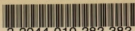


May. Emancipation in the British W. Indies.
1845

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May, S. J.
cover

ADDRESS OF REV. MR. MAY,

ON

Emancipation in British West Indies;

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SYRACUSE,

AUGUST 1st, 1845.

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May 1845
cover

ADDRESS OF REV. MR. MAY,

ON

Emancipation in British West Indies ;

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SYRACUSE,

AUGUST 1st, 1845.

EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH W. INDIES,
AUGUST 1, 1834.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SYRACUSE,

ON THE

FIRST OF AUGUST, 1845.

BY SAMUEL J. MAY,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF MESSIAN, IN SYRACUSE.

PRINTED BY J. BARBER, LIBERTY INTELLIGENCER OFFICE, SYRACUSE.

1845.

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EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES
ALBERT J. MAY

REV. MR. MAY—

DEAR SIR: The undersigned, impressed with the belief that the publication of your Address, delivered on the last Anniversary of Negro Emancipation in the British West Indies, will greatly promote the cause of Universal Liberty, very respectfully solicit a copy of the same for that purpose. We hope this request will be granted; as a fair history of that event, and of the operation of Free Colored Labor, upon Profit and Character, is, at this time, very much needed. With sentiments of high personal regard for your disinterested zeal in the cause of human freedom, we remain, &c. Syracuse, Aug. 14th, 1845.

THOS. SPENCER,	J. BROUGHTON,
GUY DAVIS,	J. L. BAGG,
JOSEPH BARBER,	DAVID COGSWELL,
J. W. NORTH,	H. HOYT,
C. A. WHEATON,	E. J. FOSTER,
HIRAM PUTNAM,	J. H. BATES,
W. L. TURNEY,	JOSIAH WRIGHT.

Syracuse, Aug. 22, 1845.

GENTLEMEN:—

I am highly gratified that you were interested in my address, and that you deem it worthy of publication. In the hope that you have not overrated it, I submit it to your disposal.

Very Respectfully, Yours,

SAMUEL J. MAY.

ADDRESS ON WEST INDIA EMANCIPATION.

“ Blow ye the trumpet abroad o’er the sea,
Humanity triumphs—the Bondmen are free;
Sing, for the pride of the tyrant is broken;
His scourges and fetters, all clotted with blood,
Are wrenched from his grasp ;—for the word was but spoken,
And fetters and scourges were sunk in the flood.
Blow ye the trumpet abroad o’er the sea,
Humanity triumphs, the Bondmen are free.”

Blessed be God, this is not a mere poetical fiction. It is a historical fact; and it should be celebrated by the true friends of humanity throughout the earth. The first of August should be hallowed. It is the anniversary of an event more auspicious to the cause of the poor and oppressed, than any other event since the advent of the Messiah. The emancipation of the 800,000 slaves in the British West Indies—which was consummated on the 1st of August, 1834—is a signal illustration of the omnipotence of the truth, and of the entire sufficiency of moral means to effect the subversion of the worst forms of human ill. It is a practical commentary, nay, it is an extant, living fulfilment of the promise of Jesus to his disciples, that if they only have faith, they shall remove mountains by a word.—For what evil ever afflicted the human family more mountainous, more deeply rooted, and of longer standing, than slavery? Slavery countenanced, legalized, protected, by the British Empire! And yet it has been abolished.

In a harsher, or a milder form, slavery has prevailed in the world from the remotest time—originating in the barbarous practices of men, who knew no better principle than *that might gives right*. Under the light of Christianity, some juster views of the rights of man were acquired, and a tone of feeling produced, by which the kind of slavery, that prevailed in Europe for ages, under the feudal system, had given way, and in most of the states had become extinct.

But in the 15th century, slavery was revived in a highly aggravated form, in the colonies of the new world. Then commenced what is damned to everlasting fame, for its pre-eminent atrocity—the African slave trade—begun and carried on almost exclusively by the self-styled Christian nations of Europe. It was prompted by the basest and most unyielding passions of the human soul—the thirst for gold, the lust of power, and the love of ease. Yet the common opinion of the so called civilized world acquiesced in this iniquity; and even Christian moralists attempted its justification. No other abomination, except it be the horrid custom of war, has been so strongly entrenched in the world as Slavery has been. But it has been successfully assailed—in its worst form—in one of its strongest holds—assailed and completely carried. Blessed be God, we can now say completely carried! Carried, not by force and arms—not by stratagem—but by the power of truth!

"No war or battle sound
Was heard the world around;
But peaceful was the night,"
In which by *moral* night,
This work was done!

"It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes."

We cannot yet fully appreciate the importance of this event. We see, and rejoice in its bearing upon the abolition of slavery in our country, and upon the abolition of negro slavery throughout the world. But there are other forms of oppression to be broken up; other abominations to be overthrown. And hereafter, those who may be roused to attempt the removal of some mighty evil, yet untouched, will look back for encouragement to the success of the British abolitionists. In time to come, the philanthropist may ever feel assured, by that event, which has signalized the 1st of August, that he need not despair of success, if his object be a good one, and he be patient, persevering and prayerful. For this event has done more than any other to establish that most encouraging doctrine, which all, who would go forward with any power, must believe, that "whatever ought to be done can be done—that whatever is right is also practicable—that things which are impossible with men, are possible with God."

I would there were time, for me to give you only a brief

sketch of the history of that moral conflict, the triumph of which we have come here to celebrate. Beginning with the first movement ever made, in mercy to the outraged children of Africa, it would do my heart good to tell, and your hearts good to hear, of the generous espousal by Granville Sharpe, in 1765, of the cause of a friendless slave, who having been so shockingly beaten by his master, that he was supposed to be disabled for life, was abandoned to perish, if he might, in the streets of London,—and afterwards, when he had been unexpectedly restored to health by the skill of a humane physician, was reclaimed by the shameless wretch who had beaten him, and well nigh borne off to the home of perpetual bondage, under what was supposed to be the sanction of English Law. It would do my heart good to tell, and your hearts good to hear how, stimulated by this outrage, Granville Sharpe was led to institute a careful examination of the laws of his country, until he discovered, as he expected to do, that there was no provision, under which any man could hold his fellow man as a slave in England; and how by years of persevering importunity at the bench of Justice, he procured in 1772—aye, extorted from Lord Mansfield, that glorious decision, which, however reluctantly given, has signalized that eminent jurist's name more than any other act of his official life.

