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Public Health Service

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

BLACK PEOPLE,

DURING THE LATE

Awful Calamity in Philadelphia,

IN THE YEAR 1793:

AND

A REFUTATION

OF SOME

CENSURES,

Thrown upon them in some late Publications.

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE
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BY A. J. AND R. A.

PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED FOR THE AUTHORS,
BY *WILLIAM W. WOODWARD, AT FRANKLIN'S HEAD,*
NO. 41, CHESNUT-STREET.

1794.

No. 54.

District of Pennsylvania, to wit.

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-third day of January, in the eighteenth year of the Independence of the United States of America, Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, both of the said District, have deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as authors and proprietors, in the words following, to wit: "*A Narrative of the Proceedings of the Black People, during the late awful Calamity in Philadelphia, in the year* 1793: *and a Refutation of some Censures thrown upon them in some late Publications. By A. J. & R. A.*" In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, intitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned."

Samuel Caldwell,

Clerk of the District of Pennsylvania.

A NARRATIVE, &c.

IN conſequence of a partial repreſentation of the conduct of the people who were employed to nurſe the ſick, in the late calamitous ſtate of the city of Philadelphia, we are ſolicited, by a number of thoſe who feel themſelves injured thereby, and by the advice of ſeveral reſpectable citizens, to ſtep forward and declare facts as they really were; ſeeing that from our ſituation, on account of the charge we took upon us, we had it more fully and generally in our power, to know and obſerve the conduct and behavior of thoſe that were ſo employed.

Early in September, a ſolicitation appeared in the public papers, to the people of colour to come forward and aſſiſt the diſtreſſed, periſhing, and neglected ſick; with a kind of aſſurance, that people of our colour were not liable to take the infection. Upon which we and a few others met and conſulted how to act on ſo truly alarming and melancholy an occaſion. After ſome converſation, we found a freedom to go forth, confiding in him who can preſerve in the midſt of a burning fiery furnace, ſenſible that it was our duty to do all the good we could to our ſuffering fellow mortals. We ſet out to ſee where we could be uſeful. The firſt we viſited was a man in Emſley's alley, who was dying, and his wife lay dead at the time in the houſe, there were none to aſſiſt but two poor helpleſs children. We adminiſtered what relief we could, and applied to the overſeers of the poor to have the woman buried. We viſited upwards of twenty families that

day—they were ſcenes of woe indeed! The Lord was pleaſed to ſtrengthen us, and remove all fear from us, and diſpoſed our hearts to be as uſeful as poſſible.

In order the better to regulate our conduct, we called on the mayor next day, to conſult with him how to proceed, ſo as to be moſt uſeful. The firſt object he recommended was a ſtrict attention to the ſick, and the procuring of nurſes. This was attended to by Abſalom Jones and William Gray; and, in order that the diſtreſſed might know where to apply, the mayor advertiſed the public that upon application to them they would be ſupplied. Soon after, the mortality increaſing, the difficulty of getting a corpſe taken away, was ſuch, that few were willing to do it, when offered great rewards. The black people were looked to. We then offered our ſervices in the public papers, by advertiſing that we would remove the dead and procure nurſes. Our ſervices were the production of real ſenſibility;—we ſought not fee nor reward, until the increaſe of the diſorder rendered our labour ſo arduous that we were not adequate to the ſervice we had aſſumed. The mortality increaſing rapidly, obliged us to call in the aſſiſtance of five* hired men, in the awful diſcharge of interring the dead. They, with great reluctance, were prevailed upon to join us. It was very uncommon, at this time, to find any one that would go near, much more, handle, a ſick or dead perſon.

Mr. Carey, in page 106 of his third edition, has obſerved, that, "for the honor of human nature, it ought to be recorded, that ſome of the convicts in the gaol, a part of the term of whoſe confinement had been remitted as a reward for their peaceable, orderly behavior, voluntarily offered themſelves as nurſes to attend the ſick at Buſh-hill; and have, in that capacity, conducted themſelves with great fidelity, &c. Here

* Two of whom were Richard Allen's brothers.

it ought to be remarked, (although Mr. Carey hath not done it) that two thirds of the perſons, who rendered theſe eſſential ſervices, were people of colour, who, on the application of the elders of the African church, (who met to conſider what they could do for the help of the ſick) were liberated, on condition of their doing the duty of nurſes at the hoſpital at Buſh-hill; which they as voluntarily accepted to do, as they did faithfully diſcharge, this ſevere and diſagreeable duty.—May the Lord reward them, both temporally and ſpiritually.

When the ſickneſs became general, and ſeveral of the phyſicians died, and moſt of the ſurvivors were exhauſted by ſickneſs or fatigue; that good man, Doctor Ruſh, called us more immediately to attend upon the ſick, knowing we could both bleed; he told us we could increaſe our utility, by attending to his inſtructions, and accordingly directed us where to procure medicine duly prepared, with proper directions how to adminiſter them, and at what ſtages of the diſorder to bleed; and when we found ourſelves incapable of judging what was proper to be done, to apply to him, and he would, if able, attend them himſelf, or ſend Edward Fiſher, his pupil, which he often did; and Mr. Fiſher manifeſted his humanity, by an affectionate attention for their relief.—This has been no ſmall ſatisfaction to us; for, we think, that when a phyſician was not attainable, we have been the inſtruments, in the hand of God, for ſaving the lives of ſome hundreds of our ſuffering fellow mortals.

