

AN ADDRESS

ON

WEST INDIA EMANCIPATION.

DELIVERED ON THE

FIRST OF AUGUST, 1838,

BEFORE THE

UNION ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA,

BY JAMES R. WILLSON, D. D.

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“LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE.”

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## WEST INDIA EMANCIPATION.

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“REJOICE with them that do rejoice; and weep with them that weep.” To day there are in the British West India Islands five hundred thousand freemen, who were yesterday slaves.\* They were nominally apprenticed freemen, but really slaves. To day they are in the full enjoyment of all the rights which belong to the free. At the hour of twelve, last night, their chains fell off, and their hearts are now overflowing with joyful emotions, awakened by the great deliverance that God hath wrought for them. After the hour of midnight, this morning, the stars shone on those islands with more brilliancy, and the moon with greater splendor; their sun rose and shone to-day with a brighter effulgence; the gales among their lemon and orange groves breathe a sweeter fragrance; the tints of the flowers that adorn their fields and gardens, have put on more softness and beauty, and the feathered songsters pour forth floods of sweeter melody from the groves. The emancipated thousands oft raise their free arms toward heaven in joyful wonder that they can now call them their own, and exert their energies according to their own volitions, and for their own interest. In transports of gladness, parents embrace their children, husbands their wives, and children their parents as their own, from whom they cannot now be separated by the will of a cruel master. “God hath done great things for them, whereof they are glad,” and he commands us to rejoice with them. The spirit of slavery must have blighted the charitable sympathies of the heart that refuses to sympathize in their joys.

We are also called to weep with them that weep. In our own land, more than two millions of our race are still groaning in cruel, relentless, and almost hopeless bondage. They hear only the sound of the lash, and the clanking of their chains. The Southern winds that bear on their wings the songs of the free, are at the same time charged with the mournful wailings of the wretched slave. The sorrows of the bondmen are deepened, and their

\*It appears by recent intelligence that the whole of the slaves in the British colonies, about 800,000, are emancipated.

woes embittered, when they contrast the hopelessness of their oppression with the present joy, and cheering future prospects of their brethren who have tasted the sweets of freedom. He has not the heart of a Christian, nor the kindness of a man, who does not weep with them, sympathizing in their sorrows. We will "rejoice with them that do rejoice—and weep with them that weep."

These sympathetic affections were implanted in our nature, and their exercise commanded of God, not that they may waste themselves in transient emotions, without exciting to efforts for the relief of those children of sorrow who are called to weeping. The highly important event that has this day occurred in the islands situated near the borders of our slaveholding states, is designed of God, who rules in the kingdom of providence, to encourage and quicken the efforts of every friend of human liberty and the rights of man, "to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burden, to break every yoke, and to set free the oppressed." The great work of God's providence which we are met to celebrate, demonstrates that he will not suffer enlightened, benevolent, philanthropic efforts to be unavailing. Heaven has answered the arguing of the panders of oppression, rebuked their sophistry, and silenced their clamorous opposition to the cause of liberty, by matters of fact which cannot be concealed, misinterpreted or refuted.

We must be indulged in a brief historical sketch of the doings of Providence which have prepared the way for the events of this day, and led to their consummation. In the month of August 1833, the British parliament passed an act declaring that, after the first of August 1834, the name of slavery should cease in all the colonies of Great Britain—that those who had been slaves should from that time be called freemen—that the 800,000 slaves of the West India Islands should be apprenticed to their former masters—that they should labor for them forty-five hours each week—and that the remainder of the time should be their own, to labor for themselves. This state of things was to continue until the first of August 1838, when the non-prædials were to enjoy all the rights of freemen, while the prædials were to continue in their apprenticeship until the first of August 1840, when they also were to become to all intents free. The non-prædials embraced all those (classes of) slaves, who did not labor in the fields, or the house servants, and those who labor in mechanical employments. The prædials were that class that in our slaveholding states are known by the name of field slaves. The former class, it was thought, would be prepared for the enjoyment and proper use of freedom two years sooner than the latter. By the act, the planter was deprived of the power to inflict corporeal

punishment on his apprentice for any offence ; and was enjoined to continue the same allowances of food as during slavery. As an indemnity to the planters for the loss of the labor of their slaves, the sum of twenty millions of pound sterling, or about one hundred millions of dollars, was granted to them. The British nation, by this prodigious sum, redeemed the 800,000 slaves in their colonies.

All the islands except Antigua, Bermuda, and the little island of Barbadoes, accepted the terms, and the slaves became apprentices on the first of August, 1834. We shall shortly give an account of the manner in which the apprenticeship scheme wrought. At present your attention is invited to the island of Antigua. It is one of the windward, or easterly islands ; about eighteen miles long, and fifteen broad. The coasts are mountainous ; the interior low and undulating. The whole population is about 37,000, of whom 30,000 were slaves, 2,500 whites, the remainder free colored people. Less than one fourteenth of the whole population are whites. The great staple of the island is sugar, of which the average yearly crop is 15,000 hogsheads. Instead of accepting the apprenticeship system, the planters of Antigua emancipated all their slaves on the first of August, 1834. The colored population were not in that island better prepared for immediate and total emancipation, than in the other islands, nor than the slaves of the United States are ; the physical force, as fourteen to one, was in their hands ; and yet their masters encountered what they deemed the hazard of setting them all free in one hour. Now, if that act, under such circumstances, succeeded well, far better than the gradual emancipation by the apprenticeship ; if no evil resulted either to the slaves, or the masters ; and if the prosperity, peace and comfort of the whole population was promoted by that deed of immediate emancipation, then it follows, as an inference irresistible, that it is not only safe, but for the best interest of all, that the slaves in the slaveholding states and territories of the Union should be at once and altogether set free. And all this is fully substantiated.

1. The slaves in Antigua passed instantly from the state of slavery to that of freedom, without tumult or disorder ; and their deportment during four years since their emancipation has been more orderly than when they were slaves. The governor of the island bears ample testimony to this. The Christmas holidays, during the continuance of slavery, had been marked with riot drunkenness, and every species of immorality and disorder. The safety of property, and personal security were preserved by a strong military force. But not so after the act of emancipation. "An intelligent gentleman," (say Thome and Kimball,) "informed us that the negroes, while slaves, used to spend, du-

ring the Christmas holidays, the extra money which they got during the year. Now they save it to buy small tracts of land for their own cultivation." "The governor informed us that the police returns did not report a single case of arrest during the holidays. He said that he had been well acquainted with the country districts of England, he had also travelled extensively in Europe, yet he never had found such a peaceable, law-abiding people as those of Antigua."\* It has been plead, many believe, and a majority fear, that were the slaves of the Southern states set free at once, they would become a riotous, disorderly, and tumultuous rabble, whose outbreakings nothing could restrain, and that the effect must be the entire ruin and disorganization of society. It seems to be in vain to reason with these groundless alarms, that liberty is not the parent of disorder—that where rational liberty is enjoyed, she is the friend, the patroness, and safeguard of peace, harmony, and good order—that it is a libel on human liberty to charge it with being the author of evil. If liberty be such an enemy to society, then let her be banished from the earth, and let the world be governed by a stern despotism. For this, no one will contend. But still, the liberty of the slave, it is said, would be most mischievous. We test this matter by Antigua. All has been orderly, no tumult, no breaking out of the disorderly passions, to disturb the repose of social life. On the contrary, the turbulent passions have been calmed, and all society wears a more quiet, orderly, and peaceful aspect. Is there any reason, why the same cause in the Southern states should not produce the same effect? Would emancipation in Virginia, render those turbulent, whom it made orderly in Antigua? The truth is, when you make a slave a freeman, you place before him a host of motives to good conduct, which he never saw before, and which, had he seen, he would have disregarded. Very few of all the motives which operate on men for the preservation of good order, can operate on a slave. What has occurred as to this matter in Antigua, is according to the stable laws of nature; it is not a strange phenomenon, but an event occurring in the natural order of cause and effect.

2. It is plead that, were the slaves of the South emancipated, they would inundate the free states with idle, disorderly, and profligate paupers. This silly fear operates with more force in Pennsylvania than in those states that are distant from the slave-holding territories. By the operation of various causes, slaves, in many cases, do become free in the slave states. And the con-

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 10. This most interesting and well substantiated work should be read by every man.

dition of the few free colored people, among many slaves, is rendered miserable by cruel laws, and public sentiment still more cruel. They are in constant danger of being reduced again to slavery, and it is exceedingly difficult for them to procure employment. It is the policy of slavemasters to render the condition of colored freemen as wretched as possible. Of course, as soon as a slave becomes free, it is natural that he should seek to better his condition by migrating to the North. Slaves, too, will often make their escape from their masters, and many of these fugitives from oppression are never recovered by their masters. On these accounts, it is admitted that Pennsylvania does suffer some inconvenience from that class of people. It is true these living witnesses of the degrading effects of slavery ought to awaken, in all, a greater detestation of the evil, and excite to efforts for its reformation. But the spirit of slavery has blunted the moral sensibilities of the nation, dried up the fountains of sympathetic benevolence, and led many to reason more from interest than from duty. Were it true that many of the colored population, when set free, would prefer to reside among us, and that some inconvenience would arise from that quarter, it would furnish no valid reason why the duty of restoring to them their natural right to liberty, should not be performed. All the states, in adopting the Federal Constitution, in which the principle of slavery is embodied, participate in the sin of holding the African race in bondage. And were some present trouble to result from the immediate removal of the evil, all should be willing to submit to it, for the glory of God, for the welfare of two millions of colored people, and for the good of the commonwealth.