It would do my heart good to tell, and your hearts good to hear, the bold and thrilling condemnation of the slave trade and slavery, by the venerable John Wesley, founder of the Methodist Church,—and of the plain language used and valuable labors performed in this cause, at that early day, by the Society of Friends. Still more would it do our hearts good to speak, and to hear, of the noble self consecration of Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, in their early manhood, to this then hopeless work of humanity,—and of the unabated ardor and unflinching fidelity, with which they prosecuted their enterprise for twenty long years, until they triumphed over all opposition; and brought many proud men to do them honor, by whom they had been wrathfully and contemptuously denounced as pestilent fanatics, not fit to live.*

* It is a fact worth mentioning, that William 4th, the crowning glory of whose short reign was, that he had the honor of affixing the royal signature to the Act of Emancipation, was one of the Lords who, a few years before, dared to speak indignantly and contemptuously of Wilberforce and his fellow laborers.

It would do my heart good to tell, and your hearts to hear, of the revival of this work by Fowell Buxton, in 1823; and of the clear and strong announcement by Elizabeth Heyrick, of the new doctrine of "*Immediate not Gradual Emancipation, the right of the slave and the duty of the master.*" She lived not to witness the quickening influence of her truthful word; but her name will live forever, in the story of redeemed humanity. The new view, which she, and a few other kindred spirits, presented of this subject, seems to have enkindled afresh all the anti-slavery zeal in the land; and to have waked up the people to a deep sense of their guiltiness, in having acquiesced so long in the continued enslavement of those, who were in bondage before Clarkson and Wilberforce accomplished their generous purpose.—The people were soon brought to see, and those venerated philanthropists were among the first to acknowledge, that all that had been done for bleeding Africa, would be a nullity—that the abolition of the slave trade would be but a dead letter upon the statute book, unless slavery itself could be abolished; for so long as the market for any article of merchandize be kept open, and a sufficient pecuniary inducement is offered for the supply of that article, so long will it be furnished, let the risk of the traffic be what it may. (See Note A.)

The Anti-slavery Society of London, in 1820, embraced the doctrine of *immediate emancipation*. Men of signal ability were found ready and anxious to go to and fro, pressing upon the public conscience the sinfulness of holding men as property, or participating in the gains, or the productions of those, who regarded and treated fellow men as domesticated brutes. Hundreds of thousands, in the United Kingdom, were brought to pledge themselves to abstain from the use of the produce of slave labor—and a much larger number, who did not concur in this particular measure, united with great heartiness in demanding of Parliament the immediate abolition of slavery. The women of England, Scotland and Ireland were especially active and successful, in circulating petitions for this boon. And when women leave the retirement, which they love, and become publicly active in any cause, it is an evidence, which all history shows us may not be despised, that the heart of humanity is deeply moved; and is bent upon the proposed achievement, with a determination that will not be baulked.

The event of which I am speaking, was a signal illustration of this fact. The cry for immediate emancipation rang through the land, and waxed louder and stronger, until the men who were in power, and the men who would be in power—the office holders and the office seekers—were alike compelled to give to it a respectful consideration. The houses of Parliament were overwhelmed with petitions. These increased in urgency, and in the weight of numbers, until in 1833, May 14, the leading member of the House of Commons introduced a bill for the emancipation of the slaves. That Bill was indeed unjust in its spirit, and unhappy in some of its prominent provisions—still it went to the immediate abolition of Slavery. The bill was passed—and on the 1st of August, 1834, it took effect. On the morning of this memorable day, the yoke of Slavery was broken from the necks of more than eight hundred thousand—who then stood up before the world disenthralled, emancipated—their rights as men recognized, guaranteed, secured to them, by the government of the British Empire. Stood up, did I say? No, they received the boon of freedom not in the attitude of exultation, but of reverent gratitude. On their bended knees did they await the coming of the moment that would make them free. As the loud bell at midnight tolled the hour, which separated forever the long ages of slavery that had passed, from the ages to come of liberty, and increasing light and happiness—“as the loud bell tolled its first notes, the crowded assembly prostrated themselves on their knees. All was silent, save the quivering, half-stifled breath of the struggling spirit. The slow notes of the clock fell upon the multitude—peal on peal—peal on peal rolled over the prostrate throng, in tones of angels’ voices, thrilling among the desolate chords and weary strings of the hearts, that had so long pined in bondage. Scarce had the clock sounded its last note, when the lightning of Heaven flashed vividly around, and a loud peal of thunder roared along the sky; as it were, God’s pillar of fire, and trump of jubilee! A moment of profound silence passed. Then came the burst. They broke forth into prayer; they shouted, they sung ‘Glory!’ ‘Alleluia!’—they clapped their hands, leaped up, fell down, clasped each other in their free arms, cried, laughed, and went to and fro, tossing up their unfettered hands. But high above the whole there was a mighty sound, which ever

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May, S. J.
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ADDRESS OF REV. MR. MAY,

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Emancipation in British West Indies;

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SYRACUSE,

AUGUST 1st, 1845.

EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH W. INDIES,
AUGUST 1, 1834.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN SYRACUSE,

ON THE

FIRST OF AUGUST, 1845.

BY SAMUEL J. MAY,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF MESSIAN, IN SYRACUSE:

PRINTED BY J. BARBER, LIBERTY INTELLIGENCER OFFICE, SYRACUSE.

1845.