We feel ourſelves ſenſibly aggrieved by the cenſorious epithets of many, who did not render the leaſt aſſiſtance in the time of neceſſity, yet are liberal of their cenſure of us, for the prices paid for our ſervices, when no one knew how to make a propoſal to any one they wanted to aſſiſt them. At firſt we made no charge, but left it to thoſe we ſerved in removing their dead,

to give what they thought fit—we ſet no price, until the reward was fixed by thoſe we had ſerved. After paying the people we had to aſſiſt us, our compenſation is much leſs than many will believe.

We do aſſure the public, that *all* the money we have received, for burying, and for coffins which we ourſelves purchaſed and procured, has not defrayed the expence of wages which we had to pay to thoſe whom we employed to aſſiſt us. The following ſtatement is accurately made :

CASH RECEIVED.

The whole amount of Caſh we received for burying the dead, and for burying beds, is, - - - - -		£. 233 10 4

CASH PAID.

For coffins, for which we have received nothing -	£. 33 0 0	
For the hire of five men, 3 of them 70 days each, and the other two, 63 days each, at 22/6 per day, - - -	378 0 0	
		411 0 0
Debts due us, for which we expect but little, -	£. 110 0 0	
From this ſtatement, for the truth of which we ſolemnly vouch, it is evident, and we ſenſibly feel the operation of the fact, that we are out of pocket, - - - -		£. 177 9 8

Beſides the coſts of hearſes, the maintenance of our families for 70 days, (being the period of our labours) and the ſupport of the five hired men, during the reſpective times of their being employed ; which expences, together with ſundry gifts we occaſionally made to poor families, might reaſonably and properly be intro-

duced, to shew our actual situation with regard to profit—but it is enough to exhibit to the public, from the above specified items, of *Cash paid and Cash received*, without taking into view the other expences, that, by the employment we were engaged in, we have lost £.177 9 8. But, if the other expences, which we have actually paid, are added to that sum, how much then may we not say we have suffered! We leave the public to judge.

It may possibly appear strange to some who know how constantly we were employed, that we should have received no more Cash than £.233 10 4. But we repeat our assurance, that this is the fact, and we add another, which will serve the better to explain it: We have buried *several hundreds* of poor persons and strangers, for which service we have never received, nor never asked any compensation.

We feel ourselves hurt most by a partial, censorious paragraph, in Mr. Carey's second edition, of his account of the sickness, &c. in Philadelphia; pages 76 and 77, where he asperses the blacks alone, for having taken the advantage of the distressed situation of the people. That some extravagant prices were paid, we admit; but how came they to be demanded? the reason is plain. It was with difficulty persons could be had to supply the wants of the sick, as nurses;—applications became more and more numerous, the consequence was, when we procured them at six dollars per week, and called upon them to go where they were wanted, we found they were gone elsewhere; here was a disappointment; upon enquiring the cause, we found, they had been allured away by others who offered greater wages, until they got from two to four dollars per day. We had no restraint upon the people. It was natural for people in low circumstances to accept a voluntary, bounteous reward; especially under the loathsomness of many of the sick, when na-

ture ſhuddered at the thoughts of the infection, and the taſk aſſigned was aggravated by lunacy, and being left much alone with them. Had Mr. Carey been ſolicited to ſuch an undertaking, for hire, *Query*, " what would *he* have demanded? but Mr. Carey, although choſen a member of that band of worthies who have ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their labours, for the relief of the ſick and helpleſs—yet, quickly after his election, left them to ſtruggle with their arduous and hazardous taſk, by leaving the city. 'Tis true Mr. Carey was no hireling, and had a right to flee, and upon his return, to plead the cauſe of thoſe who fled; yet, we think, he was wrong in giving ſo partial and injurious an account of the black nurſes; if they have taken advantage of the public diſtreſs? Is it any more than he hath done of its deſire for information. We believe he has made more money by the ſale of his "ſcraps" than a dozen of the greateſt extortioners among the black nurſes. The great prices paid did not eſcape the obſervation of that worthy and vigilant magiſtrate, Mathew Clarkſon, mayor of the city, and preſident of the committee—he ſent for us, and requeſted we would uſe our influence, to leſſen the wages of the nurſes, but on informing him the cauſe, i. e. that of the people overbidding one another, it was concluded unneceſſary to attempt any thing on that head; therefore it was left to the people concerned. That there were ſome few black people guilty of plundering the diſtreſſed, we acknowledge; but in that they only are pointed out, and made mention of, we eſteem partial and injurious; we know as many whites who were guilty of it; but this is looked over, while the blacks are held up to cenſure.—Is it a greater crime for a black to pilfer, than for a white to privateer?

We wiſh not to offend, but when an unprovoked attempt is made, to make us blacker than we are, it becomes leſs neceſſary to be over cautious on that ac-

count; therefore we shall take the liberty to tell of the conduct of some of the whites.

