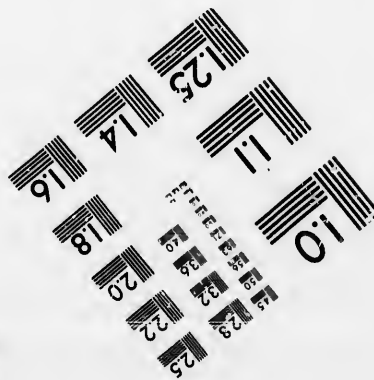
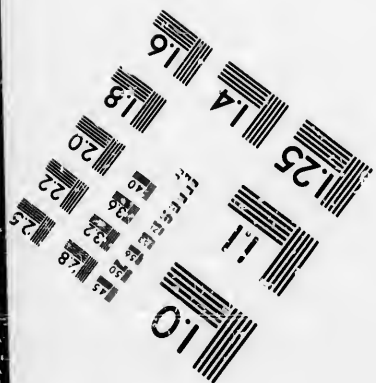
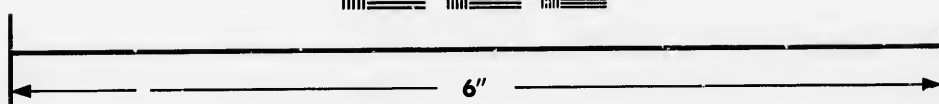
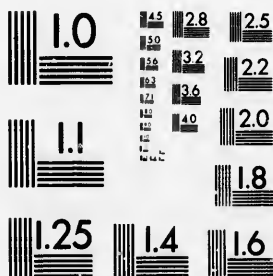


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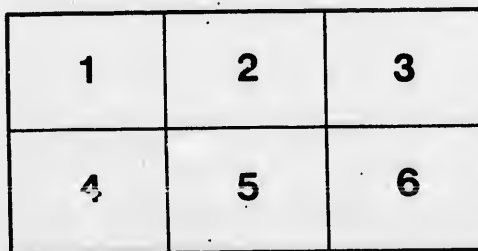
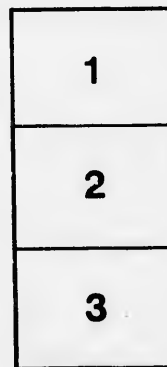
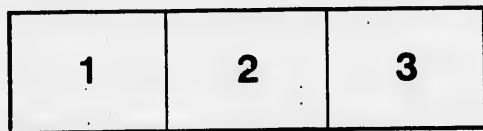
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A SPEECH

DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC MEETING,

HELD IN LONDON, AUGUST 1, 1859,

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

BY THE PARLIAMENT OF GREAT BRITAIN;

THE RIGHT HON. LORD BROUGHAM

IN THE CHAIR.

BY FRANCIS HINCKS, Esq.,

GOVERNOR-IN-CHIEF OF THE WINDWARD ISLANDS.

1859.

W. M. WATTS, CROWN COURT, TEMPLE BAR.

MY LORD BROUGHAM, LADIES and GENTLEMEN—

BEFORE submitting for the consideration of this Meeting the testimony which I can conscientiously bear in favour of the success of the great measure by which 800,000 of our brethren of the African race were emancipated from slavery, I must ask your indulgence while I make a few remarks of a personal character, which will not be altogether irrelevant to the subject. Judging from past experience, I think it not improbable that some persons may be inclined to cavil at my taking a part in this Meeting. When, some eighteen months ago, I addressed a letter to Mr. Charles Tappan, of Boston, giving him my opinion as to the results of emancipation in the British West Indies, I was blamed by some,—I hope not by many,—for omitting to guard against the publication of my views on the subject. I felt, however, then, as I do now, that however objectionable it would be for me to take any part in controversies between the *Anti-Slavery Society* and the West-Indian proprietors on the points at issue between them, the question of Slavery could not be looked upon, either in England

or in the British West Indies, as a party question. When Mr. Tappan visited Barbados, to collect information regarding its condition and progress, and asked my opinions on the subject, I gave them freely. When he told me that my testimony would be of service to the cause in the United States, and begged of me to communicate to him in writing what I had stated verbally, I did not hesitate to do so; and I am here today because I have been told, both by Englishmen and Americans, that I may do some good to the cause by publicly expressing those opinions which I have freely stated in private. My valued friend, Mr. Charles Sumner, the distinguished Senator for Massachusetts, has more than once within the last few weeks impressed on me that the opponents of slavery in the United States look to us to aid them by disproving the allegations constantly made, that emancipation has been a failure. It must not be supposed that I anticipate that any offence will be taken by the West-Indian proprietors at my taking a part in this celebration. They may not, as a body, concur in all my opinions, but it is only doing them justice to affirm that they are warm supporters of the abolition of slavery. I should, indeed, have hesitated to accept your invitation, had I believed that so influential a body would have been displeased at my doing so. In order to remove any doubt as to the views of the West-Indian proprietors on this subject, I shall quote two short extracts from journals generally supposed to express them.



