

before impartial judges, the acts of a government which, since 1810, has exercised the most absolute despotism over us, concealed under the great name of liberty. We have indeed the liberty of the press, but it is not listened to. Vain are all cries; the Government "stop their ears and let us cry." Then they tell us that we shall never have a more wise, a more paternal, a more liberal government. "What would you have more than the liberty of thinking and writing?" they ask. What we would have is that the liberty of the press should be of some use to us; that the Government should listen to the mouth-pieces of public opinion; that they should not waste our funds in spite of the protestations of the press;* that they should cause the laws, as they were made, to be observed, and by all alike; that among other laws, that of quarantine should be faithfully observed, and that no exception should be made in favor of H. B. M.'s ships of war and transports with troops; that more attention should be paid to the subject of communication with the ships arriving from India; that we should be more effectually protected from the epidemics which decimate our population; that the cholera should be prevented from becoming endemic in the country, so that the French and Creole population of the Mauritius may be preserved; that enquiry should be made as to the causes which may have brought the cholera upon us; that insufficient laws may be revised; that our reserves should be kept at home instead of being lent to the Mother Country or to other colonies; that our treaty of capitulation should be respected; that no attempt should be made to introduce here English laws, when it is agreed that by the French codes only are we to be governed; that the use of the French language, of which we have been deprived in defiance of sworn faith, should be restored to us; that no flagrant injustice should be committed in favor of the English and to the detriment of the Creoles; that the latter may be appointed to the different offices, and that these should not be conferred on incapable favorites; we would have the Legislative Council and self-government, &c., &c. This is what we would have. You see that we wish for a great many things. But are they not all just and reasonable? Let us now proceed to the enumeration of some of them, and, in chronological order, let us begin with the French language. The deed of capitulation, signed in 1810 by the representatives of France and England, contained the following articles, which we, the conquered people, imposed on our conquerors:—

- 1st. Respect for our religion.
- 2nd. The maintenance of our laws.
- 3rd. The guarantee that we should be allowed to speak French.

Well, of these three principal articles (inscribed

in large characters in our deed of capitulation, accepted and promised under the faith of an oath, signed and approved by England), one has been already violated, and the work of undermining another is going on! Setting at naught all scruples, the English Government first robbed us of the use of the French language before the high courts of justice. We have expressed our claims, but a deaf ear has been turned to them. This first step taken, what bounds will be set to this great work of destruction of all that we hold from France? On the application of a few English, the revival of our code is already being considered; and when the whole population apply to the Mother Country for the revocation of an order which renders the transaction of business impossible, without the very costly intervention of legal men and translators, and which, moreover, inflicts a deep wound on the Creole heart, they are told to hold their tongues! When they loudly call for the revision of insufficient laws which facilitate the propagation of mephitic miasmata they are not listened to! When they demand an enquiry into the circumstances which have caused the introduction into their midst of the cruel epidemic, which for more than four months has carried death into their ranks, they are told that they are indulging in idle fancies! At the same time, and as though to turn the public mind from this fixed idea, there is a semblance of bringing up a question already decided upon and voted—that relating to railways! Another grievance. Whilst the epidemic is raging among us, and whilst our municipality stands in need of money for the relief of the poor classes, the Government has none to lend, because the financial reserves of the colony are lent to the Cape, to India, to Ceylon, and to the Mother Country itself.

Thus, Mr. SPEAKER, the Mauritius, which, by the terms of her treaty of capitulation, was to have preserved to her the use of her language, her peculiar institutions and her laws, has soon found herself deprived of the use of her language; her laws have been changed, and her institutions have been subjected to oppression. This, Mr. SPEAKER, is the sort of liberty which a French colony may enjoy under the colonial system of England, when the colony is weak and is not situated, as Canada is, in the vicinity of a powerful republic such as the United States. I think, Mr. SPEAKER, that I have now shewn what has ever been the spirit of antagonism between the two races of English and French origin, on the two continents, and what has been the spirit of aggression of the English element against our population, from the founding of the colony up to our own time; we have seen colonial fanaticism attacking our institutions, our language and our laws, and we have seen that our annihilation as a race has been the evident

* This demand is in fact perfectly just, as of the five papers published in the Mauritius, four are French; but the single English journal on the island was always right, in opposition to the four French journals.