We know six pounds was demanded by, and paid, to a white woman, for putting a corpse into a coffin; and forty dollars was demanded, and paid, to four white men, for bringing it down the stairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor both died in one night; a white woman had the care of them; after they were dead she called on Jacob Servos, esq. for her pay, demanding six pounds for laying them out; upon seeing a bundle with her, he suspected she had pilfered; on searching her, Mr. Taylor's buckles were found in her pocket, with other things.

An elderly lady, Mrs. Malony, was given into the care of a white woman, she died, we were called to remove the corpse, when we came the woman was laying so drunk that she did not know what we were doing, but we know she had one of Mrs. Malony's rings on her finger, and another in her pocket.

Mr. Carey tells us, Bush-hill exhibited as wretched a picture of human misery, as ever existed. A profligate abandoned set of nurses and attendants (hardly any of good character could at that time be procured,) rioted on the provisions and comforts, prepared for the sick, who (unless at the hours when the doctors attended) were left almost entirely destitute of every assistance. The dying and dead were indiscriminately mingled together. The ordure and other evacuations of the sick, were allowed to remain in the most offensive state imaginable. Not the smallest appearance of order or regularity existed. It was in fact a great human slaughter house, where numerous victims were immolated at the altar of intemperance.

It is unpleasant to point out the bad and unfeeling conduct of any colour, yet the defence we have undertaken obliges us to remark, that although "hardly any of good character at that time could be procured" yet only two black women were at this time in the hospi-

tal, and they were retained and the others discharged, when it was reduced to order and good government.

The bad consequences many of our colour apprehend from a partial relation of our conduct are, that it will prejudice the minds of the people in general against us —because it is impossible that one individual, can have knowledge of all, therefore at some future day, when some of the most virtuous, that were upon most praiseworthy motives, induced to serve the sick, may fall into the service of a family that are strangers to him, or her, and it is discovered that it is one of those stigmatised wretches, what may we suppose will be the consequence? Is it not reasonable to think the person will be abhored, despised, and perhaps dismissed from employment, to their great disadvantage, would not this be hard? and have we not therefore sufficient reason to seek for redress? We can with certainty assure the public that we have seen more humanity, more real sensibility from the poor blacks, than from the poor whites. When many of the former, of their own accord rendered services where extreme necessity called for it, the general part of the poor white people were so dismayed, that instead of attempting to be useful, they in a manner hid themselves——a remarkable instance of this——A poor afflicted dying man, stood at his chamber window, praying and beseeching every one that passed by, to help him to a drink of water; a number of white people passed, and instead of being moved by the poor man's distress, they hurried as fast as they could out of the sound of his cries—until at length a gentleman, who seemed to be a foreigner came up, he could not pass by, but had not resolution enough to go into the house, he held eight dollars in his hand, and offered it to several as a reward for giving the poor man a drink of water, but was refused by every one, until a poor black man came up, the gentleman offered the eight dollars to him, if he would relieve the

poor man with a little water, "Maſter" replied the good natured fellow, "I will ſupply the gentleman with water, but ſurely I will not take your money for it" nor could he be prevailed upon to accept his bounty: he went in, ſupplied the poor object with water, and rendered him every ſervice he could.

A poor black man, named Sampſon, went conſtantly from houſe to houſe where diſtreſs was, and no aſſiſtance without fee or reward; he was ſmote with the diſorder, and died, after his death his family were neglected by thoſe he had ſerved.

Sarah Baſs, a poor black widow, gave all the aſſiſtance ſhe could, in ſeveral families, for which ſhe did not receive any thing; and when any thing was offered her, ſhe left it to the option of thoſe ſhe ſerved.

A woman of our colour, nurſed Richard Maſon and ſon, when they died, Richard's widow conſidering the riſk the poor woman had run, and from obſerving the fears that ſometimes reſted on her mind, expected ſhe would have demanded ſomething conſiderable, but upon aſking what ſhe demanded, her reply was half a dollar per day. Mrs. Maſon, intimated it was not ſufficient for her attendance, ſhe replied it was enough for what ſhe had done, and would take no more. Mrs. Maſon's feelings were ſuch, that ſhe ſettled an annuity of ſix pounds a year, on her, for life. Her name is Mary Scott.

An elderly black woman nurſed————with great diligence and attention; when recovered he aſked what he muſt give for her ſervices——ſhe replied "a dinner maſter on a cold winter's day," and thus ſhe went from place to place rendering every ſervice in her power without an eye to reward.

A young black woman, was requeſted to attend one night upon a white man and his wife, who were very ill, no other perſon could be had;—great wages were offered her—ſhe replied, I will not go for money, if I

go for money God will ſee it, and may be make me take the diſorder and die, but if I go, and take no money, he may ſpare my life. She went about nine o'clock, and found them both on the floor; ſhe could procure no candle or other light, but ſtaid with them about two hours, and then left them. They both died that night. She was afterward very ill with the fever—her life was ſpared.

Cæſar Cranchal, a black man, offered his ſervices to attend the ſick, and ſaid, I will not take your money, I will not ſell my life for money. It is ſaid he died with the flux.

A black lad, at the Widow Gilpin's, was intruſted with his young Maſter's keys, on his leaving the city, and tranſacted his buſineſs, with the greateſt honeſty, and diſpatch, having unloaded a veſſel for him in the time, and loaded it again.

