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### Results of free labor. (Poem)

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## RESULTS OF FREE LABOR.

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It is interesting to know that the historical facts brought forward by the abolitionists, with reference to the superiority of free over slave labor in the British West Indies, are sustained by the testimony of our own countrymen, after witnessing the beneficial effects in the United States.

As to the workings of emancipation in the West Indies the evidences of its success are abundant. We give the following as a specimen :

Rev. A. G. Hogg, of Newport, Jamaica, writes thence under date of July 21st 1863, as follows, to Mr. Robert Alsop of Stoke Newington, near London : "I might mention as an interesting fact that one of my members, Adam Patience, a black man of about forty, bought a few weeks ago the estate of Mount Pleasant, in Lower Clarendon, consisting of 800 acres, and gave £600 for the same. He made the most of his money by rearing provisions. It illustrates the curious habits of the negro, to state that he took £300 in silver out of his house when paying the first installment, and it was the accumulation of some years' sale of yams, etc. This young man drank no rum, and he worked six days a week."

We turn now to our own country. In the *Cincinnati Gazette*, October 1863, is a letter relative to the free labor system in Louisiana, written by a gentleman whose official position enables him to furnish accurate information touching the operation of the system. The letter shows, that under proper management there have been results that are extraordinarily favorable. This is the testimony :

On two plantations managed by northern men, where the slaves were well paid, the net profits, after paying one-half the latter to the government and one-twentieth to the negroes, are estimated at \$90,000. Yet on the same plantations, under the old system, the owners were constantly in debt, and the proceeds of the crops spent a year in advance. There is, of course, the advantage this season of high prices for sugar and cotton; but on the other hand there was the disadvantage of inferior seed cane with which to commence operations. Judge Rost, who owned one of the places referred to, is now in the service of the rebels in Europe.

### **Adjutant-General Thomas' Testimony.**

Under date, Natchez, Miss., October 15th 1863, Gen. Thomas writes to the Secretary of War, as follows:

"I recently passed a few days at Goodrich's Landing, Louisiana, fifty miles above Vicksburg, one of my purposes being to ascertain the condition of the head plantations—to what extent the cultivation of cotton had been carried, and especially to know whether the cultivation of plantations could not be carried on as well by hired freemen as by slaves. The gathering of cotton is now in full operation, and it may be too soon to report fully the result. But the facts in my possession are sufficient for a judgment on the experiment as previously reported.

"The season had advanced fully two months from the time cotton should have been planted, which was unavoidable, though the system was put into operation as soon after my coming to this country as was possible. The lessees, therefore, labored under great disadvantages in this respect, for most of them had first to run the furrow to plant the seed, then plant their corn, relying on subsequent time to break up the ground between the furrows of cotton and exterminate the weeds. The necessity of withdrawing the troops from Louisiana to augment the forces operating against Vicksburg kept the line of plantations, some sixty in all, without adequate protection when the rebels made the attack on Milliken's Bend, where they were signally defeated, and made raids on the

plantations, scattering and driving off the negroes and stock.

"This occurred at the time when it was important to cultivate the crops. Some time elapsed before the hands could be collected and be induced to recommence work. The consequence was, fully one-half of the crops were not worked at all, and in other cases, where some work was done, the weeds and plants had to grow up together, the ill weed overtopping the cotton plant. The army-worm attacked all the late cotton, destroying from one-fourth to a third of the crop. Still, under all these disadvantages, not one of the lessees will lose money, but all derive a profit. I know that they are satisfied with the experiment; all desire the re-lease for another year.

"The negro lessees, of whom there are some fifteen, will make from four or five bales up to, in one case, one hundred and fifty, and it is a fact that the cotton they have raised for themselves, owing to better cultivation, is of a higher grade than that of the white lessees. Some of the negroes have cultivated by themselves and families, while others have employed their fellow-freedmen. The freedmen have all worked for wages according to a scale fixed upon by the Board of Commissioners, and at a higher rate, I understand, than was adopted in the Department of the Gulf. They have been well and more abundantly fed than they were when held in slavery. Schools have been established upon the plantations, and the lessees have felt it a duty by every proper means to elevate this unfortunate race.

"As a general rule they greatly prefer working with northern men, whom they regard as their friends, to working with southerners, even their former owners; and I hazard nothing in saying that the net proceeds on a crop by a northerner who has paid his hands wages will exceed that of a southerner who has cultivated by slaves, the number of acres being the same in both cases. Those employed have thus been of no expense to the government, but supported themselves and families.

They are perfectly contented, and look forward with hope to future elevation of character.

"The experiments, adopted hastily and from necessity with many misgivings, I now regard a complete success. The number of bales of cotton raised on these plantations

will not much, if any, fall short of eight thousand bales, giving to the government some one hundred and fifty thousand dollars of revenue. The lessees will also pay to the Quartermaster's Department, for mules, utensils, &c, furnished or found on the places, some one hundred thousand dollars. The charge in lieu of rent is two dollars a bale, making sixteen thousand dollars. The government share on some few plantations abandoned by the lessees may sell for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. I desire this money, or as much as may be necessary, set aside as a fund necessary to pay the expenses of this year, and of the year commencing January 1, 1864.

"It is a significant fact that while transports on the river have been frequently fired into by the rebels, not a single shot has been fired from that line of the river covered by leased plantations, extending for seventy-five miles above Vicksburg, which shows the importance to commerce of lining the river with a loyal population.

### Liberty.

BY PLACIDO.\*

O LIBERTY! I wait for thee  
 To break this chain and dungeon bar,  
 I hear thy spirit calling me,  
 Deep in the frozen North afar,  
 With voice like God's, and visage like a star.

Long cradled by the mountain wind,  
 Thy mate the Eagle and the Storm,  
 Arise! and from thy brow unbind  
 The wreath that gives it starry form,  
 And smite the strength that would thy strength deform!

Yet, LIBERTY! thy dawning light,  
 Obscured by dungeon bars, shall cast  
 A splendor on the breaking night;  
 And tyrants, flying pale and fast,  
 Shall tremble at thy gaze, and stand aghast!

\*Written while in prison just before being shot. He was a Cuban slave.