The Demerara Colonist says:—"There are no persons in the colony, and we do not believe there are any in the whole of the British West Indies, who wish to prove that slavery is right and proper. We have never met with a single individual during our residence in this colony, who expressed even a wish to see slavery restored again."

The Barbados West-Indian says:—"Every friend to humanity must wish the opinion of Mr. Hincks to be the right one. And who can doubt it? The change in the condition of the labouring population of these islands was accomplished without violence of any kind, and, since that change, their condition has improved in moral as well as material respects."

For my own part, I must state distinctly that I am most anxious for the success of the West-Indian proprietors, believing that by their success the best interests of the labouring, as well as all other classes in those colonies will be promoted, and the abolition of slavery in other countries secured. I advocate views which I believe to be consistent with the interests of the proprietors—indeed my object is the same as their's, as I am most anxious to recover, if possible, the Creole labour, which, by an unwise policy, has been diverted from sugar cultivation; or, if that be now impossible, to prevent the further withdrawal of that labour, which will most assuredly take place, if the erroneous policy of the last twenty-five years be continued. Further, I advocate measures

that I can declare conscientiously I would myself adopt if I were a West-Indian proprietor. Before I enter on the subject, I must advert to attempts which have been made to damage the value of my testimony, by representing that I am Governor of Barbados, a colony which is in exceptional circumstances owing to the abundance of labour; and that I have not that experience of other colonies which would enable me to form a correct opinion. It is certainly not very complimentary to one who has been engaged for many years in public life, who has taken an active part in the Government of a great colony like Canada, and who has had to deal with questions of finance, of land, public works, and, in fact, of all kinds, to be told that he is so deficient in common sense as to study the West-Indian labour question, without reference to the peculiar circumstances of each colony. It happens, however, that the Windward-Islands Government embraces four islands, placed in wholly different circumstances from Barbados, where immigrant labour is sought for, owing to the gradual withdrawal of Creole labour from sugar cultivation, and where similar complaints have been made, though perhaps not to the same extent as in Jamaica. I wish it to be understood that I have formed my opinions after full inquiry into the circumstances, not only of every British colony, regarding which I could obtain information, but also of those foreign countries from which tropical products are obtained, and especially Cuba and Louisiana. If, therefore, my opinions are erro-

neous, I can claim no excuse on the score of ignorance. With these preliminary remarks, I shall proceed to consider the results of emancipation. I shall dwell very briefly on the moral condition of the emancipated class. I am not aware that much difference of opinion exists on that subject. It has been said, perhaps truly, that in some parts of British Guiana, where the people have settled in remote localities, they have retrograded, but such cases are exceptional.\* Many, doubtless, have expected too much, and have not made allowance for the moral condition of a slave population. In an excellent letter on this subject, addressed to Mr. Tappan by the Bishop of Barbados, his lordship observes—

“It is a common mistake, I think, in revolutions of this kind, to look for speedier results of a beneficial character than the nature of things admits. External changes inaugurate a new state of things; they do not at once accomplish it: the seed is sown, but the harvest is not yet. In regard to slavery in particular, I need not say that its sequels are not to be got rid of in one or two, or even three generations, and as yet we are only in the first.”

His lordship takes a most favourable view in the sequel of his letter of the progress made in Barbados,

\* A subsequent speaker, the Rev. Mr. Barrett, who had resided in British Guiana, gave it as his opinion that I had been led into error on this subject. I have no authority but the Blue Books and private information.

and this is confirmed by the reports in the Blue Books, and by the testimony of the clergy of the Established Church, as well as the various Missionaries of the Wesleyans, United Brethren, Baptists, and Independents. I will simply state one or two interesting facts which have lately come under my own observation.

I have had occasion to declare frequently, that I know no country in which the labouring classes have done so much for education as they have done in Barbados. In Boston, Massachusetts, where education is more generally diffused than it is elsewhere, the educational funds are obtained by a tax upon property, as they are to a great extent everywhere in the United States and in Canada. I will read from a letter addressed to me a week before my departure from Barbados, by the Rev. Mr. Bleby, a Wesleyan Missionary, who I have no doubt is known to many present, how such funds are obtained in Barbados. "The entire cost," says Mr. Bleby, "of the five new school-houses completed, or in progress, will be about 980*l.*, and will be realized thus:—Raised among the people 595*l.*, "two-thirds being already in hand; proceeds of subscription list 120*l.*; proceeds of lectures in the "United States and Canada 212*l.*; expected grants "for fittings from the Education Committee 50*l.*" Again: "The annual expenditure for the five schools "under my charge, which had 710 pupils, was 434*l.* "8*s.* 7*d.*, of which the parents paid in fees 193*l.* 9*s.*

"7*d.*; the Education Committee for salaries\* 167*l.*  
 "10*s.* 11*d.*; grant for school supplies 10*l.*; British  
 "and Foreign School Society 10*l.*; Wesleyan Missio-  
 "nary Society 50*l.*" Mr. Bleby adds, that "the  
 "new place of worship at Beulah, and the renovated  
 "one at Ebenezer, will be completed this year, at a  
 "cost of about 1100*l.*, the greater part of which will  
 "be contributed in various ways by the people."

