which had prevailed before the passing of Sir William Dolben’s carrying act. An energetic remedy was neces­sary, and such an one was suggested by Mr. Brougham, who, in 1811, introduced a bill, (carried unanimously through both Houses,) declaring the trade in slaves to be felony, and punishable with fourteen years’ transportation, or five years’ imprisonment. After a time, even this de­cided measure seemed not decided enough ; an act of 1824 made slave-trading a capital offence, by the name of piracy; and the recent acts of 1837, for mitigating the criminal law, have left it punishable with transportation for life. “ There is every reason to think,” says Lord Brougham, “ that no British subjects are now, or have for many years been, directly engaged in this execrable traffic, with the exception of those belonging to the Mauritius. In that island it is certain, that, with the connivance, if not under the direct encouragement, of the higher authorities of the colony, slave-trading to an enormous extent was for some years openly carried on.”

The treaties with foreign powers, crippled by national jealousies, were found equally inefficient with our own law. The king of Spain, one of the two great offenders, after having had the meanness to accept, by a treaty of 1817, a large sum from our treasury, as the price of his promise to abolish his slave-trade on the north of the equator immedi­ately, and to put a final stop to the traffic in 1820, had next the effrontery to refuse all performance of the en­gagement for which he had thus received the consideration; and a vote of abolition, passed by the Cortes in 1822, re­mained of course inoperative. The great difficulty,—the right of one nation’s cruisers to search vessels under the flag of another power, when suspected of slaving,—was how­ever mutually conceded in 1817, between Great Britain on the one hand, and Portugal and Spain (within the limits em­braced in the subsisting treaties) on the other ; and a simi­lar treaty was effected with Holland in the succeeding year.

But, besides other faults, there were, in our treaties of this sort, two main defects, which, of themselves, rendered the whole system of checks quite inoperative. First, the cruisers, except under our treaty with the Netherlands, had no power to capture vessels not having slaves on board, al­though it might be fully proved that they were slaving- ships, or even that they had just delivered a cargo. In consequence of this, not only were notorious slavers fre­quently dismissed after examination, but, in several instan­ces, which have been fully authenticated, the wretches in command were known to throw their slaves overboard on a chase, in the hope of thus removing the only ground on which their detention could be legally justified. Secondly, con­demned vessels, instead of being broken up, were sold, and, being fitted for no trade but their own, fell again almost in­variably into the hands of the slave-dealers.

In neither of these particulars was any improvement ef­fected till after the late revolution in France, whose sub­jects, since the restoration, had begun to rank amongst the most active of the contraband slave merchants. In 1833 a treaty was concluded between our government and that of France, by which the breaking up of the vessels was agreed to ; and it was also declared, that all vessels ascertained by certain equipments to be intended for the slave trade, might be lawfully detained and confiscated, even though slaves had not been found on board, nor even embarked. France and England have since taken the lead in urging all other Christian powers to accede to these con­ventions ; but as yet their success has been far from gene­ral. The five powers with which this country previously had conventions on the subject have come very reluctantly into the additional measures ; and one of them, namely, Portugal, has shown a most disgraceful want of faith in fulfilling her engagements. The protection of the Portu­guese flag was and is sold by the authorities of that govern­ment on the African coast ; and miscreants, thus furnished with papers apparently regular, and not having yet receiv­ed their slave-cargoes, insolently defy our cruisers, or even prosecute our captains for damages, on account of illegal detention. Our government, however, have recently shown a determined front ; and we may perhaps hope that the feeble and faithless power which insults us and outrages humanity, will at length suffer condign punishment. As to Spain, between 1823 and 1832, her slavers imported into Cuba 100,000 slaves at least. The equipment clause was always refused by the cabinet nt Madrid ; and it was not till 1835, after the death of Ferdinand, that our minis­ter at that court was able to extort the accession of the Spanish government to that essential article. The effects of this new treaty have been exceedingly encouraging: within six months after its execution, as many Spanish slavers lay waiting the sentence of our Confiscation Court at Sierra Leone, as had been taken during any three years under the previous conventions. The Brazilian govern­ment, although professedly anxious to discourage the im­portation of new slaves, on account of the danger the whites already incur from an increasing black population, have pleaded, with some plausibility, their want of power to check the trade effectually, so long as the Portuguese flag shall be allowed to protect the slavers. Sweden and the Netherlands were not prevailed on to accede to the French conventions till the year 1838.

Of those powers with which we had previously no agree­ment, Denmark and the Sardinian States both acceded in 1834. Prussia has shewn a reluctance, for which it is not easy to account. The display of the same spirit by Russia was not so much matter of surprise. Austria, though the emperor has imitated our laws, declaring any slave free who touches Austrian ground, and also making the slave- trade heavily punishable, has acted with its accustomed jealousy, in refusing co-operation with other states. Tus­cany and the Two Sicilies joined the league in 1838. With the republics of the New World our negociations have been exceedingly unsuccessful. The United States have peremptorily refused to combine with any foreign power for the suppression of the slave-trade ; and, amongst the Spanish commonwealths, Venezuela is the only one which has come cheerfully forward, although the objections started by some of the rest do not seem to be insuperable.

Altogether, those efforts which philanthropists have so long continued for removing this blot from the name of Christianity, have not yet by any means produced such results as can allow us to believe that the struggle is nearly at an end. Partly through defects in the machinery of the laws and treaties,—partly through dishonesty or luke­warmness in the contracting powers or their officials.— partly through causes which can never be removed while the fold shape of slavery itself darkens any comer of the earth,—the traffic in human blood still goes on with an ac­tivity that is incredible to all but those who have studies the subject. The proofs of this lamentable fact are no where so convincingly stated as in a work on *The Afri­can Slave Trade,* published in 1839, by Mr. Fowell Bux­ton, from which we can afford to abstract but a very few statements, observing, at the same time, that there is not one of them but is below the truth. According to the highest of those estimates which have been founded on assured data, the Christian slave trade still robs Africa every year of 250,000 human beings. According to the very lowest computation, it absorbs 150,000. To this number must be added that of the Mohammedan trade, which exports at least 50,000 annually ; so that we are much below the mark when we assert, that, in the course of every year, 200,000 negroes, at least, arc carried off into hopeless slavery. But this is not all. It may be safely asserted, that, for every slave who is exported, there is