is distant only about twenty leagues. When the island was discovered by Columbus, in 1492, it was thought to have had a population of a million of people of the Caribbean race; a people of a dark brown complexion, short and small in stature, and exceedingly simple in their domestic habits, and who were but little removed from barbarism. The Caribbeans were under the dominion of four or five petty kings or chiefs, to whom they were very obedient. They acknowledged a Supreme Power, the Author of all things, and entertained a dim idea of a future state, involving rewards and punishments correspondent to their low moral condition and gross conceptions. As might have been anticipated, the natives were much alarmed at the arrival of the Spaniards, and withdrew into the interior. However, by the superior judgment of Columbus, they were gradually won back, and rendered the illustrious strangers all the assistance they could. After the return of Columbus to Spain,

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Dovadillo, his successor, began a system of unmitigated oppression towards the Caribbeans, and eventually reduced the whole of the inhabitants to slavery ; and thus commenced that hateful sin in the New World. As fresh adventurers arrived in the island, the Spanish power became more consolidated and more oppressive. The natives were made to toil in the gold mines without compensation, and in many instances without any regard whatever to the preservation of human life ; so much so, that in 1507 the number of natives had, by hunger, toil, and the sword, been reduced from a million to sixty thousand. Thus, in the short space of *fifteen years*, more than *nine hundred thousand* persons perished under the iron hand of slavery in the island of St. Domingo.

The most important town built by the Spaniards was Santo Domingo, situated on the south side of the island. The island was too valuable not to attract other adventurers, and, in a short period after its discovery, the French planted a colony on the north-west side of the island, which in a few years surpassed the Spanish portion in the elements of social well-being, and in commerce and agriculture.

St. Domingo suffered much from the loss of its original inhabitants ; and the want of laborers to till the soil and to work in the mines first suggested the idea of importing slaves from the coast of Africa. The slave-trade was soon commenced and carried on with great rapidity. Before the Africans were shipped, the name of the owner and the plantation on which they were to toil was stamped on their shoulders with a burning-iron. For a number of years St. Domingo opened its markets annually to more than 20,000 newly-imported slaves. With the advance of commerce and agriculture, opulence spread in

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all parts of the island, and poured untold treasures into France and Spain. In a similar proportion the population increased, so that, at the beginning of the French Revolution, in 1789, there were 900,000 souls on the island. Of these, 700,000 were Africans, 60,000 men of mixed blood, and the remainder were whites and Caribbeans.

As in all countries where involuntary servitude exists, morality was at a low stand. Owing to the amalgamation of whites with blacks, there arose a class known as mulattoes and quadroons. This class, though allied to the whites by the tenderest ties of nature, were their most bitter enemies. Although emancipated by law from the dominion of individuals, the mulattoes had no rights; shut out from society by their color, deprived of religious and political privileges, they felt their degradation even more keenly than the bond slaves. The mulatto son was not allowed to dine at his father's table, kneel with him in his devotions, bear his name, inherit his property, nor even to lie in his father's graveyard. Laboring as they were under the sense of their personal social wrongs, the mulattoes tolerated, if they did not encourage, low and vindictive passions. They were haughty and disdainful to the blacks, whom they scorned, and jealous and turbulent to the whites, whom they hated and feared.

Many of the mulattoes having received their education in Paris, where prejudice against color was unknown, experienced great dissatisfaction at their proscription on their return to St. Domingo. White enough to make them hopeful and aspiring, many of them possessed wealth enough to make them influential. Aware by their education of the principles of freedom that were

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being advocated in Europe and the United States, they were also ever on the watch to seize opportunities to better their social and political condition. In the French part of the island alone, 20,000 whites lived in the midst of 30,000 free mulattoes and 500,000 slaves. In the Spanish portion the odds were still greater in favor of the slaves. Thus the advantage of numbers and physical strength was on the side of the oppressed. Right is the most dangerous of weapons, — woe to him who leaves it to his enemies!

In England, Wilberforce, Sharpe, and Clarkson were using their great talents to abolish the African slave-trade, and to emancipate the slaves in the English colonies. The principles which they advocated were taken up by the friends of the blacks in Paris, and a society was formed, with Gregoire, Raynal, Barnave, Brissot, Condorcet, and Lafayette at its head. The English philanthropists issued their publications in London; they found their way to Paris, and thence to St. Domingo. These made the blacks aware of their rights, as well as of their strength. The island had already assumed the name of *Hayti*. The French nation, after suffering for centuries under the misrule of its profligate princes, arose *en masse* to throw off their yoke, and the news of the oath of the Tennis Court and the taking of the Bastile was received with the wildest enthusiasm by the mulattoes in Hayti. The announcement of these events was hailed with delight by both the white planters and the mulattoes; the former, because they thought that they saw in the dim distance the independence of the colony; the latter, because they viewed it as a movement that would secure to them equal rights with the

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whites. And even the slaves regarded it as a precursor to their own emancipation.

However, the general excitement which the revolution in Paris created amongst the mulattoes soon satisfied the planters that they could not retain their power without the aid of France. The mulattoes immediately despatched a deputation to Paris, to urge upon the Constituent Assembly their claims to equal rights with the whites. The whites sent a deputation to oppose the mulattoes. Both parties were well received at Paris, but the men of color were objects of special favor. Oge, one of the mulatto deputies, became known to Brissot, Barnave, Raynal, and Gregoire, and was allowed to appear in the Assembly, where he laid the wrongs of his race before that august body. In urging his claims, he said, if equality was withheld from the mulattoes, they would appeal to force. This was ably seconded in an eloquent speech by the noble-hearted and philanthropic Barnave, who exclaimed at the top of his voice, so as to be heard at the remotest part of the Assembly, "*Perish the colonies, rather than a principle!*" Noble language this! Would that the fathers of the American Revolution had been as consistent! The Assembly passed a decree giving the mulattoes equal rights with the whites, and Oge was made bearer of the news to his brethren. As might have been expected, this news created a great sensation amongst the planters in Hayti, who, as soon as the intelligence reached them, resolved that the decree should not be carried into effect. A portion of the mulattoes determined that the decree should be enforced, and assembled in arms, with Oge as their leader. This chief addressed the following letter to the Colonial Assembly:

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"Sirs: A prejudice, for a long time upheld, is at last about to fall. Charged with a commission honorable to myself, I call upon you to proclaim throughout the colony the decree of the National Assembly, of the 28th of March, which gives, without distinction, to every *free* citizen the right of being admitted to all duties and functions whatever. My pretensions are just, and I do hope you will regard them. *I shall not have recourse to any raising of the slave gangs.* It is unnecessary, and would be unworthy of me. I wish you to appreciate duly the purity of my intentions. When I solicited of the National Assembly the decree I obtained in favor of our American colonists, known under the hitherto injurious distinction of the mixed race, *I never comprehended in my claims the negroes in a state of slavery.* You, and our adversaries, have mixed this with my proceedings, to destroy my estimation in the minds of all well-disposed people; but I have demanded only concessions for a class of *free men*, who have endured the yoke of your oppression for two centuries. We have *no wish* but for the execution of the decree of the 28th March. We insist on its promulgation; and we cease not to repeat to our friends, that our adversaries are not merely unjust to us, but to themselves, for they do not seem to know *that their interests are one with ours.* Before employing the means at my command, I will see what good temper will do; but if, contrary to my object, you refuse what is asked, I will not answer for those disorders which may arise from merited revenge."

The shout of battle was the only answer returned to this letter. The free blacks were defeated, and their brave leader, being taken prisoner, was, with a barbarity equalled only by its folly, broken alive on the wheel.

The revolt was suppressed for the moment, but the blood of Oge and his companions bubbled silently in the hearts of the negro race; they swore to avenge them. The mulattoes, many of whom held slaves themselves, and, therefore, were opposed to their liberation, now saw that nothing short of a general emancipation of the slaves would secure for them their rights, and they began to make common cause with them, with the hope of extorting from the planters an acknowledgment of their equality. The habits of the mulattoes,

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their intelligence, energy, and boldness, naturally pointed them out as the leaders of the slaves. They fraternized with them; they became popular from the very tinge of their skin, for which they had recently blushed when in company with the whites. The mulattoes secretly fomented the germs of insurrection at the nightly meetings of the slaves. They also kept up a clandestine correspondence with the friends of the blacks at Paris. The planters trembled, and terror urged them to violence. The blood of Oge and his accomplices had sown everywhere despair and conspiracy.

The news of the insurrection and the death of Oge reached even the halls of the National Assembly in Paris, and gave rise to various opinions. Some sided with the blacks, others with the planters. Gregoire ably defended the course which the colored men had pursued; and said, "If liberty be right in France, it is right in Hayti; if our cause be a good one, so is the cause of the oppressed in St. Domingo." He well knew that the crime for which Oge and his friends had suffered in Hayti, had constituted the glory of Mirabeau and Lafayette at Paris.

While the National Assembly at Paris was discussing the merits of the outbreak in the colony, the Colonial Assembly, which was in session at St. Marc, took the title of General Assembly, and declared that they would never share their rights with the mulattoes. Moreover, the Colonial Assembly threw off their allegiance to the mother country, and declared themselves the sole legitimate representatives of St. Domingo, and dismissed the governor-general, whose power emanated from France alone. When this news reached Paris, the National Assembly proclaimed the doings of the Colonial Assembly

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null and void, and ordered a new election to be held in Hayti, and sent out troops to enforce their decrees. This intelligence was received with joy by the mulattoes, for they now saw that the authorities in the mother country, and the planters, were at war with each other, and that they would profit by the quarrel.

The planters repelled with force the troops sent out by France; denying its prerogatives, and refusing the civic oath. In the midst of these thickening troubles, the planters who resided in France were invited to return, and to assist in vindicating the civil independence of the island. Then was it that the mulattoes earnestly appealed to the slaves, and the result was appalling. The slaves awoke as from an ominous dream, and demanded their rights with sword in hand. Gaining immediate success, and finding that their liberty would not be granted by the planters, they rapidly increased in numbers; and, in less than a week from its commencement, the storm had swept over the whole plain of the north, from east to west, and from the mountains to the sea. The splendid villas and rich factories yielded to the fury of the devouring flames; so that the mountains, covered with smoke and burning cinders borne upwards by the wind, looked like volcanoes; and the atmosphere, as if on fire, resembled a furnace.

Such were the outraged feelings of a people whose ancestors had been ruthlessly torn from their native land, and sold in the shambles of St. Domingo. During these excesses, a new General Assembly, composed entirely of planters and their immediate friends, opened its sessions, under the title of the "New Colonial Assembly;" and its first step was an act of rebellion. Refusing to apply to France for aid, and having taken measures of

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defence, it sought protection from England. But without waiting to hear from the English government, the Colonial Assembly laid aside their own uniform, put on the round English hat, and substituted the black cockade for the French national flag. The men of color placed themselves under the standard of royalty; they gave themselves the name of the "King's Own," and their chief assumed the title of "High Admiral of the French Army." By this movement the blacks became the government troops, and the planters the insurgents. Although the men of color were now the acknowledged soldiers of France, as yet they had no leaders of any note, and were scarcely more than an armed banditti. Jean Francois, an emancipated mulatto, intellectual, but possessing little courage, was its chief. Without either regular arms or uniform, the blacks attired themselves in the spoils taken in their engagements, and were mounted on old, broken-down horses and mules. The infantry, many of them, made a still more ridiculous appearance. The commanding chief was decorated with ribbons, orders, and medals which had been worn in former days by the whites, and announced himself as "a Chevalier of the Order of St. Louis, and Great Grand High-Admiral and Generalissimo of the French Army."

Like white men, the blacks no sooner met with success than they disagreed amongst themselves, and Bissou, an inferior general, drew off his forces, and assumed the title of "Viceroy of the Conquered Territories."

For the purpose of striking terror into the minds of the blacks, and to convince them that they should never have their freedom, the French planters were murdering them on every hand by thousands. In a single day, at the Cape, more than five hundred faithful servants, who had

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not taken up arms against their masters, but who refused to fight for them, were put to death. This example set by the whites taught the men of color that the struggle was for liberty or death. Crime was repaid with crime, and vengeance followed vengeance. The educated, refined, and civilized whites degraded themselves even more than the barbarous and ignorant slaves.