But there would be no such evil as is feared in this quarter. On the contrary, we have ample testimony in the history of the last four years in Antigua, that the inconveniences at present experienced would be removed. Dr. Daniel, an attorney for several estates on the island, says of the attachment of the colored race to the place of their birth and residence: "Love of home is remarkable in the negroes. It is a passion with them. On one of the estates, of which I am an attorney, a part of the laborers were hired from other proprietors; they had been for a great many years living on the estate, and they became so strongly attached to it that they all continued to work on it after emancipation, and they still remain on the same property. The negroes are loath to leave their homes, and they very seldom do so, unless forced away by ill treatment. H. Armstrong, Esq., S. Barnard, Esq., Jas. Howell, Esq., S. Bourne, Esq., and many other gentlemen of very reputable character, bear witness to the same facts. All affirmed "that the negroes were peculiarly

sensible to the influence of local attachments. One gentleman observed that it was a very common saying with them, '*Me nebbber leave my bornin ground,*' i. e., birth-place.\* A very few of them, soon after their emancipation, went to other islands, but the greater part shortly returned. In this matter there was no restraint imposed on them, but what arose out of circumstances, and their strong local attachments. They were left at perfect liberty to migrate to Trinidad, Hayti, or any other island. But they preferred their native place. Why should they not? The African race are as little inclined to rove as any other people. While the Irish, Germans, and others, emigrate to America, many thousands every year, the great mass of the free colored people in the United States are exceedingly averse to remove to the colony on the coast of Liberia, though they are transported free of expense, the promise of land made them, and every possible inducement held out. The corrupt popular sentiment, that first wrongs, and then despises the African race, and the oppressive operation of unequal laws, impose on them great disabilities. They know and acutely feel them all, yet they prefer their humble lot in the land of their nativity to all the golden visions presented to them in Liberia. Why? Because they are not a roving people. As they remained in Antigua, after emancipation, so they would, on the same principles, in the Southern states, were they all set free to-day. There would, evidently, be fewer emigrations of colored people to the Northern states than there are now, were they all free. But, after all, why this dread of a free colored population among the abettors of slavery? Slaveholders do not complain of the African race living among them in a state of slavery; and the advocates of slavery among us in the free states do not appear to think the Southern planters afflicted by two millions of colored people living among them. This whole outcry originates in a deep contempt and hatred of two millions of men; and a fear that, if set free, they will participate in that religious, intellectual, and moral culture that elevates humanity. Did they even emigrate as free-men to the Northern states, neither they nor we would suffer by it; but they will not.

3. It is assumed that, were the slaves all emancipated at once, they would be idle and dissolute paupers, that could not be induced to labor for wages; that they have been so long accustomed to fear and scourges, no other means could make them industrious. All this show of reasoning, or rather all this bold assertion, is contrary to the principles of our nature, and in the face of

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 46.

all fact, even before the Antigua immediate emancipation. Are the free Americans less industrious than the oppressed people of Ireland—than the serfs of Russia and Poland? What is it that in all ages and nations has paralysed the arm of industry—that has propagated an idle and lazy race? It is oppression. The rewards of industry, where men are allowed to eat the fruits of their own labors, are among the powerful motives which, according to the will of the Creator, excite men to active and vigorous efforts. When these are taken away, no other means can supply their place, as all history bears witness. Hence, the truth, so often uttered by slaveholders themselves, that one free-man, in our free states, performs as much labor as two slaves. The slaves are human beings, and why should not like causes produce like effects? Those who will not hear reasoning will perhaps, listen to matters of fact. After they were emancipated, in Antigua, they repaired in the morning to the fields, where they had been accustomed to labor for their masters without wages; there they stood, hoe in hand, waiting for the appearance of the overseers. Those who had been slave-drivers, soon found they were no more than agents. They asked the negroes why they had not commenced work as usual? They replied, “*that they were waiting to know what wages would be offered them.*” It was the first time they had ever had an opportunity of asking that question. True to human nature, they now are ready to make a bargain. What an interesting moment in their lives! Who can think of it without emotion? Wages were offered, they accepted, the contract was concluded; and then, for the first time, they cheerfully began to labor for themselves, for their wives, and for their children. Would they be likely to work less cheerfully under such a change of circumstances? There is a superabundance of testimony that they perform much more labor than when slaves. “The governor stated that he was assured by planters from every quarter of the island, that the negroes were very industriously disposed.” Mr. Ralph Highinbotham, the United States’ Consul, states, “That they, as a body, are *more* industrious than when slaves, for the obvious reason that they *are working for themselves.*” The Hon. N. Nugent says, “The most general apprehension prior to emancipation was, that the negroes would not work after they were made free; that they would be indolent, buy small parcels of land, and *squat* on them, to the neglect of the sugar cultivation. Time, however, has proved there was no foundation for this apprehension. The estates were never in better order than they are at present. If you are interrogated, on your return home concerning the cultivation of Antigua, you can say that

every thing depends on the *weather*. If we have no rain, the crops must *inevitably fail*. *But we can always depend on the laborers*. On account of the stimulus to industry, which wages afford, there is far less feigned sickness than there was during slavery. When slaves, the negroes were glad to find any excuse for deserting their labor, and they were incessantly feigning sickness. 'The sick house was thronged with real and pretended invalids. After '34, it was wholly deserted. The negroes would not go near it; and, in truth, I have lately used it for a stable." Mr. Watkins testifies, that "his people have become much more industrious since they were emancipated; that he has been induced to extend the sugar cultivation over a number of acres more than have ever been cultivated before." Mr. Cranston: "My estate was never in a finer state of cultivation than it is now, though I employ *fewer* laborers than during slavery. I have occasionally used job, or task work, and with great success. When I give out a job, it is usually accomplished in about half the time that it would have required by giving the customary wages; the people will do as much in one week, at job work, as they will in two, working for a shilling a day. I have known them when they had a job to do, turn out before three o'clock in the morning, and work by moon-light."\* Such are the declarations of men of the largest property and highest standing, who had possessed the present free men as slaves, and who had been most vehemently opposed to emancipation. With great discernment, and their hearts being turned and directed in the providence of God, for great and important purposes, they preferred immediate to gradual emancipation. He must be worse than ignorant and stupid, who will continue to affirm that the immediate emancipation of all the slaves in the United States would convert them, from being industrious laborers, into idle, lazy, and vagrant nuisances.

4. The free colored people of Antigua are respectful in their deportment to the white population. Freedom has not made them insolent. The whites possess the learning, the refinement of manners, the intelligence, and the property; and these always command respect from the ruder and poorer classes. Besides, it has become the interest of the planters to be more respectful in their deportment towards their laborers, and this produces courtesy among the colored people. Dr. Daniel declares, "that the gift of unrestricted freedom, though so suddenly bestowed, has not made the negroes more insolent than they were while slaves, but has rendered them *less so*." James Howell, Esq.: "A short time after emancipation, the negroes showed some

\* Thome and Kimball, pp. 40, 41.

disposition to assume airs and affect a degree of independence ; but this soon disappeared, and they are now respectful and civil. There has been a mutual improvement in this particular. The planters treat the laborers more like fellow men, and this leads the latter to be respectful in their turn. Mr. Bourne: "The negroes are decidedly less insolent now, than they were during slavery." Mr. Watkins: "The negroes are now all *cap in hand*; as they know that it is for their interest to be respectful to their masters."\* There is not the least ground for the outcry made by the pro-slavery newspapers and people, that the free colored people among ourselves are insolent. What is regarded as impudence in a negro, would be esteemed quite civil in a white person of the same rank and appearance. Many people would have all the African race to forget that they are men and freemen. Nothing less would please such oppressors in heart, than that every colored man, whatever his worth, should do homage as a slave to the white man, however base and contemptible. This unholy sentiment would soon be dismissed from the minds of white men, as it has been in Antigua, were all the slaves made freemen. Did white men among us treat the African race more respectfully, which they soon would do were there no slaves in the land, they would in turn deserve, and would experience, more civility from people of color. Insolence, petulance, and ambition, are probably less characteristic of the African race, than of any other people.

5. The emancipated slaves in Antigua are grateful for their liberty. I remember to have heard it plead, more than thirty years ago, in debate in Jefferson College on the subject of immediate emancipation, that though the slaves have all a right to their freedom, and though in granting it they would receive no more than justice, yet they would regard it as a boon and be grateful for it as a favor ; and that this sentiment of gratitude would have a favorable influence on their whole social character. This is a just view of the character of man, and of the motives by which he is influenced to action. The gratitude of the colored people of Antigua, is, however, much more to God than to their masters. One of them said, "The liberty we have received from the king, we can never sufficiently thank God for. Whenever we think of it, our hearts go out in gratitude to God." Whenever the subject of their emancipation is mentioned among them, they are ready to break out in such expressions of grateful emotion, as "Tank de good Lord." "Bless de Saviour." "Praise de blessed Saviour." There were reasons why they should not be

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 47.

so grateful to their masters as they would otherwise have been. They knew that had it not been for the act of the British parliament, their masters would have retained them in bondage. Perhaps, too, they were shrewd enough to perceive that in preferring immediate emancipation to the apprenticeship system, the planters were not moved by a regard to the good of their slaves. "Yet a *grateful and contented* spirit certainly characterizes the negroes of Antigua. They do not lightly esteem what they have got, and murmur because they have no more. They do not complain of small wages, and strike for higher. They do not grumble about their simple food and their coarse clothes, and flaunt about saying *freemen ought to live better*. It was the common saying among them, as we were told by the missionaries, '*well, we must be satisfied and content.*'"\* This humble, thankful, and contented disposition, is one of the best guarantees that their deportment in society will be orderly, that they will see well to their own affairs, that they will improve in their characters, and that their comforts will increase.

6. In the term of four years, their intellectual, moral, and religious character has greatly improved. The abettors and apologists of slavery discourse more plausibly, and with more show of a regard to righteousness, when they plead that the interests of the slaves would be harmed by immediate emancipation, than they do on any other topic. It is true, indeed, that all this plea is based on this Jesuitical maxim—"The end sanctifies the means," *i. e.* "that we may do evil that good may come, whose damnation is just." Nearly all colonization men, and clerical apologists for slavery, commence their addresses by declaring that slavery is a great evil, a foul blot on the national character, and contrary to the rights of man. They then go on to plead, with heated zeal, that the welfare of the country, the good of the masters, and above all, the interest of the slaves, require that it shall be continued, whether for ten or a thousand years they do not tell us. It is a pretty bold undertaking, especially for a protestant clergyman and doctor of divinity, to attempt to convince a Christian people that it is the safer course for the commonwealth to continue in sin—and the best, nay the only way to promote the interest of two millions of men, is to deprive them unjustly of their rights. Now, all this pretence of argument, divested of all rhetorical flourish, and "oppositions of science, falsely so called," is simply to prove that it is best to go on in sin. One would be ready to think that a proposition so monstrous, how-

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 47.

ever disguised, would be regarded with detestation by every decent man, not to say by every one who professes to be a Christian. But it really seems that it betrays into error thousands of the simple. The providence of God, in the island of Antigua, has furnished facts on these topics, that must, wherever known, disabuse the mind of every honest man.

The intellectual improvement of the people of Antigua, has been promoted by their emancipation.

