

Africa Delivered: Some "Forgotten Scribblers" on the Slave Trade

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THE finest art to arise out of the slave trade controversy in England was pictorial—Turner's great slave-ship painting. English literature offers no work on this tragic theme comparable with, say, Melville's *Benito Cereno*. A large body of verse¹ certainly was inspired by the abolition campaign in England, but it has understandably been ignored by modern criticism. There is much turgidly repetitive imitation of Miltonic rhodomontade or Popean couplet which may be aptly characterised as "rec-tory literature," the effusions of a leisured middle class.

Yet close study of this material reveals many under-currents in the apparently stagnant waters. The slave trade poets reflected, albeit in distorted fashion, key doctrines of enlightenment philosophy; their work is an early example of literature politicised; and their concern with social ills signals a shift in cultural consciousness.

The movement for abolition, coming at the end of a century of relative social equilibrium, was a product both of the calm and the new revolutionary climacteric. The transformation of the Augustan belief in a benevolent status quo, and the adaptation of a chain of being into a ladder of perfectibility, with the consequent upsurge of humanitarian activity, has been amply traced elsewhere.² Throughout the century we can observe that "steady broadening of sympathies"³ of which the slave trade debate was one direct outcome. There was too much broadening for many tastes, and it was often held that the increase in sentiment had led directly to the fall of the Bastille. The Earl of Abingdon declared in a Commons

debate that the plea for abolition not only formed "a part in speculation of this new philosophy," but was "actually founded on those very principles. . . . For in the very definition of the terms themselves . . . what does the abolition of the slave trade mean more or less than liberty and equality? What more or less than the rights of man?" During the Napoleonic scare it was possible to lump together conservative abolitionists and revolutionary Jacobins, only the stern piety of the Clapham Sect protecting them from the odium visited upon the genuine radicals.

But whatever the political complexities of the 1790's, by that decade perfectibility, classically presented in Condorcet's *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique* (1794), served to inaugurate profound alterations in the estate of man, whether white or black. The ideal of primitivism had developed concurrently with this meliorist doctrine of progress, and Rousseau's early work launched a flood of polemical literature which drew stark contrasts between contemporary luxury and Arcadian simplicity. The Noble Savage who strode into the drawing-room via innumerable authors acted as a visible indictment of society. But Cook's account of his stay in Tahiti, in the romantic version concocted by Hawkesworth, captured the public imagination in a new way. Indeed, after the first voyage Rousseau's word was made flesh and dwelt among the beau-monde, when Lieut. Furneaux brought the native boy Omai back to London with him.

The slave trade poets drew heavily on both primitivist and perfectibilist doctrines, as the work of the philosophes percolated down through educated circles. Oddly enough they often held both views of human history simultaneously. The belief that man has degenerated from a primitive golden age seems logically incompatible with the notion that man is progressing towards a future golden age. These poets, however, were philosophical in only a Pickwickian sense, and countless poems begin with the negro depicted as Noble Savage only to conclude with a paean to the upward course of man. This illicit logic

allows the abolitionist poet to have his cake and eat it. Philosophical ragbags as many of the poems are, the beliefs expressed contrast starkly enough with the tacit assumption of the slaving interest that the negro was racially inferior.

As Shaftesbury's optimist philosophy developed into practical philanthropy the eighteenth century witnessed an upsurge of humanitarian activity. Yet throughout the century the slave trade expanded with scarcely a single protest. As a modern historian notes, the first fifty years "are characterised by stray voices raised in opposition but without any effective steps against either the slave trade or slavery. The second half is characterised by active, organised opposition."⁴ In 1725 Dr. James Houstoun could assert, confident in the ready assent of the reading public, "the negro's natural temper is barbarously cruel, selfish and deceitful, and their Government equally barbarous and uncivil." He added pointedly, "As for their Customs, they exactly resemble their Fellow Creatures and Natives the Monkeys."⁵ Such works as John Barbot's *Description of the Coasts of North and South Guinea* and Thomas Phillips's *Journal of a Voyage . . . along the Coasts of Guiney*, both published in A. and W. Chambers's popular *Collection of Voyages* (1732), continued the denigration of the negro race. The negro's lot in Africa was so ghastly, and his nature so bestial (the argument ran) that the slave trade was a positive act of kindness. Many of these authors were implicated in the trade, usually as factors on the Guinea coast, so they could scarcely claim impartiality. A more favourable view was put forward by John Atkins, whose *Voyage to Guinea, Brasil and the West Indies* (1737) was regarded by Clarkson as instigator of the abolition campaign. Two years earlier English society had been presented with the phenomenon of an intelligent and cultured negro, in the person of Job ben Solomon, who had been rescued from slavery. In his biography of Job, Douglas Grant remarks that the "politeness shown to Job ben Solomon was an instance of the unease that was