While matters were thus transpiring in Hayti, the people in France were scarcely less agitated with dissensions at home. Louis XVI., in his attempt to escape from his own dominions, had been arrested and taken back to his capital, there to be insulted and humiliated by his subjects. Although the mother country had enough to do at home, she resolved to send three commissioners to St. Domingo on a mission of peace. On their arrival in the island, these men did but little more than fan the flame which had already been kindled.

The struggle in St. Domingo was watched with intense interest by the friends of the blacks, both in Paris and in London, and all appeared to look with hope to the rising up of a black chief, who should prove himself adequate to the emergency. Nor did they look in vain. In the midst of the disorders that threatened on all sides, the negro chief made his appearance in the form of an old slave named Toussaint. This man was the grandson of the king of Arradas, one of the most wealthy, powerful, and influential monarchs on the west coast of Africa. Toussaint was a man of prepossessing appearance, of middle stature, and possessed an iron frame. His dignified, calm, and unaffected features, and broad and well-developed forehead, would cause him to be selected, in any company of men, as one who was born for a leader. By his energy and perseverance he had learned to read

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and write, and had carefully studied the works of Raynal, and a few others who had written in behalf of human freedom. This class of literature, no doubt, had great influence over the mind of Toussaint, and did much to give him the power that he afterwards exercised in the island. His private virtues were many, and he had a deep and pervading sense of religion, and, in the camp, carried it even as far as Oliver Cromwell. It might be said that an inward and prophetic genius revealed to him the omnipotence of a firm and unwearied adherence to a principle. He was not only loved by his fellow-slaves, but the planters held him in high consideration.

When called into the camp, Toussaint was fifty years of age. One of his great characteristics was his humanity. Before taking any part in the revolution, he aided his master's family to escape from the impending danger. After seeing his master's household beyond the reach of the revolutionary movement, he entered the army as an inferior officer; but was soon made aide-de-camp to General Bissou. Disorder and bloodshed reigned triumphant throughout the island, and every day brought fresh intelligence of depredations committed by whites, mulattoes, and blacks. Such was the condition of affairs when a decree was passed by the Colonial Assembly, giving equal rights to the mulattoes, and asking their aid in restoring order, and reducing the slaves again to their chains. Overcome by this decree, and having gained all they wished, the mulattoes joined the planters in a murderous crusade against the blacks, who were the slaves. The union of the whites and mulattoes made an army too strong and powerful for the slaves, and the latter were defeated in several pitched battles. But the blacks were fighting for personal liberty, and therefore

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were not to be easily conquered. The never-to-be-forgiven course of the mulattoes in fraternizing with the whites to prevent the slaves getting their liberty, created an ill feeling between these two proscribed classes, which a half a century has not been able to efface.

While the people of St. Domingo were thus pitted against each other, the revolution in France was making sad havoc. Robespierre and Danton ruled in Paris; the Swiss Guard had been massacred; the royalists and nobility had fled, and the guillotine had once more fallen; and the head of Louis XVI. had rolled into the basket. At the news of the king's death, the slaves in Hayti gave up all hope and thought of peace and freedom under the French, renounced the revolutionary movements in Paris, and passed over into the service of the king of Spain. Toussaint was appointed brigadier-general in the Spanish army, and soon appeared in the field as a most powerful and determined foe to the French planters.

While the blacks were becoming formidable under the protection of Spain, the mulattoes were gaining strength and influence under the French. Affairs had scarcely assumed this shape in Hayti, when General Galbeaud was sent out from France to take command of the army in St. Domingo. The commissioners in the island refused to give up their authority, and a civil war commenced between the new general and the commissioners. The Haytian national guard and volunteers joined the general, while the troops of the line and the mulattoes took sides with the commissioners. A fierce and sanguinary struggle followed, in which both parties showed that they thought they were in the right, and which was attended with the most fatal results. The commissioners, seeing defeat at hand, let loose fifteen hundred slaves, and a

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large number of outlaws, who were confined in the prisons, and declared them free if they would fight in their behalf. Slaves, who had been many months in the mountains, where they had been committing the most unlawful depredations, were also invited by the commissioners to join their standard. The two armies met; a battle was fought in the streets, and many thousands were slain on both sides; the French general, however, was defeated, and, in company with several hundreds of refugees, set sail for France. During the conflict the city was set on fire, and on every side presented shocking evidence of slaughter, conflagration, and pillage. The strifes of political and religious partisanship, which had raged in the clubs and streets of Paris, and had caused the guillotine to send its two hundred souls every day for many weeks, unprepared, to eternity, were transplanted to St. Domingo, where they raged with all the heat of a tropical clime, and the animosities of a civil war. Truly did the flames of the French Revolution at Paris, and the ignorance and self-will of the planters, set the island of St. Domingo on fire. The commissioners with their retinue retired from the burning city into the neighboring highlands, where a camp was formed to protect the ruined town from the opposing party. Having no confidence in the planters, and fearing a reaction, the commissioners proclaimed a general emancipation to the slave population, and invited the blacks who had joined the Spaniards to return. Toussaint and his followers accepted the invitation, returned, and were enrolled in the army under the commissioners. Fresh troops arrived from France, who were no sooner in the island than they separated — some siding with the planters, and others with the commissioners; and never, perhaps, did any

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conflict present more heterogeneous combinations than this civil commotion. The white republicans of the mother country were arrayed against the white republicans of Hayti, whom they had been sent out to assist; the blacks and mulattoes were at war with each other; old and young of both sexes, and of all colors, were put to the sword, while the fury of the flames swept from plantation to plantation and from town to town. On one day four flags, representing as many political influences, were hoisted in sight of each other. Each had a cockade, denoting the opinions entertained by its members. Here were whites who wore the black cockade; there were other whites who wore the white cockade. The main body of mulattoes wore the red cockade; while a company made up of all shades of complexions wore the tri-colored cockade.

These parties were a lamentable illustration of the rival opinions that pervaded the minds of the masses; and miserably was poor, unfortunate St. Domingo torn asunder by Spaniards, French, English, and Africans, — by enemies and friends of emancipation.

