

MISCELLANY.

RIGHTS OF BLACK MEN.

Concluded.

I SPEAK the words of truth and soberness, in saying, that the blacks are now fighting in a just cause.—My assertion, that they are entitled to freedom, is founded upon the American Declaration of Independence :—Upon the language of petitions to the English court, at the commencement of the late war :—Upon the spirit of freedom, which animated and conducted to victory, the American army :—Upon Paine's Common Sense :—Upon the articles of our liberating societies, and upon the Declaration of Rights, to be seen in the different statute-law-Books throughout the States.

Have we already forgotten the animating sound, *Liberty, or Death*?—That sound has gone out into the world, and is rapidly extending to the ends of the earth. From various parts of Europe we have already heard the echo, *Liberty or Death*: We have firmly asserted, *that all men are free*. Yet, as soon as the poor blacks, who have been oppressed beyond measure, who suffered, till cruelty itself cried out, *It is enough*,—who bore, till patience had done its perfect work, echoed *Liberty or Death*, we have been the first to assist in riveting their chains!—From us, the blacks had a right to expect effectual assistance. They were pursuing the principles, which we had taught them, and are now sealing with their blood, *the rights of men*; yet, Americans are sending assistance to their enemies. I do not suggest, that the Federal Legislature has sent them assistance, or that any one of the States has officially afforded assistance; but vessel-loads of military stores and provisions have been sent; the public papers have been scrupulously filled with reports of the success of the whites.

Every public transaction, and, most private conversations have evinced a great zeal in favor of the whites, and one can hardly wish the blacks to be victorious, without exposing himself to censure, calumny and opprobrious names. That conduct and language, which, in 1775, would have cost a man the loss of his liberty, will now, in 1791, be applauded.----But my argument for a contrary conduct and language is made up in the following manner.

The blacks are entitled to freedom, for we did not say, *all white men are free*; but *all men are free*. The blacks bore their condition of slavery, till it became intolerable. The blacks took up arms to rid themselves of slavery. Arms were their only resource. They use their arms according to the best of their knowledge. They look to the liberating societies for that aid and support, which they were taught to expect. It is cruelty then to withhold such aid and support :—Worse than cruelty to assist their enemies. If, at this time, the liberating societies do not come forward, how ridiculous must appear their orations, their publications, their records, their addresses to the passions, and to the reason, in favor of the poor blacks!!--How profane must appear their appeals to Heaven for the sincerity of their zeal, and their resolution to exert themselves to liberate the blacks!

In calm seasons, the *timid* sailor is on deck, defying the storm; but in a gale of wind, he is sick in his hammock. On days of peace and public review, the *cowardly* soldier is on parade with swelled cheeks, and eyes flashing fire; but when the trumpet calls to actual battle; the poor wretch has the *cannon-fever*.

To hammock-sickness, and cannon-fevers may be imputed the present silence of our liberating societies. So far as the appointment of officers, and pretty letters, written upon gilt paper, could prove their zeal, they were zealous; but when they heard the sound *Liberty or Death*, like good christians, they left all to an over-ruling Providence. Where now are the pen, the tongue, the counsel, the sword, and the money of these zealous men? They were ready to risk all, for the liberation of the poor blacks :—But when the serious point comes, *Will you assist them?* They are sick in their hammocks, and the public papers are left to record the *deaths* without a prospect of the liberty of the blacks.

J.P.M.