I have likewise to mention an interesting occur-  
 rence which recently took place in Barbados. The  
 English proprietors granted a sum of money to be  
 distributed in good-conduct prizes. These were opened  
 to public competition among the labourers of the  
 island, and candidates were required to produce  
 certificates setting forth the following particulars;  
 1. Duration and regularity of service on the same  
 property or in the same employ; 2. Tidy house,  
 and well cultivated land; 3. Regular attendance at  
 public worship; 4. Regular attendance of children at  
 school; 5. Regular attendance of children at labour;  
 6. Good moral character; 7. Not frequenting the  
 magistrate's office. For these certificates containing  
 the evidence of good conduct, one hundred marks in the  
 aggregate were to be given, which were distributed  
 by the Committee according to the importance of  
 each. I had the pleasure of distributing the prizes,  
 and the four successful candidates had each upwards  
 of ninety marks; and I may observe, that the failure

\* The revenue is raised chiefly by duties on articles of general  
 consumption: there is no tax on property for education.

to obtain full marks arose from having no children at ages suitable for sending to school or labour, so that they could not get the marks assigned to those certificates. In two instances the labourers had been upwards of ten years in the same employment without having been absent a single day, except from sickness or by permission. And I may add that several of the unsuccessful candidates lost marks owing to the irregularity of their certificates, for instance, by getting their employers to certify to their attendance at public worship, the certificates for which were required to have the signatures of their ministers. So strong were these cases, that I was induced to give several extra prizes.

I am aware that many, and probably all who listen to me, would rest their case here, and would say, "With such results, of what is there to complain?" I shall quote an extract from the despatch of an eminent statesman, Lord John Russell, written in 1840, which places the results of emancipation, as regards those of the African race, in a true light. His lordship writes thus—

"Carrying into effect the religious and benevolent views of the nation at large, it was their object to convert slaves into freemen, to rescue their brethren of Africa from the lash of compulsory toil, and establish them as Christian men on the soil where they had been transported as chattels or beasts of burthen. On this, the principal question of all,

“there is, I am happy to say, no room for doubt. “None of the most inveterate opponents of our recent measures of emancipation, allege that the negroes have turned robbers or plunderers, or blood-thirsty insurgents. What appears from their statement is, that they have become shopkeepers, and petty traders, and hucksters, and small freeholders,—a blessed change which Providence has enabled us to accomplish.”

I am unwilling, however, for the sake of the millions still in slavery to rest our case solely on the improvement in the Creoles of the African race. Whatever success may have attended our measures, if the result be the withdrawal of Creole labour from the production of the tropical staples, sugar and cotton, we cannot hope that the slave owners in other countries will emancipate their slaves. Even in our own country many warm friends of the abolition cause are startled at the results of emancipation in the West Indies, and scarcely know what would be the consequences to the world if the supply of cotton were to be stopped by the emancipation of the millions of slaves employed in the cultivation of that and other products in the United States. There is no way by which the cause of abolition could be so much served as by exhibiting a large increase in the exports of Jamaica over the greatest exports in the time of slavery, and produced at a cheaper rate by free Creole labourers. In the course of the controversy which took place,

after the delivery of Mr. Chamerovzow's lecture last year, Mr. Cave, Chairman of the West-India Committee, stated in a letter to the "Times :"—

"Hence, notwithstanding the Anti-Slavery Society's "song of triumph, the sorry figure England makes in "the eyes of slave-owning nations, and hence the "material condition of the West Indies is the test of "the success or failure of emancipation."

In referring to Mr. Cave, I may observe that he is a gentleman for whom I entertain the highest respect, and whose opinions I would not cite here with a view to controvert them. On the contrary, I admit freely that the exports of sugar have materially fallen off, owing to the withdrawal of Creole labour from cane cultivation, and that, with the exception of Barbados, and perhaps one or two other colonies, the increased exports are to be attributed to imported labour. There is no use in disguising such facts, nor in concealing from ourselves their importance, not only with reference to the interests of all classes in our own colonies, and to none more than the labouring classes, but also with reference to their effect on the great cause of abolition. This very day I received a letter from a most enlightened West-Indian proprietor, from which I shall read an extract or two—

"The result of want of success has riveted the chains "on Spanish and American slaves." . . . "Make that "success large and palpable, and the chains drop from



“ the negro at once. Shew the American slaveholder  
 “ all the West-Indian colonies in the condition of Bar-  
 “ bados, and he can hardly fail of being converted to  
 “ emancipation.”