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EMANCIPATION IN THE BRITISH WEST INDIES
AUGUST 1 1845

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|----------------|-----------------|
| THOS. SPENCER, | J. BROUGHTON, |
| GUY DAVIS, | J. L. BAGG, |
| JOSEPH BARBER, | DAVID COGSWELL, |
| J. W. NORTH, | H. HOYT, |
| C. A. WHEATON, | E. J. FOSTER, |
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RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD OF CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES

1845

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and anon swelled up; it was the uttering in negro, broken dialect, of gratitude to God.

"After this gush of excitement had spent itself, the congregation became calm, and the remainder of the night was occupied in singing and prayer, in reading the Bible, and in addresses from the missionaries, explaining the nature of the freedom just received, and exhorting the freed people to show themselves, in all things, worthy of the high boon which God had conferred upon them."

Have you ever witnessed, have you ever heard of a scene more sublime than this? Do you know of any passage in the history of the whole race of man, that discloses more of the best part of human nature? When I first read this passage, I was overcome with emotion; and I can never read it without a beating heart. Gladly would I give the best volume in my library to any one, who would show me another page in the history of man equal to this.

It would be my choice to spend the rest of the time, I may occupy on this occasion, in dwelling more at length upon the history of the event we came here to celebrate—in showing you how the evil forebodings, of those who were opposed to emancipation, and the fears of those who favored it, were all put to shame by the excellent conduct of the newly freed men. I should prefer merely to narrate to you the evidences we have of the happy effects of this act of humanity—of the decrease of poverty and crime in the West Indies—the increase of public confidence and sense of security—of the rise in the value of real estate, a sure index of the prosperity of a community—and of the plans of individual and social relief and improvement, which have all followed the emancipation of the enslaved. (See Note B.)

But alas! our country is still full of unbelievers; and I must turn from the glowing narration, to *argue* certain points with some, to whom all this light, that has sprung up, seems darkness—to whom all this good seems evil.

What concern have we, there be many that say—what concern have we with the emancipation in the British West Indies. It was a national affair. It was effected by instruments, that we cannot use in this country; and your extravagant panegyric upon England for this act, is, by implication, a reproach of our own nation, which we do not deserve. Let English philanthropists applaud their govern-

ment for the Act of West India Emancipation, if they can, while so much terrible wrong remains in the social condition of their countrymen at home, and in the condition of the subjects of the British Empire, in other parts of the world. We may find some things more worthy of our commendation than this transaction, which, after all that has been said about it, is of a very mixed character, and serves rather to illustrate the egregious inconsistency of England, than to prove her philanthropy. Such is the tone, in which I often hear the event of the 1st of August spoken of. Be it known to you, fellow citizens, I stand not here the eulogist of England, as a nation. She is a paragon of inconsistencies. I know not how to strike the balance, between her glory and her shame. I would say of her in one line, what Pope has said of her most distinguished son, Lord Bacon,—

“The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind.”

But, whatever may be the guilt of that mighty nation as a body politic—however crushing may be the weight of her institutions at home—however grievous her oppressions abroad—the event we this day celebrate reveals the cheering fact, that there are true hearted, noble minded philanthropists among her people; and that by the power of truth, entreaty, remonstrance, and other moral means, they have wrought such a change in the sentiments and feelings of the people, that the government, unprincipled and corrupt as it may be, could no longer withstand the righteous demands of humanity; thus proving that “truth is mighty and will prevail.”

Now whatever this great instrument of reform has effected in one part of the world, it may effect in any other part. Aye, greater works than this shall it do. It is the instrument, by which the entire redemption of man is to be wrought out. Whatever may have been done for the relief of the suffering in any part, is a cause for congratulation and rejoicing in every other part of the world—for *humanity is one*. The sufferings of men in all parts of the earth flow from the same, or similar sources. Whatever therefore has operated, in England or in India, to relieve the oppressed, to raise up the fallen, may operate to the same beneficent result, in America, or any where else.

No one, who is at all acquainted with the story of West

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India Emancipation, can accord much praise to the English Government. They only did what public sentiment and feeling compelled them to do; and they so mixed up their own devices with the work, to which they were called, as to impair its purity, and retard its success. Not to the Parliament of Great Britain be the praise of that act, which this day, in 1834, set eight hundred thousand captives free; but to the warm hearted, self sacrificing men and women, who went through the length and breadth of the land, demanding liberty for the enslaved, until, by the might of truth and justice, all opposition was overborne, and the spirit of tyranny quailed. Not to Lord Stanley be the praise, so much as to George Thompson, and such men as he. Not to Lord Brougham, but to Elizabeth Heyrick rather, and to Elizabeth Pease, and other faithful sisters of humanity, whose names may never have reached these shores. So when the day of deliverance shall come, as come it must to the enslaved of our own land, in which the yoke of oppression shall be broken here, the praise will not be due to the Congress or the President, from whom may be extorted some act that may consummate the work; but to Benjamin Lundy, the obscure saddler of Wheeling, who first raised the standard of "*Universal Emancipation*," and dedicated himself, body and soul, to the cause of the enslaved. Not to any Congress, or to any President, will the praise be due, but to William Lloyd Garrison, the poor young journeyman printer of Newburyport, who was the first to detect and expose the monstrous fraud of the Colonization scheme, and to raise the cry of "*immediate Emancipation*;" and who blew a blast, through the Liberator's trumpet, that waked our nation from her guilty slumber. Not to any Congress or President, or statesmen will be due the praise of the slaves' redemption, but to Lydia Maria Child, who was the first to lay her choice gifts, and her celebrity as an author, upon the altar of human freedom; and to Elizabeth Chandler, and Lucretia Motte, and Maria W. Chapman, and Sarah and Angelina Grimke and Abby Kelly, and many other noble hearted women, at the thought of whose labors and sacrifices, my heart leaps into a flame of gratitude, on the slave's behalf. Not to any statesmen or politicians will the praise be due, for they will merely execute what public opinion requires at their hands; but to those men, who have