During these sad commotions, Toussaint, by his superior knowledge of the character of his race, his generosity, humanity, and courage, had won his way up to the highest position in the French army. Becoming aware that they were equal to the emergency, and wearied with internal commotion, the commissioners offered Toussaint the entire command of the army; and Lavaux, the governor, nominated the negro chief as second in the government in the island. Lavaux being soon after recalled to France, Toussaint was declared Governor-General of St. Domingo; and, by his genius and surpassing activity, he levied fresh forces, raised the repu-

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tation of the army, and drove the English troops out of the island.

The power of the French had now ceased, the English had been driven from the island, Spanish rule was at an end, and yet the war was carried on as fiercely as ever. But it was a war of color, and not condition. During the revolution a chief had appeared in the south, who, by his bravery and intellectual gifts, was second only to Toussaint. This was Rigaud, the son of a wealthy planter by a woman of mixed blood. Nature had been profligate in bestowing her gifts upon Rigaud. He was tall and slim, with features beautifully defined; and having been educated in Paris, in the finest military school in the world, and where he had been introduced into good society, his manners were polished and his language elegant. On his return to Hayti, Rigaud joined the militia in Les Cayes, his native town. In religion he was the very opposite of Toussaint. An admirer of Voltaire and Rousseau, he had made their works his study. A long residence in Paris had enabled him to become acquainted with many of the followers of these two distinguished philosophers. He had seen two hundred thousand persons following the bones of Voltaire, when removed to the Pantheon; and, in his admiration for the great writer, had confounded liberty with infidelity. In Asia he would have founded and governed an empire; in Hayti he was scarcely more than an outlawed chief; but he had in his soul the elements of a great man. Rigaud was the first man amongst the mulattoes; Toussaint the first with the blacks. After the whites had abandoned the government, these two powerful chiefs made war upon each other. Toussaint ruled in the west, and Rigaud in the south.

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We must pass over the long series of conflicts between these generals, to arrive at that crisis which settled the affairs of Hayti in their present shape. For many months France had paid no attention to the condition of St. Domingo. She was too much engaged with her own revolution at home. The great men of France, after devouring their foes, had turned upon each other. The priests had been murdered on the thresholds of the halls of justice; Marat had been assassinated by Charlotte Corday; Marie Antoinette guillotined; Robespierre had sent Danton to the scaffold, and Justice had sent Robespierre to the same guillotine; Louis XVII. had died under the hands of Simon the cobbler; Bonaparte had dissolved the Directory, and was master of France.

The conqueror of Egypt now turned his attention to St. Domingo. It was too important an island to be lost to France or destroyed by civil war, and through the mediation of Bonaparte the war between Toussaint and Rigaud was brought to a close.

With the termination of this struggle every vestige of slavery and all obstacles to freedom disappeared. Toussaint exerted every nerve to make Hayti what it had formerly been. He did everything in his power to promote agriculture; and in this he succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of the friends of freedom, both in England and France. Even the planters who had remained on the island acknowledged the prosperity of Hayti under the governorship of the man whose best days had been spent in slavery.

The peace of Amiens left Bonaparte without a rival on the Continent, and with a large and experienced army, which he feared to keep idle; and he resolved to send to St. Domingo at least a part of it. He called around

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him those who were acquainted with the affairs of the island, and laid before them his plans. Many objections were urged against the scheme. To these the Corsican replied, "There are sixty thousand men that I want to send to a distance." Some thought that England would interfere. To this he answered, "The Cabinet of St. James has been disposed to set itself in opposition to my sending an army and a squadron to St. Domingo. I have notified it that if it did not consent I would send to Toussaint unlimited powers, and acknowledge his independence. It has said no more to me on the subject." This declaration of Bonaparte, if true, shows that England was afraid that the independence of Hayti would endanger her own West India islands. Thus does wrong follow wrong, and avarice beget avarice.

The army for the expedition to St. Domingo was fitted out, and no pains or expense spared to make it an imposing one. Fifty-six ships of war, with twenty-five thousand men, left France for Hayti. It was, indeed, the most valiant fleet that had ever sailed from the French dominions. The Alps, the Nile, the Rhine, and all Italy, had resounded with the exploits of the men who were now leaving their country for the purpose of placing the chains again on the limbs of the heroic people of St. Domingo. There were men in that army that had followed Bonaparte from the siege of Toulon to the battle under the shades of the pyramids of Egypt, — men who had grown gray in the camp. Among them were several distinguished men of color. There was Rigaud, the educated, refined, and accomplished gentleman, whose language was of the drawing-room, and who was as brave as he was handsome, and whose valor had disputed the laurel with Toussaint. There, too, was Petion, a

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man destined to make an impression that should be recorded in the history of his native island. And last, though not the least, there was Boyer, who was to wait his turn to be placed in the presidential chair. These three were mulattoes, were haters of the blacks, and consequently had become the dupes and tools of Bonaparte, and were now on their way to assist in reducing the land of their birth to slavery.

Leclerc, the brother-in-law of Bonaparte, the man who had married the voluptuous Pauline, was commander-in-chief of the army. Leclerc was not himself a man of much distinction in military affairs; his close relationship with the ruler of France was all that he had to commend him to the army of invasion. But he had with him Rochambeau, and other generals, who had few superiors in arms. Before arriving at Hayti the fleet separated, so as to attack the island on different sides.

News of the intended invasion reached St. Domingo some days before the squadron had sailed from Brest; and therefore the blacks had time to prepare to meet their enemies. Toussaint had concentrated his forces at such points as he expected would be first attacked. Christophe, who stood next to Toussaint in command, had Cape City in his charge. This chief was born a slave in the island of New Grenada, was emancipated, and went to Hayti, where he became the keeper of an inn. He subsequently dealt in cattle, at which business he made a small fortune. Being six feet three inches in height, Christophe made an imposing appearance on horseback, when dressed in his uniform of a general. He had a majestic carriage, and an eye full of fire; and a braver man never lived. Next to Christophe was Dessalines. The furrows and incisions on the face, neck,

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and arms of this man pointed out the coast of Africa as his birthplace. He was a bold, turbulent, and ferocious spirit, whose barbarous eloquence lay in expressive signs rather than in words. Hunger, thirst, fatigue, and loss of sleep, he seemed made to endure, as if by peculiarity of constitution. He had a fierce and sanguinary look, beneath which was concealed an impenetrable dissimulation. Like Leclerc, Dessalines was of small, neat figure. Port-au-Prince was under the command of this chief, and it could not have been left in better hands.