This, in my opinion, is just the work that we have got to perform, and which we have neglected for the last twenty-five years. We have proclaimed to the world that slave labour was cheaper than free, and that the Creole African was naturally indolent, and would only cultivate the tropical products under compulsion. Our philanthropists, without denying these assertions, have contented themselves with arguing on the abstract principle of right, and have refused almost indignantly to discuss the point, whether the cultivation of cotton and sugar was to be maintained. In my letter to Mr. Tappan I endeavoured to convince him that free labour was cheaper than that of slaves ; and that the African Creole is not naturally indolent. Let me deal at once with this popular delusion, for that it is a delusion I have no doubt whatever. In support of my own opinion, I will give you the testimony of two disinterested witnesses, and I will observe further that it is in accordance with all that I have heard from the clergymen of the various Protestant churches, as well as from those of the Church of Rome. It is likewise in accordance with the opinions expressed by the stipendiary magistrates generally, as I have found them in the Blue Books. My first quotation shall be from a letter addressed to myself by a

Barbados proprietor, who stands high in the estimation of all who have the pleasure of his acquaintance. The second is from Dr. Davy's work on the West Indies.

“ There never was a greater mistake than to suppose that the negro will not work for hire. No man is more sensitive to that stimulus, or works more readily, more cheerfully, or more effectually for the hope of reward ; but, like every other man, he toils for his daily bread, not from choice, but necessity. Take away that, and he passes immediately out of the category of the labouring class. It is perfectly astonishing to know how much a negro can do when he is under the influence of a wholesome stimulus, and how little he will do when that is removed.”

Dr. Davy says :—“ It is a mistake often committed to suppose that the African is by nature idle and indolent, less inclined to work than the European. It is a mistake, I perceive, even fallen into by some of the friends of the race. Thus, a son of their distinguished advocate, Mr. Wilberforce, the present Bishop of Oxford, speaks of them ‘as a people who naturally hated labour, and who would sink into absolute indolence from the want of the proper stimulants to mental exertion.’ ”

In addition to these opinions, I shall refer to the case of Trinidad, one of the colonies in which a want of labour has been much complained of. It has been stated repeatedly that there has been a great aban-

donment of the estates by the Creole labourers, and that they are indolent and unwilling to work. A fairer case cannot, I think, be cited. It is a colony where immigration has been most extensively carried on. Now it has been affirmed, that at the period of emancipation there were upwards of 11,000 prædial labourers, and that only 3000 or 4000 have remained on the estates. I have examined the Blue Books, and I find that in these 11,000 were included all the families of the slaves, except children under six years of age, and if allowance be made for those who have gone to other employments, for those who have raised themselves by their own industry to the position of freeholders, cultivating land of their own, and for women who have withdrawn from labour, I maintain that there is at the present time a fair proportion of Creole labourers at work. I am about to refer to letters which have been recently published by a special correspondent of the "New-York Times," with whom I am personally acquainted, who is a Canadian by birth, who avows that his sympathies are with the planters, and who is strongly in favour of immigration. His testimony is at all events impartial, and he states his authority to be a forthcoming report of the immigration agent of Trinidad. I may add that his statement is confirmed by a report in my own possession from the same officer. The Trinidad Creoles working on the sugar estates are given as 3832, and the African Creoles from other islands as 4041, to which are added the estimated

number on the Cacao estates, making 5000 of each. It is of course with the first class that I have to deal. It appears, then, that out of a labouring population of about 11,000, including all women and children over six years of age, to which there would have been a natural increase in twenty years, 5000 are still working on the estates. I find that excluding the towns and the houses on the estates, there are in the rural districts of Trinidad upwards of 5000 houses of proprietors, the whole rural population being about 50,000. It may be said, however, that these labourers do not work more than a day or two in the week. On the authority of the same return it is stated that the average monthly earnings of the coolies are 5.35 dollars, the Trinidad Creoles 5.91 dollars; of the other island Creoles 6.27 dollars, of the Africans 5.36 dollars, of the Chinese 4.27 dollars. Again, the coolies worked  $19\frac{1}{2}$  days, the Trinidad Creoles  $16\frac{1}{2}$ , the island Creoles  $17\frac{1}{2}$ , the Africans 17, and the Chinese 17. Thus the difference between the indentured and the unindentured or wholly free labourer was three days in the month, while the latter earned more than the former. I may observe that the labourers are paid by tasks and not by the day, and that the Creoles must have performed more tasks, or probably better paid tasks, on the average in the month than the coolies. I may further remark that of all the classes mentioned, the Trinidad Creole is most likely to have occupation of his own to employ his spare time. Many of the island Creoles.

