they greatly enlarged the city. Its population was extending fast. House rent had risen to an extravagant height; it was in many cases double, and in some treble what it had been a year or two before; and, as is generally the case, when a city is advancing in prosperity, it far exceeded the real increase of trade. The number of applicants for houses, exceeding the number of houses to be let, one bid over another; and affairs were in such a situation, that many people, though they had a tolerable run of business, could hardly do more than clear their rents, and were, literally, toiling for their landlords alone.* Luxury, the usual, and perhaps inevitable concomitant of prosperity, was gaining ground in a manner very alarming to those who considered how far the virtue, the liberty, and the happiness of a nation depend on its temperance and sober manners.—Men had been, for some time, in the improvident habit of regulating their expenses by prospects formed in sanguine hours, when every probability was caught at as a certainty, not by their actual profits, or income. The number of coaches, coachees, chairs, etc., lately set up by men in the middle rank of life, is hardly credible. Not to enter into a minute detail, let it suffice to remark, that extravagance, in various shapes, was gradually eradicating the plain and wholesome habits of the city. And although it were presumption to attempt to scan the decrees of heaven, yet few, I believe will pretend to deny, that something was wanting to humble the price of a city, which was running on in full career, to the goal of prodigality and dissipation.

However, from November 1792, to the end of last June, the difficulties of Philadelphia were extreme. The establishment of the bank of Pennsylvania, in embryo for the most part of that time, had arrested in the two other banks such a quantity of the circulating specie, as embarrassed almost every kind of business; to this was added the distress arising from the very numerous failures in England, which had extremely harassed several of our capital merchants. During this period, many men experienced as great difficulties as were ever known in this city.** But the opening, in July, of the bank of Pennsylvania, conducted on the most generous and enlarged principles, placed business on its former favourable footing. Every man looked forward to this fall as likely to produce a vast extension of trade. But how fleeting are all human views! How uncertain all plans sounded on earthly appearances! All these flattering prospects vanished "like the baseless fabric of a vision."

In July, arrived the unfortunate fugitives from Cape François. And on this occasion, the liberality of Philadelphia was displayed in a most respectable point of light. Nearly 12,000 dollars were in a few days collected for their relief. Little, alas! did many of the contributors, then in easy circumstances, imagine, that a few weeks would leave their wives and children dependent on public charity, as has since

* The distress arising from this source, was perhaps the only exception to the general observation of the flourishing situation of Philadelphia.

** It is with great pleasure, I embrace this opportunity of declaring that the very liberal conduct of the Bank of the United States, at this trying season, was the means of saving many a deserving and industrious man from ruin.

unfortunately happened. An awful instance of the rapid and warning vicissitudes of affairs on this transitory stage.

About this time, this destroying scourge, the malignant fever, crept in among us, and nipped in the bud the fairest blossoms that imagination could storm. And oh! what a dreadful contrast has since taken place! Many women, then in the lap of ease and contentment, are bereft of beloved husbands, and left with numerous families of children to maintain, unqualified for the arduous task—many orphans are destitute of parents to foster and protect them—many entire families are swept away, without leaving "a trace behind"—many of our first commercial houses are totally dissolved, by the death of the parties, and their affairs are necessarily left in so deranged a state, that the losses and distresses, which must take place, are beyond estimation. The protests of notes for a few weeks past, have exceeded all former examples; for a great proportion of the merchants and traders having left the city, and been totally unable, from the stagnation of business, and diversion of all their expected resources, to make any provision for payment, most of their notes have been protested, as they became due.***

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CHAP. V. *General despondency. Deplorable scenes. Frightful view of human nature. A noble and exhilarating contrast.*

THE consternation of the people of Philadelphia at this period was carried beyond all bounds. Dismay and affright were visible in almost every person's countenance. Most of those who could, by any means, make it convenient, fled from the city. Of those who remained, many shut themselves up in their houses, and were afraid to walk the streets. The smoke of tobacco being regarded as a preventative, many persons, even women and small boys, had segars constantly in their mouths. Others placing full confidence in garlic, chewed it almost the whole day; some kept it in their shoes. Many were afraid to allow the barbers or hair-dressers to come near them, as instances had occurred of some of them having shaved the dead—and many having engaged as bleeders. Some, who carried their caution pretty far, bought lancets for themselves, not daring to allow themselves to be bled with the lancets of the bleeders. Some houses were hardly a moment in the day, free from the smell of gunpowder, burned tobacco, nitre, sprinkled vinegar, &c. Many of the churches were almost deserted, and some wholly closed. The coffee house was shut up, as was the city library, and most of the public offices—three out of the four daily papers were

*** The Bank of the United States, on the 15th of October, passed a resolve, empowering the cashier to renew all discounted notes, when the same drawers and indorsers were offered, and declaring that no notes should be protested, when the indorsers bound themselves in writing, to be accountable in the same manner as in cases of protest.

dropped,* as were some of the other papers.—Many were almost incessantly purifying, scouring, and whitewashing their rooms. Those who ventured abroad, had handkerchiefs or sponges impregnated with vinegar or camphor at their noses, or smelling-bottles with the thieves' vinegar. Others carried pieces of tarred rope in their hands or pockets, or camphor bags tied round their necks. The corpses of the most respectable citizens, even of those who did not die of the epidemic, were carried to the grave, on the shafts of a chair, the horse driven by a negro, unattended by a friend or relation, and without any sort of ceremony. People hastily shifted their course at the sight of a hearse coming towards them. Many never walked on the foot-path, but went into the middle of the streets, to avoid being infected in passing by houses wherein people had died. Acquaintances and friends avoided each other in the streets, and only signified their regard by a cold nod. The old custom of shaking hands fell into such general disuse, that many shrunk back with affright at even the offer of the hand. A person with a crape, or any appearance of mourning, was shunned like a viper. . . .

[. . .] Who, without horror, can reflect on a husband, married perhaps for twenty years, deserting his wife in the last agony—a wife unfeelingly, abandoning her husband on his death bed—parents forsaking their only children—children ungratefully flying from their parents, and resigning them to chance, often without an enquiry after their health or safety—masters hurrying off their faithful servants to Bushhill, even on suspicion of the fever, and that at a time, when, like Tartarus, it was open to every visitant, but never returned any—servants abandoning tender and humane masters, who only wanted a little care to restore them to health and usefulness—who, I say, can even now think of these things without horror? Yet they were daily exhibited in every quarter of our city; and such was the force of habit, that the parties who were guilty of this cruelty, felt no remorse themselves—nor met with the execration from their fellow-citizens, which such conduct would have excited at any other period. Indeed, at this awful crisis, so much did *self* appear to engross the whole attention of many, that less concern was felt for the loss of a parent, a husband, a wife, or an only child, than, on other occasions, would have been caused by the death of a servant, or even a favourite lap dog.

This kind of conduct produced scenes of distress and misery, of which few parallels are to be met with, and which nothing could palliate, but the extraordinary public panic, and the great law of self preservation, the dominion of which extends over the whole animated world. Many men of affluent fortunes, who have given daily employment and sustenance to hundreds, have been abandoned to the care of a negro, after their wives, children, friends, clerks, and servants, had fled away, and left them to their fate. In many cases, no money could procure proper attendance. With the poor, the case was, as might be expected, infinitely worse than with the rich. Many of these have perished, without a human being to hand them a drink of water, to ad-

* It would be improper to pass over this opportunity of mentioning that the Federal Gazette, printed by Andrew Brown, was uninterruptedly continued and with the usual industry, during the whole calamity, and was of the utmost service, in conveying to the citizens of the United States authentic intelligence of the state of the disorder, and of the city generally.

minister medicines, or to perform any charitable office for them. Various instances have occurred, of dead bodies found lying in the streets, of persons who had no house or habitation, and could procure no shelter.

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CHAP. VII. *Magnanimous offer. Wretched Sate of Bush-hill. Order introduced there.*

[. . .] On the 16th, the managers of Bushhill, after personal inspection of the state of affairs there, made report of its situation, which was truly deplorable. It exhibited 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. It was, in fact, a great human slaughter house, where numerous victims were immolated at the altar of riot and intemperance. No wonder, then, that a general dread of the place prevailed through the city, and that a removal to it was considered as the seal of death. In consequence, there were various instance of sick persons locking their rooms, and resisting every attempt to carry them away. At length, the poor were so much afraid of being sent to Bushhill, that they would not acknowledge their illness, until it was no longer possible to conceal it. For it is to be observed, that the fear of the contagion was so prevalent, that as soon as any one was taken ill, an alarm was spread among the neighbors, and every effort was used to have the sick person hurried off to Bushhill, to avoid spreading the disorder. The cases of poor people forced in this way to that hospital, though labouring under only common colds, and common fall fevers, were numerous and afflicting. They were not wanting instances of persons, only slightly ill, being sent to Bushhill, by their panic-struck neighbors, and embracing the first opportunity of running back to Philadelphia.

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CHAP. XIV. *Disorder fatal to the doctors—to the clergy—to drunkards—to filles de joie—to maid servants— to the poor—and in close streets.—Less destructive to the French—and to the negroes.*

[. . .] From the effects of this disorder, the French settled in Philadelphia, have been in a very remarkable degree exempt. To what this may be owing, is a subject deserving particular investigation.* By some it has been ascribed to their despising the danger,

* The frequent use the French make of *lavements* [enemas], at all times, may probably account for their escaping so very generally as they did. These purify the bowels, help to discharge the foul

But, though this may have had some effect, it will not certainly account for it altogether; as it is well known that many of the most courageous persons in Philadelphia, have been among its victims. By many of the French, the prevalence of the disorder has been attributed to the vast quantities of crude and unwholesome fruits brought to our markets, and consumed by all classes of people.

When the yellow fever prevailed in South Carolina, the negroes, according to that accurate observer, Dr. Lining, were wholly free from it. "There is something very singular in the constitution of the negroes," says he, "which renders them not liable to this fever; for though many of them were as much exposed as the nurses to this infection, yet I never knew one instance of this fever among them, though they are equally subject with the white people to the bilious fever".** The same idea prevailed for a considerable time in Philadelphia; but it was erroneous. They did not escape the disorder; however, the number of them that were seized with it, was not great; and, as I am informed by an eminent doctor, "it yielded to the power of medicine in them more easily than in the whites." The error that prevailed on this subject had a very salutary effect; for, at an early period of the disorder, hardly any white nurses could be procured; and, had the negroes been equally terrified, the sufferings of the sick, great as they actually were, would have been exceedingly aggravated. At the period alluded to, the elders of the African church met, and offered their services to the mayor, to procure nurses for the sick, and to assist in burying the dead. Their offers were accepted; and Absalom Jones and Richard Allen undertook the former department, that of furnishing nurses, and William Gray, the latter—the interment of the dead. The great demand for nurses, afforded an opportunity for imposition, which was eagerly seized by some of the vilest of the blacks. They extorted two, three, four, and even five dollars a night for attendance, which would have been well paid by a single dollar. Some of them were even detected in plundering the houses of the sick.† But it is wrong to cast a censure on the whole for this sort of conduct, as many people have done. The services of Jones, Allen, and Gray, and others of their colour, have been very great, and demand public gratitude.

