

**OBSERVATIONS UPON
LORD GLENELG'S
SPEECH: DELIVERED
20TH FEBRUARY, 1838**

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Observations Upon Lord Glenelg's Speech: Delivered 20th February, 1838 by Various

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VARIOUS

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SPEECH: DELIVERED
20TH FEBRUARY, 1838**

N.C.S.

W. Cunningham

OBSERVATIONS

UPON

LORD GLENELG'S SPEECH,

Delivered 20th February, 1838.

Quis hæc leget? nemo; hercule nemo!

JUV. SAT.

LONDON:

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BAKER STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE.

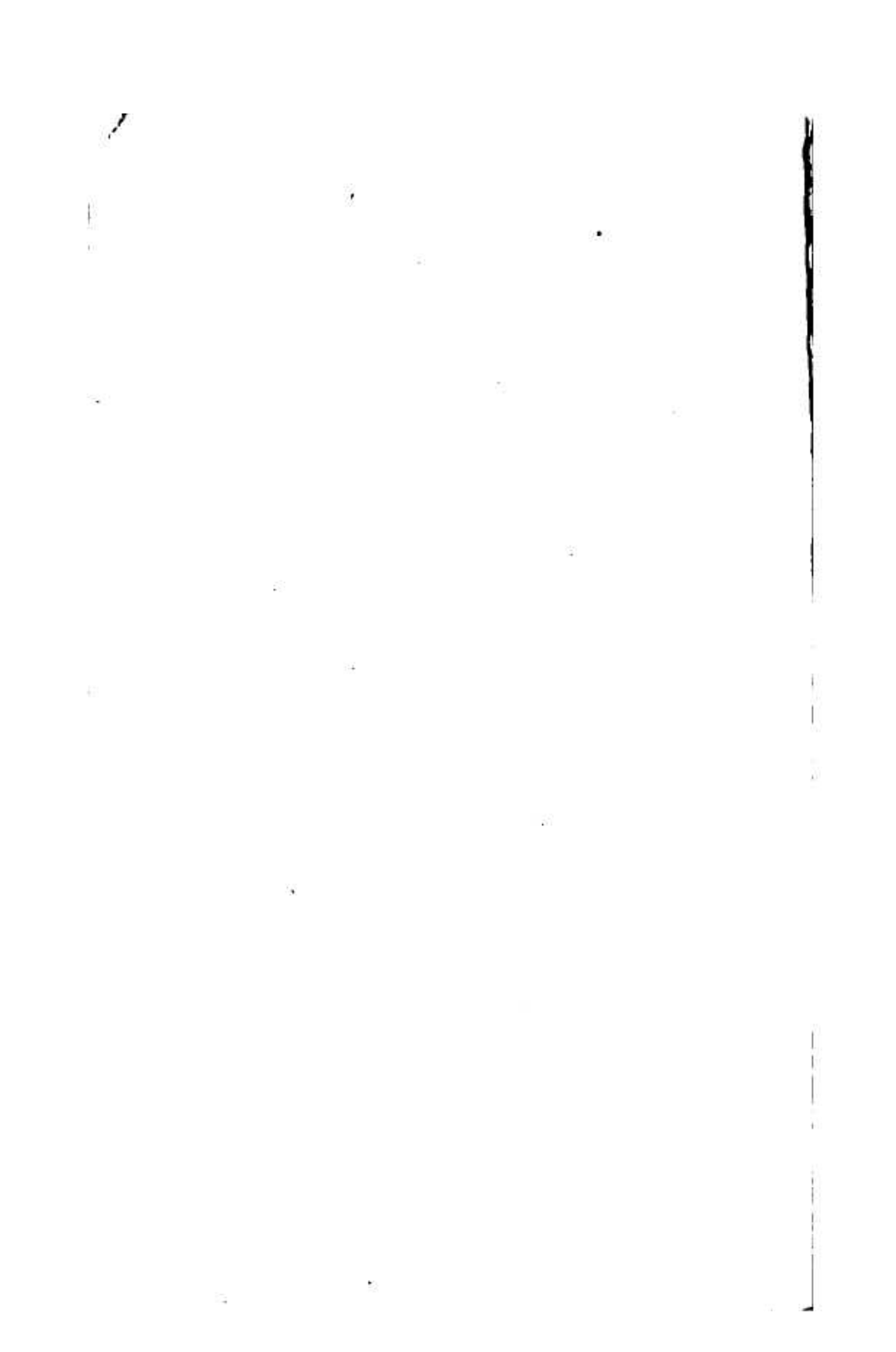
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PREFACE.