created that public opinion, which will demand the abolition of Slavery—to Theodore D. Weld, and Charles Burleigh, and Beriah Green, and Judge Jay, and Dr. Channing, and Dr. Follen, and Henry B. Stanton, and Wendell Phillips, and others, too numerous to mention, whose eloquence and whose logic have convinced the understandings, and warmed the hearts of thousands against the tremendous wrongs of slavery,—to Whittier and Pierpont and Lowell, who have written those soul-stirring songs of freedom, that have found a voice in the Hutchinsons, which has made the very stones cry out shame upon the oppressors of man—and to Arthur Tappan, and Francis Jackson, who have poured out their money like water, and periled their estates, as if they were of no worth in comparison with human rights—aye, and Gerrit Smith who has so liberally given his wealth, and his eloquence too, to the cause of the enslaved; and to William Goodell—the Granville Sharpe of our country—who by his penetrating researches into the provisions of our Constitution, and the principles of Common Law, has prepared the way perhaps for some future Chief Justice to decree, that “slaves cannot breathe in America,” any more than in England. To these men and women, and to others, as true hearted as they, whom I have not time to name, and to others still, whom I may not know, but of whose faithful words, and generous labors in the cause of the slave, God has been witness—to these, (however now despised) will the praise be due, for that deliverance, which is to come to the oppressed, down trodden in our land—although, my word for it, they will not ask for praise, so the work be done.

We rejoice this day in the act of West India Emancipation, not because it gives us a formula, by which the great question of human redemption, in our own country, is to be solved; but because it increases our faith in the power of that spirit, and the efficiency of those means, by which the event we celebrate was mainly brought about. If moral power has done so much, we say it may do much more.—The height and the depth of it have not yet been fathomed. What we propose to do in this country, is not a more hopeless task than was the abolition of the slave trade, when first determined on by Clarkson and Wilberforce; or the overthrow of Slavery by the later abolitionists of Great

Britain. Nay, though the work we have to do be different, and much more arduous than theirs, we need not despair, we ought not, for we labor on the vantage ground, gained by their toils and their sacrifices.

Some of the provisions of the Bill for West India Emancipation, may have been such as we cannot approve. But we need not thence infer, that the abolition of slavery in our Republic cannot be accomplished, by such measures as we do approve. And remember the Apprenticeship System, and the payment of £20,000,000 were not measures proposed, or approved, by the abolitionists of Great Britain; but by the political partizan managers, who always sully every thing they handle.

The early abandonment of the Apprenticeship System, by the consent of the planters themselves, is a most emphatic acknowledgement of the truth of the doctrine, on which we rely, that the abolition of slavery should be not gradual but immediate and entire. (Note C.)

The payment of twenty millions of pounds sterling, as the price of liberty, was a *compromise* of the principle, on which we demand freedom for man—a dereliction of the claim of liberty as the inalienable right, the birthright of all men. It seemed to be a recognition too of the justice of the claim of property in human beings, which is the seminal wrong in this whole system of wickedness.

Then the fact that this immense sum was paid out of the revenue of England, a revenue derived by taxation from the people, multitudes of whom were already groaning under the load of public burthens, which the pride of Royalty, the assumption of Nobility, the greediness of accumulation and the love of military achievement, had already heaped upon the nation—the fact, I say, that this £20,000,000 was extorted by tax from the already overloaded people of Great Britain, seems to make the injustice of the Act of Parliament the more glaring. This provision, I acknowledge, sullies greatly the moral purity of the act; and I do not wonder much, that it has led those, who look only at the surface of this matter, to say, that the event, for which we give thanks, was after all effected not so much by the force of truth as by the power of money.

Fellow citizens, keep in mind, the abolitionists are not responsible for the way in which the British Government

saw fit to do this act of tardy justice to the enslaved. But to the abolitionists does belong the praise of having so roused the public sentiment and feeling of England, Scotland and Ireland, that the government of those United Kingdoms could no longer withstand their demand to break the yoke of oppression. To the British Parliament be the shame of devising the Apprenticeship System. That was not asked for by the abolitionists. It was suggested by pro-slavery timidity—not by anti-slavery courage and faith in man.—To the British Parliament be the shame of having paid twenty millions of pounds to the oppressors, some of whom were wealthy members of their own body; instead rather of paying a much larger sum to the oppressed, if by the payment of money they could have made any adequate compensation to the enslaved, for the wrongs that had been done them. To the British Parliament be the shame of having paid this immense sum of money to the strong, that they would no longer trample upon the weak; to the rich, that they might no longer rob the poor. But to the British people be the praise of consenting, that so much of their very life's blood should be drawn from them, if so be it would only hasten the bestowment of liberty upon the enslaved.

The only plea, that will stand a moment in justification of this part of the British Act, cannot be set up in behalf of a similar measure in our own country. Parliament was legislating for distant dependencies upon the English Crown, that were not represented. It was about to enforce a measure upon them, without their consent—a measure that might subject them to some pecuniary loss; and therefore it was urged that compensation ought to be made. This plea, if it were valid for them, would not be for us. We have no central government, which has the power to emancipate the slaves throughout the land. Our Congress can do some things towards this result; and ought to be urged to do them, with untiring importunity. But it cannot abolish slavery throughout the land. This can be done only by the legislatures of the several states. It will not therefore be done, until majorities of the people in the several states have been brought to demand it; and this they will not do, until they have come to see the tremendous wickedness of holding men in slavery. And then probably they will no

more think of compensating slaveholders, than of compensating the holders of stolen goods.

Fellow citizens, this is not a question of compensation. It is a question of right. The claim of the enslaved to freedom, is not invalidated by the refusal of a third party to pay a price for their redemption. This is not a question between the abolitionists and the slaveholders. It is a question between the slaves and the slaveholders; and the slaveholders must account to Almighty God for the way in which they answer it. They may not refuse to give liberty to their bondmen,—liberty which they have no right to withhold from them a single hour; they may not refuse to give them liberty, because some third party is unable or unwilling to pay a price. We must scout the doctrine of compensation. It will not bear to be looked at a moment in the light of the Gospel—or in the light of our Declaration of Independence.