On examining the books of the hospital at Bushhill, it appears that there were above fifteen blacks received there, of whom three fourths died. There may have been more, as the examination was made very cursorily.

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matter, and remove costiveness [constipation], which is one of the most certain supports of this and other disorders.

** Essays and observations, vol. II. page 407.

† [Note added to fourth edition, 1794, in response to Jones and Allen's defense of the free black community: "The extortion here mentioned, was very far from being confined to the negroes: many of the white nurses behaved with equal rapacity."]

CHAP. XVI. *Desultory facts and reflexions.—A collection of scraps.*

[. . .] Several classes of people were highly benefited by the public distress. Coffin-makers had a large demand, and in general high prices for their work. Most of the retail stores being shut up, those that remained open, had an uncommon demand; as the whole of the business was divided among a few. Those who had carriages to hire, to transport families to the country, received whatever they pleased to demand. The holders of houses at from three, to twenty miles from the city, who chose to rent the whole or part of them, had high rents. The two notaries, who protested for the banks, profited highly by the absence of the merchants and traders. . . .

[. . .] The effect of fear in predisposing the body for the yellow fever and other disorders, and increasing their malignance, when taken, is well known.

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CHAP. XVII. *Another collection of scraps.*

THOSE who reflect on the many revolting cases of cruelty and desertion of friends and relations which occurred in Philadelphia, however, cannot be surprised, that in the country, and in various towns and cities, inhumanity should be experienced by Philadelphians from strangers. The universal consternation extinguished in people's breasts the most honourable feelings of human nature; and in this case, as in various others, the suspicion operated as injuriously as the reality. Many travelers from this city, exhausted with fatigue and with hunger, have been refused all shelter and all sustenance, and have fallen victims to the fears, not to the want of charity, of those whom they applied for relief. Instances of this kind have occurred on almost every road leading from Philadelphia. People under suspicion of having this disorder, have been forced by their fellow travelers to quit the stages, and perished in the woods without a possibility of procuring any assistance. At Easton, in Maryland, a wagon-load of goods from Philadelphia, was actually burned; and a woman, who was with it, was tarred and feathered.

[. . .] A poor man was taken sick on the road at a village not far from Philadelphia. He lay calling for water, a considerable time in vain. At length, an old woman brought a pitcher full, and not daring to approach him, she laid it at a distance, desiring him to crawl to it, which he did. After lying there about forty-eight hours, he died; and the body lay in a state of putrefaction for some time, until the neighbours hired two black butchers to bury him, for twenty-four dollars. They dug a pit to windward—with a fork, hooked a rope about his neck—dragged him into it and at as great a distance as possible, cast earth into the pit to cover him.

[. . .] A drunken sailor lay in the street for a few hours asleep, and was supposed by the neighbours to be dead with the disorder; but they were too much afraid, to make personal examination. They sent to the committee for a cart and a coffin. The carter took the man by the heels, and was going to put him into the coffin. Handling him roughly, he awoke, and damning his eyes, asked him what he was about? The carter let him drop in a fright, and ran off as if a ghost was at his heels.

13. Absalom Jones and Richard Allen, excerpt from *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* (Philadelphia: Printed for the authors, by William W. Woodward, 1794).

Absalom Jones (1746–1818) and Richard Allen (1760–1831) were key African American ministers and abolition activists in the early republic and figureheads of Philadelphia's (the nation's first) free black community in the 1790s. Allen was born into slavery under a Philadelphia Quaker, then sold to a middling Delaware farmer who allowed him to attend Methodist meetings where he drew strength from religious faith and community. The antislavery message of these evangelicists also converted Allen's new master, and he allowed Allen to purchase his own and his brother's freedom in 1780. Jones was likewise born into slavery in Delaware, moved to Philadelphia with his master at age fifteen, and after long efforts purchased his freedom in 1784 before becoming a minister. Both studied at Quaker Anthony Benezet's (Society of) Friends' Free African School. In response to the St. Georges' Methodist Episcopal Church's refusal to desegregate prayers, in 1787 they together founded the Free African Society, the first African American mutual aid society in U.S. history. From this institutional base, each in turn created the new nation's first two African American churches: Allen's Bethel African Episcopal Church (1793) and Jones' St. Thomas' African Episcopal Church (1794).

Jones and Allen's leadership in founding the earliest African American civic institutions was linked to public interventions and strategy on the politics of slavery. Both protested the passage of the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act, which provided a juridical mechanism for seizing and resubjugating runaway slaves. When George Washington signed the act into law in February 1793, Allen and Jones began working with the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (PAS) to expand the informal Underground Railroad network that was already helping runaway slaves elude masters and slave hunters. Their organizational experience as leaders of the city's free black institutions, as well as their work with PAS members such as Dr. Benjamin Rush and Isaac Hopper, led to the free black community's initiative in becoming the first citizen volunteers to work as emergency nurses and undertakers during the 1793 yellow fever epidemic. When the outbreak passed, they were dismayed to see Mathew Carey's widely read Short Account of the Malignant Fever *(see the excerpts in Related Texts) publicize rumors that some blacks had used their positions to extort money for services and steal from the helpless. In response to Carey's accusations, Jones and Allen wrote* A Narrative *and paid for its publication, despite the refusal of many white printers to publish the pamphlet.*

A Narrative *seeks initially to discount the notion that Africans were immune to the yellow fever, since that idea negated the deadly risks African Americans took when the city was falling into chaos. Many whites believed that Africans (and French immigrants) were immune to the fever. What was not understood at that time is that immunity results from surviving an initial infection. Since many Africans in the U.S. had survived first contacts*

with the disease in Africa, the Middle Passage, or New World landfalls, the immunity they acquired in this manner was misinterpreted as an ethno-racial characteristic. Similarly, many of the French and other Caribbean transplants who came to the U.S. via the Caribbean, like Dr. Jean Devèze or Dr. Edward Stevens, had also survived earlier infections and developed immunity. Many other Africans, however, especially those born in America, lacked this protection and suffered the same mortality rates as the rest of the population. Additionally, the white community rarely witnessed African American illness, since blacks associated hospitals with slave prisons and rarely used them. Instead, many sought care provided by other blacks familiar with African herbal medicines. Interestingly, Jones and Allen's strategic commitment to Dr. Benjamin Rush's controversial, violent, and ineffective method of bleeding and purging marks their distance from non-Christian Africans who avoided these treatments at the same time that African knowledge was surviving and passing into wider practice via French and other Caribbean doctors who learned it from their contacts on Caribbean plantations.

Throughout these excerpts from A Narrative, *Jones and Allen emphasize the selflessness and civic generosity of black nurses and undertakers in contrast to the selfishness and panicked withdrawal of whites. The full implication of this contrast emerges when the main body of the pamphlet is read in connection with its concluding sections, which are not included here. After including a testimony from Mayor Matthew Clarkson, Allen and Jones attach "An Address to Those Who Keep Slaves, and Approve the Practice" that argues that God disapproves of slavery. The pamphlet then concludes with a final note "To the People of Color," advising slaves not to lose faith in God because this faith may help them maintain an "affectionate regard" for their masters and win their liberty peacefully through righteous persuasion (as Allen had done). They argue that freed African Americans should show gratitude, not rancor, toward their former masters and should remember that many whites have also worked to create the conditions for emancipation. Thus these concluding remarks highlight Allen and Jones's larger goals for the pamphlet beyond the immediate motivation of challenging and correcting relatively minor inaccuracies in Carey's account.*

The ministers use the larger opportunity created by this riposte to Carey to reassure the educated, white community that it has nothing to fear from the abolition of slavery and to calm white anxieties about black revenge, a fear that was raised to crisis levels in 1793 by accounts of massacres in Haiti. Allen and Jones insist that whites need not fear blacks, even if the latter have the upper hand, as demonstrated by their civic benevolence during the epidemic. The detailed accounting of personal and financial sacrifices by Philadelphia blacks implies that whites have a debt, both monetary and moral, to a black community that has given of itself for the common good and that this debt can be repaid by the civil emancipation of blacks, that is, the abolition of slavery and extension of citizen status to all. Jones and Allen use gothic-sentimental images of families being destroyed by the epidemic to forge a sympathetic link to one of the most powerful images in abolitionist and later U.S. culture: the multigenerational trauma and social damage created when slavery breaks up black families and produces fear and denial of black-white family mixture.

While the passages urging black benevolence and brotherhood toward whites have left Jones and Allen open to criticism for their lack of radicalism, it is important to remember two things. First, A Narrative *was written for a primarily white audience: it was in-*

tended to garner support for abolition by mobilizing white public opinion against a negative legal environment recently worsened by the 1793 Fugitive Slave Act and thereby to denormalize slavery in white minds. Jones and Allen (like Brown's novel) make a point of emphasizing the idea that mental predispositions may affect one's health and memorably dramatize the situation of whites who effectively worried themselves to death during the epidemic. This emphasis also functions as a political allegory, pointing out that the dominant white community's fear and paranoia is as important a factor in the outcome of black emancipation as the attitudes and behaviors of the black community. As the Spanish painter Goya put it in 1798, "the sleep of reason produces monsters."

Second, while Allen and Jones were conducting strategic legal projects and writing a pamphlet like this one, they were also busy creating an illegal Underground Railroad network in collaboration with mainly Quaker whites, such as Isaac Hopper and Thomas Harrison (see the Related Text on Hopper in this volume). Viewed from this perspective, A Narrative *is only superficially a reaction to Carey's accusations. It is better understood as a progressive action, a path-breaking instance of antiracist black ministerial civil (dis)obedience that establishes a precedent for later figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Cornel West.*

In Arthur Mervyn, *Brown acknowledges Jones and Allen's arguments by dramatizing the service of free blacks as nurses and undertakers, by implying in the first part's twin mirror scenes that Mervyn's identity is bound up with that of his black counterparts, and by having enlightened characters in the fever scenes, such as Medlicote, Estwick, and Stevens, insist that a benevolent and caring disposition in the face of social change and crisis is the best course of action. Mervyn's transformation in the course of the novel from a naïve and easily manipulated Scots-Irish youth to a self-educating, cosmopolitan citizen eager to embrace the dark-skinned Achsa Fielding enacts the white response that Jones and Allen, and Brown alike, seek to achieve.*

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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 conversations, we found a freedom to go forth, confining 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, 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 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.

* Two of whom were Richard Allen's brothers.

and he would, if able, attend them himself, or end 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 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 let 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 expense 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 cost of hearses, 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 introduced, 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 nature shuddered at the thoughts of the infection, and the talk 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 talk, 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 over-bidding 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 account; 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 Servoss, 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 women 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 hospital, 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 praise-worthy 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? It is 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 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.

Caesar 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 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 called 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, as 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 compliant 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 fight 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 option, 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 compliant 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 compliant 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 way,

other 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 the 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 white. 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 to 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 headach, a sick stomach, with pains in their limbs and back this is 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 that 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 put her 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 the 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 the 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 man 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.