Leclerc, with the largest part of the squadron, came to anchor off Cape City, and summoned the place to surrender. The reply which he received from Christophe was such as to teach the captain-general what he had to expect in the subjugation of St. Domingo. "Go, tell your general that the French shall march here only over ashes, and that the ground shall burn beneath their feet," was the answer that Leclerc obtained in return to his command. The French general sent another messenger to Christophe, urging him to surrender, and promising the black chief a commission of a high rank in the French army. But he found that he had a man, and not a slave, to deal with. The exasperated Christophe sent back the heroic reply, "The decision of arms can admit you only into a city in ashes, and even on these ashes will I fight still." The black chief then distributed torches to his principal officers, and waited the approach of the French.

With no navy, and but little means of defence, the Haytians determined to destroy their towns rather than they should fall into the hands of the enemy. Late in the evening the French ships were seen to change their position, and Christophe, satisfied that they were about

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to effect a landing, set fire to his own mansion, which was the signal for the burning of the town. The French general wept as he beheld the ocean of flames rising from the tops of the houses in the finest city in St. Domingo. Another part of the fleet landed at Samana, where Toussaint happened to be himself. On seeing the ships, the great general said, "Here come the enslavers of our race. All France is coming to Hayti, to try to put the chains again on our limbs; but not France, with all her troops of the Rhine, the Alps, the Nile, the Tiber, nor all Europe to help her, can extinguish the soul of Africa. That soul, when once the soul of a man, and no longer that of a slave, can overthrow the Pyramids and the Alps themselves, sooner than again be crushed down into slavery."

The remainder of the squadron landed at Port-au-Prince, where it found the ever-watchful and heroic Dessalines waiting for it. However, this general was induced to visit Croix-des-Banquets, a town to the north of Port-au-Prince. But unfortunately, in his absence, the latter place was taken from Lamartiniere, a brave and generous man, in whose charge Dessalines had left it. When the latter heard that the town had escaped conflagration, he swore and raved like a madman. Lamartiniere joined Dessalines. Rochambeau, who had been sent against Fort Dauphin, soon reduced that place; but the blacks, in fleeing, set the town on fire; so that the provisions and quarters, which the French general expected to find, were all destroyed. At the sight of the flames, Rochambeau slaughtered all the blacks upon whom he could lay hands. The water in the bay of Mancenillo was stained with the innocent blood of men, women and children, whose only crime was that they

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shouted "*Liberty.*" Paul, the brother of Toussaint, a weak and irresolute man, surrendered the city of St. Domingo, without any show of defence, to Kerverseau, the French general. The enemy was now on the island. The Cape and Fort Dauphin in the north, Santo Domingo in the east, Cayes in the south, and Port-au-Prince in the west, were in the possession of the French invaders.

After the abandonment of the Cape, Christophe joined Toussaint, and the two generals raised fire and flames everywhere. Although the French had all the strongholds in the island, they found that they were not masters of Hayti. Like Nat Turner, the Spartacus of the Southampton revolt, who fled with his brave band to the Virginia swamps, Toussaint and his generals took to the mountains. Leclerc now resorted to the most ungenerous and dishonest means that could be devised to induce the brave Toussaint to surrender the island to him. Isaac and Placide, sons of Toussaint, who had been at school in Paris, were given commissions as French officers, by Bonaparte, and sent out with Leclerc. These sons were sent by Leclerc to Toussaint to persuade and to work upon the feelings of their father, and cause him to betray his trust, and the liberty of St. Domingo. But the heroic old chief, though born a slave, and without the refinements that adorned the more polished and educated Leclerc, rose from the position of the slave to that of the patriot. Toussaint received his sons, embraced them, and told them that they were at liberty to return to the French army if they wished, but that he would not yield the island.

Again Leclerc addressed Toussaint, telling him that he had a force sufficient to crush him if he did not surrender. Like Leonidas, when Xerxes sent him word

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that his "forest of arrows would darken the sun-light," "So much the better, we shall then fight in the shade," was the reply of the former. "I have a sword, and will not sheathe it," said Toussaint to Leclerc's messenger. The black general then issued a proclamation to the people of Hayti, in which he said, "You are going to fight against enemies who have neither faith, law nor religion; they promise you liberty—they intend your servitude. Why have so many ships traversed the ocean, if not to throw you again into chains? During the last ten years what have you not endured for liberty? The French do not come here to fight for their country, or for liberty, but for slavery. Let us resolve that these troops shall never leave our shores. Fortune seems to have delivered them as victims into our hands. Those whom our swords spare will be struck dead by an avenging climate; their bones will be scattered among these mountains and rocks, and tossed about by the waves of our sea. Never more will they behold their native land; never more will they be received by their mothers, their wives and their sisters; but liberty will reign over their tomb."

"To arms! to arms!" was the cry all over the island, until every one who could use even the lightest instrument of death, was under arms. General Maurepas, a brave black, defeated the French general at St. Marc, and forced him to put to sea with two ships of war. Dessalines, Belair and Lamartiniere, defeated the French general at Verettes; in no place was the slaughter so terrible as there. At the mere nod of Dessalines, men who had been slaves, and who dreaded the new servitude with which they were threatened, massacred seven hundred of the whites that Dessalines had amongst his

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prisoners. The child died in the arms of its sick and terrified mother; the father was unable to save the daughter; the daughter unable to save the father. Mulattoes took the lives of their white fathers, to whom they had been slaves, or who, allowing them to go free, had disowned them; thus revenging themselves for the mixture of their blood. So frightful was this slaughter, that the banks of the Artibonite were strewed with dead bodies, and the waters dyed with the blood of the slain. Not a grave was dug, for Dessalines had prohibited interment, in order that the eyes of the French might see his vengeance even in the repulsive remains of carnage. He had a mother put to death for having buried her son.

