

**JAMAICA IN 1850; OR,
THE EFFECTS OF SIXTEEN
YEARS OF FREEDOM ON A
SLAVE COLONY, PP. 1-213**

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Jamaica in 1850; Or, The Effects of Sixteen Years of Freedom on a Slave Colony, pp. 1-213 by
John Bigelow

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JAMAICA IN 1850:

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ON A SLAVE COLONY.

BY JOHN BIGELOW.

Magnas inter opes inops.—Horace.

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P R E F A C E .

In the following pages the author has endeavored to explain the causes of the stricken and prostrate condition of one of the most delightful, and formerly, one of the most productive islands in the world, and to indicate the processes by which, in his judgment, the laws of nature and of trade are providing for the ultimate restoration of its ancient prosperity and wealth. They embrace the substance of observations made during a recent excursion to Jamaica, which, it is proper for him to say, was undertaken merely for recreation, and with no thought of troubling the public about it, except perhaps, by an occasional letter to the public journal with which he is professionally connected. During his absence he found occasion to address several communications respecting Jamaican affairs, to the readers of the Evening Post,

and upon his return was pleased to discover that they had been the means, to some extent, of developing the lively curiosity which pervades the public mind of America, for information about the politico-economical condition of that island, after a deliverance of sixteen years from chattel slavery. That curiosity the author has endeavored to gratify, without attempting to do anything more. He has not presumed to write a history or a geography of Jamaica, nor to present a scientific statement of its resources, neither has he written a book of travels. He has limited the personal narrative almost exclusively to such incidents as seemed necessary to an intelligible analysis of the causes which have reduced Jamaica to her present deplorable condition, and of the means which are in operation for her ultimate restoration. He has endeavored to give a correct picture of Jamaica as she is, not what she has been; nor has he referred to her past history, farther than was necessary for that purpose.

The views he has taken of the wants of Jamaica, and of the duty of the Home Government toward her, are essentially different from those professed, so far as he knows, by any political party either there or in England, and yet he publishes them with some confidence, for he is satisfied

that they are such as almost any American would adopt, who should visit the island and inform himself with tolerable minuteness, of its physical and political condition.

The author avails himself of this occasion to make his grateful acknowledgments to those friends whose acquaintance, it was his privilege to make in Jamaica, and whose hospitable attentions enabled him to forget that he was nearly two thousand miles from his home, a stranger in a strange land. He desires also, specially to recognise his obligations to Captain J. D. Wilson, of the U. S. Mail Steamer, *Empire City*, to whose devoted courtesy he owed many important privileges and facilities during his absence, and whose personal and professional character, it will always be his delight to honor.

NEW YORK, Oct. 21st, 1850.

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