14. Three Abolitionist Addresses from Brown's Circle.

Although Brown never seems to have formally joined an abolition society, his closest friends and associates were significant leaders and organizers of antislavery societies in Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania. Nearly every member of the New York Friendly Club, the discussion group that included Brown, was an officer in an abolition society, and in 1803–1805 Brown and his lifelong friend Thomas Pym Cope together planned an abolitionist History of Slavery *that was never completed.*

During the 1790s the U.S. abolitionist movement entered a new phase for three main reasons. First, black revolution and massacres of whites in Haiti (then known as San Domingo or St. Domingue) provided a concrete example of what could happen elsewhere if slavery were not quickly abolished. Older moral arguments against slavery took on new geopolitical urgency as the black revolution not only introduced the threat of violence but also upset the balance of power in the Caribbean between European imperial states, which had direct, important effects on the economy and territorial ambitions of the United States. Despite the Constitution's attempt to regulate the question of slavery in the 1780s, the multitude of problems it created remained irresolvable.

Second, abolition activists developed innovative institutional and regional networking practices that increased their effectiveness. Throughout the 1790s, abolitionist societies developed new constitutions and improved committee structures that advocated for legal change; worked with the free black community to provide material assistance in housing, health, and education; and provided legal and illegal help to runaway slaves. The multiple state organizations began to coordinate their activities and set a national agenda at conventions like the Philadelphia meeting that Brown's close friends Smith, Dunlap, and Miller attended in May 1797.

Third, the outlook and theory of the abolition societies was significantly transformed by a younger generation of recent college graduates and men like the Friendly Club's members, who not only joined the movement but took on central administrative roles in the newly restructured societies. These men revitalized the somewhat aging membership of many societies and brought with them the progressive political sociology of favorite writers such as Thomas Paine, William Godwin, and Mary Wollstonecraft. The older abolitionist arguments that relied primarily on religious reasoning, mainly from the Quakers, were now fused with the secular slogans of the bourgeois enlightenment. These are the ideas that animate Brown's treatment of Arthur Mervyn, who struggles to free himself from the social prejudice of nonbourgeois birth; and from this perspective the novel systematically aligns itself with abolitionist claims and arguments.

These selections, from three abolitionist addresses by Brown's close friends, forcefully articulate the new, politicized viewpoint of the younger abolitionists. They claim that past behavior has no authority for justifying slavery and that it ought to be immediately abolished. Slavery belongs to the older, feudal order of rule by warriors that is unacceptable to a civilizing Enlightenment. There are no moral, social, cultural, or physical justifications for keeping Africans in positions of inferiority. The writers actively promote the idea of monogenesis, the idea that all humans belong to the same race, and dispute physiognomic notions of polygenesis—the belief that there are several separate human races, such as a "white" one, an African one, etc. The present behavior of Africans, be it violent or immoral, is simply the predictable consequence of the social conditions in which they have been unjustly placed. Because humans are formed by their social and cultural environment, Africans will change and "improve" under conditions of freedom, just as Europeans have done. A postslavery society can overcome racial divisions by empowering Africans in the practice of active citizenship, and racial prejudice may be usefully overcome by creating a mixed-race society through intermarriage.

The first address, by Connecticut-based Theodore Dwight (1764–1846), is perhaps the most surprising, given its unexpected celebration of black slave insurgency in Haiti and a notable lack of anxiety about that revolution's violence. Arguing that white plantation owners have simply reaped what they have sown, especially with their Cain-like exile from the island, Dwight rejects the idea that the Haitian Creoles deserve any help based on a shared "whiteness" with U.S. citizens. Black violence is "the language of truth" and merely the outgrowth of divinely inspired yearning for freedom, a spirit that is sympathetically circulated and amplified from individual to region to nation-state (and implicitly the globe). Only the immediate abolition of slavery will prevent a similar outbreak in the United States. These are strong words from a white lawyer who, within a few short years, will become a leading member of the arch-conservative wing of the Federalist Party.

Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith (1771–1798) was one of Brown's first and closest non-Quaker friends. More than anyone else, Smith encouraged and even financially supported Brown's career as a professional writer, and Brown often drawn on Smith as a source for characters and episodes in his fictions. Arthur Mervyn's *benevolent character Dr. Maravegli, for example, is based on Smith's care of the Venetian Dr. Giambattista Scandella, who died from yellow fever in Smith and Brown's apartment in 1798. Smith's Discourse offers a Godwinian analysis of slavery as a particular form of domination by political and*

religious institutions; so that he sees "race" as a category constructed by these premodern institutions and not as a biological essence. Conceptualizing slavery literally as a socially transmitted civic disease, Smith argues that it can be cured by providing a therapy of just benevolence.

Samuel Miller (1769–1850), a Presbyterian minister and later author of A Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century *(1803), presents the basic contradiction between the continuation of slavery and the principles of citizenship. Miller explicitly rejects notions of racial polygenesis, which could be used to support the argument that freed slaves are fundamentally different from whites and should be returned to Africa, and argues instead that the nation's best hope after abolition is to integrate freed slaves fully within American society. Like Smith, Miller sees slavery and racism as historical diseases that cripple "our political body."*

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a) Theodore Dwight, excerpts from *An Oration, Spoken before "The Connecticut Society, for the Promotion of Freedom and the Relief of Persons Unlawfully Holden in Bondage." Convened in Hartford on the 8th day of May, A.D. 1794*. Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1794.

[. . .] It being then acknowledged, that the enslaving of Africans was wrong in the first instance, it must necessarily follow, that the continuance of it is wrong: for a continued succession of unjust actions, can never gain the pure character of justice. If it was originally wrong, it never ceased to be wrong for a moment since; and length of time, instead of sactioning [sic], aggravates the transgression. [. . .] And what is the real ground of this difference, in the administration of justice, between white men, and negroes? Simply this—the white men can appeal to the laws of their country, and enforce their rights. The negroes whom our fathers, and ourselves have enslaved, have no tribunal to listen to their complaints, or to redress their injuries. Forced from their country, their friends, and their families, they are dragged to the sufferance of slavery, of torture, and of death, with no eye, and no arm, but the eye and arm of God, to pity, and to punish their wrongs. Society recognizes their existence only for the purposes of injustice, oppression, and punishment.

By doing strict justice to the negroes, I presume is meant, totally to abolish slavery, and place them on the same ground, with free white men.

[. . .] From France, turn your attention to the island of St. Domingo. A succession of unjust, and contradictory measures, in both the national and colonial governments, at length highly exasperated the negroes, and roused their spirits to unanimity and fanaticism. Seized by the phrenzy of oppressed human nature, they suddenly awoke from the lethargy of slavery, attacked their tyrannical masters, spread desolation and blood over the face of the colony, and by a series of vigorous efforts, established themselves on the firm pillars of freedom and independence. Driven from their houses and possessions, by new and exulting masters, the domestic tyrants of that island wander over the face of the earth, dependent on the uncertain hand of

Charity for shelter, and for bread. To the honour of Americans, it is true, that in this country, they have realized the most liberal humanity. But by a dispensation of Providence which Humanity must applaud, they are forced to exhibit, in the most convincing manner, this important truth—that despotism and cruelty, whether in the family, or the nation, can never resist the energy of enraged and oppressed man, struggling for freedom.

These evils may perhaps appear distant from us; yet to some of our sister states they are probably nigh, even at the doors. Ideas of liberty and slavery, have taken such strong hold of the negroes, that unless their situation is suddenly ameliorated, the inhabitants of the southern states, will have the utmost reason to dread the effects of insurrection. And with the example of the West-Indies before their eyes, they will be worse than mad, if they do not adopt effectual measures to escape their danger. To oppress the slaves by force when in a state of rebellion, or to hold them in their present condition, for any considerable length of time in future, will be beyond their strength. Courage and discipline, form but a feeble front, to check the onset of freedom. [. . .] And when hostilities are commenced, where shall they look for auxiliaries, in such an iniquitous warfare? Surely no friend to freedom and justice will dare to lend them his aid.

[. . .] Who then can charge the negroes with injustice, or cruelty, when "they rise in all the vigour of insulted nature," and avenge their wrongs? What American will not admire their exertions, to accomplish their own deliverance? Every friend to justice and freedom, while his heart bleeds at the recital of the devastation and slaughter, which necessarily attend such convulsions of liberty, must thank his God for the emancipation of every individual from the miseries of slavery. This is the language of freedom; but it is also the language of truth—a language which ever grates on the ears of tyrants, whether placed at the head of a plantation, or the head of an empire. [. . .] For the same principles, which lead nations to the attainment of freedom, urge individuals to pursue the same important object; and the struggles of the latter, are as often marked with desperation, as the efforts of the former. Indeed, from individuals, the spirit is generally communicated to states, and from states to nations. And since the mighty, and majestic course of Freedom has begun, nothing but the arm of Omnipotence can prevent it from reaching to the miserable Africans. But let the domestic tyrants of the earth, tremble at the approaches of such a destructive enemy.

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b) Elihu Hubbard Smith, excerpts from *A Discourse, Delivered April 11, 1798, At the Request of and Before The New-York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and Protecting Such of Them as Have Been or May Be Liberated. By E. H. Smith, a Member of the Society. New-York: Printed by T. & J. Swords, No. 99 Pearl-Street.*

[. . .] The most hasty outline of the history of slavery must commence with the formation of Society: the history of man is the history of slavery.

In the rude ages of the world, as in the most refined, superior force and superior cunning have equally been practiced, and have both succeeded in enslaving one portion of the human race to another. What individual strength and personal address accomplished, in respect to one or a few, in the infancy of society, has been since extended and perpetuated by multiform combinations both of power and art. Ignorance, and credulity and fear, the companions of ignorance, furnished ample opportunity for successful enterprize, where direct violence must have been hazardous and uncertain. Mental slavery, therefore, was of early origin and quick growth; it was assiduously cultivated; and the bands of superstition restrained those who would easily have shaken off the fetters of subjection. So important were these two methods of holding men in bondage to each other, so consentaneous in their principles, and so co-ordinate in their birth, that, in the outset, they not infrequently united in the same person: the same person was at once king and pontiff. As society advanced, the agents of this tyranny were augmented; a seeming division of powers took place, while a real union was maintained; to one party was committed the execution of their joint devices; to the other was entrusted the more silent and specious diffusion of opinions favourable to their views. The first subdued opposition in the field; the last undermined it in the family; and while the king led his chiefs to combat, the pontiff, surrounded by his priests, invested with the security of inviolable sanctity, refined his cunning, multiplied his wiles, and at length succeeded in subjugating the prince as well as the people. This was sometimes a delicate task; but the fear which even the most powerful despots entertain of their slaves, favoured the sacerdotal usurpation; and they were held by the interest who secretly derided the pretensions of the prelacy.

As the state of society improved, the cultivators of superstition subtilized and perfected their arts. They saw and obeyed the necessity of governing less in appearance, while they redoubled their exertions, by converting to their aid all the errors of judgment, all the violences of passion, and all the phenomena of nature, to hold an ampler tyranny over the minds of men. Unable absolutely to impede the progress of knowledge, they laboured to distort it to their own purposes; or, failing of success, imposed a more powerful obstacle, by exerting their influence for the destruction of the intractable sovereign, and enlightened philosopher.

