

from £6 sterling to two shillings per annum, while many, from age and infirmity, are unable to give anything for gospel ordinances. With one or two exceptions, no other congregation has such a diversity of class. All the congregations of the Southern Presbytery are made up exclusively of free-holders, who own their own land and live by the produce of their own labour; and these are developing a superior type of character to what is found among the field labourers. From the size of my congregation and the varied occupations followed by the people, I have ample opportunities of judging of their social condition. The charge of indolence, so frequently brought against the negro population, may be, I regret to say, preferred with truth against many of them in Jamaica. In a country so fertile where perpetual summer reigns, and in which a black man can earn a livelihood so easily, it is sad to contemplate the amount of poverty that prevails. Many of the negroes, however, are industrious, and live in stone houses of two stories with several apartments in each. There is, for example, a black man in my congregation, who, with his family, would be an honour to any church. By energy he has risen to a position of respectability and comfort, and he contributes one hundred dollars per annum for the education of his son, a very promising youth, at Montego Bay Academy.—Most of my elders are black men; some of them are men of considerable intelligence, and all of them, so far as I know, act in accordance with their christian profession; while several of them exhibit a devotedness to the duties of their office which would shame elders in countries that have longer enjoyed the gospel than Jamaica. One of them, who was converted under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Blyth in the year 1850, has ever since led a most exemplary life. Ministers, who have been long in the country and have known him intimately, have told me that they never knew of a fault being laid to his charge. I was very much interested with the account which he gave me one day of the change which the gospel had wrought upon the moral condition of Jamaica. He had been visiting with me in

a district of the congregation, and as we were returning homewards, he spoke in the following strain:—"I can remember the time when vice was universal in the island and was nothing thought of, but now, though it still prevails to a great extent, people are ashamed to practise it openly. When I compare what the country now is with what it was in the days of slavery, I can only say, what has religion done!" As we rode along we came to the church at Hampden. Pointing to it he said, "I remember before that church was built, a few of us used to meet for prayer on Sabbath mornings among some bushes that grew there. Had our master known what we were about we would have been whipped. And now to think how many hundreds of people, respectably dressed, assemble there every Sabbath morning for the worship of God." The deep interest which this elder takes in the welfare of the congregation, relieves me of a considerable amount of anxiety. Next to the prosperity of the church the comfort of the minister seems to be his principal object of study. Frequently when he thought I was labouring beyond my strength, he has given me a gentle remonstrance to spare myself. Occasionally, when he has seen me go out in the morning to visitation and not return till the evening, he has gone to Mrs. Downie, and told her that she must watch minister, for he is a new comer, and white people cannot stand so much work here as in another climate.

It is now about a year since I settled at Hampden, and I like my sphere of labour very much. The manse is situated on a rising ground, and commands a lovely view over an extensive space of table land. The Rev. Hope Waddel, in his work on Jamaica thus speaks of the scene from the manse:—"The view from the Presbyterian manse at Hampden is worthy of being remembered. In the distance rise up long ranges of black conical mountains, tier above tier, clothed with forest. The intervening space is a vast plain covered with luxuriant sugar-cane fields, and dotted with sugar works, cocoa-nut groves, and gigantic cotton-trees; while in the fore-ground at the foot of the hill, where the manse is erected, stands the beautiful white stone church.

Did space permit, I might give some account of the commercial condition and prospects of Jamaica. For a number of years business of every kind has been in a declining state, but there is one fact, in the present position of the island, on which the hopes of returning prosperity may be based, and that is, that while the imports are largely diminishing, the exports are as largely increasing. In other words, the people are living more on the produce of their own soil, and depending less for supplies from other countries. The following were the items