When the slaveholders shall have done that, which is lawful and right; when they have recognized the claim of their slaves to liberty, and secured them in the enjoyment of it; then let them come to us for any pecuniary assistance, they and the newly freed men may need, to relieve any present embarrassments, or to carry into operation any plans of social improvement; and they may brand us as hypocrites, if we do not show that we count it a privilege to help them to the extent of our ability. Let the coffers of the nation be thrown open to aid them. Let them have a *carte blanche* upon the wealth of the free states if they need it, when they have done that, which alone prevents their becoming as rich and happy as we are. But let them not talk to us of *compensation*. This can be listened to with patience only by those, who believe men may have a good right of property in the bodies and souls of their fellow men.

Compensation—yes! there is a compensation, which they shall have, if they give liberty to their slaves—a compensation above all price—the rich reward of right doing. If they will but break the yoke of oppression, and set their captives free; then shall light break forth upon them as the morning, and moral, social health shall spring forth speedily. The Lord shall guide them, and satisfy their souls; and their country, which now slavery blights, shall become

like a well watered garden; and they shall gladly build up the old waste places—instead of seeking for other, new lands to desolate and curse.

But some there are, perhaps many, who do not believe these blessed results, or results like these, have followed emancipation in the British W. Indies. All such persons must have shut their eyes to certain radiant facts, that may be seen and known of all men who will look for them. They must have closed their ears to the best attested testimony, that could be given to us on the subject; and have opened them only to hear the statements of prejudiced, interested individuals; or the statements of those who have obviously not known what ought to be expected—what ought to be called success—under the circumstances of the case. All the rest of my paper, and quires more, would not contain the gratifying reports, that have been made by wise and good men, whose word is above suspicion, who have been to the W. Indies and made it a business carefully and impartially to collect facts, showing just how emancipation is working there. Other statements too, equally satisfactory, have been given officially by the officers of the government, and the legislatures of the several colonies. I do not wish, with all my anxiety about the success of this experiment, I do not wish to have any better evidence than is before the world, of the success of emancipation in W. Indies; and much of that evidence I am willing to take as it comes from the opposers of this righteous cause. (Note D.)

No one can deny, that emancipation has taken place there. Throughout the British West Indies, eight hundred thousand human beings who were slaves, now are free—and have been so since 1834. They received the boon of freedom gratefully; and, in the joy of their deliverance, forgot the wrongs and cruelties, that had been inflicted upon them in their bondage. Instead of using their unchained hands to wreak vengeance upon their oppressors, they have not, as was confidently predicted, they have not in any instances “cut their masters’ throats;” but have shown a disposition to forget the past, and live at peace.

Now is not this a most encouraging fact, a glorious fact, that such a change has taken place in the condition of so large a population, and all so quietly. Does it not increase

our confidence in humanity? And are we Americans—we, whose fathers sacrificed every thing for liberty—are we the people coldly to withhold expressions of our joy, that nearly a million of our fellow men are set free, until we can be satisfied that there is, or will be, just as much sugar and coffee raised there as there used to be? Is the pecuniary advantage of the change any test of its value? If it were, I should be willing to abide that test, so soon as the influence of emancipation has had time to operate, without the counteracting influences, which flow from the bad passions of those, the pride of whose tyranny has been broken, from whose hands has been wrenched irresponsible power. But I ask again, is the pecuniary advantage or disadvantage of the change in the condition of the enslaved, any test of its value? What though the exports of the island should become inconsiderable, is that to be thought of, if suffering humanity be relieved, if tyranny is restrained, if the injured are redressed, the ignorant enlightened, and those, who were living like domesticated brutes, are brought to live like human beings? I am almost ashamed to ask these questions, and yet (so besotted are many of my countrymen with the feeling that money is the one thing needful, that, if a measure adopted does not result in some pecuniary advantage, it is a failure,) the only objection, I have heard, to the emancipation in the W. Indies, has been that property is depreciating in value, that the freed men will not work, and the exports are much smaller than they used to be. No one pretends, that the freed men themselves are not so happy. No one pretends, that they complain of the change in their condition, and pine for the blessings and privileges of slavery. Nor does any one allege that they have become more violent, ferocious, dangerous to their white neighbors than they were before. Nothing of this kind can be alleged, in face of the abundant evidence to the contrary.

But then they are lazy, 'tis said, they will not work. If this be true, they have as good a right to be lazy as the white people have, and no one will say they are more so. If the mildness of the climate be such, that they can live almost without shelter, and with clothing that costs but a trifle; and if they have no disposition to work for more than enough to supply their simple wants, spending the rest of

their time in listlessness, or in such pastimes as they fancy, we may regret that they have no more enterprize, and no better taste; but reproach comes to them with an ill grace from the indolent whites, in whose manner of life there is little that is superior to that of the freed-men, as our opponents describe it. If the freed men are content to lie half the day in some cool, grassy retreats, or to bask in the sunshine, satisfied with the simple food, which they may procure from the earth with little toil, and with the pure, healthful waters that are distilled for them from the clouds, I see not why they should be reproached, any more than the wealthy planters, who loll half the day upon stuffed sofas, and pamper their appetites with rich viands, and the costly decoctions, which men have devised, so often to their ruin.

If it be true that they are averse to labor, what has made them so? what but the hatefulness of coercion? Associated in their minds, as labor must be, with all the appliances of the task master, who could wonder, if they loathed the sight of an implement of husbandry, or a mechanical tool? And how should this evil effect of their past condition be corrected, but by such a course of treatment, and such an example on the part of the whites, as shall lead them to see the advantages of industry, and by awakening a desire for the increased comforts which it will procure, make them willing to comply with the conditions and incur the toil, by which alone those increased comforts can be obtained?