Let us again refer to the immortal work of Thome and Kimball.\* The following is an extract from the reply of Mr. Charles Thwaites to queries on education. "1. What has been your business for some years past in Antigua? A superintendent of schools, and catechist to the negroes. 2. How long have you been engaged in this business? Twenty-four years. The first four years engaged gratuitously, ten years employed by the Church Missionary Society, and since by the Wesleyan Missionary Society. 3. How many schools have you under your charge? Eight, with 1850 scholars; day schools seventeen, with 1250 scholars; night schools on twenty-six estates, 396 scholars. The total number of scholars under instruction, is about 3,500. 4. Are the scholars principally the children who were emancipated in August, 1834? Yes, except the children in St. Johns, who were free before. 5. Are the teachers negroes, colored, or white? One white, four colored, and sixteen black. 6. How many of the teachers were slaves prior to the first of August, 1834? Thirteen."

"Education has become very extensive *since* emancipation. There are probably not less than *six thousand* children who now enjoy daily instruction." "We learned that the Bible was the principal school-book taught in all the schools throughout the island." "Before emancipation," as was declared by Mr. Newby, the oldest Moravian missionary on the island, and a venerable man, "such was the opposition among the planters, it was impossible to teach the slaves excepting by night, and secretly. The children were not allowed to attend day school after they were six years old. Now the schools are open to all, at all times. The governor, the magistrates, the planters, and the parents, all vie with each other in the promotion of education. Before the passage of the act of emancipation, the planters had begun to relax the rigor of their opposition; being driven from it by the prevalence of abolition doctrines in England." They never carried their opposition to so enormous and infamous lengths, as is done in many of our Southern states.

\* Thome and Kimball, pp. 31, 32.

The Legislature of Antigua never forbid by statute the education of children; much less did they make it criminal, and visit it with heavy pains and penalties. If the cause of learning is so greatly promoted in Antigua, where the restraints were not so great as in the slaveholding states of this country, how much more would the colored race advance in intellectual improvement were all the slaves of the United States emancipated. The Southern Legislatures, like the Antigua planters, would then be as zealous in the promotion of their education, as they now are to keep them in a state of savage ignorance. As no one will or can possibly question this, after the example of Antigua, how can any friend to human learning, any professor of religion, who desires all to have access to the Holy Scriptures, plead for the continuance of slavery one hour?

7. That slavery is adverse to the diffusion of religious knowledge among those who are held in bondage, is almost a self-evident proposition. An enslaved and oppressed population are generally ignorant, and of course irreligious and immoral. Set them free, it is said, and they become lazy, idle, and disorderly, and the consequence of all this will be greater ignorance and irreligion. That they would become more ignorant than the great body of the slaves in the Southern states are, is nearly impossible; and as they are now in a state of pagan darkness, they cannot become more destitute of the knowledge and power of the true religion than they are at present. If emancipation will not increase their means of instruction in the way of salvation by Christ Jesus, they must for ever remain without God, and without hope in the world. The attention given to religious ordinances by the free colored people in the United States, is incomparably greater than it is among the slaves.

8. Events in Antigua are every day bearing testimony to the salutary influence of immediate emancipation on the religious condition of the people. In a letter dated Dec. 2, 1834, but four months after emancipation, and addressed to the missionary board in England, the Rev. B. Harvey thus speaks of the Moravian missions:—"With respect to our people, I believe I may say, that in all our places here they attend the meetings of the church more numerously than ever, and that many are now in frequent attendance who *could very seldom appear among us during slavery*. The same statements substantially were made to us by Mr. H.—showing that instead of any falling off, the attendance was still on the increase." "The whole number of blacks receiving religious instruction from the Christian bodies, making allowance for the proportion of white and colored, included in the three thousand Wesleyans, is about twenty-two

thousand—leaving a population of eight thousand negroes in Antigua, who are unsupplied with religious instruction.” “The negroes are uncommonly punctual and regular in their attendance upon divine worship, particularly on the Sabbath. They always show a readiness to contribute to the support of the gospel.”\* Activity has been given to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures among the people of Antigua. The attention of the white people, their late masters, who, during slavery, had, like the Roman Pontiff, considered the circulation of the Bible among their slaves as the greatest enemy of their “domestic institutions,” and had discouraged it, as soon as emancipation was effected, was directed to the importance of using means for the moral improvement of the great mass of their citizens; and they knew that the Holy Scriptures was the best means to accomplish this. They contributed largely to the funds of the Bible Society; and encouraged the introduction of the Bible into the common schools. Those who had been eager to shut out all the rays of religious knowledge from the minds of their slaves, became zealous in their efforts to furnish the means of spiritual illumination. In one word, the slaves who sat in darkness, as soon as they were emancipated, saw a great light springing up. This is the brightest feature in the whole aspect of West India emancipation. God, who in his providential benignity delivered them from the thralldom of slavery, and broke the yoke of man’s oppression, has furnished them with the means which he uses to bring men out of spiritual bondage into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. All this gives promise that Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God, and that great princes shall arise out of the African race.

We have more need of emancipation, to accomplish these beneficent objects,—immediate and total emancipation,—than they had in the West Indies.

Within less than three years after the deed of emancipation, between two-thirds and three-fourths of the whole colored population are found to be under the means of religious instruction. Will any one presume to affirm that there is as large a proportion of slaves in our slaveholding states that enjoy these means of coming to a knowledge of the way of salvation? Does any one really believe, or hope that there will be such an effort among slave masters to instruct their bondmen in the way of life, while slavery continues?

That the moral deportment of the Antiguans improves with the increase of their facilities to attain religious knowledge is con-

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 25.

firmed by the amplest testimony. Crimes of every description are less frequent. "The abolition of slavery, gave the death-blow to many open vices, over-grown as they had become. Immediate emancipation, instead of lifting the floodgates of profligacy, was the only power strong enough to shut them down! It restored the proper restraints on vice, and supplied the proper incentives to virtue. The controllers of moral action, self respect, attachment to the law, and veneration for God, which slavery annihilated, freedom has resuscitated, and now they stand round about the emancipated with flaming sword, deterring from evil, and with cheering voice exhorting to good. It is explicitly affirmed that the grosser forms of immorality, which in every country attend upon slavery, have, in Antigua, either shrunk into concealment or become extinct."\* Can any thing be more natural than all this? We all know, where slavery prevails, there vice in its most odious and disgusting forms presents an unblushing front, both among masters and slaves. While the cause exists, the baleful effects, with unerring certainty, will follow. Restore the proper incentives to moral deportment, and furnish the means of knowing the truth, and the law of God, by his appointed means of grace, and beneficent results will follow. "Every thing shall live, whithersoever the waters of the river of life come." These beautiful waters never irrigate, reclaim and fertilize those lands that slavery renders barren and desolate wastes, until this insuperable barrier is removed.

9. The female character is improved, and elevated in Antigua by immediate emancipation. Slavery and barbarism degrade—they always, and inevitably degrade the character of woman. Look at the condition of the colored female, among American slaves, and how utterly sunk in the very lowest depths of degradation! Humanity blushes and hides its face in shame. This evil never can be reformed, while slavery continues; for it conceals or takes away the incentives to modesty, delicacy, and every thing that purifies, exalts, and adorns the character of woman. Many people seem to wish this female degradation to continue. They cry out that if the slaves are immediately emancipated, it will result in the amalgamation of the two races by inter-marriages. What! do they fear that should colored females become free women, instead of slaves, they would forthwith become so beautiful, graceful, and attractive by their charms that their sons would prefer them for wives, before the young white females? Must they keep the slaves degraded lest they should either force or seduce white men to select them as

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 27.

partners for life? In truth there never was a more idle and senseless clamor, than the cry of amalgamation raised to render the doctrine of immediate emancipation odious. No emancipationist ever plead for it; no one ever was known to act on it in pactice. But they are desirous that more than a million of females of the African race in our country shall have access to the means of intellectual refinement, and of polished manners. They believe that the Creator has endowed them with faculties rendering them susceptible of improvement, and thereby indicating his will, that they should not be kept in a state of physical, intellectual, moral, and religious debasement. But what has immediate emancipation done for them in Antigua? It has been the occasion of doing every thing for them by making them free; opening the portals of knowledge to them, by furnishing them with the means of grace, and promoting marriage. All that has been stated in the discussion of the preceding topics, applies to them in common with the males. But in relation to marriage, there is something peculiarly emphatic in the amelioration of their character and condition. "All persons, of all professions, testify to the fact that *marriages* are rapidly increasing. In truth there was scarcely any such thing as marriage before the abolition of slavery. Promiscuous intercourse of the sexes was almost universal." In the report of the Antigua branch association of the Society for advancing the Christian faith in the British West Indies, (for 1836,) the following statements are made: "The number of marriages in the six parishes of the island in the year 1835, the first entire year of freedom was 476, all of which, excepting about fifty, were between persons formerly slaves. The total number of marriages solemnized in the church during the nine years ending December 31, 1832, was 157; in 1833, the last entire year of slavery, it was sixty-one. Thus it appears that the whole number of marriage durings *ten years* previous to emancipation (by far the most favorable ten years) was but half as great as the number for a single year following emancipation."

The governor, in one of our earliest interviews with him, said: "The great crime of this island, as indeed of all the West India colonies, has been licentiousness, but we are certainly fast improving in this particular."\* Before the deed of emancipation, mothers often sold their daughters to those who could give the highest price for them. The buyer was generally a manager or overseer. Now the mother is desirous to obtain a marriage settlement for her daughters. The planters in the island were,

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 26.

with few exceptions, unmarried men, and led very licentious lives. Men of large families frequently kept two or three colored mistresses, with the most open and unblushing effrontery. By far the largest part of the population of the island are of illegitimate birth. This abominable profligacy of manners is the native offspring of slavery, and is amalgamation of the most odious and detestable character. A very great reformation has been effected in four years, as the fruit of immediate emancipation. The condition of females, and indeed of society must be debased, wherever the divine institution of marriage is either disregarded or lightly esteemed. All know that this is the case among the slaves in the United States. In the course of an ordinary life, one colored man will often be the husband (if it be not an abuse of the name to apply it in this manner) of three or four wives, and one woman acknowledged as the wife of as many husbands. In truth, the word marriage is not much used among perhaps a majority of the slaves; they speak of "*taking-up*" with one another, instead of entering into the marriage relation, as they know it is in the power of the master to break up the connexion, as soon as he chooses to sell either of the parties. The prodigious increase of the mulattoes, quadroons, &c., in the Southern states, is unquestionable evidence that the debasement of morals by this vice is little less than it was in Antigua. How shall this debasing and most detestable immorality be reformed, and the female, as well as the male, be rescued from degradation and infamy? We have the answer in the emancipation of the Antigua slaves. Formerly, people of all colors "proclaimed their sin as Sodom;" now it is either in a great measure concealed, or abandoned. Messrs. Thome and Kimball assure us, that there is the fairest prospect of the young females now growing up under the culture of literature and religion in Antigua, and being virtuous and respectable. What are we to think of those ministers of the gospel, doctors of divinity, and other professors of religion, who, in the face of all these facts, plead for the continuance of slavery for generations to come, perhaps for ever? Were there no obstacle to the improvement of the slaves preparatory to emancipation, this one would prove insurmountable. The female character must continue to be debased while slavery continues; and while the female character is dishonored, the ignorance and wretchedness of the slave population cannot be reformed.