coming increasingly to be felt as the English began to realise more clearly the extent and enormities of the trade."⁶

The last third of the century saw abolition at last actively canvassed. The abolition was triggered off by the judgement of 1772 that as soon as a slave set foot on English soil he became free. Resistance to the trade had been stiffened among dissenters by the Quaker decision of 1761 to exclude from membership all involved in it. The Quakers had been vociferous critics of the trade since the 1720's, but now came a determined effort to convert the public by types of mass propaganda scarcely known before.

The argument of the slaving faction was neatly crystallised by the *Monthly Review* in 1788. The writer posited three main points. First, the trade was "lawful according to the different states of nations over the earth"; secondly, the situation of the negro was "bettered by changing their African masters for those in the West Indies"; and thirdly, the trade was "useful to society in general, and Britain in particular."⁷ Many literate and influential figures with no trading interest lent their support to this case, from Hume, writing in 1743 "Of National Characters," who held that the negro race "never had a civilisation . . . nor an individual eminent either in action or speculation," to Boswell, who declared that slavery was "an institution so marvellously humane and just that it should be contemplated with delighted wonder."⁸

Fortunately for the negro Boswell's delight was not universally shared. As early as 1748 the most pungent of the "lone voices," that of Montesquieu, had exposed the economics of slavery with bitter clarity in *L'Esprit des Lois*. As the tide of opinion turned against what Walpole called "that horrid traffic," the voices of criticism swelled to a chorus. Men implicated in the trade began to feel a sense of guilt and revulsion. A slave ship surgeon, Alexander Falconbridge, published a critical *Account of the Slave Trade* in 1788, the same year as John Newton's *Thoughts on the African Slave Trade*. Newton, Cowper's mentor at

Olney, had made the spectacular metamorphosis from slave ship captain to evangelical divine, his monomaniacal fervour giving an influential aura to confessions made in an atmosphere of increasing religious enthusiasm. With the "conversions" of Wilberforce and Clarkson the abolition movement became a crusade, Clarkson's indefatigable labours acting as a foil to the pious zeal of Wilberforce and the Claphamites.

References to the slave trade in literature of the early eighteenth century range in tone from the ambiguities of Defoe to the forcible clarity of Edward Young in *Imperium Pelagi* (1730):

Afric's black, lascivious, slothful breed,
To clasp their ruin, fly from toil;
That meanest product on their soil,
Their people sell: one half on t'other breed.⁹

As the cult of sensibility grew this kind of reaction was called into question. The visit of an African prince inspired William Dodd, the "macaroni parson" later executed for forgery, to the first poem specifically on the evils of slavery, *Zara at the Court of Annamaboe* (1749). But while both this work and its sequel were merely love stories given an exotic setting, the year before Thomson had given the cultivated classes their most vivid glimpse yet of the trade in which they connived, focussing attention upon the horrors of the Middle Passage:

Here dwells the direful shark lured by the scent
Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
Behold! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
Swift is the gale can bear the ship along;
And from the partners of that cruel trade
Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons
Demands his share of prey—demands themselves.
The stormy fate descends: one death involves
Tyrants and slaves; when straight, their mangled limbs
Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.¹⁰

The only extended poem to countenance slavery at this time, James Grainger's verbose and technical essay on *The Sugar Cane* (1764), enjoyed only limited circulation by comparison with abolitionist poetry, which now in-

cluded Dyer's *The Fleece* (1757) and Chatterton's *African Eclogues* (1770). Thus far, however, the slave trade had been a very minor theme for the English poet.

