industry, keep as much as possible aloof from the slaves, to whom in general they regard themselves as in some degree superior. Their association is confined as much as possible, to the better and more respectable class of slaves. But the idle and disorderly free blacks naturally seek the society of such slaves, as are disposed to be idle or disorderly, whom they encourage to become more and more so, by their example their conversation and the shelter and means of concealment which they furnish. They encourage the slaves to theft, because they partake in its fruits. They receive secrete and dispose of the stolen goods, a part, and probably much the largest part of which they receive, as a reward for their services. They furnish places of meeting and hiding

places

places in their houses, for the idle and vicious, whose idleness and vice are thus increased, and rendered more contagious. These hiding places and places of meeting are so many traps and snares, for the young and thoughtless slaves, who have not yet become vicious; so many schools in which they are taught, by precept and example, idleness lying debauchery drunkenness and theft. The consequence of all this is very easily seen, and I am sure is severely felt in all places, where free people of colour exist in considerable numbers. That so many resist this contagion, that the free blacks themselves as well as the slaves do not become still more generally profligate, is a strong and consoling proof, that the race possesses a fund of good disposition, and is capable in a proper situation and under proper management,