The consequence of these salutary reforms in Antigua, has been to multiply the comforts of the emancipated. They are industrious and economical; their food is better, and their clothes and cottages are cleaner and neater. Instead of spending their

time on the Sabbath, and their hours of relaxation, in low and vulgar amusements, and in drinking intemperately, they expend their earnings in procuring for themselves the comforts of life, and enjoy their leisure hours with families that they can call their own, and in whom they feel an increased and before unknown interest. Whatever attaches any one to home, increases his means of happiness; for if the comforts of social life are not found at home, they are few indeed. No one could have anticipated so many and such happy results from the deed of emancipation, as experience has demonstrated that it produces. Hardly any evil existed, which it has not already greatly mitigated, and hardly any thing to be desired, which it has not improved. It may be confidently affirmed, that not one evil has resulted from this great and beneficent change, which, in one moment transformed thirty thousand slaves into freemen; which elevated them from the rank of chattels into that of men and citizens, and which restored them to themselves. The lamp of freedom has kindled the lights of learning, and the darkness of many generations has fled away. More than all, "the sun of righteousness has arisen on them with healing under his wings."

If the slaves have been so greatly benefitted, it has not been to the disadvantage of their masters. They too have been much the gainers, and have in nothing suffered loss.

1. There have been no attempts on the part of the emancipated to avenge past injuries. They have all been forgotten in the transporting joys of emancipation. We are often told that were all our slaves at once emancipated, they would break forth in transports of rage, and deluge the land with blood, and fill it with carnage. Many simple people seem really to believe that all this would happen, however contrary it is to the known laws of human nature, and the constant operation of moral causes. Antigua furnishes a mass of facts to allay all these idle fears, and silence all these senseless alarms. "For some time previous to the first of August, forebodings of disaster lowered over the island. The day was fixed! Thirty thousand degraded human beings were to be brought forth from the dungeon of slavery, and turned loose on the community! and this was to be done 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye!' How did they conduct themselves? What was their deportment? Were these gloomy apprehensions and dreadful anticipations realized? Not in the least; all was directly the reverse. On the evening which preceded the day of their emancipation, many of the candidates for liberty assembled in a spacious church, which was filled to overflowing. They spent the time in songs of joyful expectation, and in prayer, till the hour of midnight approached, when the missionaries pro-

posed that all, as soon as the clock of the cathedral would begin to strike the hour of twelve, should kneel, and receive from God the boon of freedom in silence. Accordingly, as the loud bell tolled its first note, the immense assembly fell prostrate on their knees. All was silence, save the quivering, half-stifled breath of the struggling spirit. The slow notes of the clock fell upon the multitude; peal on peal rolled over the prostrate throng in tones of angels' voices, thrilling among the desolate chords and weary heart-strings. Scarce had the clock sounded its last note, when the lightning flashed vividly around, the loud peal of thunder roared along the sky—God's pillar of fire, and trump of jubilee! A moment of profoundest silence passed—then came the *burst*; they broke forth in prayer; they shouted, they sung 'glory,' 'alleluia;' they clapped their hands, leaped up, fell down, clasped each other in their free arms, cried, laughed, and went to and fro, tossing up their unfettered hands; but high above the whole, there was a mighty sound which ever and anon swelled up—it was the utterings, in broken negro dialect, of gratitude to God.

“After this gush of excitement had spent itself, the congregation became calm, the religious exercises were resumed, and the remainder of the night was occupied in singing and prayer, in reading the Bible, and in addresses from the missionaries, explaining the nature of the freedom just received, and exhorting the freed people to be industrious, steady, and obedient to the laws, and to show themselves in all things worthy of the high boon that God had conferred on them.”\* How very far different was all this from spending that night memorable to Antigua, in plots and conspiracies. The first of August was Friday, and a release from labor was proclaimed until the Monday following. Saturday, all was quiet—no revelling, nothing but natural and joyful congratulations upon the wondrous deliverance that had been wrought, in their redemption from bondage. The Sabbath came, and the churches all over the island were crowded. The planters united with the colored freemen, who the Sabbath preceding had been their slaves, and with cheerful countenances saluted them as friends.

These emotions of joy and gratitude cannot dwell in the same bosoms with the malignant and vengeful passions. The island to this moment continues tranquil. There have been no rebellions, no conspiracies for four years, no striking for higher wages, nor any occurrence to awaken between the white population and the negroes, hostile feelings. The physical power is

\* Thome and Kimball.

in the hands of the colored people, for they are about fourteen times as numerous as the whites. Can there be any possibility of danger in the United States, where the negroes are but one sixth of the whole population, or even in the slaveholding states, where the whites are nearly double the number of the slaves? In Antigua, they have the power, but not the will to harm the planters; would they have the will in our own country, where they could not have the power? The law, were they free, would have more power over them than the whip of the slave-driver, now that they are slaves. Gratitude, their own interest, the power of the white population, and the influence of public sentiment and law, would secure the country against all danger from two and a half millions of colored people, were they even disposed to avenge themselves on their former masters for past wrongs. But the example of Antigua demonstrates that the desire of vengeance, if it exists, is extinguished by emancipation.

2. The planters of Antigua have not only been living without molestation from the emancipated, but they are delivered from the fear of danger. Wherever there are many slaves, their masters live in constant terror. Their conscience admonishes them that they daily wrong the slave. They feel in themselves, that were they the slaves and the colored people their masters—that were they treated as they treat their slaves, it would beget enmity. They know that, in such a change of relations, nothing but force could hold them in bondage. Hence the dread of insurrection that haunts them. Mr. John Randolph, more than twenty years ago, said, on the floor of Congress, "That every rustling of the leaf by the wind, heard in the night, made the mothers of Virginia press their babes closer to their bosoms." During the last war, even in Kentucky, the slaveholders slept in bed-rooms furnished with swords, and fire-arms charged. They do so now in many parts of the slaveholding states. Armed men patrol by night the estates of the planters. The same terrors harrassed the planters of Antigua, before the deed of abolition. A merchant who had resided more than thirty years in Antigua, writes: "There is no sense of personal danger, arising from insurrections or conspiracies among the blacks. Serious apprehensions of this nature were formerly entertained, but they gradually died away *during the first year of freedom.*"\* When the planters were asked whether they apprehended any danger, it excited a smile of surprise that such a question should be asked. What a change in the comfort of social life! Before

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 38.

emancipation, they were in habitual terror. H. Armstrong, Esq., said: "That during slavery, he used frequently to lie sleepless on his bed, thinking about his dangerous situation—a lone white person far away from help, and surrounded by hundreds of savage slaves; and he had spent hours thus, in devising plans of self-defence in case the house should be attacked by the negroes. If they come, he would say to himself, and break down the door, and fill my bed-room, what shall I do? It will be useless to fire at them; my only hope is to frighten the superstitious fellows by covering myself with a white sheet, and rushing into the midst of them, crying 'ghost, ghost.' Now, Mr. A. sleeps in quietness, without conjuring up a ghost, to guard at his bed side." One gentleman in St. John's affirms, "that *now* the security of property is much greater in Antigua than in England."\* During the christmas holidays, while slavery existed, the whole island was under military law. At present, the military are not ever called out. Had the Southern planters of the United States no other object, a regard to their own peace of mind—to rid themselves from the terrors that embitter their lives, should influence them to emancipate immediately all their slaves. That they are haunted by such terrors, they are not generally willing to confess, since the commencement of the abolition controversy. But their appeals to public sympathy against abolitionists reveal the secret. "These incendiaries will stir up the slaves to cut all our throats; they are scattering firebrands to kindle the flames of a servile war!" All this is so far from being true, that there has been no insurrection since the Southampton insurrection, which happened before the existence of an abolition society was known at the South. How is this to be accounted for? Previously to that time scarcely a year passed without not only the bruit, but the actual formation and partial execution of plans for the recovery of liberty, by destroying the lives of the slave-masters. Even the hope of emancipation, though faint, preserves all now in a state of peace and quietness. The fear of evil resulting from performing an act of duty, from ceasing to commit sin, is an impeachment of the law and government of God. Many, who admit that slavery is a violation of the law of Heaven, a gross outrage on the rights with which God has endowed man, and a blot on the national escutcheon, affirm withal that the reformation of the evil would be attended with the most disastrous consequences. What is this, but to maintain that it is better to violate than to obey the law of God? That ignorant and profane men should utter such preposterous opinions, does not excite asto-

\*Thome and Kimball, p. 38, 39.

nishment, but when they proceed from the lips of professors of the Christian religion, it is just ground of surprise. By the facts that have occurred in Antigua, God in his providence has refuted the impious slander on his moral government.