are strangers, who come, as the Irish used to come to England for the harvest, from Grenada and other neighbouring islands, to work during crop-time—a remarkable fact, considering that Grenada is importing labour from India. There is another remark I may offer, as it bears on the question of continuous labour. It is not estimated that in Barbados the labourer works, on an average, much, if at all, over 200 days in the year. I have consulted many planters, and 220 days was the highest average given to me, while some consider 200 or 210 days a fairer one; and I incline myself, from all my inquiries, to think 200 the outside. It is to be observed, that in nearly all the colonies the Creole labourer has a certain quantity of land, not sufficient to employ his time fully, but which enables him to occupy his leisure profitably. It will be found that the Creole labourers in Trinidad give nearly, if not quite as much labour in the month as those in Barbados. I shall test the industry of the Trinidad Creoles in another way. The population may be estimated at 75,000, of which about 25,000 reside in the towns of Port-of-Spain and San Fernando, leaving 50,000 as the rural population of all classes. I cannot suppose that the adult rural population of all classes exceeds the one half, or 25,000; and I am borne out by statistics in giving the labouring population at 20,000: indeed, I would be safe in estimating it as nearer to 21,000, which is an immense proportion of labourers. I have a return before me

from the immigration agent, giving the labourers in March 1858, on 140 sugar estates, at 16,902, and he states that the jobbers may safely be estimated at 1700, which would make 18,602; and the remaining sugar estates, and all the cacao estates, can hardly be estimated at less than 2400. I think I have proved satisfactorily, that in Trinidad a fair proportion of the population is labouring on the estates; indeed, the exports of Trinidad, which have increased of late years nearly if not quite by 20,000,000 pounds of sugar, afford conclusive evidence in support of this position. I admit that the increase has been owing to the labour of the immigrants, but if the Creoles had abandoned labour, the exports would have been stationary.

I trust that I have said sufficient on this point to satisfy every unprejudiced person that the Creole labourers are not naturally indolent. I willingly admit, at the same time, that there has been a considerable withdrawal of their labour from sugar cultivation, in some of the colonies, and especially in Jamaica, owing to a variety of causes. Among those causes I am inclined to think that, next to the tenure of land, the insolvency of the proprietors has been the chief. I have never been able to trace an instance in which an estate has gone out of cultivation owing to want of labour. I have heard of many cases in which estates have been abandoned from want of capital, and of some in which the labourers have been dismissed with wages several months in arrear.

I admit that I have heard of the abandonment of estates, both in Guiana and Jamaica, from want of labour, but I have not been furnished with such particulars as to enable me to satisfy my own mind on the subject. Even, however, admitting that such instances have occurred, they would not surprise me. The only wonder is, that, with such a land tenure as that which exists in the West Indies, a single labourer remains on the sugar estates. I shall give a description of that tenure from the letter of Mr. Prescod, member for the city of Bridgetown, and addressed to Mr. Tappan, and then cite other testimony that may, perhaps, be considered by some more unbiassed.

Mr. Prescod says—

“The labourer holds his cottage and allotment, and cultivates the latter on a monthly tenure, his growing crop to be appraised and paid for (commonly, in practice, below its value), if the notice to quit comes from the landlord employer, but is forfeited altogether when the notice is his own. There can be, generally speaking, no confidence, no affection, no feeling of interest on the part of the labourer for the interests of his employer under the working of such a system ; and, what is of far greater consequence, no permanent settling down of our peasantry to improve morally and socially.”

Again, Dr. Davy says—

“So long as the labourers hold their cottages as tenants at will, liable to be expelled at a day’s

“notice—so long as the planters are insecure of their labour from day to day—so long as land is apportioned to the labourer in lieu, in part or altogether, of money wages, neither the planter nor labourer is likely to be contented, nor fair and honest labour attainable.”

The correspondent of the “New-York Times,” already quoted, thus refers to the tenure—

“But their measures (the planters’) were futile. Their policy, as I attempted to shew in a former letter from Barbados, was suicidal. Instead of endeavouring to promote a good understanding between themselves and their labourers, the planters adopted, and still retain in Trinidad, the odious system of tenancy at will. The labourer who lives on an estate is compelled to work for that estate and no other, on peril of ejection, with consequent loss of the crop which he has raised on his little allotment. He is still in a position of virtual slavery, and it is a matter which can excite no surprise, that, after emancipation, those who had means to purchase parcels of ground should prefer to leave the estates, and either cultivate for themselves or be free to give their labour to whom they pleased, upon their own terms, and in a way which would secure for themselves and their families a greater independence.”

Again the same writer says—

“I still think that the tenure system of Trinidad, though more liberal than that of Barbados and some other islands, has had much to do with the dislike of



“the negro to perform estate work. It is true that  
 “the Trinidad planter exacts no rent from the labourer  
 “on his estate, and supplies him with medical attend-  
 “ance, but the labourer in return is compelled to work  
 “for the estate alone, and for five cents a day less  
 “than the current rate of wages. It may be urged,  
 “and with truth, that house-rent and medical attend-  
 “ance are worth more than five cents a day, but for  
 “these privileges the labourer is required to give up  
 “his independence ; and I do not think it natural  
 “that even the negro should of his own free choice  
 “prefer the exchange.”

The question hardly requires to be argued. It is sufficient, to demonstrate the absurdity of the system, to state that the planters have persevered for the last twenty-five years in maintaining the same tenure in Jamaica, British Guiana, and Trinidad, where land is cheap and abundant, as that which prevails in Barbados, where it is very dear, and where there is not an acre undisposed of.

