

to pass, but it finally became law amid the almost universal plaudits of the British nation. We are told that many days and nights were spent in discussion, but the arguments of truth and righteousness prevailed at last, and the guilt appertaining, to what has lately been styled, *the sum of all human villainies*, was, as regards after ages, expunged from the national conscience.

But the wisdom of the Act is best demonstrated by its results, not that they have been, by any means, uniform; it was impossible in the nature of things that they should be. Instances arose, which gave much pain to the friends of freedom, and fears were excited lest unbridled licence should hurry the emancipated ones into such courses as would have endangered the success of the whole scheme. But the danger passed away, and now, looking back through a vista of thirty years, we have ample reason to bless God, that he put it into the hearts of our forefathers to perfect so glorious a work, for in the very regions most directly affected by the Act, I mean in the West Indian Islands, every class of society has, on the whole, been benefited by it, and industry, wealth, and commerce have been greatly enlarged; while in only one or two has a falling off in the production of one staple been experienced, and that arising as much from inadequate local legislation as from any other cause; while as a set off to this, in the very same island,* a fact is recorded which amply demonstrates the benefits of emancipation. A class of men, occupying a middle rank between the laborer and the planter, indeed they may be styled planters themselves, numbering fifty thousand, possess freehold property, which average three acres to each.†

Another result of emancipation, though perhaps, but an indirect one, is supplied by the fact, which was embodied in the report submitted to President Lincoln by the commissioners, who about twelve months ago, passed through this province and other countries to enquire into the condition of the colored race in a state of freedom. These gentlemen were agreeably surprised to find that the colored inhabitants, in the places which they visited, formed an independent and very respectable portion of the community, and they could not help coming to the conclusion that their capacity for supporting themselves and families, and for raising themselves in the social scale, was thus fully proven.

And, as these results are shown, the world looks on approvingly. Great Britain, the true friend of the oppressed, holds out no encouragement to the oppressor, and takes no notice of *quasi* republics founded on slavery. When the recognition of the Confederate States is mooted, her sons and daughters petition strongly against any "proposition that may be made to recognize in any way such a foul confederacy against human rights, as fitted to sit in any council of the civilized nations of the earth, much more to become an ally and equal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland."*

And such petitions based as they are upon the good sound sense and the true Christian feeling of the British nation shall, under God always prevail. The traffic in human souls shall be confined within the narrowest limits, limits in the Providence of God to be made narrower every year, till the

* Jamaica

† See a book entitled "The ordeal of Free Labour, in the British West Indies."

From a petition to the House of Commons.