3. The property of the planters has improved in value since the emancipation of the slaves. There are two reasons for this; the freemen do more work now than when they were slaves, and they are more provident and careful. If the slave works by the job, he is stimulated to exertion by the reward; and when he works by the day, it is his interest to work well and be careful, as these are the means of securing reputation and employment. So abolitionists have always reasoned. But now, we can appeal to facts. "Dr. Nugent stated that the expenses of cultivation were greatly diminished." "A merchant of St. John's informed us that real estate had increased in value at least fifty per cent. He mentioned the fact, that an estate which, previous to emancipation, could not be sold for six hundred pounds current, had lately brought two thousand pounds current."\* This improvement is advancing every year, as the planters are introducing the plough and other labor-saving machinery. It is not too much to say that, were all the facts in relation to property, safety, and comfort, alone, as they exist in Antigua, placed before the minds of all the slave-masters in our country, and duly weighed, they would immediately emancipate all their slaves. I had, a few days ago, a conversation with a Mississippi planter, in a steam-boat on the North river. His first question was: "In what state are we?" It seemed fair to infer, from a question of this kind, that he was a very ignorant man; and he was so, as respected all that related to the Northern states. But he was soon found to be well informed respecting the Southern states. Do Southern people feel very strongly that the free states are a part of their country? He was desirous to know what the profits of the New York farmers were on such farms as we saw in Dutchess county. When told that a farmer, possessing one hundred and fifty or two hundred acres, would support his family in great comfort, and in one year clear from five hundred to upwards of one thousand dollars, he said that one farmer in the neighborhood of Natchez would clear annually ten thousand dollars. He was told, this would be by the labor of two or three hundred people. No, said he, thirty laborers would clear that amount to a planter. One hand will make ten bales of cotton on good ground in a favorable season, and it will sell for fifty dollars; so that we make fifteen thousand dollars out of the labor of thirty

\* Thome and Kimball, pp. 44—49.

people. He was reminded that there must be some children and superannuated people. Oh yes, said he, we must keep about fifty people, to have thirty productive laborers. These do not cost us more than two thousand dollars a year, and our family expenditures are not annually more than three thousand dollars,—at least, a family can live very well, and not spend more. I said, there is something in all this which I cannot understand. It appears that, in one of the West India islands, Antigua, where the slaves were all set free nearly four years ago, the property of the planters has increased in value, and they cultivate their plantations at less expense than they did when their laborers were all slaves. He inquired what wages the working people received? When he heard the amount, he said if he could hire laborers at twenty-five cents a day, he would prefer it to slave-labor. But how is that? Twenty-five cents a day is more than you say the expense of supporting one slave is in the same time. Very true, he replied, but there is an item which you do not recollect. We have been paying, until within about a year, one thousand six hundred dollars for a good "*work hand*."\* We have, for many years, been paying twenty-five per cent. interest. Multitudes of laborers are bought on borrowed money. The interest of the purchase money amounts to four hundred dollars. It is very common, he added, to hire a man from his owner for three hundred and fifty dollars a year. When a negro dies, it is dead capital, and another sixteen hundred dollars must be paid to supply his place; I should greatly prefer hiring men at a quarter of a dollar a day to my present way of cultivating my estate. At that moment it seemed to have suggested itself to him that he was in conversation with a Northern man, who, probably, thought he had no right to a man after he had paid his sixteen hundred dollars, and that it is not honest to give a man in food and clothing less than forty dollars, when his labor is worth five hundred. "Sir," said he, "they [meaning the slaves] are in a better condition than if they were free." The last proposition of this slave-master was no more consistent with reason, than his first, that the planter in Mississippi cleared ten thousand dollars a year, was consistent with accuracy. But though, as was evident from his whole manner, he had been educated in all the habits of slaveholders, yet half an hour's conversation on the Antigua emancipation, of which he seemed to have had no previous knowledge, convinced him that slave-labor is less profitable than free. Why are slave masters and proslavery men determined to remain ignorant on these topics, and

\* Slave is a word which many Southerners endeavor to avoid using.

to extinguish all the lights of discussion? Men love sin, and sin delights in darkness.

4. The best evidence of the improved condition of the planters of Antigua is, that they are all now delighted with the change, and are zealous abolitionists. Before the act of emancipation passed in the British parliament, they were unanimous and vehement in their opposition to any interference with "their domestic institution." They had paid their money for their slaves, and they were of course their own property; they had been secured in their title by the British government, who had maintained an armed force on the island to suppress slave insurrection; slavery was an ancient institution which had descended to them from their ancestors; and without slave labor, sugar could not be cultivated. All who opposed them in the possession of property that had been legalized, were disorganizers, fools, fanatics and incendiaries. The slaves when freed would be infuriate wild beasts of prey, who would soon glut themselves with the blood of all their former masters. No lecturer on abolition would have dared to set foot on Antigua, while the subject was under discussion in parliament; his life would have been the forfeit. Now the masters rejoice in the change as much as the slaves, and perhaps more. The superintendent of police, in his report to the governor, dated St. John's, Sept. 4th, 1836, and of course more than two years after the deed of immediate emancipation, among many other items of similar import makes this remarkable declaration: "Every friend to this country, and to the liberties of the world, must view with satisfaction the gradual improvement in the character and behavior of this class of the community, under the constant operation of the local enactments." Again, in a report of January 4th, 1837: "Sir, it is with feelings of the most lively gratification that I report for your notice the quiet and peaceable termination of the Christmas vacation, and the last year, which were concluded without a single serious violation of the governing laws."

"I cannot refrain from cordially congratulating your excellency on the regular and steady behavior maintained by all ranks of society, at this particular period of the year.

"Not one species of crime which can be considered of a heinous nature, has yet been discovered; and I proudly venture to declare my opinion, that in no part of his majesty's dominions has a population of thirty thousand conducted themselves with more strict propriety, at this annual festivity, or been more peaceably obedient to the laws of their country." Mr. Hickham, the author of this report, has been thirty-eight years a resident in the island; and most of that time engaged directly in the manage-

ment of estates.\* He is of course thoroughly acquainted with the condition of society.

“Not long before emancipation, Mr. Scotland was imprisoned for befriending the negroes; after emancipation, Mr. Corbett was imprisoned for *wronging* them.”† Dr. Daniell says: “We all resisted violently the measure of abolition; we regarded it as an outrageous interference with our rights, with our property.” Mr. I. Howell,—“Before emancipation there was the bitterest opposition to it among the planters. But after freedom came, they were all delighted with the change. I felt strong opposition myself, being exceedingly unwilling to give up my *power of command*. But I shall never forget how differently I felt when freedom took place. I arose from my bed on the first of August, exclaiming with joy, I am free, I am free; *I was the greatest slave on the estate*, but now I am free.”‡ In view of such testimony, and after more than two years of experience, can any one doubt that the condition of the masters was greatly improved—their estates, their safety, their peace of mind—all their earthly comforts? How should the property and the comfort of the Antiguans be so greatly improved by a measure which would mar these in the United States! The relation of the tyrant, despot, and cruel taskmaster, to the oppressed, has always been painful to the oppressor. It is an unnatural relation, contrary to the law of society impressed on the constitution of man by the Creator. All sin leads to misery in the very nature of things; for God’s law, of which sin is a violation, is adapted in the wisdom and goodness of the Supreme Legislator to the promotion of human happiness. “The ways of wisdom are pleasantness, and all her paths peace.” Slaveholders make themselves miserable while they wrong and degrade their slaves by holding them, not by right, but by lawless violence, in bondage. A more natural state of society has been introduced in Antigua, and it has removed a mass of misery, and diffused comfort through all society. It would do so here.

5. The moral character of the planters is in the way of improvement. Those fierce and tyrannical traits that distinguish the slaveholder and the slave-driver, in his intercourse with his slaves, have suddenly disappeared. The very fact that the laboring class are now freemen begets respect. They are now *men*, and no longer mere *things* that may with impunity be trodden down and trampled upon. It has become the interest of the planter to treat with courtesy those who labor on his estate as hired

\* Thome and Kimball, pp. 44, 45.

† Ibid. p. 51.

‡ Ibid. p. 49.

servants, who may leave him at any time on a month's notice. It is an evidence of this, that on the Sabbath following the Friday of emancipation, the whites attended church with the colored people, and spoke to them in a friendly manner, and, in one word, they sought by all judicious means to conciliate their favor. The improvement of the emancipated in their moral character and deportment puts the vices of the opulent to the blush.

It has been already stated that few of the planters, before emancipation, were married men. They lived in the most shameful libertinism. This vice, among the whites, begins to be abashed. In a short time as large a proportion of the colored females will be wives, as in civilized societies elsewhere. The improving virtue of the emancipated tends to the reform of the planters. Illegitimacy, in less than three years after emancipation, had become a dishonor. This is one of the deep stains of slavery in Antigua, that will require a generation to wash out. "His excellency, the governor, intimated as much, by his repeated assurances for himself and his compeers of the first circles, that there was no such feeling in the island as prejudice against *color*. The reasons, for excluding the colored people from their society, he said, were wholly different from that. It was chiefly because of their *illegitimacy*." Now, the floodgate of libertinism, by which all other vices flow in upon society, is in a great measure let down; and a healthier state of morals begins to appear. The interest which the planters take in the establishment of schools for the cultivation of the minds of the children, in the circulation of the Bible among all classes, and in temperance associations, are visibly improving the state of morals among the higher classes. All this would follow immediate emancipation in the United States. That there is much open, very gross, and loathsome immorality in the slaveholding states every one knows. The sons of slaveholders are educated, if education it may be called, in idleness; this leads to intemperance, gaming, and other gross vices. Fathers set before their sons examples of gross and shameless licentiousness. The children of the masters know that they have brothers and sisters, the children of their fathers, among the slaves. How blasting and withering must be the effect of all this on all the moral sensibilities of the tender mind! Nothing could tend to brutalize it more directly. The son sees his father sell and tear from the arms of their distracted mothers his own flesh and blood, literally, and commit them to the manacles and the lash of the merciless slave dealer, that they may be driven away, like cattle in the drove, to a distant market! Can a son see his father do all this, without a frown from society around him, and not be

hardened and debased? Is he not likely to grow up a shameless libertine and relentless tyrant? Let facts in the South bear witness. Even members of the protestant churches are known to be guilty of these gross and most abominable vices, without being subjected to the censures of the church, or even the admonitions of the clergy. "O shame, where is thy blush!" One is filled with horror at the recital of such enormities. And yet, does any one believe that a reformation of these monstrous immoralities will ever be effected as long as slavery continues? Can any one point, on the whole page of history, to a people that have practised such slavery, and yet have been free from these pollutions? There is but one remedy—abolish slavery, as in Antigua, at one blow, and thus "lay the axe to the root of the tree."

It is thus that the God of heaven has kindled a beacon fire in the West Indies, that sheds its light on the dark abodes of slavery, "on the places full of the habitations of horrid cruelty"—a light that has attracted the gaze of the nations—a light that the oppressor and all his auxiliaries cannot extinguish. They may riot in mob violence; they may burn the halls of liberty; they may close the door on the right of petition; they may threaten to restrain and demolish the press; and they may even drink the blood of the slain; but they cannot extinguish the fires of liberty kindled by the hand of the Almighty, in the isles of the sea. They will continue to burn and reveal the iniquity of the oppressor; to shine, and make known the best means to accomplish the reformation of the evils wrought by oppression.

