

served, "that it was to be expected that the quantity of unoccupied land and the easily satisfied wants of the black population, would detach them from the labours of the field and bring about disastrous evils to the proprietary body. Now, it is quite true that this result did follow but it was only one of the causes which produced such terrible distress in the West Indies, and particularly in Jamaica and British Guiana, but this did not apply to the other Islands of Barbadoes, Antigua, Trinidad, &c. The colonists themselves over and over again remonstrated with the Imperial Government on the injurious consequences of their partial legislation, and predicted the ruin that would surely overtake them. For they well understood that the system which in England is called Free Trade, was partial and unjust, and framed with special reference to the interests of Britain alone and did not bear reference directly to colonial interests. It must be borne in mind that while Great Britain forced on her possessions the acceptance of her own policy, she left them to a most unjust competition with the Slave-holding States in their neighborhood, whose sugars were to be admitted into the British market on the same terms, and worse than this, she kept up, and is still keeping up a base monopoly in her capital cities, for the protection of a few British Refiners; and by a prohibitory duty on refined West India sugar, prevents the colonist from entering her markets with the best manufactured article. In Sir Robert Schomburgk's excellent work we have his authority for strongly condemning this policy and he clearly points out the vacillating, tampering system which has been pursued by contrasting Sir Robert Peel's speech in answer to Lord Langdon's, Jan. 1841, and the Right Hon. Baronet's financial statement on assuming power immediately afterwards, although his measure was not in the commencement so sweeping as his predecessors in office; it laid the foundation for the admission of sugar manufactured by Slave labour. The duty of 27s per hundred weight which it was professed should merely continue during the war, terminated in 1842 when the duty on British Plantation sugar was reduced to fourteen shillings. The duty on foreign sugar and the produce of free labour met at the same time a corresponding *reduction*; and in consequence of certain commercial treaties with countries where Slavery still prevailed, and by which they were placed on the footing of most favored nations, some sugars produced by slave labour were now likewise admitted at this reduced duty. The revenue was compensated for the reduction of duty, both on Foreign and British plantation sugar, by the increased consumption, and this increased consumption produced a rise in the price of sugar, which proved remunerative to the planter. The powerful party in Parliament mean-

while pressed upon ministers with success, the measure for the admission of foreign sugar, whether the produce of free or slave labour; and though they resisted the abolition of all protective duties at that time, a sliding scale was introduced by which these duties were to terminate. The preceding twelve years, from '34 to '46, offer the example of an inconsistency in Imperial measures without a parallel in any previous age during so short a period. These colonies, by the value of their commerce, contributed mainly to the supremacy of Great Britain as a naval power. For years they afforded an unfailing and remunerative market for the manufactures of the mother country, and relieved Great Britain from depending for her colonial produce wholly on foreign countries. It would, therefore, have been considered the interest of Great Britain to foster and protect her colonies, but the events of the past twelve years prove the contrary, and leave it undisputed that the colonists have been hardly dealt with. If we judge from the various measures which succeeded the emancipation, we are almost led to the conclusion that it was the object of the Government to sacrifice twenty millions of money to destroy a capital of five times the amount vested by British subjects in the colonies. The fiat has been passed, and the monopoly on sugar in favour of the British colonies, was abolished at the commencement of the second half of this century. This sacrifice has been conceded to the free trade principle; and while in the abstract the political economist can but rejoice in the mighty strides with which this only true principle of commerce advances, we must regret, with the much injured colonists, that it has been employed against their interests *while their commerce remains* fettered by restrictions and monopolies—such were the cruel and unjust impediments thrown in the way to prevent the successful working of African emancipation, and it is to such hindrance, arising from most lamentable ignorance, that most of the wisest and best colonial measures have been thwarted—think you that any colonial secretary would have been found reckless enough to spurn the respectful remonstrances of a consolidated people? that if instead of being divided into fragmentary commands, the West India Islands could have spoken, as Canada has spoken, that either the sophistry of a Peel, or the cold selfishness of a Chandos, would have successfully crushed them? but weak, defenceless, divided as they are, oppression accomplished its work. Turn then, my brethren, turn quickly away from the contemplation of those miserable differences which would divide us into paltry cliques! east to the winds those childish fancies which embitter and mar our prospects, and remember that we owe a holy allegiance to this, our only home, and that henceforth no one of us can claim a better