

condition, whether, as myself, young and healthy, or including infancy and decrepitude. We must to this add £1 for clothing, 10s. for medical assistance, and £5 for food—in all £18 10s. for every head; and to this we must now place 25 per cent., £4 12s. 6d., for children unable to work, old people, pregnant women, runaways, and slaves under surveillance, which will give the annual cost of a slave in these Colonies at £23 2s. 6d., taking 300 working-days in the year. We now pay, without minding old women and children, for similar services £25, a small increase of expenditure, which certainly does not warrant the cry continually raised that slave sugar and blessed free labour cannot compete on even terms. This is our own case. In Cuba and Brazil, our most dreaded antagonists, the case is stronger, for it is universally admitted, and is known as a fact, that in the former the yearly depreciation of slave population amounts to 10 per cent., while money bears an interest of 1 per cent. per annum.

Why, then, it may be asked, can the Cuba planter make a profit where our planters cultivate at a loss? The answer is ready. This occurs, not because slave labour is cheaper, for this I have shown above with him is a fallacy; but because the Cuba planter makes Cuba his home; because the Cuba planter is an educated man; because he cultivates with economy; because he manufactures with skill; because he sells his sugar in Cuba; because he gets his home freight for one-half of ours; and because he does not ship to some cormorant of a mortgagee who plays Ralph Nickleby again. These, Sir, and not the dearness of labour with us, are the causes why competition appears impossible, and hence, sir, my remark above that I look on the depreciated market as an advantage, inasmuch as it must awaken the planter to devise means to meet a great present emergency, which, when it ceases to exist, must tell in an enhanced ratio; for if he can devise means to surmount the now existing difficulties, when a larger market is open, and when the pressure from money is removed, he will certainly be able to float safely with the tide of prosperity, having been successful against the ebb of adversity. Various will be the endeavours to devise these means, but as surely as they are tried so certainly will they result in failure, if an identity of interests of all parties concerned is not in some way adopted. Wages at 1s. 8d. per day, both in Demerara and this Colony, is barely enough to support existence, as provisions in both places are enormously dear—to reduce wages, therefore, until some step be taken to reduce food is perfectly impossible, and in no way can this be done and the present system kept up. Look at it as you will—view it in any shape you will—and the longer you investigate the more convinced will you become that a completely new system must replace the present; and that in the question of price you must make the labourer a participator in your losses or profits, and give him a direct and positive interest in the success of cultivation; at the same time taking care to make his tenure such as must dissipate the fears he is now perpetually under when planting provision for his use.

I now propose to submit to you the plan I should pursue, and would long ago have pursued, were I so fortunate as to be a sugar pro-