In the West Indies, we have also had a scheme of gradual emancipation weighed in the balances and found wanting. All the other West India islands, save Antigua, accepted the apprenticeship system, and put it into operation on the first of August, 1834. Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the other British islands that came at that time under the act of August, 1833, contained slaves of the African race amounting to near eight hundred thousand. All these, though nominally set free on the first of August, 1834, were yet obliged by the act to work for their former masters forty-five hours a week, under the name of apprentices, until the first of August, 1840, except the non-prædials, or those who were not field slaves, who amounted to more than forty thousand. All of that class were to become to all intents free men on this day. The prædials or field apprentices, were allowed to work for themselves the remaining hours of the week, which were computed to amount to one day out of six. The overseers were not allowed to use the *whip*. All offences were to be reported to special magistrates, who were appointed by the crown, not of the former slaveholders, in the colonies. It was thought that if delin-

quencies should come under the cognizance of the ordinary local magistrates, or of persons appointed from among the slave masters, they might be influenced by an undue bias, in favor of the planters and against the apprentices. The special magistrates were armed with power to inflict corporeal punishment on those who were proved to be offenders. They had jurisdiction also over the masters, to prevent and punish cruelties in the treatment of the apprentices. And any one of the apprentices, who had the means and was desirous of purchasing, at any time, entire freedom, had a right to do so, at a price set by appraisers, appointed for that special object. The master must sell him his time at the price fixed.

Here was a scheme of gradual emancipation that seemed to be well guarded. It was not what the abolitionists of Great Britain sought. They petitioned for immediate and total emancipation; but still much was gained; and it was a system which intelligent men might adopt, especially such as were not deeply impressed with the greatness of the evil of sinning against God, by violently withholding their inalienable rights from his creatures. The system seemed to be protected by many efficient safeguards from working great harm to the apprentices. But still it was essentially defective. It was perhaps impossible at the time to devise any scheme of removing *gradually* the yoke of bondage from the neck, that could give greater promise of working well. In so far as it adopted the doctrine of gradual emancipation, it accords with the plans of the colonization society; and the evils with which it was found to be chargeable may be fairly plead against colonization. It was not altogether unproductive of good, though pregnant with many evils. 1. The condition of both the apprentices and masters was in some degree improved. The Archdeacon of Barbadoes, the Rev. Edward Elliot, informed Messrs. Thome and Kimball, "that the number of churches and clergymen had increased since emancipation; religious meetings were more fully attended, and the instructions given had manifestly a greater influence. Increased attention was paid to *education* also. Before emancipation, the planters opposed education, and, as far as possible, prevented the teachers from coming to the estates. Now, they encourage it in many instances, and where they do not directly encourage, they make no opposition. He said that the number of marriages had very much increased since the abolition of slavery."\* "Mr. C., an American merchant, spoke of the advantages of emancipation with much feeling." "Emancipation is as great a blessing to the master as to

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 54.

the slave. Why, it was emancipation to me. I assure you the first of August brought a great, *great* relief to me. I felt myself, for the first time, a freeman on that day. You cannot imagine the responsibilities and anxieties which were swept away with the extinction of slavery.”\*

The first of August in Barbadoes and all the other islands, as it had done in Antigua, passed off without any riot or tumult of any kind; and from that day to this there have been no insurrectionary movements in any of the British islands. Indeed, there have been more mobs and riots in the city of New York within the last four years, than among all the apprentices in the British West Indies. Slavery and the slavery spirit are the parents of insurrections and tumultuary movements. Feeling the manacles slipping off their hands, the apprentices waited in patience and quietness the completion of the deliverance. Hence, there have been fewer thefts, more respect for law and trustworthiness among them, and much great security for person and property, than there were before emancipation.

Thus we see that a little infusion of freedom diminishes the bitterness of the cup of slavery. It is worthy of grateful observation, that God remarkably countenances even very small acts of duty in rulers and in nations. Ahab humbled himself, and God gave to his house a reprieve. The posterity of Jehu reigned over the ten tribes of Israel to the fourth generation, for their zeal against idolatry, though it was but temporary. The people of Nineveh, humbled themselves at the preaching of Jonah, and the Lord delayed long the execution of the threatened judgment. He that gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones shall in no wise lose his reward. Though no more than one sixth part of all the apprentices had a right to, was restored to them, yet God, in his most benign and gracious providence, made them feel that the whole condition of society among all ranks was greatly ameliorated. Wives could not be sold from their husbands, nor children wrested from the arms of their parents. The constabulary force in the islands was diminished, and society wore a more benign and peaceful aspect.

2. The greater part of the disabilities of slavery still remained. This must of course have been so, as five sixths of the labor of the apprentices went to the master and not to the lawful owner. And there were remaining disabilities, in their foreign as well as in their domestic relations. As for example, the Island of Jamaica was not permitted to trade with Hayti. That island, after passing through violent revolutionary wars, in the latter

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 55.

part of the revolution in France, to whom it belonged, became independent, and of course its slaves, freemen, about thirty-seven years ago. The African race have possessed St. Domingo during all this period, and have governed it in their own way. Its exports are large. And though Jamaica is in its neighborhood, and greatly needs many of the Haytien exports, yet all intercourse between the two islands was strictly prohibited. No British vessel from Jamaica might touch at any port in Hayti, and no vessel from St. Domingo, or that had entered any of its ports, might be entered in those of Jamaica. St. Domingo, because its people were free, was an infected island, and all intercourse with it forbidden by law. These restrictions continued as long as the apprenticeship lasted. The freedom of the apprentices was nominal, not real. They must have no opportunity of making their escape to Hayti, or of knowing the state of things among the freemen there. As soon, however, as the Legislature of Jamaica, resolved to anticipate the act of Parliament, and set her 360,000 apprentices free this day, her leading men began to devise measures for the removal of all restrictions on trade with St. Domingo; and about the same time the Queen's cabinet were taking measures to open the ports for trade with that island. They no longer dread the air of a free island as infectious, dangerous and pestilential. The moral, physical, intellectual and commercial decrepitude always produced by slavery, continued still to curse the islands, as long as the apprenticeship continued.

3. The harsh treatment of the laborers, on the part of masters, was mitigated, not reformed. The slaves had been informed of the discussions in England, thought they had a right to be free, and hoped for complete emancipation; at all this the masters were irritated. Indeed, the American merchant before alluded to in Barbadoes, was of opinion that had the bill been thrown out of Parliament, and no relief granted them, there would have been a general insurrection in the island. The planters, generally, deprecated every interference in all the colonies, and when the apprenticeship act took effect, it was forced upon them; and in many instances, perhaps in a majority, they exercised the power remaining with a harshness that greatly irritated the apprentices. Mothers were not as formerly allowed to nurse their children until they were three months old; but they were forced out to labor in the fields, when their infants were not more than a week old. No one can conceive the cruelties practised by slave-masters on females, soon after their confinement. A few years ago, at Ballston Springs, a planter received a letter from his overseer, stating that a very valuable female slave had

died a few days before, in consequence of having been exposed to rain in the labors of the field too soon after confinement. He stated it to many gentlemen around him. He told us that she was a very valuable breeder—that he had ordered the overseer to be careful and not expose her unnecessarily until she was able with safety to handle the hoe—that his driver had disobeyed his orders, and proceeded to load him with as many curses as slaveholders usually do in such cases. Though this display of his cruel tender mercies was exceedingly disgusting and loathsome to all present, yet the party concerned seemed perfectly unaware that there was any thing harsh or indelicate in the affair. The sufferings of the poor woman did not move him, but the loss of a valuable breeder. While slavery continues, the slave master has the same motive to use him well, that a man has to treat his horse well; though it is strange that it appears to have far less power over him. That motive was almost wholly taken away from the master of the apprentice. If the child died for want of a mother's care, the planter suffered no loss; for it would be quite free before it would become able to labor. The time formerly allowed for the meals was shortened. The practice of allowing one slave to supply a gang with water for refreshment was abandoned; and the laborers were often compelled to work when faint with thirst. The usual scanty allowance of food was often diminished. Add to all this, that the apprentices were harassed with petty complaints to the special magistrates for small delinquencies in labor, for acts of neglect in the most trifling matters, and for some disrespectful word or look. "The complaints to the magistrate on the part of the planter, were very numerous at first, but they soon greatly diminished. They were of the most trivial and even ludicrous character. One of the magistrates says, the greater part of the cases that came before him, were from old women who could not get their coffee early enough in the morning! and for offences of equal importance." It was soon found that many of the special magistrates were inclined to favor the planters, for the same reason that some of the young clergy from the free states become friends of slavery as soon as they are settled in the South, because they are well fed at the tables of the masters. The apprentices said, as soon as a special magistrate had partaken of a sumptuous dinner, with a planter,—"*New massa now be poison.*" Frequently very severe punishments were awarded for small offences. In some instances the lash was not less sparingly applied at the sentence of the magistrate, than it had been at the caprice or passion of the overseer. The tread-mill—that dreadful instrument of torture, kindred to the wheel on which heretics were broken by the inquisition,

was in use as a mode of punishment. Females were forced to endure it sometimes to the instant of child birth. Some dropped down dead the moment they were relieved from its agonies. These punishments were inflicted not for high crimes and misdemeanors, but for mere delinquencies in accomplishing tasks, or some saucy word spoken to an overseer. "Still, slavery, thou art a bitter draught." The effect of these vexatious and cruel doings was to produce a very irritated and irascible state of feeling, both on the part of the apprentices and the planters. The former were told they were free, and hence did not bear so tamely the cruelty of their tormentors. The latter were incensed that the apprentices should presume to think, speak, or act as freemen—that they were not in every respect as abject in their submission, as they had been before emancipation; on the other hand, the apprentices, considering themselves as no longer slaves, bore with less patience harsh and cruel treatment, than they had formerly done. They had now rights acknowledged by law, whereas in slavery they had none—they, with most of their labor, were held in law to be the property of their masters. They were tenacious in maintaining the few rights guaranteed by the act of emancipation, and would not tamely submit when they were invaded. These mutual causes of irritation produced angry feelings, alienating the parties from each other. And should any disturbances arise from the entire emancipation of the apprentices, it must be ascribed to the mischievous effects of the scheme of gradual emancipation. The people of Barbadoes, Jamaica, and the other islands, would have all conducted themselves as peaceably as those of Antigua, had they all been set free on the 1st of August, 1834. The governor of Barbadoes said:—*"He thought the negroes in Barbadoes, and in the windward islands generally, were as well prepared for freedom, as the slaves of Antigua."*\*

4. The apprentices did not advance in qualifications for the enjoyment of freedom, under the operation of the apprenticeship system. They were subject to the same restraints, except the suffering of corporeal punishments at the caprice of their masters, as when they were held under the name of slaves. There was a great relief as to their personal sufferings, and their constant misery from the dread of the lash, but it was the mere removal of suffering. The great mass of them had no means of intellectual, moral or religious improvement. Had it not been for the delusion under which the public mind and the members of parliament labored, that it would neither be for the interest of

\* Thome and Kimball, p. 55.

the slaves, nor safe for the masters, to free them at once, they would probably have all been fully emancipated on the first of August, 1834. That delusion vanished, when the results of immediate emancipation in Antigua were made known. It was clearly perceived in Great Britain, that no advantage was gained in the improvement of the apprentices preparatory to their full enjoyment of liberty.