But, fellow-citizens, believe me, most of this complaint against the freedmen in the West Indies, has no other foundation than this—they are unwilling to labor for nothing, or that which is next to nothing. Ever since their emancipation, the planters, especially of Jamaica, from which island most of this complaint comes, have been endeavoring to oblige the freedmen to work for wages, that are inadequate to the support of their families. The freed-men were willing to labor for fifty cents a day; but the planters, many of them, refused to give more than *twenty five cents* a day; and out of this pittance, demanded, as rent for their cabins, fifty cents a week, leaving the laborers but a dollar for the support of themselves and their dependants. For such wages, a great many refused to work, preferring to retire to the mountainous districts, and other unoccupied lands, and get a simple

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living as they might. Should we not respect them all the more, for showing this respect for themselves, and their rights. I, for one, am thankful, that they will not work for such wages as men grown old in slaveholding may think enough for them. And I rejoice that such is the climate of the West Indies, and so abundant the spontaneous productions of the soil, that they can live, in tolerable comfort, without selling themselves for a piece of bread. Would to God, that the poor people in the cities of our own country could as easily escape from those extortioners among us, who are willing to fatten upon their life's blood—to get rich by paying wages, that are not half enough to supply the wants of our mere animal nature. I rejoice that the soil and climate of Jamaica are such as to encourage the freed-men, and that their spirit is such as to prompt them, to leave the plantations untilled, rather than work for men, who would oppress them still. This fact increases my confidence in them all the more,—my assurance that they have feelings, which become them as men. And when I am told that the amount of produce, raised on the Island, is moreover greatly lessened by the unwillingness of many of the freed-men to have their wives and daughters labor in the fields, preferring that they should live more like other females, I could clap my hands for joy at this evidence of their humanity. I should not grieve if there were never another hoghead of sugar exported from the Island, if I could only know, that the long oppressed laborers of Jamaica were coming to taste more and more of the sweets of domestic life; and were seeking individual and social, intellectual and moral improvement, rather than riches for themselves or others. I am such an ultraist as to believe, that there are some things much better for men, for all men, than riches—than “gold, aye, than much fine gold.”

My hearers, I have inquired into these complaints, which have come to us through certain channels from the West Indies. If any of you will take one tithe of the pains, that I have, to inform yourselves, you will know that what I say is true. If the planters would pay fair wages, there would be little reluctance on the part of the freed-men to labor for them. And if they will not, I hope their lands may be allowed to return to the wilderness.

Let the representations of the state of things in the West

Indies, be what they may ; let the worst representation, that has been given, be true ; one thing we know, that the eight hundred thousands, who once were slaves there, are slaves no more. This fact alone should be enough to fill our hearts with joy unspeakable. Were the love of liberty alive in our land, were not the people of the south drunk with the blood of their victims, and the people of the north besotted with the lust of gain, the fact that *eight hundred thousand* slaves have been set free, would raise a shout of thanksgiving throughout our borders. Deliverance from bondage is the first thing to be done for the redemption of the enslaved. Enslavement is an insuperable barrier to human improvement. When this barrier is effectually broken down, then, and not till then, are the golden gates thrown open to endless progress in knowledge and virtue. This barrier is broken down in the British West Indies. Hallelujah ! praise ye the Lord for that ! And if it must take generations, to recover the freed-men from the deterioration wrought by slavery, we will thank God all the more, that the commencement of their recovery has been no longer delayed. We rejoice that they are free ; that they are *accounted men* ; that their rights are to be henceforth protected by the British arm. We need no prophetic foresight to assure us, that this is the dawn of their better day.

We rejoice this day for all the oppressed throughout the British Realm. Millions of the subjects of Great Britain are groaning under burdens, too grievous to be borne. All the laboring classes in England are cruelly oppressed. The people of Ireland are peeled and scathed by the avarice of their masters. Countless thousands in Hindoostan are trodden under foot. Surely the British philanthropists will persevere in the good work they have begun. The moral energy, the faith, which have achieved emancipation in the West Indies, cannot, will not slumber until justice and mercy are shown to all the subjects of that Empire, upon whose possessions the sun never sets.

We rejoice in anticipation of the effect, which the abolition of slavery in the West Indies must produce upon our own country. No doubt there are many in this land, who delight in the possession of absolute power ; who boast of the shame of living upon the unpaid labor of the poor. Yet there are, I doubt not, a large number of persons, who with-

hold themselves from all efforts for the relief of the enslaved, because of the fear that they are unfit for freedom. Of this unreasonable apprehension, the history of the West Indies, for the last ten years, must entirely relieve them. There now are eight hundred thousand witnesses to our countrymen of the safety of immediate emancipation. Nay more; these are but a part of a much larger population, who all declare to the recreant sons of the fathers of this Republic, that it is *safe* to treat men as men; safe, to restore them to their birthright; safe, to liberate them from slavery.

Once more, we rejoice in the brightening prospects of the world. We see, we feel, we own, that with God all things are possible. There is nothing now of evil among men, of the removal of which we need despair. The morning of *universal emancipation* has dawned. Ay, the sun of liberty has risen high above the horizon. The mental and moral power of true philanthropy, has made itself felt. It has achieved a noble work. It needs never distrust itself again. Well may we rejoice, take courage, and press on; for now we see, that nothing is too hard to be undertaken, which ought to be accomplished; that if God be for us, it matters not though the whole world be against us.

NOTE A.

At that point of the address where reference is made to this Note, I introduced some extempore remarks, upon Gov. Hammond's letters to Thomas Clarkson. He taunts that venerable philanthropist, with the ill success of all his protracted labors for the abolition of the Slave Trade; nay, worse than ill success, the disastrous consequences of all that had been done to procure the legal suppression of that traffic. The Governor alleges, that the trade has gone on, increasing in amount and in cruelty, ever since its prohibition by the British Parliament, and the American Congress. I mean not to deny the truth of this allegation. It may be sustained by too much evidence. But I protest against the use which Governor Hammond has made of the fact. Clarkson and Wilberforce assailed first the trade, because they saw all about them the men, who were engaged in it; and the proofs of the atrocity, were at hand, and not afar off. If they had ceased from their labors here, there might have been some more reason for the contempt which Gov. H. would throw upon their work. But their success in procuring the prohibition of the trade, only led them to renewed exertions for the abolition of the whole system of slavery. Nor are they to be ridiculed for not having seen from the beginning, that, as the latter included the former, all their efforts would have been, to better purpose, directed against slavery rather than the trade. Men generally have to learn by experience

how to labor to the best advantage. But it may not be denied, that much was gained to the cause of humanity, when the British Parliament, and the American Congress were brought to denounce the Slave Trade as piracy.