While nations were exclusively ruled by the priesthood, or by tyrants who united in their own persons the offices of monarch and high-priest, no safe means of obtaining and consolidating authority were neglected. Afterwards, upon a separation of the two functions of enslaving the bodies and subjugating the minds of men, the leaders of opinion strenuously supported all the outrages of the despot who was subservient to their wishes; and, whether he ground with the iron edge of oppression his own subjects, or the subjects of another, whether his capricious frenzy doomed his own territories, or the dominions of a neighbouring prince, to desolation, alike sustained his fury and panegyrized his injustice. Under such circumstances, is it wonderful that slavery became widely diffused; that the sword and the robe alone were deemed worthy the ambition of the great; that all the arts which nourish and bless mankind were despised as servile; that men became worshippers of men, and eagerly acknowledged themselves the servants of one, that they might more securely tyrannize over many.

Nor was this state of things limited to monarchies. Forms of government rather varied the application of the spirit of despotism, than destroyed it.

[. . .] In the existing circumstances of society, encumbered as we are with this mighty evil, which slavery has cast upon us, we are only free to chuse, amid [a] variety of embarrassments. There is no fear that even this factitious right of property, so much insisted on, will not be sufficiently respected. Alas! there is no hope but that it will long continue triumphantly to oppose all the efforts of benevolence. But, were it justly insisted on, what demons of malignant cruelty paralize the senses and the reason of legislators? Do they not see the ruin which surrounds us? Are they unconscious of the poison which hovers over every roof, lurks in every house, and infects every cup? Wait they till the venders of pestilence, till the manufacturers of plagues, relinquish their productive and desolating craft, before they labour for the restoration of health, for the prevention of disease? What! will they foster the fury, relax the fetters which partially confine her, and imp her with new wings, that she may more vigorously pursue the work of devastation?—You, yes you, the Legislators of America, you are the real upholders of slavery! You, yes you, Legislators of this Commonwealth, you foster and protect it here! Is it not recognized by your laws? and in the very face of your Constitution? of that instrument which you maintained by your arms, and sealed with your blood? Have not those laws authorized, systematized, and protected, and do they not now protect it? If you fear the clamors of the enslavers of men, or if you acknowledge the justice of their claims to compensation, it is you who sanction, you who uphold the crime. It is you who are deaf to the demands of justice, the signs of humanity, the representations of policy, the calls of interest, the suggestions of expediency, the warning voice of domestic tranquility. It is you who shut the ear, who close the eye, who clench the hand, insensible to every motive which must determine men to hear, to see, and to act. You perpetrate, you perpetuate, you immortalize injustice—and all "for so much trash as may be grasped thus." The opposers of justice do not read, think, reason, feel,—they do not so much as listen. They admit but one idea, that of gain from the labour of their slaves; they are occupied but with one care, that of maintaining their authority. And you nourish that gain, you cherish that care, you defend with double mounds that monstrous authority, at the hazard, if not with the sacrifice, of all the dearest interests of society, of its very existence. These you hazard, when the remedy is obvious, certain, easy to be obtained, and safe to be applied. Mad insensibility! the little interests of the moment, the gratifications of vanity, and the contests of passion, a market, a palace, or a strip of land, engross your thoughts and dissipate your treasures, while the welfare of a nation sleeps unregarded, while thousands of your fellow-beings, children of the same father, and inheritors of the same destiny, eat the bitter bread of slavery, writhe under the lash of cruelty, and sink into the untimely grave amid the taunts of oppression!—Amen! so be it! and so shall be the retribution!"*

* It is but justice to the last House of Representatives of this State to inform the reader, in this place, that they passed a bill providing for the gradual abolition of slavery, and by a considerable majority. The bill, however, was rejected by the Senate.

[. . .] The experience of many years, evidence palpable to the most hardened and obstinate sense, has demonstrated the capacity of the Blacks. The very vices of which they stand so bitterly accused, demonstrate it. They, alike all men else, are the creatures of education, of example, of circumstances, of external impressions. Make them outcasts and vagabonds, thrust them into the society of drunkards and of thieves, shut them from the fair book and salutary light of knowledge, degrade them into brutes, and trample them into dust, and you must expect them to be vile and wretched, dissolute and lawless, base and stupid. Madmen! would you "gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

But, notwithstanding the degraded condition of the Africans, and their descendants among us,—a condition to which they have been reduced, or in which they have been retained, by those who reproach them with it, and would offer it as an excuse for their own inhumanity and injustice,—still they exhibit many examples of humble, but of cheering virtue. We not only see them irreproachably employed in various mechanic occupations; but, in some few instances, elevated to the illustrious offices of the instructors in learning, and inculcators of morality. The desk, and the pulpit, have witnessed their triumphs over all the efforts of blind and malignant prejudice. Already they begin to feel their own worth as men; already are they impressed with some just sense of the nature of those exertions which are making in their behalf; already have they attained to some conception of that prudent and virtuous conduct which is the best reward for all our toils; already may they challenge the palm from many of their whiter brethren. Perceive you not that spirit of improvement—slow though it be, yet visible—which diffuses itself among them? Observe you not their growing knowledge, their increasing industry, their softening manners, their correcter morals? Hear you not that sigh, wakened by your benevolent sympathy? Mark you not that tear of grateful joy, silently descending? See you not that sable figure, that casts himself at your feet, that kisses your hand, that clasps your knees, "fathers and benefactors of our race," that exclaims—"the sons of Africa feel your virtue at their souls;—their hearts, their hands, their lives, are devoted to your service."

'Go, hapless progeny of a violated parent! cultivate peace, order, knowledge. Let your patience grow with your wrongs. Let your hearts learn forgiveness, your hands labour for your tyrants, your lives refute their calumnies. Go! assured, that, as for us, we have well considered what awaits us,—the extent of surrounding obstacles, and their duration, and have resolved, never to quench our zeal, to withhold our care, to intermit our labours, never to drop the language of persuasion, and forget the tone of justice, till we behold you disenthralled of bonds, reinstated in your rights, blessed with science, and adorned with virtue.'

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c) Samuel Miller, excerpts from *A Discourse Delivered April 12, 1797 at the Request of and Before the New-York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slaves, and Protecting Such of Them as Have Been or May Be Liberated.* New York: T. and J. Swords, 1797.

[. . .] That, in the close of the eighteenth century, it should be esteemed proper and necessary, in any civilized country, to institute discourse to oppose the slavery and commerce of the human species, is a wonderful fact in the annals of society! But that this country should be America, is a solecism only to be accounted for by the general inconsistency of the human character. But, after all the surprise that Patriotism can feel, and all the indignation that Morality can suggest on this subject, the humiliating tale must be told—that in this free country—in this country, the plains of which are still stained with blood shed in the cause of liberty,—in this country, from which has been proclaimed to distant lands, as the basis of our political existence, the noble principle, that "ALL MEN ARE BORN FREE AND EQUAL,"—in this country there are slaves!—men are bought and sold! Strange indeed! that the bosom which glows at the name of liberty in general, and the arm which has been so vigorously exerted in vindication of human rights, should yet be found leagued on the side of oppression, and opposing their avowed principles!

[. . .] In the present age and country, none, I presume, will rest a defence of slavery on the ground of superior force; the right of captivity; or any similar principle, which the ignorance and the ferocity of ancient times admitted as a justifiable tenure of property. It is to be hoped the time is passed, never more to return, when men would recognize maxims as subversive to morality as they are of social happiness. Can the laws and rights of war be properly drawn into precedent for the imitation of sober and regular government? Can we sanction the detestable idea, that liberty is only an advantage gained by strength, and not a right derived from nature's God? Such sentiments become the abodes of demons, rather than societies of civilized men.

Pride, indeed, may contend, that these unhappy subjects of our oppression are an *inferior race of beings;* and are therefore assigned by the strictest justice to a depressed and servile station in society. But in what does this inferiority consist? In a difference of *complexion* and *figure?* Let the narrow and illiberal mind, who can advance such an argument, recollect whither it will carry him. In traversing the various regions of the earth, from the Equator to the Pole, we find an infinite diversity of shades in the complexion of men, from the darkest to the fairest hues. If, then, the proper station of the African is that of servitude and depression, we must also contend, that every Portuguese and Spaniard is, though in a less degree, inferior to us, and should be subject to a measure of the same degradation. Nay, if the tints of colour be considered the test of human dignity, we may justly assume a haughty superiority over our southern brethren of this continent, and devise their subjugation. In short, upon this principle, where shall liberty end? or where shall slavery begin? At what grade is it that the ties of blood are to cease? And how many shades must we descend still lower in the scale, before mercy is to vanish with them?

But, perhaps, it will be suggested, that the Africans and their descendents are inferior to their brethren in *intellectual capacity*, if not in complexion and figure. This is strongly asserted, but upon what ground? Because we do not see men who labour under every disadvantage, and who have every opening faculty blasted and destroyed by their depressed condition, signalize themselves as philosophers? Because we do not find men who are almost entirely cut off from every source of mental improvement, rising to literary honours? To suppose the Africans of an inferior racial character, because they have not thus distinguished themselves, is just as rational as to suppose every private citizen of an inferior species, who has not raised himself up to the condition of royalty. But, the truth is, many of the negroes discover great ingenuity, notwithstanding their circumstances so depressed, and so unfavourable to all cultivation. They become excellent mechanics and practical musicians, and, indeed, learn every thing their masters take the pains to teach them.* And how far they might improve in this respect, were the same advantages conferred on them that freemen enjoy, is impossible for us to decide until the experiment be made.

ARISTOTLE long ago said—"Men of little genius, and great bodily strength, are by nature destined to serve, and those of a better capacity to command. The natives of Greece, and of some other countries, being naturally superior in genius, have a natural right to empire; and the rest of mankind, being naturally stupid, are destined to labour and slavery."** What would this great philosopher have thought of his own reasoning, had he lived till the present day? On the one hand, he would have seen his countrymen, of whose genius he boasts so much, lose with their liberty all mental character; while, on the other, he would have seen many nations, whom he consigned to everlasting stupidity, shew themselves equal in intellectual power to the most exalted of human kind.

[. . .] But higher laws than those of common justice and humanity may be urged against slavery. I mean THE LAWS OF GOD, revealed in the scriptures of truth. This divine system, in which we profess to believe and to glory, teaches us, that *God has made of one blood all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth.*

[. . .] There have not been wanting, indeed men, as ignorant as they were impious, who have appealed to the sacred scriptures for a defence of slavery.

[. . .] Many have been the proposals of benevolent men to remedy this grand evil, and to ameliorate the condition of the injured negroes. But, while I revere the very mistakes of those who have shewn themselves friends to human happiness, yet the most of these proposals appear to me incumbered with insuperable difficulties, and, in some points of view, to involve greater mischief than the original disorder designed to be cured. Immediately to emancipate *seven hundred thousand* slaves, and

* Having been, for two years, a monthly visitor of the African School in this city, I directed particular attention to the capacity and behaviour of the scholars, with a view to satisfy myself on the point in question. And, to me, the negro children of that institution appeared, in general, quite as orderly and quite as ready to learn, as white children.