The last years of the century changed all that. In 1788 a reviewer of Hannah More's poem *Slavery* remarked: "Religion, philosophy and poetry have of late vied with each other in deploring the fate of the unhappy Negro, and in endeavouring to interest the reason, feeling, and fancy in their favour."¹¹ The sheer bulk of verse on the abolition question attests to the fact that in some respects poetry was the most potent means of propaganda available. This "rectory literature" was especially attractive to female readers who would balk at official reports; but no doubt many men also preferred the lurid fictions of the poet to more sober sources of information. Clarkson was in the position to know, and he later told a lady poet: "I think that a work of that description may secure the attention of some, whom prose-composition would not so much lay hold of, and thus a greater number of persons may become acquainted with the case of the unhappy people whose rights we advocate."¹² John Jamieson, a Scot best known for his etymological studies, prefaced his *Sorrows of Slavery* (1789) with the remark that his chief aim was "to represent simple historical facts in the language of poetry; as this might attract the attention of some who would not otherwise give themselves the trouble of looking into the subject." In his study of *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* David Brion Davis affirms that "this flood of anti-slavery literature conditioned many people to an active support of abolition" (p. 388).

Such open propagandising rarely made for good poetry; but most of these writers shared with Thomas Wilkinson, a friend of Wordsworth, "a desire to assist, if in my power, the most oppressed of all the earth."¹³ The abolition poets directed their efforts at that large readership "who could not easily be prevailed upon to peruse a pamphlet, but would seize with avidity on anything in the form of a poem."¹⁴ Thus we find the anonymous author of a "Short

Sketch of the Evidence" urging the reader to peruse his article rather than hyperboles in "the form of the 'Dying Slave' or 'The Negro's Complaint,'" which he thought likely "to attract their willing attention and to win their sympathetic regard." But the Dying Negro was by now a favoured object of sensibility, expiring repeatedly in the English drawing-room of the period.

Most poets derived their information about the trade at second-hand from the written evidence, often boasting that this endued their work with greater authenticity. In particular, the evidence to the Commons Select Committee of 1791-2 proved to be a versifiers' goldmine. As the *Monthly Review* had pointed out some years earlier: "so numerous and horrid are the miseries created by that species of traffic, the slave trade, that the poet, in order to produce the strongest impression on the imagination and feeling of his reader, has only to follow the track of history and clothe plain fact in the dress of simple and easy verse."¹⁵

Some authors, however, drew upon personal experience. Bryan Edwards, the historian of the West Indies, wrote passionately of what he saw there.¹⁶ In dedicating his poem *The Wrongs of Almoona* (1788) to Cowper, an anonymous poet described how he had sailed first to Africa and then to Jamaica on a voyage during which "he was an eye-witness to scenes that would have shocked him out of apathy, and made the strongest Stoic weep." Few of these poets escape the creeping Miltonism which blighted the work of their homebound contemporaries, but occasionally they achieve a first-hand freshness. Most notable of these is Captain James Marjoribanks's fearsomely Gothic poem, *Slavery* (1792). The writing here, according to Marjoribanks, is entirely factual, "not the production of hypothesis, the dream of theory, but the simple recital of what fell under the cognisance of my senses; and may be considered as an additional link in the chain of evidence (p. 5). He did not baulk at the punishments devised by the plantation-owners and managers:

Your ingenuity we must confess,
 In finding various methods to distress:
 See the wretch fasten'd to an emmet's nest,
 Whose stings in myriads his whole frame molest!
 Or smeared with cowheage all his body o'er,
 His burning skin intolerably sore!
 Chains, hooks, and horns of every size and shape,
 Mark those who've once attempted an escape.
 A jealous mistress finds a ready sham
 To give a handsome maid the sugar dram;
 With her fair hands prepares the nauseous draught,
 And pours the scalding mixture down her throat;
 Closely confined for mad'ning nights, and days,
 Her burning thirst no liquid drop allays.

