

Two hours before sunrise the negroes are summoned to their toil, and while the dew still lies heavy on the ground, or the rainy season may have rendered the ground a morass, they cut grass for the horses and cattle, and feed the stock under negro drivers for gangs of twenty-five. After this, they proceed to the sugar or coffee plots; there they labour with the hoe till breakfast-time, for which they are allowed half an hour; again at work till dinner, for which an hour is allowed, if it be not crop time, when a quarter of an hour is all they have to devour their meals in. Sun-down does not terminate their labours, for on moonlight nights they carry wood or stones, building materials, or are otherwise employed till nine at night, when a bell rings them to their stable. I do not say that the Cuba plantation slaves are all treated as above-described; but a great many are so abused, and this I had from the mouths of Spanish planters.

The Spanish and French planters of Cuba give their negroes rice, maize, and four ounces of jerked (dried) beef at each meal, but barely enough to support nature. The Americans in Cuba give salt fish instead of beef, because it is cheaper; but their negroes are not so strong as those fed upon beef. The field negroes go nearly naked. The negresses commonly get a coffee-bag to cover themselves: they cut a hole in the bottom of it for their head, and two holes at the corners for the arms. Sunday brings no holiday to these unfortunates, for till ten in the forenoon, and from four till dusk, they labour as usual in the field; between ten and four they are