** De Republ. lib.i,cap.5,6.

send them forth into society, with all the ignorance, habits, and vices of their degraded education about them, would probably produce effects more unhappy than any one is able to calculate or conceive. Nor does the plan appear much more plausible, which some have proposed, to collect, and send them back to the country from whence they or their fathers have been violently dragged; or, to form them into a colony, in some retired part of our own territory.[1] I shall not pronounce either of these impracticable; because one of them has been attempted by an European nation, and not altogether without success.[2] I shall not say, that such a removal would be less happy for the subjects of it, than their present condition; because, in particular instances, it might prove otherwise. But, in my view, the difficulties and objections attending such a plan, especially on a large scale, are far greater and more numerous than many sanguine speculators have seemed to suppose.

Perhaps no method can be devised, to deliver our country from the evil in question, more safe, more promising, and more easy of execution, than one which has been partially adopted in some of the states,[3] and hitherto with all the success that could have been expected. This plan is, to frame laws, which will bring about the emancipation in a GRADUAL MANNER; which will, at the same time, PROVIDE FOR THE INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL CULTIVATION of slaves, that they may be prepared to exercise the rights, and discharge the duties of citizens, when liberty shall be given them; and which, having thus fitted them for the station, will confer upon them, in due time, the privileges and dignity of other freemen. By the operation of such a plan, it is easy to see that slavery, at no great distance of time, would be banished in the United States; the mischiefs attending an universal and immediate emancipation would be, in a great measure, if not entirely, prevented; and beings, who are now gnawing the vitals, and wasting the strength of the body politic, might be converted into wholesome and useful members of it. Say not that they are unfit for the rank of citizens, and can never be made honest and industrious members of the community. Say not that their ignorance and brutality must operate as everlasting bars against their being elevated to this station. All just reasoning abjures the flimsy pretext. Make them freemen; and they will soon be found to have the manners, the character, and the virtues of freemen.*

[1] [Editors' Note: Miller refers to African or other recolonization proposals by Jefferson and others and rejects the idea in favor of a vision of a mixed-race society, which he articulates in the remainder of the address. Earlier, in a passage not included here, Miller quotes Jefferson's famous warning: "I tremble for my country when I remember that God is just—that his justice cannot sleep for ever—and that an exchange of circumstances is among probable events. The Almighty has no attribute which can take side with us in such a conflict" (Miller, 27).]

[2] [Editors' Note: Miller refers to the British scheme in 1792 to recolonize Sierra Leone with those who had formerly been slaves in the Caribbean and North America.]

[3] [Editors' Note: i.e., a reference to Pennsylvania's 1781 abolition law and the work of building black institutions and education there.]

* It is easy to foresee that many strong prejudices, and many feelings not altogether unnatural, will oppose the execution of this plan. The idea of admitting negroes to a state of political and social

15. Two Perspectives on Slavery from *The Monthly Magazine and American Review*

These two pieces on slavery and racial domination were published in the Monthly Magazine and American Review, *the magazine founded and edited by Brown's New York circle and in which Brown played a central editorial role. Both appeared during the months when* Second Part *was being written and use historical case studies from Roman and English history as evidence of ways in which the damage caused by slavery in the United States can be overcome. The first section comes from an article by "H.L.," possibly a pseudonym for Brown's childhood friend Joseph Bringhurst, Jr. H.L. uses the arguments linking population, territory, and economic resources that are most commonly associated today with Thomas Malthus'* An Essay on the Principle of Population, as It Affects the Future Improvement of Society with Remarks on the Speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and Other Writers (1798).

Malthus refuted progressive claims that society can become more perfect by arguing that the increase of population will act as a conservative check on social change, since population growth creates a scarcity of resources. But H.L. turns Malthus on his head by arguing that miscegenation and the relative increase of the white population into an expanding frontier will allow for a transformation of American society through the peaceful abolition of slavery, just as slaves were incorporated into Roman society.

The second excerpt comes from an anonymous review of a section of William Eton's four volume A Survey of the Turkish Empire (London, 1798). *Because this is not a review of Eton's entire work, but a re-publication of a particular section, it is most likely that Brown, as editor, chose the fragment to highlight an argument with which he was in sympathy. Eton argues that the character of Greeks cannot be adduced from their present behavior as dominated peoples under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. Because of the legal and cultural divisions created by the ruling Turks in order to disempower and disenfranchise the Greeks, their human vitality is suppressed. Using England as his example, Eton argues that that the difference among peoples can be overcome through universal rights and miscegenation. Eton's argument can also be understood in the context of wider British romantic era interest in the theme of Greek independence (in the best-known example, the poet Byron dies in Greece for this cause). Brown's magazine most likely publishes the extract as a comparative example that helps explain African behavior under slavery and that projects the results of a full emancipation and incorporation of Africans as equal citizens.*

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equality with the whites, even after the best education they can receive, is not a very pleasant one to a great majority even of those who are warmly engaged for their emancipation. I shall not discuss the reasonableness of such feelings at present. It is sufficient to say, that our political body is labouring under a most hurtful and dangerous disease; and that the most skilful physician cannot restore it to health without the exhibition of some remedies which are more or less unpalatable.

a) H.L., "Thoughts on the Probable Termination of Negro Slavery in the United States of America," *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* 2:2 (February 1800).

[. . .] Domestic Slavery was greatly prevalent among the Romans, in the height of their power. Their system, in this respect, was remarkably similar to ours, except in the employment of their slaves, which did not essentially differ from that of servants and peasants in modern Italy and Spain. Their manners, religion, and government, were far less favorable to manumission than ours, and yet a slave, in the third generation, was rarely known. The mass of people in the cities, the knights, and finally the senators and governors of provinces were chiefly composed of the posterity of slaves.

Hence, when the limits of the empire became stationary, and war no longer supplied the markets with captives, the people insensibly mingled into one mass, with little distinction but those of property or profession. The progress to this state of things, with us, may be reasonably expected to be infinitely more rapid, from the greater prevalence of enlightened opinions, from the inferior proportion of the number of slaves to that of freemen,* and from causes peculiar to our selves, which obstruct their propagation or shorten their lives.

But however we determine as to the absolute number of slaves, at any given period, it is evident that their relative or proportionate number will decline. The southern States are, comparatively, deserts. A few districts on the seaboard are planted with rice, and maize, and tobacco; but the western regions are nearly unoccupied except by panthers and deer. These, however, will quickly be stocked by people who will migrate hither from the east and north. The new comers will bring with them habits, if not opinions, incompatible with slavery. They will till their fields and stock their corn with their own hands.

[. . .] As the proportion of freemen increases, it must be expected that every moral cause tending to annihilate servitude, will increase in force. . . . Comprehensive schemes of emancipation may possibly be dangerous when the number of slaves is *one half* or *one third* of the whole; but this danger is annihilated when it dwindles to a fifteenth or a twentieth.

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b) William Eton, "Interesting Account of the Character and Political State of the Modern Greeks. [From a Survey of the Turkish Empire, &c. by W. Eton, Esq.]." *The Monthly Magazine and American Review* 2:6 (May 1800).

[. . .] Every object, moral and physical, the fair face of nature and the intellectual energies of the [Greek] inhabitants, have alike been blasted and defiled by the harpy-touch of Turkish tyranny.

* Some have computed the slaves in the Roman provinces to be half the inhabitants. In our southern states it is but little more than one third of the whole population.

[. . .] Of the defects of the Grecian character, some are doubtless owing to their ancient corruptions; but most of them take their rise in the humiliating state of depression in which they are held by the Turks. This degradation and servility of their situation, has operated for centuries, and has consequently produced an accumulated effect on the mind; but, were this weight taken off, the elasticity and vigour of the soul would have wide room for expansion; and, though it cannot be expected that they would at once rise to the proud animation of their former heroes, they would doubtless display energies of mind which the iron hand of despotism has long kept dormant and inert. It is rather astonishing that they have retained so much energy of character, and are not more abased, for, like noble coursers, they champ the bit, and spurn indignantly the yoke: when once freed from these, they enter the course of glory.

[. . .] It has been said, that long possession of a country gives an indisputable right of dominion, and that the right of the Turks to their possessions has been acknowledged by all nations in their treaties. As to treaties between the Turks and other nations, who had no right to dispose of the countries usurped by the Turks, they cannot be binding to the Greeks, who never signed such treaties, nor were consulted, or consented to their signing.

When one nation conquers another, and they become incorporated by having the same rights, the same religion, the same language, and by being blended together by intermarriages, a long series of years renders them one people. Who can, in England, distinguish the aborigines from the Romans, Saxons, Danes, Normans, and other foreigners? They are all Englishmen.

The Greeks were conquered by the Turks, but they were attacked (like all other nations they conquered) by them without provocation. It was not a war for injury or insult, for jealousy of power or the support of an ally, contests which ought to end when satisfaction or submission is obtained; it was a war having for its aim conquest, and for its principle a right to the dominion of the whole earth; a war which asserted that all other sovereigns were usurpers, and the deposing and putting them to death was a sacred duty. Do the laws of nations establish that such a conquest gives right of possession? They, on the contrary, declare such conquest usurpation.

The conquered were never admitted by the Turks to the rights of citizens or fellow subjects, unless they abjured their religion and their country: they became slaves; and as, according to their cowardly law, the Turks have a right, at all times, to put to death their prisoners, the conquered and their posterity for ever are obliged annually to *redeem their heads*, by paying the price set on them: they are excluded from all offices in the state. It is death for a conquered Greek to marry a Turkish woman, or even to cohabit with a common prostitute of that nation. They are, in every respect, treated as enemies. They are still called and distinguished by the name of their nation, and a Turk is never called a Greek, though his family should have been settled for generations in that country. The testimony of a Greek is not valid in the court of judicature, when contrasted with that of a Turk. They are distinguished by a different dress: it is death to wear the same apparel as a Turk: even their houses are painted a different colour: in fine, they are in the same situation they were the day they were conquered; totally distinct as a nation; and they have therefore the same right now as they then had, to free themselves from the barbarous usurpers of their country, whose conduct to all the nations they have conquered, merits the external execration of mankind.

16. Benjamin Nones vs. the *Gazette*

This polemical newspaper exchange from early August 1800 between an anonymous "Observer" in the Federalist Gazette of the United States *and Benjamin Nones (1757–1826), a Democratic-Republican society*[1] *and Jewish community activist, is a likely context for Brown's decision, late in the novel's composition, to give the character Achsa Fielding Jewish ethnicity and to end the novel with a romantic union between the Scots-Irish Mervyn and a dark-skinned, non-Christian emigrant. By concluding the novel with this affirmation of a Jewish character and an interracial marriage, and publishing it in a context that included heated exchanges like this one, Brown codes the novel's ending as an argument against the partisan racialization of political debate in his immediate environment and as a wider affirmation of progressive ethnic and class mixture in personal and civic relations.*

Additionally, given Nones' suggestion that all Jews and the less wealthy ought naturally to support republican causes, the conclusion of Brown's novel may be seen in this light as an oblique, discrete criticism of the Federalist administration in the key months leading up to the December 1800 national election that ended the Federalist party's domination of national politics. Brown made a brief visit to Philadelphia from New York in late August and would have been well aware of such a remarkable exchange appearing in the leading Philadelphia newspapers of the day. The exchange had an afterlife through the rest of the month when Nones' reply was distributed as a broadside on the streets of Philadelphia, reprinted elsewhere, and satirized in subsequent issues of the Gazette.