(ll. 155-62)

Yet catalogues of Radcliffian torments often culminated in triumphant affirmations of the doctrine of progress. For instance, Elizabeth Benger, a friend of the Lambs and a well-known historical novelist, ended her *Poem Occasioned by the Abolition* with a vision in which trade achieves an apotheosis in a liberated continent:

Know, Commerce follows nature's social laws,
 As peace or charity her blessing draws—
 Still shall she bear from Afric's genial plains
 Their native wealth, though man untouch'd remains;
 She hides no dagger in her flowing vest,
 But frankly comes, caressing and caressed:
 The fields rejoice beneath her gentle tread,
 Nor from her touch the lotus bends its head.¹⁷

According to the abolition poet mankind was firmly launched on an upward course. By now the chain of being was only dragged out in order to manacle the negro and preserve the status quo in the islands. Marjoribanks's poem, for instance, elicited a fierce response from one Reverend Holder, who had been a priest in the West Indies. For Holder slavery was one of the "gradations and modifications of society, one of the inferior links which bind man to man, and create new duties of fidelity." Holder's *Fragments of a Poem* (1792) was intended to rebut the abolitionists, proving negroid inferiority by appeal to the chain of being. But this was by now an unfashionable view and the doctrine of perfectibility had gained many converts. The comment of the *Monthly Review* on Thomas Day's famous *Dying Negro* (1773) was

more truly representative in describing how the poet “expresses the highest sense of human liberty, and vigorously asserts the universal rights of mankind.”¹⁸ The achievement of abolition in 1807 seemed to furnish incontrovertible proof of the idea of progress. When the publisher Robert Bowyer planned a volume of commemorative verse in 1809 he “made an effort to procure an honourable commemoration of that great legislative event which exalts the character of his age and country, which forms an epoch in the history of civilisation, which vindicates our religion and our laws.”

While the slave trade poets gazed fervently towards the coming millennium they yearned also for the innocence of a golden past. With teleological and ontological inextricably muddled they faced, Janus-like, in both directions at once. Douglas Grant remarks that only “a fanatical primitivist could believe that African life before the coming of the European was an idyll.”¹⁹ But once the abolition campaign got underway Cook’s discoveries and Rousseau’s premises were indiscriminately pressed into service on behalf of the negro: if Tahiti was paradise, Africa was paradise lost. James Grahame, a Scottish nature poet admired by Wordsworth, was clearly of the Rousseauist persuasion in his poem *Africa Delivered* (1809):

Beyond that wilderness the nations dwelt
 In peace and happiness: no foreign foe
 Had crossed the desert or had ploughed the main,
 Conveying warfare and the seeds of war.
 There bounteous nature with spontaneous hand
 Had scatter’d every herb, tree, shrub, and flower,
 That ministers to man’s delight or use:
 Bud, blossom, fruit, adorn at once the boughs,
 While ’mid the gay festoons full many a bird,
 Of plumage various, brilliant as the hues
 Of tulip bells, like sister blossoms seem. . . .²⁰

In this version of African history the negro cultivated the soil in a prelapsarian setting. William Roscoe, the Liverpool Whig and children’s writer, imagined such a community in his *Wrongs of Africa* (1787):

Strangers alike to luxury and toil,
 They with assiduous labour, never woo’d

A coy and stubborn soil, that gave its fruits
Reluctant; but on some devoted clay,
Perform'd the task, that for their future lives
Suffic'd, and to the moist and vigorous earth
The youthful shoots committed.²¹

Nor was the negro, as the preservationists argued, an unfeeling brute, ideally suited to a life of slavery. The Irish bishop, Richard Mant, was positive on this contentious point in his poem *The Slave* (1806):

Yet he can feel the sacred ties, that bind
The scatter'd brotherhood of human kind;
And when the rains descend, and whirlwinds rave
Round Segó's walls by Niger's ample wave,
Can welcome to his hospitable door
The wand'ring stranger, shelterless and poor;
Nor heed the colour of his guest; but spread
The cocoa board, and strew the rushy bed;
Beside the couch his midnight vigil keep,
And lull with plaintive song the white man's sleep.²²

The worm in the bud of this primitivist Arcadia was the European, who, perverted by greed and cruelty, sold these Noble Savages into slavery. Thomas Day, the notorious English Rousseauist, visualised the West African traders as full of guile:

Soft as the accents of the traitor flow,
We melt with pity, and unbend the bow;
With lib'ral hand our choicest gifts we bring,
And point the wand'ers to the freshest spring. . . .