The endeavors of the British Government to enforce this prohibition, have been on the whole, commendable, especially since 1834. But the duplicity of our Government has, in a great measure, thwarted those endeavors. See Dr. Madden's Letter to Dr. Channing, and Fowell Buxton's work on the Slave Trade. Although my bosom is hot with indignation, I wish to use no stronger language than I find in a recent number of the "Onondaga Standard," taken from the "Rochester Daily Advertiser"—both of them democratic papers. "It was contemplated that the Slave Trade should be prohibited after 1803. It has indeed been made piracy; but the law has ever been evaded; and our government, under the influence of slaveholders' dictation, has hitherto virtually connived at its continuance, by insisting on the exemption from visitation and search, of all vessels carrying the flag of the Union. What wrong was ever done, or likely to be done, by an examination simply to ascertain whether our flag was not *fraudulently* assumed to cover piracy and robbing!"

I rejoice to learn, from a correspondent of the N. Y. Evangelist, writing from Brazil, that the Hon. Mr. Wise, the American Minister there, has been vigorously prosecuting an investigation into this infamous business. Mr. Wise says in his official communication to the Secretary of State—"Documents herewith transmitted will show the nature, connections, and extent of the African Slave Trade as it is, and has for some time been, unblushingly carried on by our citizens *under our flag*. It has grown so bold and so bad, as no longer to wear a mask, even to those who reside here, and who are at all acquainted with the trade between Brazil and Africa." And we are told, by the above correspondent, that Mr. Wise has expressed the opinion, "that if the people of the United States knew the extent to which this worst of piracies is conducted under their flag, and by vessels launched and owned in their free, northern waters, a law would be passed at the very next session of Congress, forbidding all trade with the coast of Africa," because the vessels, which go upon that coast, are sure to be engaged directly or indirectly in the slave trade.

NOTE B.

RESULT OF EMANCIPATION.

Many conflicting statements have been made, in relation to the effect which emancipation has produced upon the character and condition, both moral and physical, of the blacks in the English West India Islands. In a debate had in the English House of Commons, in 1842, Lord Stanley made the following statement, on which, it seems to me, full reliance may be placed.

"That the emancipation of the negro population of the West Indies had, in the benefits which were derived from it, exceeded the most sanguine expectations of the most ardent advocates of the measure. In every one of the islands, the physical condition and prosperity of the laboring classes had reached to an extent far greater than had been anticipated; and what was still more gratifying, the improvement in their physical condition was accompanied by a corresponding improvement in their social and moral habits. Religious instruction had produced its anticipated effects,

inducing greater purity in domestic life, and creating a stronger desire for education. This he considered to be a result infinitely more important than any improvement in their physical condition. (Hear, hear.) To show that he did not exaggerate the vast improvement which had taken place in the habits and conditions of the West Indian laborers, he would read to the House an extract from an official document, which he had a short time since addressed to a foreign power in answer to a statement, in which the great experiment of emancipation was alluded to as having proved a failure. The words were these: 'It will be found that the British emancipation took place without the occurrence of a single instance of tumult or disturbance; that the joy of the negroes on the 1st of August, 1834, was orderly, sober and religious; that since emancipation, the negroes had been thriving and contented; that they have varied their manner of living, and multiplied their comforts and enjoyments; that their offences against the laws have become more and more light and infrequent; that their morals have been improved; that marriage has become more and more substituted for concubinage; that they are eager for education, rapidly advancing in knowledge, and powerfully influenced by the ministers of religion. Such are among the results of emancipation which are plain and indisputable; and these results constitute in the estimation of Her Majesty's Government and the people of England the complete success of the British emancipation, in so far as relates to the primary and paramount objects of that act.'

The results have not been alike in all the colonies, for the obvious reason, that the procedure of the planters, and other employers, has been different in the different colonies. In Antigua, where the planters rejected the Apprenticeship System, and chose immediate and entire emancipation in 1834; and where the conduct of the employers, towards the newly freed men, has been comparatively considerate and generous, all the blessed effects, spoken of by Lord Stanley, have followed, and *good crops besides*. The following is an extract from a recent number of "the Antigua Observer."

"We believe it may be asserted with truth, that not more than one third of those, who during Slavery, were employed in the field labor of estates, are now continuously occupied in that work. * * * A great many have withdrawn from sugar cultivation altogether; many work only occasionally as jobbers, when their own independent settlements do not require their presence. Notwithstanding this, the first ten years of freedom, with one-third the number of laborers, have given at least as large, and I believe larger average crops, than the last ten years of Slavery, with three times the hands. How is this fact explained; and how does it comport with the heavy and abounding complaints, which we constantly hear? * * * It is certainly consolatory to reflect, that whatever may have been the fate of some other islands, the average crop of Antigua has not diminished since emancipation, though she has had to strive against the disastrous effects of an unprecedented physical evil, (annual drought) which the other islands in a great measure have escaped."

In Jamaica, whence come most, if not all, the complaints we hear, there has been from the beginning a very ungenerous spirit, on the part of the planters; and to their oppressive measures may be fairly attributed, the evils of which they complain. The following are extracts from an article in a late English paper—"The League." The statements speak for themselves.