I BELIEVE it has before been said, that the idea of property—of *one's own*, imparts a charm to everything which is the object of it. Hence it is, no doubt, that men cling, with such unconquerable tenacity of attachment, to their own opinions, to wit, because they are their own. Hence again, the reluctance which the generality of men evince, to the reading of anything which may have a tendency, to disturb the quiet and comfortable enjoyment of their own preconceived opinions. Therefore is it that I have selected my querulous motto.

London, March 1838.



OBSERVATIONS, &c.

WHATEVER diversity of opinions may once have prevailed as to the expediency or the safety of emancipating the slaves in the West Indies, all must now admit that the principles upon which that great measure is founded do honor to the national character. The 3rd and 4th Will. 4th, ch. 73, will ever be regarded as a lasting monument, not less of national justice than of humanity and benevolence. Disdaining to shelter itself under metaphysical dogmas concerning the abstract rights of man, the British parliament, seeing that the nation, whether right or wrong, had for ages most unequivocally sanctioned a right of property in slaves; and had by various laws and institu-

tions encouraged their fellow subjects to invest capital in that description of property, felt that it could not without flagrant injustice wrest it from its owners without compensation. They accordingly decreed the sum of £ 20,000,000 for this purpose. Now in as much as the affairs of nations are, it must be confessed, regulated by a much lower standard of morality than the affairs of individuals, this must ever be acknowledged as a generous act of justice. The Colonies were helpless, and had Parliament thought fit to put forth the strong arm of power to strip them of their rights, unrestrained by considerations of honor, they must have tamely submitted. A particular acknowledgment however appears to be due to the Minister under whose immediate auspices this great measure was matured and developed. Mr. Spring Rice, who was at that time the colleague of Lord Stanley, having a few nights past thought proper to taunt his Lordship, with having altered the loan of £ 15,000,000 as was at first proposed, to a grant of £ 20,000,000, it is now proved that

the Colonies owe this act of justice, and the nation the success of this great experiment, *primarily* to the high principle and sound discretion of this honest and consistent statesman —consistent in having quitted his party, when they quitted their principles, and surrendered themselves to the dictation of demagogues.

The nation having then dealt with this question on sound and liberal principles of equity, it follows that every colonial proprietor who has partaken of the compensation fund, has thereby virtually entered into a compact, which binds him in honor to assist faithfully, in furthering those objects, for the accomplishment of which the fund was granted. And the people who are to pay it, have a right to be assured that the benevolent designs, for the sake of which they have submitted to this burthen, shall not be frustrated by sordid views of self-interest, or a blind and intractable attachment to old prejudices. It is therefore natural, that the reports which have been lately so industriously circulated throughout this country, of the unkind treatment and

unhappy condition of the emancipated slaves, should have produced a great deal of angry excitement. But are these statements true? That is, are they true, not as isolated facts, but as exhibiting a faithful picture of the actual condition of the apprenticed laborers? A very common error, be it remembered, into which *collectors of grievances* are apt to fall, is to mistake *varieties* for *species*, and *species* for *genera*. Such a person hears a case of crying injustice or cruelty; perhaps he is at some pains to investigate the circumstances connected with it, and arrives at the conclusion that the evidence of its truth is irresistible. His task is now completed; he has the means of proving the existence of injustice and cruelty, and forthwith exhibits this case as *instar omnium* a confirmation of his pre-established opinions, as to the general prevalence of oppression; when perhaps had he pushed his enquiries further, he may not have been able to find another instance of a similar character.

An impartial consideration of the means which have been employed to collect the in-