Let the slave-holders in our Southern States tremble when they shall call to mind these events. While Dessalines was carrying fire and sword amongst the planters where he had command, Toussaint and Christophe were cutting the French to pieces at Crete-a-Pierrat, where they had to meet the bravery and experience of Rigaud and Petion, who fought nobly, but in a bad cause. Rochambeau was doing the work of death amongst the blacks. He caused wives to be murdered before the eyes of their husbands, and children to be thrown into burning pits in presence of their agonizing mothers. But Leclerc saw that this was slaughter without any prospect of reducing the blacks to their former condition as slaves, and he determined to resort to a stratagem, in which he succeeded too well.

A correspondence was opened with Toussaint, in which the captain-general promised to acknowledge the liberty of the blacks, and the equality of all, if he would yield. In the mean time, Dessalines and Christophe had joined the French, under the solemn promise that liberty should

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be guaranteed to the colored race throughout the island. Overcome by the persuasions of his other generals, and the blacks who surrounded him, and who were sick and tired of the shedding of blood, Toussaint gave in his adhesion to the French authorities. This was the great error of his life. But even in this Christophe and Dessalines cannot escape blame. As inferior officers, they should not have listened to Leclerc's terms without the consent of Toussaint. Suffice it to say, that both of these generals regretted that act in after life.

The loss that the French army had sustained during the war was great. Fifteen thousand of their best troops, and some of their bravest generals, had fallen before the arms of these negroes, whom they despised. Soon after Toussaint gave in his adhesion, the yellow fever broke out in the French army, and carried nearly all of the remaining great men off,—Debelle, who had rare virtues, and who was beloved by many of the blacks; Dugua, an old man, whose warlike exploits on the banks of the Nile had placed him high in the list of fame; Hardy, a man second only to Bonaparte, in the wars of the East; more than seven hundred medical men, besides twenty-two thousand sailors and soldiers. Among these were fifteen hundred officers. It was at this time that Toussaint might have renewed the war with great success. But he was a man of his word, and would not take advantage of the sad condition of the French army.

The forcible capture of Toussaint, which took place about this time, is too well known to be recapitulated here. The great chief of St. Domingo had scarcely been conveyed on board the ship Creole, and she out of the harbor, ere Rigaud, the mulatto general who had accompanied Leclerc to Hayti, was also seized and sent to

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France. After being imprisoned a short time in the Temple, Toussaint was conveyed to the Castle of Joux, and placed in one of its cold, damp cells. It was a strange coincidence, that Toussaint and Rigaud, who had hated each other in their native land, were incarcerated in the same prison in France. But, even in this dismal place, these chiefs were too illustrious to be permitted to see and converse with each other. The arrest of Toussaint caused suspicion and alarm amongst the blacks; and that of Rigaud told the mulattoes that they could put no confidence in the promises of the captain-general.

The disarming of the blacks, with the exception of those under Christophe and Dessalines, now took place. Belair, in the mountain of St. Marc, and Sans-Souci, two veteran chiefs, who had followed Toussaint in nearly all his battles, were arrested and put to death. But the death of General Maurepas, the heroic black chief, who had defeated a portion of the French when they numbered two to his one, caused a general rising of the blacks. This general, who commanded a battalion of blacks attached to the French army, was invited by Leclerc to go to the Cape to take the command of that post. No sooner had he arrived than he and his soldiers were disarmed and put on board a vessel lying in the bay. Maurepas was bound to the mast of the ship and tortured in the presence of his wife and children. They were then, one after another, thrown into the sea; the father being the last put to death, so that he should witness the drowning of his wife, children, and officers, to increase his grief. Thus died the frank, brave, and generous Maurepas, who loved liberty for the sake of his race. The murder of Maurepas and his companions had scarce

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been told to the blacks, before the news reached them that Rochambeau had put five hundred blacks to death. These brutal murders by the French filled the blacks with terror.

Hearing of the death of his old friend and camp-mate, Dessalines, with all under his command, joined the insurgents, and started for the Cape, for the purpose of meeting Rochambeau, and avenging the death of the blacks. In his impetuous and terrible march, he surrounded and made prisoners a body of Frenchmen, and, with branches of trees, that ferocious chief raised, under the eyes of Rochambeau, five hundred gibbets, on which he hanged as many prisoners.

Twenty thousand fresh troops arrived from France; but they were not destined to see Leclerc, for the yellow fever had taken him off. In the mountains were many barbarous and wild blacks, who had escaped from slavery soon after being brought from the coast of Africa. One of these bands of savages were commanded by Lamour de Rance, an adroit, stern, savage man, half naked, with epaulets tied to his bare shoulders for his only token of authority.

At home, in the mountains, he passed from one to another with something of the ease of the birds in his own sunny land. Toussaint, Christophe, and Dessalines, had each in their turn pursued him, but in vain. His mode of fighting was in keeping with his dress.

Another gang of these savages was commanded by a woman named Vida. She was a native of Africa, and, like Lamour, had been ruthlessly torn from her native land. Her face was all marked with incisions, and large pieces had been cut out of her ears. Vida kept a horse, which she had caught with her own hands, and had

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broken to the bit. When on horseback, she rode like a man. On arriving at places too steep to ascend, she would dismount, and her horse would at once follow her. This woman, with her followers, met and defeated a battalion of the French, who had been sent into the mountains. Lamour and Vida united, and they were complete masters of the wilds of St. Domingo; — and, even to the present day, their names are used to frighten children into obedience. These two savages came forth from their mountain homes, and made war on the whites wherever they found them.

The desertion from the French army by Dessalines was soon after followed by Christophe, who carried over to the blacks a large and well disciplined force. Clervaux and Petion, the mulatto generals who succeeded Rigaud in the south, also joined the blacks, and these four chiefs caused dismay in all parts of the island where they appeared. Leclerc was now dead, and Rochambeau, who succeeded him in the government of St. Domingo, began to resort to the most atrocious means to subdue the blacks. He sent a ship of war to Cuba for blood-hounds; and, on their arrival, cannons were fired, and demonstrations of joy were shown in various ways. Even the women, wives of the planters, went to the sea-side, met the animals, and put garlands about their necks, and some kissed and caressed the dogs. Such was the degradation of human nature. While white women were cheering on the French, who had imported blood-hounds as their auxiliaries, the black women were using all their powers of persuasion to rouse the blacks to the combat. Many of these women walked from camp to camp, and from battalion to battalion, exhibiting their naked bodies, showing their lacerated and scourged persons; — these

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were the marks of slavery, made many years before, but now used for the cause of human freedom.