“In one of the articles criticising my views as  
 “to the effect of the tenure of land on the labour  
 “question, it was said, ‘I would just ask what Lord  
 “Brougham, or any other large landed proprietor in  
 “England, would say if he were told that he ought to  
 “grant his labourers leases of their holdings for five  
 “years. Why, it would in every way create such an  
 “*imperium in imperio* on every estate, that it could not  
 “possibly go on either in England or in the West-  
 “India Islands.” There is an obvious answer to this.  
 If England contained, in addition to its present

territory, five or ten times the quantity of unoccupied fertile land, the present tenancy system could no more be maintained here than in America. The poor Irishman who goes to Canada will not remain a labourer. He obtains land almost immediately, and becomes a proprietor; and where land is cheap and abundant the West-Indian tenure cannot be maintained. Its obvious tendency is to drive the labourers from sugar cultivation to remote places where they can get land of their own."

It is true that high rents are charged in Barbados, while as a general rule the allotments are given gratuitously in the other colonies. This, however far from being a mitigation, is an aggravation of the evil. The mixing up of the questions of rent and labour contrary to the advice of successive Secretaries of State, and of every enlightened inquirer, has produced the worst results. I can, however, better illustrate my views on this subject by stating what I would do myself if I were the proprietor of a sugar estate, than in any other way. I would devote one-fourth or one-third, or even a larger proportion if necessary, of the cane land on the estate to the labourers. I would give them a good tenure, for instance, leases renewable for ever, with a right to buy at such number of years' purchase as might be agreed upon. I would make it the interest of the labourers to buy or occupy land near my cane lands, instead of at a distance; and I would trust to the admitted sagacity of the Creole to cultivate that product which would pay him best. I would have a labour market at my door, and I would have the spare time of my labour-

ers employed in growing a product which must come for manufacture to my works. Even if the result should be that all my land was rented or sold at remunerative prices, I would have ample profit by my manufactory. Such, however, in my opinion, would not be the result. The large proprietor would still be the principal cultivator of the land, and the small one would combine, as he does in Barbados, labour on the estates with labour on his own land in growing the cane. In Barbados alone, so far as my knowledge extends, the labourers on the estates cultivate the sugar cane, and this is one of the reasons why the Barbados labourers cannot be attracted elsewhere. In Barbados the labourer is dependent on the proprietor, for the manufacture of his little crop of canes, while the proprietor is dependent on him for labour when it is required. This mutual dependence has had the best results. In no other colony does it exist to any extent, if at all. It is admitted that the most profitable employment of labour in the tropics is the cultivation of the sugar cane, and yet labour does not seek the most profitable employment. The obvious reason is, that the proprietors have, by maintaining a vicious tenure, or perhaps I should rather say one wholly unsuited to countries where land is abundant and cheap, driven the labourers to places where they cannot employ themselves at cane cultivation owing to the want of means for manufacturing their crops. We have thus the strange anomaly presented to us of labourers in Jamaica, at a distance from sugar estates, complaining of want of employ-

ment, while in other parts of the same island the employers are crying out for want of labour. I know that many will affirm that I am too sanguine, that my views are visionary, that even a liberal tenure would not induce the Creoles to be labourers. But I have found those views concurred in by too many who have had opportunities of judging of the character of the Creoles to be induced to change them, and especially without a fair trial. At all events, it is by the means suggested, and by those alone, that sugar cultivation can be carried on by the Creoles. I have little hope that any West-Indian proprietor will give a fair trial to the proposed system. It is, however, worthy of the attention of those friends of abolition who have faith in the African race. I am convinced, that until we prove to the world that emancipation will not necessarily lead to the abandonment of sugar and cotton cultivation by free labour, all our efforts to induce slave proprietors to emancipate will be vain. But if we could prove this we should only have to prove further, that slave labour is much dearer than free. I need not occupy much of your time with the discussion of this point. I have been assured by planters in Louisiana that slave labour is very expensive. In Cuba it is at present enormously high. I have gone most carefully into calculations on this subject, and have no doubt in my own mind as to the immense difference in cost. Mr. Olmsted, a late American writer, with much practical experience, has demonstrated that slave labour is much higher than the

free labour of the northern States of the Union, which is probably the highest free agricultural labour in the world. Much has been said of the prosperity of Barbados, being owing to the abundance of labour. My own opinion is, that in none of the colonies has labour been so economized as in Barbados.

I have a variety of statistics on the subject obtained in Louisiana and Cuba, and in the British colonies, but I consider the important point sufficiently established that free labour is much cheaper than slave, and that in the sugar producing slave countries Louisiana maintains its ground owing first, to protection in the home market, but secondly, and chiefly, to the great economy of labour in cultivation, combined with skill in the manufacture, while Cuba obtains immense returns from the land, much greater than any of the British colonies, except Mauritius, which is said to give an average of nearly 5000 lbs. per acre, and sometimes as high as 8000 lbs. The Barbados average for a term of years has not, I should think, exceeded 2500 lbs. per acre reaped, and as the greater portion of the cane land only gives a crop every second year, the average of the 55,000 acres supposed to be in cane cultivation, would be much less.

