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the space of one year ; which, from the circumstance of giving them seed, wherewith to sow the land, appears to have been the last of that septennial dearth. So, that, even taking advantage of the extreme indigence of his fellow-creatures, when able to relieve them, in order to reduce them to the condition of Slaves, was not deemed by this righteous, and inspired Man, *with whom the Lord was*, an infraction of those sacred laws of Nature, which were the invariable rule of his conduct.

XXI. How far Joseph's conduct in every stage of this remarkable transaction, so favourable to the SLAVE-TRADE, may appear equitable or otherwise to the present humane advocates for African Liberty, through the feeble light of mere human reason and sense, I know not: this however is most certain, that there is not so much as one JOT in the Sacred Writings of the Word of God, that seems to disapprove in the most distant manner any one part of his conduct, either in this or in any other transaction of his long and holy life (g). On the contrary, in every place of Scripture, where this eminent Personage is introduced, whether before or after this transaction, he is constantly represented as one of the most faithful and acceptable servants of God, under whose particular protection he lived and thrived (b); by whose immediate direction he acted (i); and who did nothing whatever, but the Almighty *made it to prosper* (k). The very transaction, we are speaking of, when rehearsed by one of the inspired Writers (l), a Man according to God's own heart (m), is so far from being

(g) Gen. 50. 26. (b) Gen. 39. 21, 23.

(i) Gen. *ibid*, and cc. 40. 41. (k) Gen. 39. 23. (l) Pf. 105. v. 16—24.

(m) 1. Kings, c. 15. 3.

being taxed with the least intimation of guilt in any one circumstance attending it, that the whole process, without any exceptions whatever, is there represented as the effect of that divine Wisdom, with which he was inspired from above.

XXII. A FURTHER scriptural evidence, that the conduct of Joseph in purchasing so many millions of his fellow-creatures, and reducing them to the condition of Slaves, met the entire approbation of God, and was therefore perfectly consonant to the sacred laws of Nature, is that remarkable declaration of the Word of God, registered in the First Book of CHRONICLES, c. 5. v. 1—3, which assigns the true reason for transferring the right of Primogeniture, or First-born, from the Family of Reuben, eldest son of Jacob, to the Family of Joseph; which, as it is expressly mentioned in that place, was Reuben's incestuous conversation with Bilhah, his Father's concubine (n).—But is it credible, consistently with the essential justice of God, that he should deprive Reuben's children of their Primogeniture or birth-right, for having once transgressed one of the Laws of Nature, and yet should at the same time, even in preference to Judah the Messiah's progenitor, give it to those of Joseph, who, by the very act of enslaving so many millions of his fellow-creatures, and using them as he did, must have necessarily incurred the horrid guilt of reiterated transgressions of several of those sacred Laws, if, what is so confidently asserted be true, that the SLAVE-TRADE, or the purchasing of Slaves, is an iniquitous unnatural pursuit, and a crime of the blackest die in direct opposition to every principle of Nature? How could any one in such chimerical supposition reconcile the visible partiality

(n) Gen. 35. 22.