The smiling traitors with insidious care,
The goblet proffer, and the feast prepare,
Till dark oblivion shades our closing eyes,
And all disarm'd each fainting warrior lies.²³

More violent methods were often employed. Kidnapping, ambush, pillaging and looting were the stock-in-trade of the trader in Guinea, as Hannah More's *Slavery* made clear:

I see, by more than fancy's mirror shewn
The burning village, and the blazing town:
See the dire victim torn from social life,
The shrieking babe, the agonizing wife!
She, wretch forlorn! is dragg'd by hostile hands,
To distant tyrants sold, in distant lands!²⁴

Once captured or bought from the warring African chieftains the slaves were moved in mournful procession to the

coast. John Jamieson gave his readers a telling account of this episode:

Now from the field of purchase slowly moves
The troop reluctant, tottering every step
Beneath the cumb'rous, forked yoke that binds
Each in succession to the slave before,
Throughout the mournful, far-extending file

In bags, suspended from their deep-gall'd necks,
Of helpless babes the superadded load
Enfeebled mothers bear. Some big with child,
The cries of famine, grief, fatigue, despair,
With those of parturition, void of hope,
In melancholy symphony conjoin:

Some down the rivers in the light canoe
Are hurried to the coast. Bound hand and foot,
They to the bassy bottom are consign'd,
Where day and night in filthy water drench'd,
They basely lie, like nature's offals vile.²⁵

It was, however, naturally the Middle Passage which gripped these poets most intensely. Just as they reflect some of the key philosophical postulates of the age, so also we find in their work overtones from the aesthetic which had created the novel of terror, and the romantic agony. Helen Maria Williams, who was at the centre of Girondist activity during the French Revolution, showed readers of her poem the negro's sense of loss at his removal from Africa:

The groan of agony severe
From yon dark vessel, which contains
The wretch new bound in hopeless chains;
Whose soul with keener anguish bleeds,
As Afric's less'ning shore recedes—
No more where Ocean's unseen bound
Leaves a drear world of waters round,
Between the howling gust, shall rise,
The stifled Captive's latest sighs.²⁶

A late poem on the theme, Hamlet Wood's *The Negro* (1833), gave a brief summation of the experience of the Middle Passage:

Two hundred Negroes, and two hundred more,
Lie closely clustered on a filthy floor,
In irons, in rows and naked are they spread,
No downy pillow rests their aching head;
Disease, despair, and sickness dire assails

The wretched inmates of these rocking jails;
 Like cattle! is the Negro daily bought,
 As beasts of burden, is he fed and taught;
 To some plantation straight perhaps he goes,
 'Midst toil, and pain, and stripes, and kicks, and blows.²⁷

As Wood indicates here, life on the plantation was felt only to offer a type of hell marginally better than the Middle Passage itself. The pseudonymous Timothy Touchstone's *Tea and Sugar* bears the imprint of observed reality both in its depiction of the devices used upon the slaves and in its dietary accuracy:

Turn'd to the fields, in gangs, with Hoe and Bill,
 Or watch the growing Canes, or feed the Mill:
 Where, with cruel lash the Driver stands
 To whip, without regard, the sable bands;
 Each lacerating stroke gives writhing pain
 Too much for human nature to sustain

And often, when the whip is laid aside,
 Some other curious torture is apply'd,
 Such as the thumb-screw, damned instrument,
 A most inhuman, horrid punishment:

Besides these ills, dire Famine holds her sway
 O'er Afric's race, t'whom numbers fall a prey:
 Their food, if what they eat deserves that name,
 Englishmen, listen! Creoles, blush for shame!
 Consists of putrid pork, or stinking fish,
 And horse-beans constitute their first, best dish.²⁸

In 1826 the novelist Amelia Opie published a poem for children, *The Black Man's Lament*, accompanied by drawings illustrating the various tasks of the slaves. Thus was the English child familiarised with the negro's drudgery in both field and refinery:

As holes must all at once be made,
 Together we must work or stop;
 Therefore, the whip our strength must aid,
 And lash us when we pause or drop!

Our task is next to catch the juice
 In leaden bed, soon as it flows
 And instant, lest it spoil for use,
 It into boiling vessel goes.