In discussing this question, the productiveness of the land has been too much overlooked. It is, consequently, most difficult to obtain information as to the extent of land from which a given quantity of sugar has been obtained.

The writers who have furnished statistics of the cost of producing sugar in Cuba, have invariably

omitted to state the number of acres reaped, without which information it is most difficult to institute a fair comparison between the actual cost of labour in different countries.\* I have, in my letter to Mr. Tappan, stated the cost of producing sugar in Barbados, and although my figures have been criticised, I am prepared to defend them in all essential points. But it is not essential to the validity of my argument, whether the value of an estate in Barbados, producing 200 hhds. of sugar, is 30,000*l.* or 20,000*l.*, or whether the cost of labour is one cent the 100 lbs., or one cent and a half. I willingly submit both my figures and my views to the test of any criticism to which those who differ from me may choose to subject them. I have given you the result of an honest and impartial inquiry into the causes of the withdrawal of Creole labour from cane cultivation, and I have little doubt that you will agree with me that we have no cause to have even the shadow of a doubt as to the entire success of the great measure of emancipation. I have much pleasure in moving the resolution which has been entrusted to me.

\* I should except Consul-General Crawford, who, in his dispatch of Jan. 28, 1848, to Viscount Palmerston, states the average crop of Cuba in boxes per caballeria. Estimating by the acre, his statement would give 4848 lbs. as the first crop, 3633 lbs. average of first ten years, and 2424 lbs. average of second ten years; adding, "Consequently new lands are constantly being brought into cultivation, and new estates being formed."

I have added a note with regard to the cost of the labour employed in producing sugar in different countries, which may be found interesting.

### ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE COST OF SLAVE AND FREE LABOUR.

I am so well aware of the difficulty of making a satisfactory estimate of the cost of the labour employed in the cultivation and manufacture of sugar, that I submit one with hesitation. I venture to hope that if my calculations should be considered worthy of criticism, I shall be furnished with more reliable statistics than those on which they are based, and to which I shall refer. I propose to estimate the cost of the slave-labour employed in the production of sugar in Cuba and in Louisiana, and to compare it with the cost of free labour in Barbados and Trinidad, two colonies which are placed in wholly different circumstances. In Barbados the land is all occupied, and is very dear, while labour is abundant. In Trinidad labour is said to be so scarce, that cultivation is carried on chiefly by immigrants, many of whom, however, are of the African race. There is in that island a rich virgin soil, which admits of ratooning for a long series of years; while in Barbados, on far the greater portion of the cane-land, crops can only be obtained once in two years, and nearly one half that land must be annually planted. In Cuba the cane land, like that of Trinidad, is chiefly rich virgin soil, which admits of ratooning for many years. In Louisiana the land can be ratooned for two years, but owing to the occurrence of frosts in that country, the planters are compelled generally to reap their crops prematurely, and often at considerable loss. I have, in every case, rejected from my calculations what is termed in Barbados the offal crop, or the molasses, rum, and provisions. I could not obtain reliable statistics on the subject, and I have therefore thought it advisable to exclude them in every case. The value of the offal crop would of course go in reduction of the cost of labour in each country, but would probably not alter the proportion between them. With these preliminary remarks I shall state the cost of labour in each country, commencing with Cuba. I estimate the cost of slave-labour in that Island at 3 cents per lb., on the authority of a statistical work published in 1852 at the Havanna, entitled "Manual de la Isla de Cuba." It gives very precise information as to the number of slaves employed, and the product of their labour.

The entire number of slaves on sugar plantations at that time was 120,000, of which 70 percent., or 84,000, were effective labourers. The total quantity of sugar produced was 22,690,460 arrobas of  $25\frac{7}{16}$  lbs. each, or an average to each slave of 4810 lbs. of sugar. At 3 cents. the lb., this would give 144·30 dollars as the annual cost of each slave. Slaves in Cuba are said by Mr. Dana, author of "To Cuba and Back," to be worth upwards of 1000 dollars each, having reference to gangs of all ages and of both sexes. This is in accordance with the information which I myself received a few months ago in Havanna, and I am satisfied that the cost of food and clothing is from 40 to 50 dollars a-head. Food alone was variously estimated to me at 3 dollars, at 4 dollars, and at 3 to 4 dollars a month. At  $3\frac{1}{2}$  dollars it would be 42 dollars a-year, and clothing and medical attendance is from 5 to 8 dollars. The interest on the cost cannot be calculated, considering the duration of life under 10 per cent., which would be 100 dollars a-year. I may observe, that the average of the production of the effective slaves is given at 270 arrobas, or 6868 lbs., and on 17 of the most important estates as high as 8903 lbs. If allowance be made for the non-effectives on the 17 important estates, on the same scale as that given for the whole, the average product would be 6231 lbs. for each slave, which, at  $2\frac{3}{10}$  cents per lb., would be 143·31 dollars. If, therefore, I can rely upon the official statistics of Cuba, which seem to have been carefully prepared, and upon the most reliable information that I have been able to procure as to the value of the slaves and the cost of their maintenance, the average cost of labour in Cuba is 3 cents per lb. of sugar, and the average on the best estates is  $2\frac{3}{10}$  per lb. Mr. Dana gives the product on a particular estate at 4705 for each labourer, and the Hon. C. A. Murray 5185 lbs. These, it will be observed, are about the average stated in the Manual.

