

the employment of them by the native kings or chiefs, in their own towns or territories. Nothing must be done against their independence. The abolition of that execrable trade must be left to the gradual, but sure, operation of reason, and example. Should we endeavour to prevent the native chiefs from selling slaves; so sudden, and so violent, a check to one of their immemorial customs; the reason, the policy, or the justice of which, it is impossible for them at first to comprehend, would ill dispose them towards us; and make them either treacherous friends or open enemies to the success of our undertaking; at the same time that not one slave less would be annually sold, notwithstanding our ill-advised and absurd attempts to prevent it; and by such means the slave trade never will be abolished. Whereas if these people are left to themselves, and to the operation of reason and example, without the smallest shock to any of their customs or prejudices, I question very much if a slave will ever be seen in any native town of the colony at the expiration of fifteen or twenty years. But if a misguided zeal for the abolition of slavery be manifested, it will tend to prolong its continuance, and the colony never can, and never will flourish. The absurdity of very well meaning persons, in thinking that they can overcome vices, customs, or prejudices, immemorially rooted in an unenlightened people, by shocking, instead of gradually enlightening their understandings, has done a great deal of mischief already. To begin by telling a native chief, the instant you have got into his country, that of his six wives he must put away five, because it is a great sin, and forbidden by the laws of God, to have more than one, will certainly astonish the chief, but will not induce him to part from his wives. As to the word sin, it is impossible that it can convey any

*guyliche ein Vort über den allein polig. Missionen!*