ſtinction between clean and unclean beaſts, God him­ſelf aſſigns the reaſon : “ I am the Lord your God (ſays he), who have ſeparated you from other people ; ye ſhall therefore put difference between clean and un­clean beaſts, and between unclean fowls and clean @@\*.” For the ſame reaſon they were prohibited from inter­marrying with the heathen, or having any tranſaction whatever with them as neighbours ; and the ſeven ido­latrous nations of Canaan they were ſtrictly command­ed to exterminate. “ When the Lord thy God (ſays Moſes) ſhall deliver them before thee, thou ſhalt finite them, and utterly deſtroy them : thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor ſhow mercy unto them : nei­ther ſhalt thou make marriages with them: thy daugh­ter thou ſhalt not give unto his ſon, nor his daughter ſhalt thou take to thy ſon ; for they will turn away thy ſon from following me, that they may ſerve other gods @@\*.”

Under theſe laws, it is plain that no intercourſe what­ever could have place between an Iſraelite and a man of any other nation, unleſs the latter was reduced to ſuch a ſtate as that he could neither tempt the former nor practiſe himſelf the rites of his idolatrous worſhip. But the Iſraelites were not ſeparated from the reſt oſ the world for their own ſakes only : They were intend­ed to be the repoſitories of the lively oracles of God, and gradually to ſpread the light of divine truth thro’ other nations, till the fulneſs of time ſhould come, when in Chriſt all things were to be gathered together in one. To anſwer this end, it was necessary that there ſhould be ſome intercourſe between them and their Gentile neighbours ; but we have ſeen that ſuch an intercourſe could only be that which ſubſiſts between mailers and their ſlaves.

Should this apology for the ſlavery which was authoriſed by the Jewiſh law be deemed fanciful, we beg leave to ſubmit to the consideration of our readers the following account of that matter, to which the ſame objection will hardly be made. It was morally impoſſible that between nations differing ſo widely in religion, cuſtoms, and manners, as the Jews and Gen­tiles, peace ſhould for ever reign without interruption ; but when wars broke out, battles would be fought, and priſoners would be taken. How were theſe priſoners to be diſpoſed of ? Cartels for exchange were not then known : it was the duty of the Iſraelites to prevent their captives from taking up arms a ſecond time againſt them ; they could not eſtabliſh them among themſelves either as artificers or as huſhandmen ; for their law en­joined them to have no communication with the hea­then. There was therefore no other alternative but ei­ther to massacre them in cold blood, or to reduce them to the condition oſ ſlaves. It would appear, however, that thoſe ſlaves were raiſed to the rank of citizens, or at leaſt that their burdens were much lightened, as ſoon as they were convinced of the truth of the Moſaic re­velation, and received into covenant with God by the rite of circumciſion. They were then admitted to the celebration of the paſsover ; concerning which one law was decreed to the ſtranger, and to him that was home-born Indeed, when we conſider who was the legiſlator of the Jews ; when we reflect upon the num­ber oſ laws enacted to mitigate ſlavery among them, and call to mind the means by which the due execution of all their laws was enforced, (ſee Theology), we

cannot help being of opinion that the heathen, who was reduced to ſlavery in Judea, might be happier, if he pleaſed, than when living as a freeman in his own country. But whether this be ſo or not, is a matter with which we have no concern. On account of the hardneſs of their hearts, and the peculiarity of their circumſtances, many things, of which ſlavery may have been one, were permitted to the Jews, which, if practiſed by Chriſtians, would render them highly guilty.

After treating thus largely of ſlavery in general, we need not occupy much of the reader’s time with the

SLAVE-TRADE carried on at preſent by the mer­chants of Europe with the natives of Africa. It is well known that the Portugueſe were the firſt Europeans who embarked in this trade, and that their example was ſoon followed by the Dutch and the Engliſh. Of the riſe and progreſs of the Engliſh commerce in ſlaves, the reader will find a ſufficient account in other articles oſ this work@@\*. That commerce, though long cherished by the government as a ſource of national and colonial wealth, was from its commencement conſidered by the thinking part of the nation as a traffic inconſiſtent with the rights of man, and ſuspected to be carried on by acts of violence. Theſe ſuſpicions have been gradually ſpread through the people at large, and conſirmed, in many inſtances, by evidence incontrovertible. Laws have in conſequence been enacted to make the negroes more comfortable on what is called the middle passage, and to protect them againſt the wanton cruelty of their masters in the West Indies : but the humanity of the nation was rouſed ; and not many years ago a number of gentlemen, of the moſt reſpectable characters, find­ing that no adequate protection can be afforded to per­ſons in a ſtate of hopeleſs ſervitude, formed themſelves into a ſociety at London, for the purpoſe of procuring a total abolition of the ſlave-trade. That the motives which influence the leading men of this ſociety are of the pureſt kind, cannot, we think, be queſtioned ; for their object is to deliver thoſe who had none to help them, and from whom they can expect no other reward for their labours of love than the bleſſings of them who are ready to periſh. To a cauſe ſo truly Chriſtian, who would not pray for ſucceſs ? or who but muſt feel the moſt pungent regret, if that ſucceſs has been rendered doubtful, or even been delayed, by the imprudence of ſome of the agents employed by the ſociety ? This we apprehend to have been really the caſe. Language calculated only to exaſperate the planters cannot ſerve the negroes ; and the legislature of Great Britain will never ſuffer itſelf to be forced into any meaſure by the me­naces oſ individuals.

In the year 1793, petitions were preſented to parlia­ment for the abolition of this inhuman traffic, which gave a pleaſing picture of the philanthropy of the na­tion ; but, unfortunately for the cauſe of freedom, it was diſcovered that many of the names ſubjoined to thoſe petitions had been collected by means not the moſt ho­nourable. This diſcovery, perhaps, would never have been made, had not the inſulting epithets indiſcriminately heaped upon the ſlave-holders provoked thoſe men to watch with circumſpection over the conduct of their opponents. The conſequence was, that ſuſpicions **of unfair dealing on the part of the petitioners were ex-**

@@@[m]\* Lev. xx. 24, 25, 26.

@@@[m]\* Dout. vii. 2, 3, 4.

@@@[m]\* See Company, vol. p. 225. and Guinea.