I have ascertained the cost of labour in Louisiana from "Hunt's Magazine." In the number of April 1854 there is a comparison between the production of the years 1845 and 1853. In the former year the product was 204,913,000 lbs., and the slaves 65,340, or 3136 lbs. per head, which, at 4 cents. per lb., would be 125·44 dol-



lars. In 1853 the crop was 495,156,000, and the labourers 125,970, or 3930 lbs. each, which, at  $3\frac{2}{10}$  cents, would be 125·56 dollars. I may observe that the Louisiana sugar crop of 1853 was a very large one. In 1854 the sugar crop was 385,726,000 lbs.; in 1855, 254,569,000; in 1857, 307,666,700; in 1856 it was under a hundred millions of pounds. I am inclined to think that the cause of this falling off must have been the withdrawal of labour from sugar to cotton cultivation. I prefer, therefore, taking years in which the number of slaves employed is stated precisely in a commercial periodical of authority. I certainly do not over-estimate the cost of each slave in Louisiana at 125 dollars per annum. In "Hunt's Magazine" for November 1854 will be found a statement of the expenses of a sugar estate in detail. The cost of the plantation, with 100 slaves—70 effective—is stated to have been 160,000 dollars, and the pork, corn, clothing, and medical attendance, is 3207 dollars, or 32 dollars each. The slaves must have cost at least 1000 dollars each. In Barbados the average sugar crop may fairly be estimated at 68,000,000 lbs. Making a proportionate reduction for the women and children, I estimate the number of first-class labourers at 22,000, which would give 3090 lbs. to each, and at  $1\frac{4}{10}$  cents per lb. this would give 43·26 dollars to each labourer. It is estimated that the Barbados labourers do not work on the estates more than 200 days on the average, and as all are estimated as first-class, 22 cents a day may be considered a fair allowance for wages. This would give 44 dollars, or a fraction over my estimate. Again, a hogshead of sugar weighing 1700 lbs. nett, at  $1\frac{4}{10}$  cents the lb. would give 23·80 dollars as the cost of labour. This is equal to £4.19s. 2d., and 5l. is generally admitted as a fair average of the cost of labour per hogshead in Barbados.

In Trinidad I estimate the present average sugar crop to be 60,000,000 lbs. Owing to the annual influx of immigrants, and consequent increase of production, it is impossible to pretend to much accuracy, but I think it will be admitted that this is as fair an estimate as can be made. On the authority of the correspondent of the "New-York Times," who states that he has obtained his information from the immigration agent of that

colony, I estimate the number of labourers at 17,000, which would give 3529 lbs. to each labourer. This, at 2 cents the lb., would be 70.58 dols. If each labourer in Trinidad should work on the average 220 days, and should earn 32 cents, he would receive 70.40 dols. While I am persuaded that labour in Trinidad does not cost over 2 cents the lb. I do not feel the same confidence in the numbers. I am inclined to think that the number of labourers is under estimated, and the daily average earnings of 32 cents exaggerated. The main point, however, is the cost of the free labour, and it will scarcely be alleged that more than 1,200,000 dollars, which is 2 cents the lb., is paid for labour on the sugar estates of Trinidad. The result, then, is, that labour in Cuba is 3 cents per lb., or  $2\frac{3}{10}$  on the choicest estates. In Louisiana it is about  $3\frac{2}{10}$  cents; in Barbados  $1\frac{4}{10}$  cents; and in Trinidad 2 cents. In Barbados the produce per head is lower than in Trinidad, and in both much lower than in Cuba, but a fair allowance must be made for the number of working days. I have no satisfactory statistics within my reach as to the product from each acre in Cuba, but I have little doubt that the large returns obtained on the seventeen estates specially referred to were owing to the great productiveness of the new land. The above calculations may appear startling, having reference to the alleged large profits in Cuba and Louisiana, and to the ruling prices of sugar. I must again remind the reader, that in each country the same labourer produces a considerable quantity of rum or molasses, or both. I must further point out that the value of land in Cuba is only 1500 dollars the caballeria, which is 33 acres, or less than 50 dollars the acre. In Barbados the cost of labour is probably about one-third of the cost of sugar, allowing a fair return for the capital invested in land. In Cuba the labour, reckoning, as I have of course done, the interest on the capital invested in the slaves, is doubtless much more than half the entire cost. It is further to be observed, that many of the Cuban estates are unprofitable. My estimates are averages, and the estates where great returns are made are exceptions. I have only to add, in conclusion, that having no object but to arrive at truth, I shall be glad to receive any information which may throw further light on the subject.

F. H.

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