Nor one alone: four vessels more
 Receive and clear the sugar-tide.
 Six coolers next receive the store;
 Long vessels, shallow, wooden, wide.²⁹

The abolitionist poet did not hesitate to place the slave within the wider context of West Indian civilisation. James Montgomery, a prominent Sheffield radical, based his poem *The West Indies* upon childhood memories of the islands. While the slaves toiled, others parasitically took their ease:

Loathsome as death, corrupted as the grave,
 See the dull Creole at his pompous board,
 Attendant vassals cringing round their lord;
 Voluptuous minions fan him in repose;
 Prone on the noonday couch he lolls in vain,
 Delirious slumbers rock his maudlin brain;
 He starts in horror from bewildering dreams,
 His bloodshot eye with fire and frenzy gleams;
 He stalks abroad; through all his wonted rounds,
 The negro trembles, and the lash resounds,
 And cries of anguish shrilling through the air,
 To distant fields his dread approach declare.³⁰

To a few of these poets slavery was so awful in its human implications that the claims of the perfectibilists rang hollow. Only an apocalyptic insurrection comparable to that of Toussaint against the French would now bring England to her senses. Bishop Mant was of this persuasion:

Thron'd on the storm, and all his zone on flame,
 Athirst for vengeance, Afric's Genius came.
 His sons beheld him, tow'ring in his might;
 And clank'd their chains with horrible delight;
 Wav'd the red banner o'er the murmuring flood;
 And yell'd to war; and bath'd the land in blood.
 Nor rest; nor respite; death to death succeeds:
 The negro triumphs, and the white man bleeds.

That an eruption of violence was circumvented was largely due to the efforts of Clarkson and the Clapham Sect. But the weight and force of their arguments could never have gained so rapid a reformation of opinion without the support of the abolitionist poets. It was to Cowper, whose slave trade "ballads" were universally popular, that these poets looked for inspiration.³¹ But whether in the person of Cowper or the humblest versifier, literature had engaged with a crushing social evil as never before. For once, the poet was an acknowledged legislator.

We see in the abolition movement that deepening of humanitarian sentiment which became so marked a characteristic of the Victorian age. With the abolition in 1807 slave trade literature virtually ceased in England. Concern with the institution of slavery, abolished in the colonies in 1833, became the prerogative of the American writer. Yet it can be said that the English poets took a decisive step in removing the republic of letters from the drawing-room and placing it in a larger world.

There is little enough grace or wit in the literature of abolition, nor would it be appropriate to the subject-matter. But we may close with a glimpse of the campaign through the eyes of one who never lost her Augustan sense of elegance in the swelling tide of earnestness. Jane Austen is not noted for overt political comment, but one telling cameo epitomises the changed attitude to abolition post facto. Once it was accomplished most people of manners were anxious to be found on the side of the angels. In *Emma* Mrs. Elton is a classically foolish upholder of the proprieties. Her brother-in-law, Mr. Suckling, has made his money in Bristol, and she hypersensitively leaps to his defence when Jane Fairfax refers to something quite other than the slave trade:

"There are places in town, offices, where inquiry would soon produce something-- Offices for the sale --not quite of human flesh--but of human intellect."
 "Oh! my dear, human flesh! You quite shock me; if you mean a fling at the slave-trade, I assure you Mr. Suckling was always rather a friend to the abolition."
 "I did not mean, I was not thinking of the slave-trade," replied Jane, "governess-trade, I assure you, was all I had in view; widely different certainly as to the guilt of those who carry it on; but as to the greater misery of the victims, I do not know where it lies.""

The guilt of the bourgeoisie and their belated consciousness of the evils of the slave trade are here caught with an economy and power quite beyond the poets of the abolition campaign. Yet in the last analysis it was they who helped largely to create the new moral atmosphere which Mrs. Elton breathes.