A woman, that nurſed David Bacon, charged with exemplary moderation, and ſaid ſhe would not have any more.

It may be ſaid, in vindication of the conduct of thoſe, who diſcovered ignorance or incapacity in nurſing, that it is, in itſelf, a conſiderable art, derived from experience, as well as the exerciſe of the finer feelings of humanity—this experience, nine tenths of thoſe employed, it is probable were wholly ſtrangers to.

We do not recollect ſuch acts of humanity from the poor white people, in all the round we have been engaged in. We could mention many other inſtances of the like nature, but think it needleſs.

It is unpleaſant for us to make theſe remarks, but juſtice to our colour, demands it. Mr. Carey pays William Gray and us a compliment; he ſays, our ſervices and others of their colour, have been very great &c. By naming us, he leaves theſe others, in the hazardous ſtate of being claſſed with thoſe who are

alled the "vileſt." The few that were diſcovered to merit public cenſure, were brought to juſtice, which ought to have ſufficed, without being canvaſſed over in his "Trifle" of a pamphlet—which cauſes us to be more particular, and endeavour to recall the eſteem of the public for our friends, and the people of colour, ſo far as they may be found worthy; for we conceive, and experience proves it, that an ill name is eaſier given than taken away. We have many unprovoked enemies, who begrudge us the liberty we enjoy, and are glad to hear of any complaint againſt our colour, be it juſt or unjuſt; in conſequence of which we are more earneſtly endeavouring all in our power, to warn, rebuke, and exhort our African friends, to keep a conſcience void of offence towards God and man; and, at the ſame time, would not be backward to interfere, when ſtigmas or oppreſſion appear pointed at, or attempted againſt them, unjuſtly; and, we are confident, we ſhall ſtand juſtified in the ſight of the candid and judicious, for ſuch conduct.

Mr. Carey's firſt, ſecond, and third editions, are gone forth into the world, and in all probability, have been read by thouſands that will never read his fourth—conſequently, any alteration he may hereafter make, in the paragraph alluded to, cannot have the deſired effect, or atone for the paſt; therefore we apprehend it neceſſary to publiſh our thoughts on the occaſion. Had Mr. Carey ſaid, a number of white and black Wretches eagerly ſeized on the opportunity to extort from the diſtreſſed, and ſome few of both were detected in plundering the ſick, it might extenuate, in a great degree, the having made mention of the blacks.

We can aſſure the public, there were as many white as black people, detected in pilfering, although the number of the latter, employed as nurſes, was twenty times as great as the former, and that there is, in our

opinion, as great a proportion of white, as of black, inclined to such practices. It is rather to be admired, that so few instances of pilfering and robbery happened, considering the great opportunities there were for such things: we do not know of more than five black people, suspected of any thing clandestine, out of the great number employed; the people were glad to get any person to assist them—a black was preferred, because it was supposed, they were not so likely to take the disorder, the most worthless were acceptable, so that it would have been no cause of wonder if twenty causes of complaint occurred, for one that hath. It has been alledged, that many of the sick, were neglected by the nurses; we do not wonder at it, considering their situation, in many instances, up night and day, without any one to relieve them, worn down with fatigue, and want of sleep, they could not in many cases, render that assistance, which was needful: where we visited, the causes of complaint on this score, were not numerous. The case of the nurses, in many instances, were deserving of commiseration, the patient raging and frightful to behold; it has frequently required two persons, to hold them from running away, others have made attempts to jump out of a window, in many chambers they were nailed down, and the door was kept locked, to prevent them from running away, or breaking their necks, others lay vomiting blood, and screaming enough to chill them with horror. Thus were many of the nurses circumstanced, alone, until the patient died, then called away to another scene of distress, and thus have been for a week or ten days left to do the best they could without any sufficient rest, many of them having some of their dearest connections sick at the time, and suffering for want, while their husband, wife, father, mother, &c. have been engaged in the service of the white people. We mention this to shew the difference between this

and nurſing in common caſes, we have ſuffered equally with the whites, our diſtreſs hath been very great, but much unknown to the white people. Few have been the whites that paid attention to us while the black were engaged in the other's ſervice. We can aſſure the public we have taken four and five black people in a day to be buried. In ſeveral inſtances when they have been ſeized with the ſickneſs while nurſing, they have been turned out of the houſe, and wandering and deſtitute until taking ſhelter wherever they could (as many of them would not be admitted to their former homes) they have languiſhed alone and we know of one who even died in a ſtable. Others acted with more tenderneſs, when their nurſes were taken ſick they had proper care taken of them at their houſes. We know of two inſtances of this.

It is even to this day a generally received opinion in this city, that our colour was not ſo liable to the ſickneſs as the whites. We hope our friends will pardon us for ſetting this matter in its true ſtate.

The public were informed that in the Weſt-Indies and other places where this terrible malady had been, it was obſerved the blacks were not affected with it. Happy would it have been for you, and much more ſo for us, if this obſervation had been verified by our experience.

When the people of colour had the ſickneſs and died, we were impoſed upon and told it was not with the prevailing ſickneſs, until it became too notorious to be denied, then we were told ſome few died but not many. Thus were our ſervices extorted *at the peril of our lives*, yet you accuſe us of extorting *a little money from you*.

