

neglected truth, that freedom in man is the soul of virtue as well as energy. But the display of these qualities does not solve the great question of the future. The present flourishing condition of the negro peasantry cannot continue without steady industry. We are not now discussing the abstract question, whether civilization may not flourish in the absence of wealth — suffice it to say, that in the present state of the West Indies, the growth of wealth alone can ensure the growth of civilization. Their taste for comforts and luxuries, and the great increase in the importation of articles consumed by them, on which so much stress is laid by writers on the prosperous side of the question, prove that they are able just at present to obtain very high wages for very slight and irregular labour — the worst of all preparations for an orderly and industrious state of life. When those wages fall, as fall they inevitably will, and that shortly — what will be their conduct *then*? Will they be content to work more steadily for less remuneration? or will they prefer to continue in their present desultory habits, and drop, one by one, their acquired wants, rather than undergo the additional fatigue which will then be necessary to satisfy them? This is not only the great question of the day in reference to the actual condition of our tropical colonies, but it is perhaps the most important of all the questions which now agitate the political world, in its ultimate bearing on the destinies of the human race. If all our sacrifices, all our efforts, end but in the establishment of a number of commonwealths, such as Hayti now is, flourishing, in contented obscurity, side by side with the portentous and brilliant opulence of slave-owning and slave-trading states — the best interests of humanity will have received a shock which it may take centuries to repair. If, on the other hand, we do not succeed