

which, at 8s. per cwt., is cheaper than we can grow yams. Can you expect that Jamaica is always to be the outpouring of wealth? Are we not to have some comforts there? But there is another circumstance: many of our black brethren think they may as well be masters as servants. (Laughter and cheers.) They have got the idea into their heads that it is as well to have a settlement of their own, as to live in places from which they could be kicked out, at the fiat of a drunken overseer, at any time. (Cheers.) It is most wonderful that they should think so—(Laughter)—It is most astonishing that the Baptist missionaries should get such a thing in their head, and teach it to others. I had a member of the name of Hamilton, who was obliged to work for his master, but the moment he was made free, he set up for himself, and became a road-maker. He took a contract, and paid his work-people 10d. per day more than the whites said they were worth. (Hear, hear.) I made out his accounts, he brought me the money, and when he had paid his men four bits a day, he himself cleared 12s. sterling per day for his work. Would he have been a wise man if he had stopped working for a master at a shilling per day, when he could get 12s. by working on his own account? But the fallacy of the planters saying that the Baptist missionaries settle the wages, is most egregious. They settled it themselves. This is one of the few blessings—and they were very few—that the apprenticeship gave us. During the time of the apprenticeship a number of persons came to be valued. The masters universally came down, and deposed, on oath to their value, and that fixed the wages. (Hear, hear.) We saw how it was going on, and what would be the result. Let the planters deny it if they can; we have their words, deposing on God's eternal truth, that the labour of apprenticeship was worth so much, and can you suppose that when the people were free it was of less worth than when they were slaves? (Cheers.) Was it an unnatural deduction for the men to make, that if their masters thought their labour worth four bits a day, when the men wished permission to work for themselves, the men ought to receive four bits a day, now that they worked for the master? (Loud Cheers.) Not only is this the case, but, feeling they might have outstepped the bounds of prudence, and that those wages were rather too high, it was my happiness, in connexion with an estate of a gentleman in London, on which my brother Barratt has lived nearly all his life, to make the first settlement of wages; and I made it at two-thirds of what they said it was worth. Let that be denied if it can—(Cheers.) I assert it as a distinct and palpable fact. When I had made this arrangement, a person was sent to the Oxford estate to make the people discontented; and urged on by some white men, they came and said that I had made a bad bargain. So convinced was I of the equity of the proceeding, that I called the men into the mill-yard, and said, "You have made a bargain; I know it is a good one. You have entered into a covenant, and unless you fulfil it, I will never interfere again." They did fulfil it. (Cheers.) But this is not all; I could bring forward cases of a most unjust nature, and when we meet in our Anti-Slavery convention I will bring them forward. I will content myself on the present occasion by saying, that the great leading cause of the diminution of colonial produce is this—the women stop at home and the children go to school. (Cheers.) It has been asserted that the Baptist missionaries use their influence to prevent the people working. We have recommended the children to be sent to school. Did we do right or wrong? (Loud cries of "right.") Is it not honourable to my emancipated black brethren that they keep their wives at home to take care of their children. We do not weigh liberty in pounds of sugar or gills of rum. (Cheers.) We weigh liberty in far higher scales than these. We see in that beautiful, that Godlike change what has taken place in Jamaica, the development of the human mind, the reciprocal feelings of affection sweetly intermingling with each other, and while we behold a contented and delighted peasantry, it matters little to us from whence the sugar comes. (Loud cheers.)

But I must pass from this subject. There are yet brighter triumphs, there are more exalted scenes which your delighted hearts may visit, but which it has been my privilege to behold. It was supposed by many of our Christian brethren, and sometimes the suspicion would come over ourselves, that when the negro was relieved from his bondage, the holy principles of Christianity would not be sufficient to keep him in the course he should pursue. But what is the fact? When the apprenticeship came our chapels were in ruins, and our people were scattered; but such is their attachment to the house of God, and such their delight in his ordinances, that where only 11 small chapels stood, 20 large ones have been erected. (Cheers.) Every chapel that was destroyed by the riots, has, by the blessing of God, been substituted by one twice its size. Not only is this the case, but most of them have been paid for, by that Voluntary Principle which is going down. (Loud cheers.) I am happy to inform you that I only need now your prayers. You kindly, as a Society supported me when my brethren were in bondage, but they determined, the moment they were free, that they would take the delightful work on themselves. (Cheers.)