The bill of mortality for the year 1793, publiſhed by Matthew Whitehead, and John Ormrod, clerks, and Joſeph Dolby, ſexton, will convince any reaſonable man that will examine it, that as many coloured people died in proportion as others. In 1792, there

were 67 of our colour buried, and in 1793 it amounted to 305; thus the burials among us have increaſed more than fourfold, was not this in a great degree the effects of the ſervices of the unjuſtly vilified black people?

Perhaps it may be acceptable to the reader to know how we found the ſick affected by the ſickneſs; our opportunities of hearing and ſeeing them have been very great. They were taken with a chill, a head-ach, a ſick ſtomach, with pains in their limbs and back, this was the way the ſickneſs in general began, but all were not affected alike, ſome appeared but ſlightly affected with ſome of theſe ſymptoms, what confirmed us in the opinion of a perſon being ſmitten was the colour of their eyes. In ſome it raged more furiouſly than in others—ſome have languiſhed for ſeven and ten days, and appeared to get better the day, or ſome hours before they died, while others were cut off in one, two, or three days, but their complaints were ſimilar. Some loſt their reaſon and raged with all the fury madneſs could produce, and died in ſtrong convulſions. Others retained their reaſon to the laſt, and ſeemed rather to fall aſleep than die. We could not help remarking that the former were of ſtrong paſſions, and the latter of a mild temper. Numbers died in a kind of dejection, they concluded they muſt go, (ſo the phraſe for dying was) and therefore in a kind of fixed determined ſtate of mind went off.

It ſtruck our minds with awe, to have application made by thoſe in health, to take charge of them in their ſickneſs, and of their funeral. Such applications have been made to us; many appeared as though they thought they muſt die, and not live; ſome have lain on the floor, to be meaſured for their coffin and grave. A gentleman called one evening, to requeſt a good nurſe might be got for him, when he was ſick, and to ſuperintend his funeral, and gave particular directions

how he would have it conducted, it ſeemed a ſurpriſing circumſtance, for the man appeared at the time, to be in perfect health, but calling two or three days after to ſee him, found a woman dead in the houſe, and the man ſo far gone, that to adminiſter any thing for his recovery, was needleſs—he died that evening. We mention this, as an inſtance of the dejection and deſpondence, that took hold on the minds of thouſands, and are of opinion, it aggravated the caſe of many, while others who bore up chearfully, got up again, that probably would otherwiſe have died.

When the mortality came to its greateſt ſtage, it was impoſſible to procure ſufficient aſſiſtance, therefore many whoſe friends, and relations had left them, died unſeen, and unaſſiſted. We have found them in various ſituations, ſome laying on the floor, as bloody as if they had been dipt in it, without any appearance of their having had, even a drink of water for their relief; others laying on a bed with their clothes on, as if they had came in fatigued, and lain down to reſt; ſome appeared, as if they had fallen dead on the floor, from the poſition we found them in.

Truly our taſk was hard, yet through mercy, we were enabled to go on.

One thing we obſerved in ſeveral inſtances—when we were called, on the firſt appearance of the diſorder to bleed, the perſon frequently, on the opening a vein before the operation was near over, felt a change for the better, and expreſſed a relief in their chief complaints; and we made it a practice to take more blood from them, than is uſual in other caſes; theſe in a general way recovered; thoſe who did omit bleeding any conſiderable time, after being taken by the ſickneſs, rarely expreſſed any change they felt in the operation.

We feel a great ſatisfaction in believing, that we have been uſeful to the ſick, and thus publicly thank

Doctor Rush, for enabling us to be so. We have bled upwards of eight hundred people, and do declare, we have not received to the value of a dollar and a half, therefor: we were willing to imitate the Doctor's benevolence, who sick or well, kept his house open day and night, to give what assistance he could in this time of trouble.

Several affecting instances occurred, when we were engaged in burying the dead. We have been called to bury some, who when we came, we found alive; at other places we found a parent dead, and none but little innocent babes to be seen, whose ignorance led them to think their parent was asleep; on account of their situation, and their little prattle, we have been so wounded and our feelings so hurt, that we almost concluded to withdraw from our undertaking, but seeing others so backward, we still went on.

An affecting instance.—A woman died, we were sent for to bury her, on our going into the house and taking the coffin in, a dear little innocent accosted us, with, mamma is asleep, don't wake her; but when she saw us puther in the coffin, the distress of the child was so great, that it almost overcame us; when she demanded why we put her mamma in the box? We did not know how to answer her, but committed her to the care of a neighbour, and left her with heavy hearts. In other places where we have been to take the corpse of a parent, and have found a group of little ones alone, some of them in a measure capable of knowing their situation, their cries and the innocent confusion of the little ones, seemed almost too much for human nature to bear. We have picked up little children that were wandering they knew not where, whose (parents were cut off) and taken them to the orphan house, for at this time the dread that prevailed over people's minds was so general, that it was a rare instance to see one neighbour visit another, and

