The "Coolie trade," as it is improperly called, which is proposed as a substitute for the slave trade, deserves an extended and thorough discussion by itself. Our space only allows a look at it from one point of view. It proposes to get labor done in the West Indies, on such terms, that the planters can pay the expense of finding and hiring the laborers in China, pay the expense of transporting them to the West Indies, and back again at the end of their term of service, and make money by the operation. To accomplish this, contracts must be made with men who do not know the value of labor in the West Indies, and who can be induced, by taking advantage of that ignorance, to bind themselves to work for so much less than their labor is worth, as will enable the planters to meet all those other expenses and make a profit. If during their term of service they learn how they have been cheated and show symptoms of rebellion, they must be reduced to order, and made to fulfil the contract into which they had thus fraudulently been induced to enter. It is vain to think of making such a system tolerable by regulations. It is intrinsically incapable of being honestly and humanely executed. Its whole operation is prompted by avarice, and the contracts can only be obtained by fraud and enforced by oppression. It is probable, however, that Great Britain will try it for a time, before resorting to effectual measures for the extinction of the

And yet, we do not see why she needs to do it. If the slave trade and "Coolie" trade were both stopped, the price of labor in the West Indies would rise, and the price of sugar would rise; but Cuba would no longer be able, by working to death cargoes of newly imported Africans, to sell sugar cheaper than Jamaica could, and the British planter would be as well off, in comparison, as while both trades continue. The only enduring evil would be, that the consumers of sugar must pay an additional penny or two a pound for it.

We have said that while Great Britain indulges Spain in conniving at the slave trade, it is the duty of our government to restrain our own citizens, and others residing or being within our jurisdiction, from engaging in it. For this last-mentioned purpose, probably some further legislation is needed; especially, to prevent members or agents of foreign houses from using our ports for some of the preliminary, but essentially important operations for a slave trading voyage, and perhaps for holding American vessels, transferred by a sham or even a real sale to foreign slave trading owners or masters, still responsible to our laws. The addition of a few small armed steamers to our African and West India squadrons might also be advisable; though the few now employed are capturing slavers so fast that the traffic can not long stand such losses. All such points, we trust, will receive the careful and efficient attention of Congress at its next session.

A word more, on a proposal, so absurd that even one word ought not to be needed; the proposal, not formally made, but suggested in some newspapers and speeches in Congress, that Africans, taken from slave ships, instead of being sent to Africa, should be retained in this country and civilized. The precise mode of civilizing them, we believe, has not yet been even suggested. If they are to be civilized by an apprentice-ship, somewhat like the British, where shall it be done? In the slave holding States, such a class of "free negroes" would be thought inconvenient. None of those States, we suppose, have, or would enact, laws for the government and protection of such "apprentices;" and the Federal Government has no constitutional power to make laws for their government within the jurisdiction of any State. And what should be done

with them at the end of their apprenticeship? Must they be sold as vagabonds? In the non-slave-holding States, no body would consent to have such "apprentices." See, on this subject, the letter of Mr. Adams, Secretary of State, to Messrs. Gallatin and Rush, of Nov. 2, 1818, in Kennedy's Report, p. 273, and of Mr. Rush to Lord Castlereagh, December 21, 1818, p. 275. Shall they be kept in the United States, to be civilized, as slaves. Any arrangement of this kind would be a virtual opening of the slave trade by the authority of the United States. Slave ships might be sent to Africa, purchase and ship their cargoes, (if Great Britain continues to permit such things to be done there,) bring them into our ports, and pass them through cheap forms of seizure and condemnation into the hands of planters who want them; as was habitually done at Darien, Ga., and other ports, from 1808 to 1819. See Report of Secretary of the Treasury to the House of Representatives, Jan. 11, 1820, with enclosures, in Kennedy's Report, pp. 249—258. See also, Kennedy, pp. 229—246.

The experience of our Government from the law prohibiting the importation of slaves after January 1, 1808, to the Act of March 3, 1819, conclusively proved that, in order to suppress the slave trade between our own ports and the coast of Africa, the re-captured slaves must not be allowed to pass under the jurisdiction of any of the States, but must be retained in the custody of the United States Government, till sent out of the country; and for this reason arrangements were made for returning them to Africa. For this reason, the Act of March 3, 1819, was passed, and the agency in Africa for re-captured Africans was established.

For many years Great Britain pursued the same policy, settling her re-captives, first at Sierra Leone, and afterward at Bathurst, at the mouth of the Gambia, and on Macarthy's Island, far up that river. If she would resume that policy, she would be obliged to plant other settlements on other parts of the coast; and each settlement would make the exportation of slaves impossible in its vicinity. She has abundant materials for commencing such settlements, and preparing them for the reception of recaptured slaves. She has nearly, if not quite, a million of acclimated subjects of African descent. On the Gambia, in Sierra Leone, and on the gold and slave coasts, all in tropical Africa, she must have very nearly a hundred thousand, native to the climate. In the West Indies, her emancipated slaves are eight hundred thousand; and among her black and colored population, there are men of good character and education, who are anxious to plant new British colonies in Africa, for the purpose, among others, of aiding in the extinction of the slave trade; of which desire the British Government has had official information for ten or twelve years. And even without planting colonies, she might station such men, as traders, or as consuls, or consular agents, all along the coast, as is done at Lagos, so that not a cargo of slaves could be collected without their knowing it in season to inform a British cruiser. So entirely has Great Britain the means of suppressing the slave trade. And the posses sion of the means, especially when obtained for that purpose, with the assent, asked and granted, of the whole civilized world imposes the obligation

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The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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