After the period of emancipation, when the planters could no longer compel the negroes to work by the whip, they endeavored to compel them to work at such wages as they chose to dictate; and, in cases of refusal, unroofed and even demolished their cottages; trod their provision-grounds under foot with oxen; increased their rent double, treble and even fourfold; distrained their goods and imprisoned their persons. This spirit of persecution, with the view to compel labor on their own terms, is not extinct, but it has assumed another form. Open oppression became dangerous—it was necessary to disguise it under the forms of law, and so the colonial Legislatures (composed of planters)—under the pretext of there being a short supply of laborers, and the public welfare (the welfare of the said planters) requiring an increase—have passed laws to encourage the immigration of foreign laborers, not by every planter importing at his own expense any such laborers he may need, but, *to remedy the evil of high wages, by taxing the bread and other necessaries of the negroes, for the purpose of providing a fund for bringing rival labor into competition with theirs.* * * * * *

The duty on flour has been raised from 4s. to 6s. per barrel. Corn meal is an article of great consumption by the laboring population. In the time of Slavery, when purchased by the planters to feed the negroes, the duty was *three pence* per barrel. Now that the *free* negro has to purchase it for himself, the duty has been raised to *three shillings!* When the slave-owners fed their negroes with rice, the duty was *one shilling per cwt.*; now that the negroes have become buyers of rice, the duty is *four shillings per cwt.* Salt fish, for slaves, paid a duty of 6d per cwt.; for free negroes, it now pays 2s per cwt. Turtle, which the *negroes do not eat*, is duty free. Pork, imported to feed *slaves*, paid only a trifling tax; now that it is imported to feed the *free* negroes, it pays 20s. 6d. Soap, to wash the hands of slaves, paid 9d. per box; to wash freemen, it must pay 2s. per box.

Since emancipation, the negroes have purchased little freeholds, and a great demand has arisen for timber to build their houses. Before freedom, the tax on white and pitch pine was 4s.; but since, it has been raised to 8s. for white, and 12s. for pitch pine; and the tax on shingles has in like manner been raised from 1s. to 4s. and 3s. But whilst the duties on all the necessary articles consumed by the negroes have thus been raised since they became freemen, the duty on staves for sugar hogsheads, which *they do not use*, has been kindly reduced from 12s. the duty during Slavery, to 2s.; and the tax on wooden hoops, which was 4s. has been reduced to 1s. The sum expended to import other laborers at the expense of the negroes, up to 1844, amounted to £129,271, besides £95,000 voted for the same object during the present year.

Now, will it be believed, in the face of this outcry about the scarcity of laborers, and the high price of labor, that the average rate of wages in Jamaica is only 1s. per day out of crop, and 1s. 6d. per day during crop! * * * * *

The rude state of cultivation in Jamaica, sufficiently accounts for all their difficulties. A recent writer (Phillippo) observes—"Almost the only implements of husbandry in common use, are the hoe, the bill, the cutlass, and the axe. Manure is conveyed to the fields on the heads of laborers in baskets or trays, filled by the hoe; exhibiting in these respects no improvement on the rude usages of our Saxon forefathers! Little is done in the way of drainage, alternate crops, artificial grasses, or manuring. Soils are usually wrought until exhausted; after which they lie fallow

for several years. 'The farmer may form some idea of the waste of labor in the West Indies,' says an intelligent American traveller, (Dr. Hovey,) 'by supposing his lands to be all cultivated with Indian corn, and no agricultural implements allowed him, except a mule, a pack-saddle, a wooden tray, and a stab hoe.' The old methods of cultivation are the rule—the improvements the exception. The hoe, the cutlass, and the tray, and others of equal antiquity, still usurp the place of the plough and spade, the mock-fork, the wheelbarrow, and the tumbril; whilst the practical knowledge of the *last century* is still regarded by many as superior to the experience and science of the present day." * * * * *

It is calculated that, in planting canes, a pair of horses and a plough will do the work of thirty-five men. WHAT IS WANTED, THEN, IS NOT AN IMPORTATION OF HILL COOLIES, BUT AN IMPORTATION OF HORSES AND PLOUGHS, AND MACHINERY, to make labor more productive. We have lying before us the most abundant evidence that sugar can be—*ay, that it is—made by free labor as cheap in Jamaica as in any other country, and that it can be made cheaper.* Happily there are even in Jamaica a few intelligent and enterprising planters, and these, like our most intelligent agriculturists, repudiate protection and desire to see it abolished.—Among this number is Mr. George Price, of Worthy-park, St. John's, who has addressed an interesting letter to the *Jamaica Times*, dated April 12, 1845, in which he expressly states "that, if the cries for protection and immigration could be overcome by a general cry for the one thing needful, *capital*, to be expended in improved cultivation, the crops would be doubled in five years; that they would exceed the largest crops ever made in the island, without the addition of one single laborer; and that they would afford a large net profit to the proprietor." * * * *

We are told that no stimulus but the whip will induce the negro to work like a white man. The experiment has been for the first time fairly tried on the railway now making in Jamaica, and, we are happy to say, with the most complete success. The stimulus of a just reward for labor, and kind and honorable treatment, has proved equally efficacious in Jamaica as in England. The negroes on the line are employed on piece-work; and, notwithstanding the exhausting heat of the climate, they have performed daily an equal amount of labor with laborers engaged in the same kind of work in England; indeed, the engineer declares "he prefers the negroes to Irish and Scotch laborers." Their earnings on piece-work amount to 2s. per day. Here is an important and gratifying fact, proving the superiority of free over slave labor; and we trust our Anti-Slavery friends, supporting the sugar monopoly, will ponder it before they presume again to raise the cry that free labor needs protection.

NOTES C & D.

For the want of room, we must content ourselves with referring our readers to some of the sources, from which we should have drawn the information, we intended to give in these notes.

Thome and Kimball's *Journal of a Tour through the West Indies*, in 1837.

The *Journal of Sylvester Hovey*, Prof. of Nat. Phil. and Math. in Amherst College, 1836.

Joseph John Gurney's *Letters to Henry Clay*, 1840.

Journal of Truman, Jackson and Longstreth, 1840—'41.

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