even friends when they met in the ſtreets were afraid of each other, much leſs would they admit into their houſes the diſtreſſed orphan that had been where the ſickneſs was; this extreme ſeemed in ſome inſtances to have the appearance of barbarity; with reluctance we call to mind the many opportunities there were in the power of individuals to be uſeful to their fellow-men, yet through the terror of the times was omitted. A black man riding through the ſtreet, ſaw a man puſh a woman out of the houſe, the woman ſtaggered and fell on her face in the gutter, and was not able to turn herſelf, the black man thought ſhe was drunk, but obſerving ſhe was in danger of ſuffocation alighted, and taking the woman up found her perfectly ſober, but ſo far gone with the diſorder that ſhe was not able to help herſelf; the hard hearted man that threw her down, ſhut the door and left her—in ſuch a ſituation, ſhe might have periſhed in a few minutes: we heard of it, and took her to Buſh-hill. Many of the white people, that ought to be patterns for us to follow after, have acted in a manner that would make humanity ſhudder. We remember an inſtance of cruelty, which we truſt, no black man would be guilty of: two ſiſters orderly, decent, white women were ſick with the fever, one of them recovered ſo as to come to the door; a neighbouring white man ſaw her, and in an angry tone aſked her if her ſiſter was dead or not? She anſwered no, upon which he replied, damn her, if ſhe don't die before morning, I will make her die. The poor woman ſhocked at ſuch an expreſſion, from this monſter of a man, made a modeſt reply, upon which he ſnatched up a tub of water, and would have daſhed it over her, if he had not been prevented by a black man; he then went and took a couple of fowls out of a coop, (which had been given them for nouriſhment) and threw them into an open alley; he had his wiſh, the poor woman that he would make die,

died that night. A white man threatened to ſhoot us, if we paſſed by his houſe with a corpſe: we buried him three days after.

We have been pained to ſee the widows come to us, crying and wringing their hands, and in very great diſtreſs, on account of their huſbands' death; having nobody to help them, they were obliged to come to get their huſbands buried, their neighbours were afraid to go to their help or to condole with them; we aſcribe ſuch unfriendly conduct to the frailty of human nature, and not to wilful unkindneſs, or hardneſs of heart.

Notwithſtanding the compliment Mr. Carey hath paid us, we have found reports ſpread, of our taking between one, and two hundred beds, from houſes where people died; ſuch ſlanderers as theſe, who propagate ſuch wilful lies are dangerous, although unworthy notice. We wiſh if any perſon hath the leaſt ſuſpicion of us, they would endeavour to bring us to the puniſhment which ſuch atrocious conduct muſt deſerve; and by this means, the innocent will be cleared from reproach, and the guilty known.

We ſhall now conclude with the following old proverb, which we think applicable to thoſe of our colour who expoſed their lives in the late afflicting diſpenſation:—

God and a ſoldier, all men do adore,
In time of war, and not before;
When the war is over, and all things righted,
God is forgotten, and the ſoldier ſlighted.

To MATTHEW CLARKSON, Esq.
Mayor of the City of Philadelphia.

SIR,

FOR the perſonal reſpect we bear you, and for the ſatisfaction of the Mayor, we declare, that to the beſt of our remembrance we had the care of the following beds and no more.—

Two belonging to James Starr we buried; upon taking them up, we found one damaged; the blankets, &c. belonging to it were ſtolen; it was refuſed to be accepted of by his ſon Moſes; it was buried again, and remains ſo for ought we know; the other was returned and accepted of.

We buried two belonging to Samuel Fiſher, merchant; one of them was taken up by us, to carry a ſick perſon on to Buſh-hill, and there left; the other was buried in a grave, under a corpſe.

Two beds were buried for Thomas Willing, one ſix feet deep in his garden, and lime and water thrown upon it; the other was in the Potter's field, and further knowledge of it we have not.

We burned one bed with other furniture, and cloathing belonging to the late Mayor, Samuel Powel, on his farm on the weſt ſide of Schuylkill river;—we buried one of his beds.

For———Dickenſon, we buried a bed in a lot of Richard Allen; which we have good cauſe to believe, was ſtolen.

One bed was buried for a perſon in front ſtreet, whoſe name is unknown to us, it was buried in the Potter's field, by a perſon employed for the purpoſe; we told him he might take it up again after it had been buried a week, and apply it to his own uſe, as he

ſaid he had lately been diſcharged from the hoſpital and had none to lay on.

Thomas Leiper's two beds were buried in the Potter's field, and remained there a week, and then taken up by us, for the uſe of the ſick that we took to Buſhhill, and left there.

We buried one for———Smith, in the Potter's field, which was returned except the furniture, which we believe was ſtolen.

One other we buried for——Davis, in Vine ſtreet, it was buried near Schuylkill, and we believe continues ſo.

A bed from——Gueſts in Second ſtreet, was buried in the Potter's field, and is there yet, for any thing we know.

One bed we buried in the Preſbyterian burial ground the corner of Pine and Fourth ſtreets, and we believe was taken up by the owner, Thomas Mitchel.

———Millegan in Second ſtreet, had a bed buried by us in the Potter's field—we have no further knowledge of it.

This is a true ſtate of matters reſpecting the beds, as far as we were concerned, we never undertook the charge of more than their burial, knowing they were liable to be taken away by evil minded perſons. We think it beneath the dignity of an honeſt man, (although injured in his reputation by wicked and envious perſons) to vindicate or ſupport his character, by an oath or legal affirmation; we fear not our enemies, let them come forward with their charges, we will not flinch, and if they can fix any crime upon us, we refuſe not to ſuffer.