NOTES

- ¹"In England slavery would attract a host of forgotten scribblers, along with Blake, Cowper, Burns, Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth." David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970), p. 517.
- ²See, for example, J. B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1920), E. L. Tuveson, *Millennium and Utopia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), Lois Whitney, *Primitivism and the Idea of Progress* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1934), Basil Willey, *The Eighteenth Century Background* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1940).
- ³A. Cobban, *In Search of Humanity* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960).
- ⁴F. J. Klingberg, *The Anti-Slavery Movement in England* (New Haven: Yale Historical Publications, Misc. 17, 1926), p. 22.
- ⁵*Some New and Accurate Observations on the Coast of Guinea* (London, 1725), pp. 33-34.
- ⁶Douglas Grant, *The Fortunate Slave* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 92.
- ⁷"On the Abolition of the Slave Trade," *The Monthly Review* LXXIX (1788), 169.
- ⁸James Boswell, "No Abolition," *Gentleman's Magazine*, LXI (1771) 357-58.
- ⁹Edward Young, *Imperium Pelagi, or The Merchant*, (Dublin: G. Risk, G. Ewing & W. Smith, 1730), Part V, stanza xx.
- ¹⁰"Summer," *The Seasons* (1746), II. 1015-25. Thomson added these lines to the original text to illustrate summer in the tropics. Douglas Grant makes an illuminating comparison between this passage and Turner's slave-ship painting, noting that Thomson was here able to "associate the consequences of the slave trade with most aspects of the sublime: fear, power, infinity, solitude, obscurity, and death, which both repel and attract the imagination," (Grant, p. 150).
- ¹¹*The Critical Review*, LXV (1788), 137.
- ¹²In a letter to Mrs. W. Rawson in 1826, discussing Sheffield anti-slavery album.
- ¹³Thomas Wilkinson's preface to *An Appeal to England on behalf of the Abused Africans, a Poem* (London: James Phillips, 1789), Preface p. iii.
- ¹⁴Captain James Majoribanks in a letter to the secretary of the Edinburgh Abolition Society which prefaces his poem "Slavery, an Essay in Verse" (Edinburgh: J. Robertson, 1792), Prefatory Letter p. 6.
- ¹⁵*The Monthly Review*, LXXVIII (1788), 137.
- ¹⁶See the "Ode on seeing a Negro Funeral" and "The Sable Venus," both included in Edwards's *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies* (1793). On Coleridge's substantial connexions with the abolition movement see J. R. Ebbatson, "Coleridge's Mariner and the Rights of Man," *Studies in Romanticism*, II (1972), pp. 171-206.

- ¹⁷Elizabeth Benger, "A Poem, occasioned by the Abolition of the Slave Trade in 1806," ll. 691-98. This was published in *Poems on the Abolition of the Slave Trade written by James Montgomery, James Grahame and Elizabeth Benger* (London: Robert Bowyer, 1809).
- ¹⁸*The Monthly Review*, XLIX (1773), 63.
- ¹⁹Grant, p. 49.
- ²⁰James Grahame, "Africa Delivered, or The Slave Trade Abolished," in Bowyer, Part I, ll. 6-16.
- ²¹William Roscoe, *The Wrongs of Africa* (London: R. Faulder, 1787), ll. 148-54.
- ²²Richard Mant, *The Slave* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1807), ll. 100-09.
- ²³Thomas Day, "The Dying Negro" (1773); original text not available, quotation from *The British Poets*, vol. LVII (Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1822), ll. 176-79; 196-99.
- ²⁴Hannah More, "Slavery" (1788), *Poems* (London: T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1816), ll. 113-18.
- ²⁵John Jamieson, *The Sorrows of Slavery* (London: J. Murray, 1789), Part I, 354-58; 370-75; 465-69.
- ²⁶Helen Maria Williams, *A Poem on the Bill lately passed for Regulating the Slave Trade* (London: T. Cadell, 1788), ll. 4-12.
- ²⁷Hamlet Wood, *The Negro: an historical poem, in the shape of Dialogue, Describing the unchristian and wicked principle and practice of slavery* (Burslem: R. Timmis, 1833), ll. 709-18.
- ²⁸Timothy Touchstone, *Tea and Sugar, or the Nabob and the Creole* (London: J. Ridgway, 1792), Canto II, ll. 17-22; 25-28; 51-56.
- ²⁹Amelia Opie, *The Black Man's Lament, or, How to make Sugar* (London: Harvey and Darton, 1826), stanzas 13, 20 and 21.
- ³⁰James Montgomery, "The West Indies" (1808), in Bowyer, Part III, 218-30.
- ³¹Cowper never wavered in his resistance to the slave trade, and we may imagine that his resistance was stiffened by the presence of John Newton at Olney. It was at Newton's request that in 1788 Cowper wrote his "ballads," notably "The Slave's Complaint," which Clarkson described as one of the shrewdest blows of the campaign. On this question see Lodwick C. Hartley, *William Cowper, Humanitarian* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938).
- ³²*Emma* (London: John Murray, 1816), ch. 35.