The exchange is best known for Benjamin Nones' landmark assertion and defense of Jewish civic identity in the U.S. When Nones was refused the right of response to insults against him in the final lines of the Gazette *article, he published his now-famous reply—defiantly declaring "I am a Jew . . . I am Republican . . . I am poor"—in the opposition newspaper, the Jeffersonian-identified* Aurora. *Nones was a French Sephardic Jew who came to the U.S. from Bordeaux at age twenty in 1777 to fight in the American Revolution, became naturalized in 1784, and settled in Philadelphia, where he was active in numerous civic organizations, serving for example as the president (1791–1799) of the Congregation Mikveh Israel, the first synagogue in Philadelphia.*

Nones was also an abolitionist, joining the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and manumitting his one slave in summer 1793 before working to

[1] "Federalist . . . Democratic-Republican": in the political party terminology of the 1790s, Federalists are the more Anglophile, moneyed elite, and conservative party (the party of the Washington and Adams administrations), and Democratic-Republicans are the more socially and regionally heterogeneous Francophile party (which comes into power after 1800 in the Jefferson and Madison administrations). Democratic-Republican societies were local political action committees that were typically more radical in tone and spirit that the party's elite leaders such as Jefferson or Madison.

persuade other Jewish refugees from the black revolution in Haiti to free slaves they had brought to Philadelphia. One of Nones' three sons (who all became consuls) had a consular appointment to Haiti. Within this group, Nones would have been familiar to Brown's close abolitionist friends, to the African American ministers Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, as well as to the white co-organizers of the Underground Railroad, Thomas Harrison (listed in Nones' reply as one of his repaid creditors) and Isaac Hopper. In this letter to the Gazette, *Nones defends himself against a personalized slur but explicitly situates his claims in larger terms as part of the period's ongoing struggle for the civil emancipation of Jews in the United States and other postrevolutionary republics.*

For readers of Arthur Mervyn, *it is also instructive to consider the attack that provoked Nones' response, since the anonymous* Gazette *piece exemplifies the scurrilous style of antiworker, antiblack, and anti-Semitic slurs that was repeatedly employed by Federalist journalists in the partisan infighting of the late 1790s, especially in attacks on the Democratic-Republican societies that had been providing new mechanisms for egalitarian-minded social organization since they began to appear in 1793. That is, the* Gazette *piece is not primarily an attack on any of the individuals it insults, but a race-baiting account of a meeting of the True Republican Society of Pennsylvania (earlier called the Democratic Society of Pennsylvania) with a larger agenda that was clear to contemporary readers.*

The piece's larger argument, built on its appeal to ethnic and class stereotypes, is against the kind of mixed-ethnicity potential that the club and its principles make possible, and which are affirmed by Arthur Mervyn's *Woldwinite program. The attack is not an isolated gesture, but continues the earlier partisan mobilization of anti-Semitic slurs by Federalist journalists such as William Cobbett and John Fenno (the previous editor of the* Gazette*) that was a repeated feature of the decade's political newspaper wars.*

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Actuated by motives of curiosity, I attended the meeting of Jacobins,[2] on Wednesday evening last, at the State House. Diverted at the consummate ignorance and stupidity, as well as self importance of these miserable wretches, I will endeavour to recount the various and singular transactions of this *wonderful* meeting, almost altogether composed of the very *refuse* and *filth* of society. To prove this my assertion (if proof be necessary) let it be known, that a large proportion of this meeting was men of the most infamous and abandoned characters; men, who are notorious for the seduction of *black innocence*,[3] who have more than once been convicted in open court of wilful perjury, and men who with sacriligious hands have impiously dared to tear down from the sacred desk, the emblems of mourning in honour of our beloved Washington—When persons of such character assume to themselves the order and regulation of a *government*, soon may we expect anarchy, confusion and commotion to ensue.

This meeting was opened by the *great big little* citizen of Market Street in the following style, "Fellow citizens, its most eight o'clock; an't it most time to commence the meeting, shall our worthy and Republican say—hem, Citizen B—r take the chair." Aye, Aye, was the general response, whereupon from the *motley group* out pops little Johnny (Knight of the Thimble) and at his tail the lap stone boy, R.[4] as his journeyman, Pshaw I mean his secretary. When seated, Barker loudly thumps his cudgel upon the table and with an audible voice proclaims order; "order Gent.—hem—Fellow Citizens, order, posi-ti-vely we cant *recede* to business without some order; Brother R— read the minutes of the last assemblage." Here secretary Vizze seating himself upon the table near the *Rush light*[5] (for reader he has not very good

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persuade other Jewish refugees from the black revolution in Haiti to free slaves they had brought to Philadelphia. One of Nones' three sons (who all became consuls) had a consular appointment to Haiti. Within this group, Nones would have been familiar to Brown's close abolitionist friends, to the African American ministers Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, as well as to the white co-organizers of the Underground Railroad, Thomas Harrison (listed in Nones' reply as one of his repaid creditors) and Isaac Hopper. In this letter to the Gazette, *Nones defends himself against a personalized slur but explicitly situates his claims in larger terms as part of the period's ongoing struggle for the civil emancipation of Jews in the United States and other postrevolutionary republics.*

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eyes) after a great deal of coughing twisting and snuffing the candles, and a *little bit* of spelling here and there (having been no doubt accustomed to the din of Hammers) bawled out in a most ridiculus and blundering manner the aforesaid minutes. [. . .]

[. . .] A great noise—Chairman what's the matter?

Citizen I—s—l. Nothing only our friend Billy is a little *gone*.

Citizen B—r. (in a half whisper and shaking his head), Ah poor soul, I'm afraid that damn'd gin will be the death of him; but come let us *reconnoitre* the business;—I think Citizen F—n was going to move—

Citizen Sambo. Ah massa he be *shove off* already; he go away wid broder Bully—oh here he come.

[. . .] *Cit B—r.* Citizens before we sojourn, I will remark that I know Republicans are always a pertty much *harrassed* for the rhino,[6] but must *detrude* upon your ginerosity to night by exing you to launch out some of the *ready* for the citizen who provides for the room; I know Democrats hav'nt many *English Guineas* amongst them but I hope they have some *sipyenny bits* to night *at least*, and if they will *jist* throw them into *my hat* as they go along I shall be *defientially* obliged to them.*

Here I observed not a few gave an eleven penny bit and asked for a sipenny bit change, which they received. As for myself, I returned to my house as soon as possible, that I might enjoy my laugh, which be assured I did, and heartily too.

AN OBSERVER.[7]

**Citizen N— the Jew. I hopsh you will consider dat de monish ish very search, and besides you know I'sh just come out by de Insholvent Law.*[8]

Several. Oh yes let N— pass.

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[6] "Rhino": slang for money.

[7] Historian Jacob Rader Marcus suggests that Federalist journalist Joseph Dennie was behind this piece as author or editor, although there is no conclusive evidence for the attribution. See Marcus's discussion in *United States Jewry* 1.527–28.

[8] "*I hopsh . . . de Insholvent Law*": the dialect speech given to Nones is based on anti-Jewish stereotypes in contemporary theater, for example in the character Ben Hassan in Susanna Rowson's *Slaves in Algiers* (1794). See Nathans, "A Much-Maligned People: Jews on and off the Stage in the Early American Republic."

b] Benjamin Nones, "To the Printer of the Gazette of the U.S." (*The Aurora*, August 13, 1800).

TO THE EDITOR.

MR. DUANE,[9]

I enclose you an article which I deemed it but justice to my character to present for insertion in the Gazette of the United States, in reply to some illiberalities which were thrown out against me in common with many respectable citizens in that paper of the 5th inst. When I presented it to Mr. Wayne,[10] he promised me in the presence of a third person, that he would publish it. I waited until this day, when finding it had not appeared, I called on him, when he informed me that he would not publish it. I tendered him payment if he should require it. His business appears to be to aspersе and shut the door against justification. I need not say more:

I am &c. B. NONES.

Philadelphia Aug. 11, 1800.

To the Printer of the Gazette of the U.S.

SIR,

I hope, if you take the liberty of inserting calumnies against individuals, for the amusement of your readers, you will at least have so much regard to justice, as to permit the injured through the same channel that conveyed the slander, to appeal to the public in self defence.—I expect of you therefore, to insert this reply to your ironical reporter of the proceedings at the meeting of the republican citizens of Philadelphia, contained in your gazette of the fifth instant: so far as I am concerned in that statement. —I am no enemy Mr. Wayne to wit; nor do I think the political parties have much right to complain, if they enable the public to laugh at each others expence, provided it be managed with the same degree of ingenuity, and some attention as truth and candour. But your reporter of the proceedings at that meeting is as destitute of truth and candour, as he is of ingenuity, and I think, I can shew, that the want of prudence of this Mr. Marplot in his slander upon me, is equally glaring with his want of wit, his want of veracity, his want of decency, and his want of humanity.

I am accused of being a *Jew*; of being a *Republican*; and of being *Poor*.

I *am* a *Jew*. I glory in belonging to that persuasion, which even its opponents, whether christian, or Mahomedan, allow to be of divine origin—of that persuasion on which Christianity itself was originally founded, and must ultimately rest—which has preserved its faith secure and undefiled, for near three thousand years—whose

[9] William Duane, editor and publisher of the *Aurora*.

[10] Caleb P. Wayne, publisher-printer of the *Gazette*.

votaries have never murdered each other in religious wars, or cherished the theological hatred so general, so unextinguishable among those who revile them. A persuasion, whose, patient followers have endured for ages the pious cruelties of Pagans, and of christians, and persevered in the unoffending practice of their rites and ceremonies, amidst poverties and privations—amidst pains, penalties, confiscations, banishments, tortures, and deaths, beyond the example of any other sect, which the page of history has hitherto recorded.

To be of such a persuasion, is to me no disgrace; though I well understand the inhuman language, of bigotted contempt, in which your reporter by attempting to make me ridiculous, as a Jew, has made himself detestable, whatever religious persuasion may be dishonored by his adherence.

But I am a Jew. I am so—and so were Abraham, and Isaac, and Moses and the prophets, and so too were Christ and his apostles. I feel no disgrace in ranking with such society, however, it may be subject to the illiberal buffoonery of such men as your correspondents.