SIR,

You have cauſe to believe our lives were endangered in more caſes than one, in the time of the late mortality, and that we were ſo diſcouraged, that had it not been for your perſuaſion, we would have relin-

quiſhed our diſagreeable and dangerous employment—and we hope there is no impropriety in ſoliciting a certificate of your approbation of our conduct, ſo far as it hath come to your knowledge.

With an affectionate regard and eſteem,

We are your friends,

ABSALOM JONES.
RICHARD ALLEN.

January 7th 1794.

HAVING, during the prevalence of the late malignant diſorder, had almoſt daily opportunities of ſeeing the conduct of Abſalom Jones and Richard Allen, and the people employed by them, to bury the dead—I with cheerfulneſs give this teſtimony of my approbation of their proceedings, as far as the ſame came under my notice. Their diligence, attention and decency of deportment, afforded me, at the time, much ſatisfaction.

MATTHEW CLARKSON, Mayor.

Philadelphia, January 23, 1794.

An Addreſs to thoſe who keep Slaves, and approve the practice.

THE judicious part of mankind will think it unreaſonable, that a ſuperior good conduct is looked for, from our race, by thoſe who ſtigmatize us as men, whoſe baſeneſs is incurable, and may therefore be held in a ſtate of ſervitude, that a merciful man would not doom a beaſt to; yet you try what you can to prevent our riſing from the ſtate of barbariſm, you repreſent us to be in, but we can tell you, from a degree of experience, that a black man, although reduced to the moſt abject ſtate human nature is capable of, ſhort of real madneſs, can think, reflect, and feel injuries, although it may not be with the ſame degree of keen reſentment and revenge, that you who have been and

are our great oppreſſors, would manifeſt if reduced to the pitiable condition of a ſlave. We believe if you would try the experiment of taking a few black children, and cultivate their minds with the ſame care, and let them have the ſame proſpect in view, as to living in the world, as you would wiſh for your own children, you would find upon the trial, they were not inferior in mental endowments.

We do not wiſh to make you angry, but excite your attention to conſider, how hateful ſlavery is in the ight of that God, who hath deſtroyed kings and princes, for their oppreſſion of the poor ſlaves; Pharaoh and his princes with the poſterity of king Saul, were deſtroyed by the protector and avenger of ſlaves. Would you not ſuppoſe the Iſraelites to be utterly unfit for freedom, and that it was impoſſible for them to attain to any degree of excellence? Their hiſtory ſhews how ſlavery had debaſed their ſpirits. Men muſt be wilfully blind and extremely partial, that cannot ſee the contrary effects of liberty and ſlavery upon the mind of man; we freely confeſs the vile habits often acquired in a ſtate of ſervitude, are not eaſily thown off; the example of the Iſraelites ſhews, who with all that Moſes could do to reclaim them from it, ſtill continued in their former habits more or leſs; and why will you look for better from us? Why will you look for grapes from thorns, or figs from thiſtles? It is in our poſterity enjoying the ſame privileges with your own, that you ought to look for better things.

When you are pleaded with, do not you reply as Pharaoh did, "wherefore do ye Moſes and Aaron, let the people from their work, behold the people of the land, now are many, and you make them reſt from their burdens." We wiſh you to conſider, that God himſelf was the firſt pleader of the cauſe of ſlaves.

That God who knows the hearts of all men, and the propenſity of a ſlave to hate his oppreſſor, hath ſtrictly forbidden it to his choſen people, "thou ſhalt not

abhor an Egyptian, becauſe thou waſt a ſtranger in his land. Deut. xxiii. 7." The meek and humble Jeſus, the great pattern of humanity, and every other virtue that can adorn and dignify men, hath commanded to love our enemies, to do good to them that hate and deſpitefully uſe us. We feel the obligations, we wiſh to impreſs them on the minds of our black brethren, and that we may all forgive you, as we wiſh to be forgiven; we think it a great mercy to have all anger and bitterneſs removed from our minds; we appeal to your own feelings, if it is not very diſquieting to feel yourſelves under the dominion of a wrathful diſpoſition.

If you love your children, if you love your country, if you love the God of love, clear your hands from ſlaves, burden not your children or country with them. Our hearts have been ſorrowful for the late bloodſhed of the oppreſſors, as well as the oppreſſed, both appear guilty of each others blood, in the ſight of him who ſaid, he that ſheddeth man's blood, by man ſhall his blood be ſhed.

Will you, becauſe you have reduced us to the unhappy condition our colour is in, plead our incapacity for freedom, and our contented condition under oppreſſion, as a ſufficient cauſe for keeping us under the grievous yoke? We have ſhewn the cauſe of our incapacity, we will alſo ſhew, why we appear contented; were we to attempt to plead with our maſters, it would be deemed inſolence, for which cauſe they appear as contented as they can in your ſight, but the dreadful inſurrections they have made, when opportunity has offered, is enough to convince a reaſonable man, that great uneaſineſs and not contentment, is the inhabitant of their hearts.