Christophe, who had taken command of the insurgents, now gave unmistakable proof that he was a great general, and scarcely second to Toussaint. Twenty thousand fresh troops arrived from France to the aid of Rochambeau; yet the blacks were victorious wherever they fought. The French blindly thought that cruelty to the blacks would induce their submission, and to this end they bent all their energies. An amphitheatre was erected, and two hundred dogs, sharpened by extreme hunger, put there, and black prisoners thrown in. The raging animals disputed with each other for the limbs of their victims, until the ground was dyed with human blood. Three hundred brave blacks were put to death in this horrible manner. The blacks, having spread their forces in every quarter of the island, were fast retaking the forts and towns. Christophe commanded in the north, Dessalines in the west, and Terrou in the south.

Rochambeau, surrounded on all sides, drew his army together for defence, rather than aggression. But even in this he foresaw a failure. Exulting in their triumph, the blacks commenced hostilities on the sea. In light boats, with the aid of the wind and tide and of oars, they went up and down the rivers, passed from the mountains into the ocean, and from the ocean into the mountains, spreading terror wherever they appeared. At last Rochambeau was besieged by the blacks on land, and the English on sea, and never was a general in a more deplorable condition. All of his brave officers had either died of the yellow fever, or been slain in battle with the blacks, and he and his few followers reduced to starvation. Horses had been used for food; and even the

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very dogs that had been brought from Cuba to hunt down the blacks were used as food by the proud and oppressive French. The French general now sued for peace, and promised that he would immediately leave the island; it was accepted by the blacks, and Rochambeau prepared to return to France. The French embarked in their vessels of war, and the standard of the blacks once more waved over Cape City, the capital of St. Domingo. As the French sailed from the island, they saw the tops of the mountains lighted up; — it was not a blaze kindled for war, but for freedom. Every heart beat for liberty, and every voice shouted for joy. From the ocean to the mountains, and from town to town, the cry was Freedom! Freedom! and the women formed themselves into bands, and went from house to house, serenading those who had been most conspicuous in expelling the invaders. Thus ended Napoleon's expedition to Hayti. In less than two years, the French lost more than fifty thousand persons, and the blacks less than fifteen thousand.

After the retirement of the French, a declaration of independence was put forth, signed by Dessalines, Christophe, and Clervaux, in which they said, "We have sworn to show no mercy to those who may dare to speak to us of slavery. We shall be inexorable, perhaps cruel, toward the troops, who, forgetting the object for which, from 1789, they have not ceased to fight, may come from Europe to inflict on us servitude and death. Nothing will be too dear to be sacrificed; nothing impossible to be executed, by men from whom it may be wished to snatch the first of all blessings. Should we be obliged to shed rivers of blood; should we, to preserve our freedom, be compelled to set on fire seven-eighths of the globe, we shall be pronounced innocent before the tribunal of Prov-

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idence, who has not created men to see them groan under a yoke so oppressive and so ignominious."

Who knows but that a Toussaint, a Christophe, a Rigaud, a Clervaux, and a Dessalines, may some day appear in the Southern States of this Union? That they are there, no one will doubt. That their souls are thirsting for liberty, all will admit. The spirit that caused the blacks to take up arms, and to shed their blood in the American revolutionary war, is still amongst the slaves of the south; and, if we are not mistaken, the day is not far distant when the revolution of St. Domingo will be reënacted in South Carolina and Louisiana. The Haytian revolution was not unlike that which liberated the slaves of Sparta.

"In the gloomy history of human servitude, there are few chapters more horrible than that which relates to the Helots of Sparta. Its dark features, and the blackness of its character, made even the ancient world stand aghast at its intense cruelty, and which the Romans condemned as at once absurd and wicked, and which the Ionian Greek, the highest development of the great Hellenic race, detested. The Helot expresses nearly everything that can be conceived of the oppressed and degraded man, and the word has been literally burnt into the history of Sparta, so that humanity may not be deceived into the belief of the perfection of the heroes of Thermopylæ. The news of the earthquake became the watchword of revolt. Up rose the Helots; they armed themselves; they poured in, — a wild, and gathering, and relentless multitude, — resolved to slay, by the wrath of man, all whom nature had yet spared. The earthquake that levelled Sparta rent her chains; nor did the shock create one chasm so dark and wide as that between the

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master and the slave. It is one of the sublimest and most awful spectacles in history — that city in ruins — the earth still trembling — the grim and dauntless soldiery collected amid piles of death and ruin; and in such a time, and such a scene, the multitude, sensible, not of danger but of wrong, and rising, not to succor, but to revenge; — all that should have disarmed a feebler enmity, giving fire to theirs; the dreadest calamity their blessing; dismay their hope; — it was as if the great mother herself had summoned her children to vindicate the long-abused, the all-inalienable heritage derived from her; and the stir of the angry elements was but the announcement of an armed and solemn union between nature and the oppressed."

What the Helots were to Sparta at the time of the earthquake, the blacks were to St. Domingo at the time of the French revolution. And the American slaves are only waiting the opportunity of wiping out their wrongs in the blood of their oppressors. No revolution ever turned up greater heroes than that of St. Domingo. But no historian has yet done them justice. If the blacks were guilty of shedding blood profusely, they only followed the example set them by the more refined and educated whites.

After the French had been driven from the island, Dessalines soon set his companions at naught, and caused himself to be elected governor; and a few months after, he threw aside the disguise, and proclaimed himself emperor. That he was a cruel man, no one will deny. It was his hatred to the whites, and his indomitable courage, that placed him in favor with the people. The act of Cortes, in destroying his ships, after arriving in Mexico, was not more heroic or courageous

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than that of Dessalines, when, fearing that his soldiers would surrender the fort at Crete-a-Pierrat, he seized a torch, held it to the door of the magazine, and threatened to blow up the fort, and himself with it, if they did not defend it. What is most strange in the history of this man is, that he was a savage, a slave, a soldier, a general, and died, when an emperor, under the dagger of a Brutus.