5. That this scheme of gradual emancipation was a failure appears most clearly from the results. The people of Great Britain having been fully awakened to a sense of the evil of slavery, and having paid one hundred million dollars for its extinction, kept their eye steadily on the colonies. They affirmed that the masters had violated the contract. Petitions were poured in upon Parliament from all quarters of the empire for the immediate termination of the apprenticeship. The British government do not and dare not treat petitions and set at nought popular sentiment, as is done by the American Congress. A bill was introduced by Lord Glenelg, for the better protection of the apprentices against the severity of the masters and the partiality of the special magistrates. The passage of this bill was made the pretext in the colonial legislatures for terminating the apprenticeship on the first of August, 1838, and granting entire emancipation. Acts to this effect were passed by the legislatures of Barbadoes, Demarara, Montserrat, St. Vincents, Tortola, Nevis, Dominica, St. Christophers, Tobago, and Jamaica, in which there are four hundred and ninety-three thousand eight hundred colored people. In all, the proportion of the negroes to the whites is as eighteen to one. Had they thought it more profitable to continue the apprenticeship, or had immediate emancipation been deemed unsafe, they would never have passed such acts. They had the example of Antigua before them, during the four years of the apprenticeship; they had examined the whole subject, and the result of all was a decision that immediate emancipation is preferable to gradual.

Measures have been adopted by the government of Great Britain to complete this noble work in the crown colonies, *i. e.* such as have no colonial legislatures. These are Berbice, Cape of Good Hope, Honduras, Mauritius, St. Lucia, and Trinidad. The whole number of slaves set free is eight hundred and thirty-one thousand one hundred and five. This is a solemn declaration of the most enlightened part of the British people, comprising nearly all the professors of religion, and respectable professional and literary men, of the British parliament, of slaveholders and of the colonial legislators, that immediate emancipation is altogether to be preferred to gradual. No question in political morality ever underwent a more severe examination. The best talent was en-

listed in the investigation; it was agitated by the press, in the pulpit, in popular assemblies and in private circles; to all this was added actual experiment. The decision has been in favor of immediate abolition. It is, and will be, and *must* be respected.

By the providence of God, and by the most enlightened public sentiment, every scheme of gradual emancipation has affixed to it the seal of condemnation—among others that of colonization. The act of apprenticeship, was in every respect better than the gradual emancipation of the American Colonization Society.

1. The advocates of the colonization scheme professedly plead for a continuance in sin. They are of late cautious of admitting at the South that slavery is a sin. But in the free states, they all do so. Public sentiment would not permit them to do otherwise. Had colonization not been regarded as a means of abolishing a great evil, no favor would ever have been shown it north of Mason's and Dixon's line. It is, they say, a sin. Even Professor Hodge says, "he as sincerely desires the extinction of slavery as any abolitionist;" for he considers it an evil. Yet every colonizationist maintains that the slaveholders not only may but ought to continue in the commission of this sin, till all the slaves can be transported to Liberia. It is evident that two and a half millions of people cannot be removed at once—and that many years must elapse before it can be effected. They therefore maintain that it is a *duty* to commit sin. The act of the British Parliament is not chargeable with this gross absurdity. The slaves were all declared to be freemen on the first of August, 1834. They were to be retained for six years in the condition of apprentices *for their own good*, as they were erroneously thought to be incapable of enjoying the rights of freemen.

2. The colonizationists press the Bible into the advocacy of sin. Professor Hodge maintains that slavery is sanctioned by the Holy Scriptures. They say that the whole spirit of Christianity is adverse to slavery as practised in the United States, and if left to its silent operation, without the impertinent arguments and discussions of abolitionists, it would in time extinguish the evil. How the spirit of Christianity will effect any object in society without being uttered, and reform any social evil without reproving it, is a mystery. It does not so reform intemperance, Pagan idolatry, and Sabbath violation, without open rebuke. But what is most preposterous, the colonizationist maintains that the Bible sanctions what the spirit of Christianity will abolish, *i. e.* the Bible, the foundation of Christianity, abolishes itself! The emancipation act was never chargeable with this impiety, it admitted that slavery is a sin, and professedly abolished it in a day,

without being reduced to the necessity of pleading Bible authority for its continuance.

3. The colonizationist professes to accomplish what he knows can never be effected. No sensible man now believes that all the colored people will ever be transported to Africa. As the annual increase of the African race within the United States is about eighty thousand, it would require one hundred and sixty-six years to colonize in Africa one year's increase, according to the rate at which for twenty-two years they have been colonized. It professes to mitigate the evils of slavery by colonization, whereas the direct tendency of all colonization measures is to aggravate the evil. They administer soporific doses to the conscience of the oppressor and multiply the advocates of sin. None of these things are chargeable on the gradual emancipation attempted in the West Indies. They professed no more than what there was a reasonable prospect of accomplishing. They did not aggravate the evils of oppression. The effect of that system, imperfect as it was, and badly as it worked, proved to be the death blow to slavery in four years. In twenty-two years colonization has done less than nothing for its destruction.

4. Colonization forcibly expatriates native Americans. This may seem to be too harsh an accusation against the Colonization Society, which professes to colonize those who are willing to become residents of Liberia. A few, and they are but few, slaves have been emancipated by slave-holders and transported to Africa. But on what terms were they set free? On condition they should submit to be colonized. A culprit walks into court to be tried, or to receive the sentence of death. He exercises his will in a volition at every step; but still he is forced. The choice is between walking and being forcibly *dragged*. So it is with those who are emancipated for colonization. Their free papers are, in some instances, not put into their hands, until they are on board the vessel that transports them to Africa. They are *forced* either to remain in bondage, or leave their native land. Were this choice given to Mr. Clay, the President of the Colonization Society, either to live the remainder of his life a slave to his negro Tom, or reside in London; no doubt he would be willing to repair to London. Yet he and all his friends would say he was forcibly expatriated. It is well known that the great body of the free colored people are most earnestly opposed to the colonization scheme. The slaves are so too; but some of them prefer expatriation to slavery. With this iniquity the apprenticeship was not chargeable. Yet with her means, it would be much easier for Great Britain to colonize at Sierra Leone, the eight hundred thousand Africans, who were

lately slaves in her colonies, than for the United States to convey two millions five hundred thousand of the same race to Liberia. Let us test this scheme of colonization by substituting the Irish, or Germans, in the place of the Africans. Its wickedness and absurdity would be perceived by the most ignorant without any reasoning. But the Africans are black ! True. And where is it found written in the Holy Scriptures, or revealed in the law of nature, that a *man* with a dark skin has fewer rights than a *man* with a white one ?

5. The Colonization Society throws obstacles in the way of furnishing the means of intellectual improvement to the free colored people. Its constant cry is, they can never rise in the scale of human worth in the United States. They are and must ever remain while here a degraded caste. They are careful to verify this, by excluding them from the schools, academies, and colleges.\* They who "*do such things*," are colonizationists. The professed object of the apprenticeship system, was the improvement of the Africans to prepare them for enjoying the rights of free citizens.

6. Colonization pleads, in fact, for the perpetuation of slavery. The object of the apprenticeship was its abolition. It ought not to be doubted that some honest and good people, in their simplicity and ignorance, do still hope by colonization the evil of slavery may be reformed. All the leaders and better informed supporters of the society know better. It is not to be supposed that any clergyman in the United States, who advocates that scheme, can be so ignorant, as for a moment to entertain the hope that the planters of the slave-holding states will free their slaves and send them to Liberia ; or that the means can be furnished for establishing two and a half or three millions of our people in Africa. The experience of twenty-two years has demonstrated its utter impracticability. The number of slaves in the country is now twice as great as it was when the Colonization Society was organized. When, at this rate, would the evil become extinct ? Colonizationists are too obstinate to abandon their favorite doctrine that all are to be held in bondage until there is provision made for their transportation. Of course, slavery must continue for ever. They do not, indeed, in so many words, acknowledge this ; for if they did so, the whole of the free states would abandon them. The defections have already alarmed them. They perceive that the Abolition Society has

\* We have heard of a Sabbath-school expelling colored children ; and of the elders of a congregation giving notice to colored members, that they must not attend church.

enrolled more than three times as many members in seven years, as they have done in twenty-two. They are aware that this proceeds from opposition, in the minds of more than nine-tenths of the people of the free states, to slavery, as a great national evil, and deeply disgraceful to a land boasting of its free institutions. Hence they *dare* not plead directly for the perpetuation of what nearly all, of what they themselves, have a thousand times acknowledged to be an aggravated sin against God, and a most shameful outrage on the rights of man. But they plead for what is equivalent, and what they cannot but *know* to be equivalent to its continuation to the end of the world. They are in favor of slavery.

What colonizationist has ever signed a petition for the abolition of slavery in the district of Columbia? Has Mr. Clay, has Dr. Proudfit, has Mr. R. J. Breckenridge, has Mr. Gurley? Who in all their ranks has? They cannot. Not one of the seven thousand slaves in the District can be set free, until provision is made for his colonization. To furnish these means at the ratio of past years, would require twenty years. In truth, it would require about one hundred years, computing by the rate of the increase of slaves, and the past operations of the society, to extinguish slavery in that small District alone. They do not wish to see all their funds absorbed in that small portion of the dominions of slavery. It would unmask their battery. They would have no means of warring with abolitionists, no covert means of defending slavery. If they were really adverse to slavery, as they say they are in the *introductions* to their addresses, why do they not aid in its removal from the seat of government? Their own scheme has seduced them, and they are endeavoring to seduce others into an approbation of "the domestic institutions of the South," which "holds men to labor or service." Their admission that it is a sin is no more than a rhetorical flourish, when they go on to plead for it the sanction of the Holy Scriptures and the law of nature, classing it among the natural relations of human society. They are substantially pleading for the continuance of what God in his merciful providence has abolished by the edict of a monarchical government, to put to shame a republican commonwealth, which outrages its own doctrine of liberty, by embodying in its constitutions, and maintaining by its laws, and upholding by its mobs, the most wanton outrages on the rights of man.