God himſelf hath pleaded their cauſe, he hath from time to time raiſed up inſtruments for that purpoſe, ſometimes mean and contemptible in your ſight; at other times he hath uſed ſuch as it hath pleaſed him,

with whom you have not thought it beneath your dignity to contend, many have been convinced of their error, condemned their former conduct, and become zealous advocates for the cause of those, whom you will not suffer to plead for themselves.

To the People of Colour.

FEELING an engagement of mind for your welfare, we address you with an affectionate sympathy, having been ourselves slaves, and as desirous of freedom as any of you; yet the bands of bondage were so strong, that no way appeared for our release, yet at times a hope arose in our hearts that a way would open for it, and when our minds were mercifully visited with the feeling of the love of God, then these hopes increased, and a confidence arose that he would make way for our enlargement, and as a patient waiting was necessary, we were sometimes favoured with it, at other times we were very impatient, then the prospect of liberty almost vanished away, and we were in darkness and perplexity.

We mention our experience to you, that your hearts may not sink at the discouraging prospects you may have, and that you may put your trust in God, who sees your condition, and as a merciful father pitieth his children, so doth God pity them that love him; and as your hearts are inclined to serve God, you will feel an affectionate regard towards your masters and mistresses, and the whole family where you live, this will be seen by them, and tend to promote your liberty, especially with such as have feeling masters, and if they are otherwise you will have the favour and love of God dwelling in your hearts, which you will value more than any thing else, which will be a consolation in the worst condition you can be in, and no master can deprive you of it; and as life is short and uncertain, and the chief end of our having a being in this world, is to be prepared for a better, we wish you to think of this more than any thing else: then will you have a view of that freedom which the sons of God enjoy; and if the troubles of your condition end with your lives, you will be admitted to the freedom which God hath prepared for those of all colours that love him; here the

power of the most cruel master ends, and all sorrow and tears are wiped away.

To you who are favoured with freedom, let your conduct manifest your gratitude toward the compassionate masters who have set you free, and let no rancour or ill-will lodge in your breasts for any bad treatment you may have received from any; if you do, you transgress against God, who will not hold you guiltless, he would not suffer it even in his beloved people Israel, and can you think he will allow it unto us?

There is much gratitude due from our colour towards the white people, very many of them are instruments in the hand of God for our good, even such as have held us in captivity, are now pleading our cause with earnestness and zeal; and we are sorry to say, that too many think more of the evil, than of the good they have received, and instead of taking the advice of their friends, turn from it with indifference; much depends upon us for the help of our colour more than many are aware; if we are lazy and idle, the enemies of freedom plead it as a cause why we ought not to be free, and say we are better in a state of servitude, and that giving us our liberty would be an injury to us, and by such conduct we strengthen the bands of oppression, and keep many in bondage who are more worthy than ourselves; we intreat you to consider the obligations we lay under, to help forward the cause of freedom, we who know how bitter the cup is of which the slave hath to drink, O how ought we to feel for those who yet remain in bondage? Will even our friends excuse, will God pardon us, for the part we act in making strong the hands of the enemies of our colour.

A short Address to the Friends of Him who hath no Helper.

WE feel an inexpressible gratitude towards you, who have engaged in the cause of the African race; you have wrought a deliverance for many, from more than Egyptian bondage, your labours are unremitted for their complete redemption, from the cruel subjection they are in. You feel our afflictions—you sympathize with us in the heart-rending distress, when the husband is separated from the wife, and the parents from the children, who are never more to meet in this world. The tear of sensibility trickles from your eye, to see the sufferings that keep us from increa-

sing.—Your righteous indignation is roused at the means taken to supply the place of the murdered babe. You see our race more effectually destroyed, than was in Pharaoh's power to effect, upon Israel's sons; you blow the trumpet against the mighty evil, you make the tyrants tremble; you strive to raise the slave, to the dignity of a man; you take our children by the hand, to lead them in the path of virtue, by your care of their education; you are not ashamed to call the most abject of our race, brethren, children of one father, who made of one blood all the nations of the earth: You ask for this, nothing for yourselves, nothing but what is worthy the cause you are engaged in; nothing but that we would be friends to ourselves, and not strengthen the bands of oppression, by an evil conduct, when led out of the house of bondage. May he, who hath arisen to plead our cause, and engaged you as volunteers in the service, add to your numbers, until the princes shall come forth from Egypt, and Ethiopia stretch out her hand unto God.

ABSALOM JONES,
RICHARD ALLEN.

YE Ministers, that are call'd to preaching,
Teachers, and exhorters too;
Awake! behold your harvest wasting!
Arise! there is no rest for you.

To think upon that strict commandment,
That God has on his teachers laid,
The sinner's blood, who dies unwarned,
Shall fall upon their Shepherd's head.

But oh! dear brethren, let's be doing,
Behold the nation's in distress,
The Lord of Hosts forbid their ruin,
Before the day of grace is past.

We read of wars and great commotions,
Before the great and dreadful day,
Oh, Sinners! turn your sinful courses,
And trifle not your time away.

But Oh! dear sinners, that's not all that's dreadful!
You must before your God appear!
To give an account of your transactions,
And how you spent your time, when here.

Died on the 14th of april 1813 a child of Daniel Sampson
6 mounths old no Docter attended it died of the belly
Complaint Enteird in St Thomas' african Church
Burial Ground Certyfied by me Absalom Jones

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