I am a *Republican!* Thank God, I have not been so heedless, and so ignorant of what has passed, and is now passing in the political world. I have not been so proud or so prejudiced as to renounce the cause for which I have *fought*, as an American throughout the whole of the revolutionary war, in the militia of Charleston, and in Polaskey's legion,[11] I fought in almost every action which took place in Carolina, and in the disastrous affair of Savannah,[12] shared the hardships of that sanguinary day, and for three and twenty years I felt no disposition to change my political, any more than my religious principles.—And which in spite of the witling scribblers of aristocracy, I shall hold sacred until death as not to feel the ardour of republicanism. —Your correspondent, Mr. Wayne cannot have known what it is to serve his country from principle in time of danger and difficulties, at the expence of his health and his peace, of his pocket and his person, as I have done; or he would not be as he is, a pert reviler of those who have so done—as I do not suspect you Mr. Wayne, of being the author of the attack on me, I shall not enquire what share you or your relations had in establishing the liberties of your country. On religious grounds I am a republican. Kingly government was first conceded to the foolish complaints, of the Jewish people, as a punishment and a curse; and so it was to them until their dispersion, and so it has been to every nation, who have been as foolishly tempted to submit to it. Great Britain has a king, and her enemies need not wish her the sword, the pestilence, and the famine.

In the history of the Jews, are contained the earliest warnings against kingly government, as any one may know who has read the fable of Abimelick,[13] or the exhorta-

[11] "Polaskey's legion": troops commanded by Casimir Pulaski (1746–1779), a Polish officer who fought and died in the American Revolution.

[12] "Disastrous affair of Savannah": the Battle of Savannah (1778), won by the British.

[13] "Abimelick": the Biblical character Abimilech (*Judges* 9:1), a bastard son whose name (signifying "my father, the king") was a direct claim to hereditary power that he wielded tyrannically. To seize

tions of Samuel.[14] But I do not recommend them to your reporter, Mr. Wayne. To him the language of truth and soberness would be unintelligible.

I am a Jew, and if for no other reason, for that reason am I a republican. Among the pious priesthood of church establishments, we are compassionately ranked with Turks, Infidels and Heretics. In the *monarchies* of Europe we are hunted from society—stigmatized as unworthy of common civility, thrust out as it were from the converse of men; objects of mockery and insult to froward children, the butts of vulgar wit, and low buffoonery, such as your correspondent Mr. Wayne is not ashamed to set us an example of. Among the nations of Europe we are inhabitants every where—but Citizens no where *unless in Republics*. Here, in France, and in the Batavian Republic alone, we are treated as men and as brethren. In republics we have *rights*, in monarchies we live but to experience *wrongs*. And why? because we and our forefathers have *not* sacrificed our principles to our interest or earned an exemption from pain and poverty, by the dereliction of our religious duties, no wonder we are objects of derision to those, who have no principles, moral, or religious, to guide their conduct.

How then can a Jew but be a Republican? in America particularly. Unfeeling & ungrateful would he be, if he were callous to the glorious and benevolent cause of the difference between his situation in this land of freedom, and among the proud and privileged law givers of Europe.

But I am *poor*, I am so, my family also is large, but soberly and decently brought up. They have not been taught to revile a christian, because his religion is not *so old* as theirs. They have not been taught to mock even at the errors of good intention, and conscientious belief. I hope they will always leave this to men as unlike themselves, as I hope I am to your scurrilous correspondent.

I know that to purse proud aristocracy *poverty is a crime* but it may *sometimes* be accompanied with honesty even in a Jew. I was a Bankrupt some years ago. I obtained my certificate, and I was discharged from my debts. Having been more successful afterwards, I called my creditors together, and eight years afterwards unsolicited I discharged all my old debts, I offered interest which was refused by my creditors, and they gave me under their hands without any solicitations of mine, as a testimonial of the fact (to use their own language) as a tribute due to my honor and honesty. This testimonial was signed by Messrs. J. Ball, W. Wister, George Meade, J. Philips, C. G. Paleske, J. Bispham, J. Cohen, Robert Smith, J. H. Leuffer, A. Kuhn, John Stille, S. Pleasants, M. Woodhouse, Thomas Harrison, M. Boraef, E. Laskey, and Thomas Allibone, &c.

I was discharged by the insolvent act, true, because having the amount of my debts owing to me from the French Republic, the differences between France and America

the throne he killed his seventy half-brothers but was himself killed by a rebellious woman after only three years in power.

[14] "Samuel": in 1 *Samuel* 12 the prophet Samuel in his farewell speech inveighs against the worship of kings and warns that rulers must be held accountable for their actions.

have prevented the recovery of what was due to me, in time to discharge what was due to my creditors. Hitherto it has been the fault of the political situation of the two countries, that my creditors are not paid; when peace shall enable me to receive what I am entitled to it will be my fault if they are not fully paid.

This is a long defence Mr. Wayne, but you have called it forth, and therefore, I hope you at least will not object to it. The Public will now judge who is the proper object of ridicule and contempt, your facetious reporter, or

Your Humble Servant,

BENJAMIN NONES.

17. Lydia Maria Child, excerpts from *Isaac T. Hopper: A True Life* (Boston: J. P. Jewett & Co., 1853).

Despite his relative obscurity today, Isaac Tatem Hopper (1771–1852) was one of the great progressive activists of the early Republic and antebellum era. Hopper was one of the central creators of the early Underground Railroad network that worked to free slaves in 1790s Pennsylvania, particularly after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 and may have provided a model for certain aspects of Brown's character Arthur Mervyn. Many of Hopper's efforts involved attempts to secure freedom for Haitian slaves who were brought to Philadelphia by masters fleeing revolution. Despite public anxieties that these "French negroes" might spread the seeds of violent black revolt, Hopper and other abolition activists actively sought to aid the foreign slaves and draw sympathy to their plight, as in the examples of "Romaine" and "Poor Amy" reprinted here.

Raised as a Presbyterian near Woodbury, New Jersey, Hopper moved to Philadelphia at age sixteen (1787), almost immediately became involved in abolitionist networks, apprenticed as a tailor, and converted to Quakerism at about age twenty-two (1793–1794). By the mid-1790s he was an active member of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society (PAS) and taught at the school for free blacks founded by Anthony Benezet. Inside the PAS, Hopper was known for his ironclad knowledge of laws concerning runaway slaves, especially 1790s laws about emancipation for slaves legally residing in Pennsylvania for a period of six months. After being trained in the late 1780s and early 1790s by Thomas Harrison, another Quaker tailor and abolitionist, in techniques for creating an illegal network to transport runaway slaves to freedom, Hopper was responsible for expanding its activity and creating a matrix of safe houses in and around Philadelphia.

Working closely with free black community leaders like Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, Hopper was an important link between the PAS's more elite membership and Philadelphia's blacks. His tailor shop became an unofficial office at which blacks could seek aid, and he was well known for his emergency interventions in sometimes-violent situations involving the attempted recapture of escaped slaves. From 1829 to his death in 1852, Hopper lived in New York City and ran a bookstore for the more progressive "Hicksite" wing of the Quakers but continued to play an important role in mentoring black abolitionists such as David Ruggles and Frederick Douglass. In New York he was also active in prison reform and, with his daughter, founded prisoner advocacy groups.

At present, very little is known about the early Underground Railroad and its relations to the PAS (unlike the antebellum network about which a great deal is known). This absence of historical records partly results from cultural differences between the denominational and regional groups that dominated the earlier and later phases of Underground Railroad activity. The later phase is tied to the work of New England mainline Protestants, such as William Lloyd Garrison, who brilliantly recognized the potential impact of mass-printed slave narratives and who never missed opportunities to publicize their activities in print. The earlier abolitionists, by contrast, mainly followed Quaker cultural styles that discouraged self-promotion. They consequently tended to organize their projects—especially illegal ones like the Underground Railroad—in discrete, unostentatious, nonpublicized ways.

Only in the 1840s, when the main channels of the Underground Railroad shifted westward from Philadelphia and the early mechanisms of its operation had been surpassed, was Hopper prevailed upon by Lydia Maria Child to publish accounts of his earlier activity, which then appeared in the abolitionist National Anti-Slavery Standard *as a biweekly column titled "Tales of Oppression." After Hopper's death in 1852, Child collected and slightly revised his recollections for publication in her* Isaac T. Hopper: A True Life *(1853). Child heard many of these stories from Hopper himself, since she knew him well and briefly lodged with his family. She explains that she edited Hopper's originals lightly because he "had a more dramatic way of telling a story than he had of writing it." A comparison of Child's and Hopper's texts confirms that she was, in fact, a nonobstructive editor who made slight stylistic changes without altering the substance of the original. The comparison is useful in that it also suggests that her role in editing Harriet Jacob's* Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl *(1861) was similarly light handed. Hopper, of course, appears in Jacob's tale as the "Lawyer Hopper" who gives her advice about the best routes to travel to freedom, a fitting tale to summarize a figure whose life was spent in administering the Underground Railroad.*

Within the small circles of abolitionist Quaker Philadelphia in the 1790s, Hopper would have been intimately familiar to Brown. Brown and Hopper were the same age and lived only a few doors apart, Brown at 117–119 and Hopper at 88–90 South Second. Hopper's mentor Thomas Harrison lived around the corner, and Harrison had been on the same 1777 list of Quakers to be incarcerated in Virginia as Brown's father, except that Harrison was tipped off, managed to evade arrest, and then survived in hiding during the rest of the Revolution. It would have been hard to ignore Hopper; he was not only a well-known and dramatic figure who stood out to most people who met him but he also insisted on wearing the distinctive buttonless coats and broad-brimmed hats of Penn-era Quakers, long after this clothing style had become obsolete. The well-known writer Margaret Fuller later recounted with pleasure how Hopper's visit to a Boston abolitionist event made it particularly memorable.

Brown's fictions often refer elliptically to his acquaintances and Arthur Mervyn *seems to draw on Hopper's well-known personal style in legible ways, especially in the dramatization of Mervyn's selfless efforts to help others in the novel's* Second Part. *Readers of Hopper's anecdotes will recognize parallels between Hopper and Mervyn's idiosyncratic manner in scenes such as Mervyn's confrontation with the matron Mrs. Althorpe in*

Chapter II.2, with the angry Philip Haduein in Chapter II.10 (see Hopper's "Poor Amy"), his intervention at Villars' brothel in Chapters II.11–12 (see "The Uncomplimentary Invitation"), or his nonjudgmental efforts to comfort the jailed and ruined Welbeck in Chapter II.13 ("The Magdalen"). When the novel's first part ends with Mervyn telling the reader that he has seen objects with very important implications in an attic crawlspace but cannot explain because "it appears to be my duty to pass them over in silence" (Chapter 23), Brown may be referring to the kinds of hiding places that Hopper's Underground Railroad used to safeguard runaway slaves.

*****

ROMAINE.

A Frenchman by the name of Anthony Saligrac removed from St. Domingo to New-Jersey, and brought with him several slaves, among whom was Romaine. After remaining in New-Jersey several years, he concluded in 1802, to send Romaine and his wife and child back to the West Indies. Finding him extremely reluctant to go, he put them in prison some days previous, lest they should make an attempt to escape. From prison they were put into a carriage to be conveyed to Newcastle, under the custody of a Frenchman and a constable. They started from Trenton late in the evening, and arrived in Philadelphia about four o'clock in the morning. People at the inn where they stopped remarked that Romaine and his wife appeared deeply dejected. When food was offered they refused to eat. His wife made some excuse to go out, and though sought for immediately after, she was not to be found. Romaine was ordered to get into the carriage. The Frenchman was on one side of him and the constable on the other. "*Must* I go?" cried he, in accents of despair. They told him he must. "And alone?" said he. "Yes, you must," was the stern reply. The carriage was open to receive him, and they would have pushed him in, but he suddenly took a pruning knife from his pocket, and drew it three times across his throat with such force that it severed the jugular vein instantly, and he fell dead on the pavement.