The death of Dessalines placed Christophe at the head of the government, in October, 1806. Christophe had long been recognized as the second officer in the state. Well acquainted with the great interests of which he undertook the care, and thoroughly experienced in Haytian warfare, Christophe, who had enjoyed a high reputation for humanity and benevolence, and who, in addition to his domestic virtues, was actuated by a practical sense of religion, seemed to possess the best guaranties for a useful, if not a happy career. Free from vanity, he discarded the pompous title of emperor, and took that of chief of Hayti. Petion, the mulatto general, made war on Christophe soon after the latter came into power. The former, however, was defeated, and driven to the gates of Port-au-Prince, his head-quarters.

Rigaud, having escaped from his prison in France, and returned to Hayti, offered his services to Petion, which were eagerly accepted. But these two chiefs soon disagreed, and Rigaud, having been appointed Petion's commander in the south, retained that part of the island, and so gave rise to three rival powers in Hayti. Rigaud lost his life shortly after; and Petion, Boyer, and Borgella were united in the south; while Christophe remained master of the north. After a reign of four years as chief of Hayti, and five years as king, Christophe died

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by his own hands. To no one do the Haytians owe more than to this man. In the war of independence he took the place of Toussaint, after the abduction of that chief. And, during the nine years that he governed St. Domingo, the island prospered, and was fast returning to its original grandeur. A busy population covered the land with marks of its industry; rich crops of the most coveted produce of nature annually rewarded the toil of the husbandman. Christophe was also the patron ofeducation; and there are still on the island schools that were founded by him when king. In one respect, he excelled Charlemagne,—he could write his own name; but that was all.

At the death of Christophe, the north and south were united under Boyer as president. In 1843, a revolt caused Boyer to leave the island, and Riche was chosen in his stead. The death of Riche shortly after placed the reins of government in the hand of Souloque, the present ruler of Hayti. This chief is now in his 69th year. He is a large man, of good constitution, and a strong frame. Souloque was the slave of General Lamarre, and acted as aide-de-camp to his master in 1810, in a war against Christophe. He subsequently became lieutenant in the army under Petion, and, when Boyer was president, he made Souloque captain. Under Herara he was made a chief of squadron, under Guerrier a colonel, and under Riche a general. He is a more worthy and intelligent man than the whites are willing to allow. The patriotism of Toussaint, the firmness of Christophe, the moderation of Boyer, and the wisdom of Riche, have done much to raise Hayti, and place her people in a high position before the world, and to warrant the hope that St. Domingo will ere long take her place among the proudest nations of the earth.

We cannot close without once more reviewing the

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character of Toussaint. Of all the great men of St. Domingo, the first place must be given to him. He laid the foundation for the emancipation of his race and the independence of the island. He fought her battles, and at last died in a cold prison for her sake and his fidelity to the cause of freedom. As an officer in battle he had no superior in Hayti. He defeated the French in several pitched battles, drove the English from the island, and refused a crown when it was offered to him. When his friends advised him to be on his guard against the treachery of Leclerc, he replied, "For one to expose one's life for one's country when in danger is a sacred duty; but to arouse one's country in order to save one's life is inglorious." From ignorance he became educated by his own exertions. From a slave he rose to be a soldier, a general, and a governor, and might have been a king. He possessed a rare genius, which showed itself in the private circle, in the council-chamber, and on the field of battle. His very name became a tower of strength to his friends and a terror to his foes.

The history of Toussaint, placed by the side of that of Napoleon, presents many striking parallels. Both born in a humble position, they raised themselves to the height of power by the force of their character. Both gained renown in legislation and government, as well as in war. Both fell the moment they had attained supreme authority. Both finished their career on a barren rock.

The parallels, however, have their contrast. Toussaint fought for liberty; Napoleon fought for himself. Toussaint gained fame by leading an oppressed and injured race to the successful vindication of their rights; Napoleon made himself a name and acquired a sceptre by supplanting liberty and destroying nationalities, in

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order to substitute his own illegitimate despotism. Napoleon transferred Toussaint from the warm and sunny climate of the West Indies to the cold climate of the north of France ; the English transferred Napoleon from the cold climate of France to the warm climate of St. Helena.

This was indeed retribution ; for the man of the cold regions died in the tropics, to atone for his crime in having caused the man of the tropics to end his days in the cold regions. While Toussaint's memory will be revered by all lovers of freedom, Napoleon's will be detested.

And, lastly, Toussaint's career as a Christian, a statesman, and a general, will lose nothing by a comparison with that of Washington. Each was the leader of an oppressed and outraged people, each had a powerful enemy to contend with, and each succeeded in founding a government in the New World. Toussaint's government made liberty its watchword, incorporated it in its constitution, abolished the slave-trade, and made freedom universal amongst the people. Washington's government incorporated slavery and the slave-trade, and enacted laws by which chains were fastened upon the limbs of millions of people. Toussaint liberated his countrymen ; Washington enslaved a portion of his, and aided in giving strength and vitality to an institution that will one day rend asunder the UNION that he helped to form. Already the slave in his chains, in the rice swamps of Carolina and the cotton fields of Mississippi, burns for revenge.

In contemplating the fact that the slave would rise and vindicate his right to freedom by physical force, Jefferson said : —

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"Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever; that, considering numbers, nature, and natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation, is among possible events; that it may become probable by supernatural interference! The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a contest.

"What an incomprehensible machine is man! who can endure toil, famine, stripes, imprisonment, and death itself, in vindication of his own liberty, and the next moment be deaf to all those motives whose power supported him through his trial, and inflict on his fellow-men a bondage, one hour of which is fraught with more misery than ages of that which he rose in rebellion to oppose."

And, should such a contest take place, the God of Justice will be on the side of the oppressed blacks. The exasperated genius of Africa would rise from the depths of the ocean, and show its threatening form; and war against the tyrants would be the rallying cry. The indignation of the slaves of the south would kindle a fire so hot that it would melt their chains, drop by drop, until not a single link would remain; and the revolution that was commenced in 1776 would then be finished, and the glorious sentiments of the Declaration of Independence, "That all men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," would be realized, and our government would no longer be the scorn and contempt of the friends of freedom in other lands, but would really be the LAND OF THE FREE AND HOME OF THE BRAVE.

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