

**AMERICAN
SLAVERY
AND COLOUR**

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American slavery and colour by William Chambers

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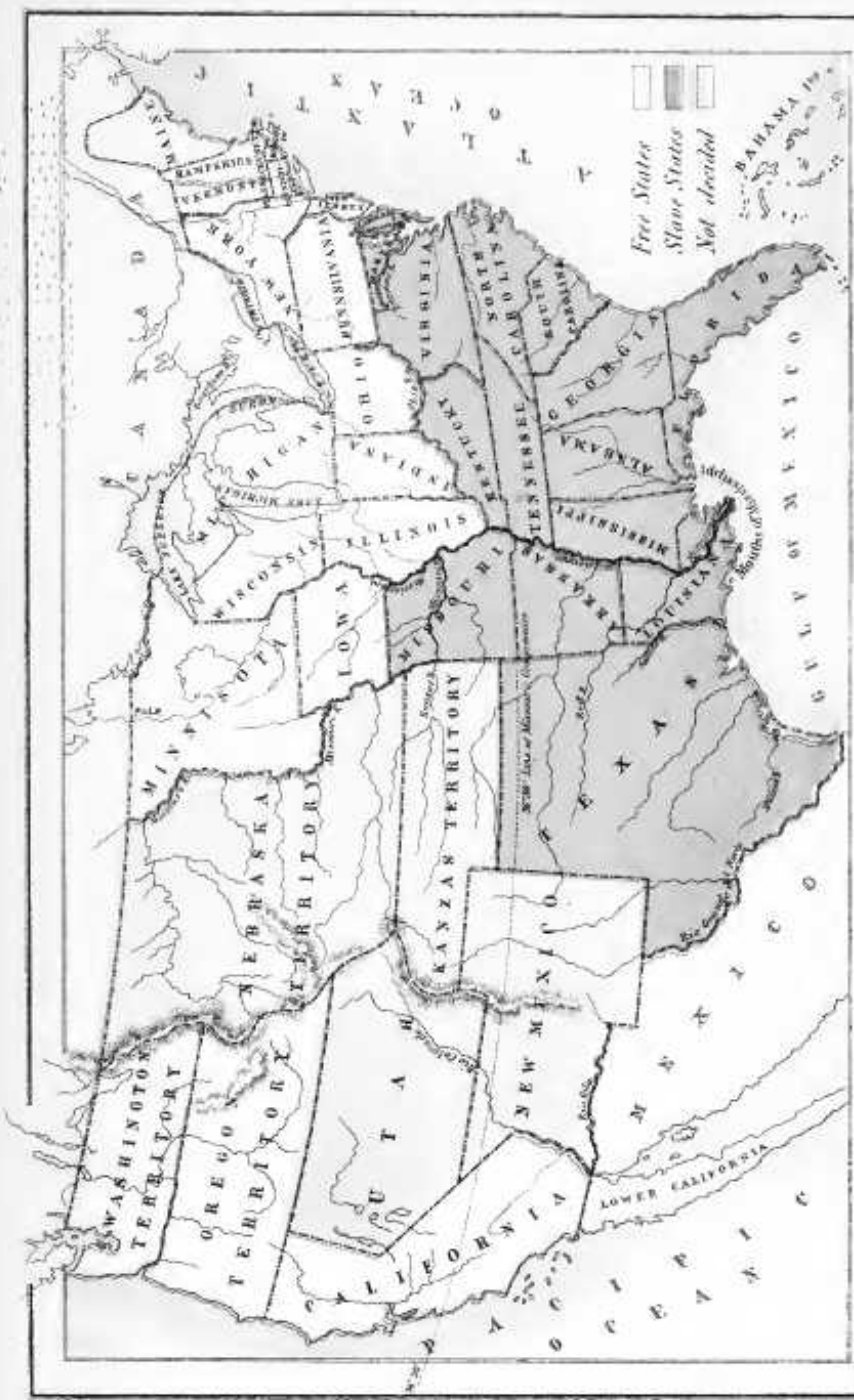
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WILLIAM CHAMBERS

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AMERICAN
SLAVERY AND COLOUR

LIBRARY OF
CALIFORNIA

BY WILLIAM CHAMBERS

AUTHOR OF 'THINGS AS THEY ARE IN AMERICA'

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LONDON
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THE sight of a few Slave Sales has a wonderful effect in awakening the feelings on the subject of Slavery. The thing is seen to be an undeniable reality—no mere invention of the novelist. From time to time, the spectacle of an auction-stand on which one man is selling another, flashes back upon the mind. For three years, I have been haunted by recollections of that saddening scene, and taken a gradually deepening interest in American Slavery—its present condition, its mysterious future. Having already referred to the subject, I should not again have intruded on public notice, but for the recent exciting discussions concerning Slavery, the protracted struggle in Kansas, and the probability of further contests between Slavery and Freedom, consequent on the organisation of new States in the southern section of the Union.

The present volume, tracing the progress of Slavery, and presenting such other particulars as may afford a comprehensive view of the subject, is offered as a small contribution to a department of literature daily increasing in interest—an expression of sympathy from an unenrolled adherent of a great and sacred cause.

W. C.

EDINBURGH, March 1837.

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AMERICAN SLAVERY AND COLOUR.

SOUTHERN DEMONSTRATIONS.

‘RACE! Do not speak to us of race—we care nothing for breed or colour. What we contend for is, that slavery, whether of black or white, is a normal, a proper institution in society.’ So proclaim southern writers in the United States. The principle of enslaving only coloured persons, descendants of imported Africans, is now antiquated, and a scheme which embraces slavery of every race and variety of complexion is at length put forward as a natural and desirable arrangement for all parties—a highly commendable state of things. Any one could have foreseen that it must come to this. The prodigious and irregular amalgamation of races in the south, with the deterioration and helplessness of the less-affluent class of whites in the slaveholding states, has, as may be supposed, led to a pretty nearly pure, nay, absolutely pure breed of white slaves. A new style of reasoning is consequently required. If slavery is to be at all vindicated, it must not now be on the narrow basis of colour, but on the broad grounds, that

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there is an inherent right in the stronger and more wealthy classes to reduce the poorer, and, it may be, more ignorant orders to a state of perpetual bondage. The cool announcement of this extraordinary doctrine, from influential parties in a great thriving republic, strikes one with so much wonder, that we almost inquire if we have heard aright, or if we are really living in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The most casual glance at the products of the southern press leaves no room for doubt on the subject. A few scraps cannot but be classed among the curiosities of modern literature. Mr Fitzhugh, a southern writer, says: 'We do not adopt the theory that Ham was the ancestor of the negro race. The Jewish slaves were not negroes, and to confine the justification of slavery to that of race, would be to weaken the Scriptural authority, and to lose the whole weight of profane authority; for we read of no negro slavery in ancient times. Slavery, black or white, is right and necessary.' The *Richmond Inquirer*, an able Virginian paper, says: 'Until recently, the defence of slavery has laboured under great difficulties, because its apologists—for they were mere apologists—took half-way grounds. They confined the defence of slavery to mere negro slavery; thereby giving up the slavery principle, admitting other forms of slavery to be wrong. The line of defence is now changed. The south now maintains that slavery is right, natural, and necessary. While it is far more obvious that negroes should be slaves than whites—for they are only fit to labour, not to direct—yet the principle of slavery is itself right, and does not depend on difference of complexion.'

Mr G. W. Weston, a writer in the cause of emancipation in the *New York Tribune*, observes: 'It is not true, in law or in fact, that the condition of slavery at