As the party had travelled all night, seemed in great haste, and watched their colored companions so closely, some persons belonging to the prison where they stopped suspected they might have nefarious business on hand; accordingly, a message was sent to Isaac T. Hopper, as the man most likely to right all the wrongs of the oppressed. He obeyed the summons immediately; but when he arrived, he found the body of poor Romaine weltering in blood on the pavement.

Speaking of this scene forty years later, he said, "My whole soul was filled with horror, as I stood viewing the corpse. Reflecting on that awful spectacle, I exclaimed within myself, How long, O Lord, how long shall this abominable system of slavery be permitted to curse the land! My mind was introduced into sympathy with the sufferer. I thought of the agony he must have endured before he could have resolved upon that desperate deed. He knew what he had to expect, from what he had experienced in the West Indies before, and he was determined not to submit to the same

misery and degradation again. By his sufferings he was driven to desperation; and he preferred launching into the unknown regions of eternity to an endurance of slavery."

An inquest was summoned, and after a brief consultation, the coroner brought in the following verdict: "Suicide occasioned by the dread of slavery, to which the deceased knew himself devoted."

Romaine and his wife were very good looking. They gave indications of considerable intelligence, and had the character of having been very faithful servants. His violent death produced a good deal of excitement among the people generally, and much sympathy was manifested for the wife and child, who had escaped.

The master had procured a certificate from the mayor of Trenton authorizing him to remove his slaves to the West Indies; but the jury of inquest, and many others, were of opinion that his proceedings were not fully sanctioned by law. Accordingly, Friend Hopper, and two other members of the Abolition Society, caused him to be arrested and brought before a magistrate; not so much with the view of punishing him, as with the hope of procuring manumission for the wife and child. In the course of the investigation, the friends of the Frenchman were somewhat violent in his defence. Upon one occasion, several of them took Friend Hopper up and put him out of the house by main force; while at the same time they let their friend out of a back door to avoid him. However, Friend Hopper met him a few minutes after in the street and seized him by the button. Alarmed by the popular excitement, and by the perseverance with which he was followed up, he exclaimed in agitated tones, "Mon Dieu! What is it you do want? I will do anything you do want."

"I want thee to bestow freedom on that unfortunate woman and her child," replied Friend Hopper.

He promised that he would do so; and he soon after made out papers to that effect, which were duly recorded.

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POOR AMY.

A Frenchman named M. Bouilla resided in Spring Garden, Philadelphia, in the year 1806. He and a woman, who had lived with him some time, had in their employ a mulatto girl of nine years old, called Amy. Dreadful stories were in circulation concerning their cruel treatment to this child; and compassionate neighbors had frequently solicited Friend Hopper's interference. After a while, he heard they were about to send her into the country; and fearing she might be sold into slavery, he called upon M. Bouilla to inquire whither she was going. As soon as he made known his business, the door was unceremoniously slammed in his face and locked. A note was then sent to the Frenchman, asking for a friendly interview; but he returned a verbal answer, "Tell Mr. Hopper to mind his own business."

Considering it his business to protect an abused child, he applied to a magistrate for a warrant, and proceeded to the house, accompanied by his friend Thomas Harrison

and a constable. As soon as they entered the door, M. Bouilla ran up-stairs, and arming himself with a gun, threatened to shoot whoever advanced toward him. Being blind, however, he could only point the gun at random in the direction of their voices, or of any noise which might reach his ear. The officer refused to attempt his arrest under such peril; saying, he was under no obligation to risk his life. Friend Hopper expostulated with the Frenchman, explained the nature of their errand, and urged him to come down and have the matter inquired into in an amicable way. But he would not listen, and persisted in swearing he would shoot the first person who attempted to come near him. At last, Friend Hopper took off his shoes, stepped up-stairs very softly and quickly, and just as the Frenchman became aware of his near approach, he seized the gun and held it over his shoulder. It discharged instantly, and shattered the plastering of the stairway, making it fly in all directions. There arose a loud cry, "Mr. Hopper's killed! Mr. Hopper's killed!"

The gun being thus rendered harmless, the Frenchman was soon arrested, and they all proceeded to the magistrate's office, accompanied by several of the neighbors. There was abundant evidence that the child had been half starved, unmercifully beaten, and tortured in various ways. Indeed, she was such a poor, emaciated, miserable looking object, that her appearance was of itself enough to prove the cruel treatment she had received. When the case had been fully investigated, the magistrate ordered her to be consigned to the care of Isaac T. Hopper, who hastened home with her, being anxious lest his wife should accidentally hear the rumor that he had been shot.

He afterwards ascertained that Amy was daughter of the white woman who had aided in thus shamefully abusing her. He kept her in his family till she became well and strong and then bound her to one of his friends in the country to serve till she was eighteen. She grew up a very pretty girl, and deported herself to the entire satisfaction of the family. When her period of service had expired, she returned to Philadelphia, where her conduct continued very exemplary. She frequently called to see Friend Hopper, and often expressed gratitude to him for having rescued her from such a miserable condition.

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THE MAGDALEN.

Upon one occasion, Friend Hopper entered a complaint against an old woman, who had presided over an infamous house for many years. She was tried, and sentenced to several months imprisonment. He went to see her several times, and talked very seriously with her concerning the errors of her life. Finding that his expostulations made some impression, he asked if she felt willing to amend her ways. "Oh, I should be thankful to do it!" she exclaimed. "But who would trust me? What can I do to earn an honest living? Everybody curses me, or makes game of me. How *can* I be a better woman, if I try ever so hard?"

"I will give thee a chance to amend thy life," he replied; "and if thou dost not, it shall be thy own fault."

He went round among the wealthy Quakers, and by dint of great persuasion he induced one to let her a small tenement at very low rent. A few others agreed to purchase some humble furniture, and a quantity of thread, needles, tape, and buttons, to furnish a small shop. The poor old creature's heart overflowed with gratitude, and it was her pride to keep everything very neat and orderly. There she lived contented and comfortable the remainder of her days, and became much respected in the neighborhood. The tears often came to her eyes when she saw Friend Hopper. "God bless that good man!" she would say. "He has been the salvation of me."

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THE UNCOMPLIMENTARY INVITATION.

A preacher of the Society of Friends felt impressed with the duty of calling a meeting for vicious people; and Isaac T. Hopper was appointed to collect an audience. In the course of this mission, he knocked at the door of a very infamous house. A gentleman who was acquainted with him was passing by, and he stopped to say, "Friend Hopper, you have mistaken the house."

"No, I have not," he replied.

"But that is a house of notorious ill fame," said the gentleman.

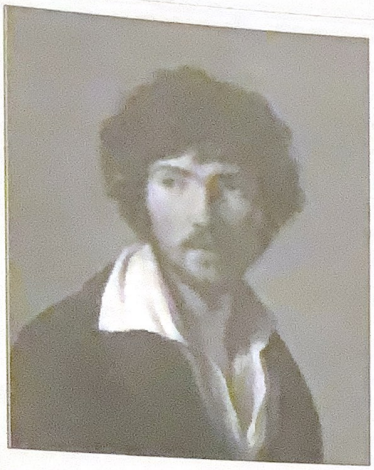
"I know it," rejoined he; "but nevertheless I have business here."

His acquaintance looked surprised, but passed on without further query. A colored girl came to the door. To the inquiry whether her mistress was within, she answered in the affirmative. "Tell her I wish to see her," said Friend Hopper. The girl was evidently astonished at a visitor in Quaker costume, and of such grave demeanor; but she went and did the errand. A message was returned that her mistress was engaged and could not see any one. "Where is she?" he inquired. The girl replied that she was upstairs. "I will go to her," said the importunate messenger.

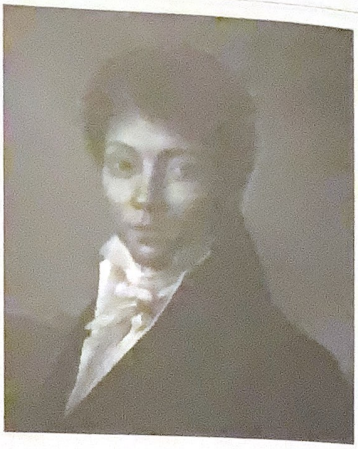
The mistress of the house heard him, and leaning over the balustrade of the stairs, she screamed out, "What do you want with me, sir?"

In very loud tones he answered, "James Simpson, a minister of the Society of Friends, has appointed a meeting to be held this afternoon, in Penrose store, Almond-Street. It is intended for publicans, sinners, and harlots. I want thee to be there, and bring thy whole household with thee. Wilt thou come?"

She promised that she would; and he afterward saw her at the meeting melted into tears by the direct and affectionate preaching.



Henri-François Riesener, *Portrait de Maurice Quay* (1797-99). Musée du Louvre. Reproduced by permission of Erich Lessing/Art Resources, NY.



François-Xavier Fabre, *Portrait of a Mulatto* (1809-10). Courtesy of Arenski Fine Art, Ltd., London.

The two portraits reproduced here exemplify the revolutionary era's new visual modes for representing individuals and status-group (class, gender, ethnicity) distinctions; these provide visual analogues for Brown's literary portrait of Arthur Mervyn. Trained in the studio of Jacques-Louis David, the stylistic and institutional center of politically-engaged visual art in revolutionary France, Riesener and Fabre are self-consciously modern and Davidian in their use of single-person portraiture to represent previously marginalized social types with the new dignity of the citizen. Foregoing the use of external accessories, such as furnishings or other objects to convey social distinctions, this spare style of portraiture conveys character by asking the viewer to focus on the sitter's physiognomy, clothing, and hairstyle.

Maurice Quay was a bohemian artist and leader of the "Barbu" (bearded, primitive) school, a subgroup in David's studio. His facial hair and clothing implicitly defend a new democratization by alluding to laboring-class clothing and grooming, rejecting the finery of the old regime. Fabre's anonymous sitter is probably a "free man of color" (possibly a wealthy planter from the West Indies), whose *à la mode* clothing suggests his crossing of ethno-racial and class barriers within the context of the post-revolutionary order. He wears his hair in the fashionable "Titus" cut, named after the Roman Emperor Titus and first popularized in Paris and London after 1791 by the actor Talma. This hairstyle was associated with the mood of emancipatory cultural transformation throughout the theater of Atlantic revolutions as it frees the hair from the fussy, quasi-aristocratic style of powdered wigs. By letting the hair flow *au naturel*, the Titus cut's conscious unruliness was egalitarian; both Europeans and Africans, and women and men could equally sport this hairstyle in the 1790s and 1800s, when it retained its association with the Roman and revolutionary iconography of the David school.

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