Thanks to God he has furnished by the late events in the West Indies, on the very borders of our slaveholding domains, the refutation of all the flimsy sophisms of colonizationists and of all other advocates of oppression. They cry out amalgamation. We

deny that we are its advocates. We point to the Covenanters and the Quakers, who have been abolitionists for more than a generation—who have plead for and practised on the doctrine of immediate emancipation—and ask them, who ever heard of a Covenanter or a Quaker marrying an African? We can now ask them, who has heard of any white man in Antigua choosing a colored woman for his wife? They say the slaves would become idle vagabonds, and nuisances to society. We can now ask them, have they become so in Antigua? They say property would be depreciated. We ask them, has it depreciated in Antigua? They affirm that were the slaves emancipated at once, they would cut the throats of their masters. We ask them, have they done so in Antigua? There where there are fourteen negroes to one white man, for four years they have remained in an entirely peaceful state. How idle then must be the clamor, that two millions of Africans, if set free, would make war upon fourteen millions of white men! Who will listen to the panders of oppression, when they cry out, set these people free and the South will in one day become a smoking ruin—a Zalmunnah—a field of blood. The ferocious tigers will not be glutted with all the blood of the South; they will march their armies North; Philadelphia and New York will be made desolations; and we will all be butchered, or—married to black women! Men of sense will no longer dare to utter these senseless clamors.

These dispensations of God's providence show the wisdom of the measures of the abolitionists, and illustrate the value and efficacy of these associations. When Wilberforce and Clarkson commenced their opposition to the slave trade, they experienced all the obloquy, and vituperation which have been heaped on abolitionists in the United States. But their cause gained strength every year, for God blessed their efforts, their zeal and their perseverance. Intelligence was diffused abroad in the nation, men's judgments convinced, and their sympathies enlisted in behalf of "the poor and needy, who had no help of man." "Might," there as here, was "on the side of the oppressor." But they boldly persevered. They organized societies,\* they employed the press in issuing books

\* Many professors of religion have of late manifested violent opposition to anti-slavery associations, on the ground that some members are not in all their principles orthodox. Persons who, in all business transactions, in labor, in trade, and in schools, are connected with men of no religion, or those unsound in some articles of faith, profess to discover that any association with the same class of persons, for the purpose of effecting the deliverance of the oppressed, is evil. How it is dangerous to have any connexion with a class of men for the purpose of imparting relief to the suffering, and quite safe and proper to have far more intimate and frequent intercourse with them to acquire property, or to communicate or receive instruction in learning, it is difficult to conceive.

and pamphlets, for, there as here, at first the political press was opposed to them; they petitioned Parliament, and they employed agents as lecturers to popular assemblies. To use a modern popular phrase, they agitated. It was necessary. In the moral atmosphere, as in the physical, when it becomes morbid, it must be purified by the agitation of the storm. Hence the agitation produced in the pagan world by the gospel, and that of papal Europe by the evangelical doctrines which the reformers promulgated. In these conflicts of truth and error, the cause of God prevailed. In Great Britain, the contest between liberty and oppression has eventuated in the triumph of the rights of man. It is an earnest of victory here, if we persevere. It must be effected, however, by the unflinching exposure of all corruption, whether on the plantation of the slaveholder, in the halls of legislation, in popular sentiment, in the sacred desk, or in the civil and ecclesiasti-

When Bible societies were organized, no objection was heard from any quarter against associating with others in circulating the Scriptures, except from the High Church Episcopalians. All the churches in New England, and those of all Presbyterian denominations, were opened for meetings of Bible societies, and the addresses of agents. This country is Protestant. There was neither odium, nor danger, in making efforts to diffuse among all ranks the Holy Scriptures. When temperance societies were formed, for the purpose of arresting the progress of *one* sin forbidden in the word of God, some began to discover that it was not orthodox to associate with many of those who were its members. This objection often came from men who had seen no evil in partaking of a social glass, and even setting in bar-rooms to drink with the same persons, before they had abandoned the use of the intoxicating cup. It required some sacrifice to make a professed and open opposition to the habitual use of intoxicating drinks; there were so many tipplers, so many manufacturers, and so many venders. However, the vice of drunkenness is so odious, and the evils which it works are so extensive and so prominent, that mobs, arsons, and murders were not resorted to for the suppression of temperance efforts. In New England, and in all branches of the Presbyterian church, the houses for public worship were every where opened for temperance meetings and addresses.

Anti-slavery societies were organized for the reformation of *one* other sin forbidden in the Bible. Those who had been the most prominent in the Bible and temperance societies, were also the leading members of abolition societies. But it was now discovered that there was a compromise of principle in associating for the extinction of slavery, with the men who in Bible and temperance societies had not been objected against. The sin of slavery is practised by so many ministers and professors, it is sanctioned by so many laws, and so many are connected with slaveholders, in trade, by marriage, and in political parties, that an attempt to reform the evil has been met by the fiercest denunciation of the highest functionaries both civil and ecclesiastical. Reputation, property, and even life have been put in jeopardy. Cowardice is so unworthy that men are not willing to acknowledge even to themselves that they act under its influence, and in this business some other motive must be assigned. The most convenient was, the danger of associating with persons not in all points orthodox. The churches in the eastern states and elsewhere were closed against anti-slavery societies, on the professed principle that all their members were not orthodox. Is that the real motive? It is true that good people will be cautious how they expose themselves to temptation; but the temptations in private life, in business, and in intermarriages are incomparably greater, than in associations for great, benevolent, and most praiseworthy objects, by means and on conditions agreeable to the law of God.

cal courts of judicature. If the evil is allowed to entrench itself in any strong hold without resistance, it will live, acquire strength and prevail.

Abolitionists in England attacked slavery in all its strong holds, and they have driven it out of the empire. This illustrious consummation in which we rejoice was, indeed, the work of God; but he wrought by means. He engaged the intellectual powers, and the prayers of the friends of human liberty; he wrought by the parliamentary act of emancipation; he put it into the hearts of Antiguans to emancipate in a moment their slaves; he influenced the emancipated to conduct well; he used Lord Glenelg's bill, and the advice of the Queen's cabinet to the colonial legislatures, to abolish the apprenticeship by proclaiming entire and immediate emancipation. Had any one of all these elements been wanting, the memorable deed would not have been done. Associations and addresses, such kind of things as we are doing this evening, gave the impulse to their mighty movements. We see the results and rejoice in them. It is often asked, what have abolitionists done? The cause of abolition in Britain and America is one. We have been the instruments in God's hand of emancipating eight hundred thousand slaves. If colonization has emancipated four thousand, and they will not claim more, it would require two hundred years to effect what a few years have accomplished by abolition. Our emancipated have neither been transported to Botany Bay, nor to Liberia; they live in peace on their native soil.

The voice of truth and the trumpet of liberty cheer us onward. We will obey the summons. We invite, we admonish others to hear and obey. The call of God on the oppressor "to break every yoke" becomes daily louder. It begins to speak in tones of thunder. Woe to him who refuses to hear.

The voice of Providence has been speaking to our land in no equivocal accents, for these six years. In 1832, Heaven employed the friends of immediate emancipation to call on oppressors to "let the people go, out of the house of bondage." It was treated with scorn. Cholera, the plague in its most dreadful form, that and the following year scourged the land. The call has been uttered every year since, in deeper, louder, and clearer tones. Still it has been received with derision. Every year has been distinguished by the judgments of heaven. The springs have been tardy, the winters have been unusually severe, unseasonable frosts have destroyed the fruits of the garden, orchard and field. Droughts, intemperate heat, mildew, and hitherto unknown insects have wasted the harvests. Conflagrations of appalling character, both for their number and magnitude, and the wild spirit

of speculation, and misrule have spread ruin and dismay over the land. If the voice of Providence, of truth and humanity, now careering on the wings of the wind from the isles of the ocean, pass by unheeded, what are we to expect from the rod of God, in coming years? "Lord, *when* thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; *but* they shall see, and be ashamed for *their* envy at the people." "For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The earth shall disclose her blood and no more discover her slain."\*

It is vain for men to hope for the blessing of Heaven while they continue in sin. "The tabernacles of robbers may prosper for a season;" but the day of reckoning must come. In Antigua, there has been no acknowledgment of sin, no humbling themselves before God for the sin of having furnished a mart for slaves, and for having so long oppressed the poor and needy; and though in the providence of God, the emancipated have been peaceful and industrious to a degree that exceeds the most sanguine expectations of even abolitionists, yet as the act of emancipation was merely from self-interest, Heaven has chastised the planters. The island has been greatly afflicted with drought. To procure the blessing of God, sinners must look to God, by faith in Christ the Redeemer, humble themselves before his throne in the confession of their sins, and break them off by righteousness. To accomplish this is our aim, in seeking the reformation of a great national evil. We seek the glory of God, together with the peace and prosperity of the land—to relieve the oppressed, and bring both them and their oppressors to give glory to the God of Heaven.

We are encouraged to hope for success, both by passing events and from the consolatory predictions of the spirit of inspiration. We see in part the accomplishment of the prophecy: "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God."† Ethiopia is Africa, and her enslaved sons are now set free in every part of the most powerful empire on earth. This is an earnest of the full accomplishment of the promise. These 800,000 free men will educate ministers of the gospel, and send them to make known a crucified Saviour, in the land of their fathers' sepulchres. How much more reasonable is it to look to this quarter for evangelizing Africa, than to a miserable, misgoverned and abortive colony, that in its cupidity is now seizing the lands of the natives by violence, and provoking a war with all its neighbors!

\* Isa. xxvi. 11, 21. It appears by late investigation, that one thousand Africans perish daily by the slave trade.

† Psalm lxxvii. 31.

But we shall soon see more than the colored people of the British colonies unfettered, and admitted into the schools of learning, and the temples of the living God. Nearly three millions of the African race in our own country "will soon stretch out their hands to God." The trumpet of jubilee has sounded. In Judea, it never sounded in vain. By the plagues of Egypt, God taught the Israelites what they were to expect did they refuse to free their bondmen when they heard the jubilee trumpet. They remembered and obeyed. God has demonstrated that it is not now sounding in vain. Its notes shall continue to reverberate until every ear shall hear, until its cheering notes shall gladden all the wretched slave quarters from the Pennsylvania line\* to the mouth of the Mississippi, and from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains. For this let us continue to strive with increasing zeal, and for this let us pray. We shall be heard and we shall prevail; for we have the assurance of the Amen, the faithful and true witness. "I will also make thy officers peace and thy exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land." Isa. lx. 17, 18. "Lord thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause their ear to hear, to judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that the man of earth may no more oppress." Ps. 17, 18. "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety *from him that puffeth* at him." Psl. xii. 5.

\* A familiar phrase in Pennsylvania for Mason and Dixon's line.

