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SLAVES AT HONDURAS.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

RELATIVE TO THE

Condition and Treatment of Slaves at Honduras:

1820—1823.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
16 June 1823.

Return to an Address of the Honourable House of Commons,
dated 22d May 1823;—*for*

Copies of all CORRESPONDENCE between Government and Colonel *Arthur*, relative to the Condition and Treatment of Slaves at Honduras; and also of all Correspondence between Government and Major General *Codd*, on the same subject :—viz.

- N° 1.—Copy of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K.G., dated Honduras, 16th May 1820 - - - - - p. 3
- N° 2.—Extract of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K.G., dated Honduras, 7th October 1820 - - - - - p. 4
- N° 3.—Extract of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K.G., dated Honduras, 28th September 1821; with Six Enclosures - - - - - p. 5
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- N° 9.—Extract of a Letter from Major-General Codd to the Earl Bathurst, K.G., dated Honduras, 22d January 1823 - - - - - p. 100
- N° 10.—Extract of a Letter from Major-General Codd to the Earl Bathurst, K.G., dated Honduras, 8th March 1823 - - - - - *ibid.*

Colonial Office, }
13th June 1823. }

R. J. WILMOT HORTON.

CORRESPONDENCE

Relative to the Condition and Treatment of Slaves at Honduras: 1820—1823.

—N^o 1.—

Copy of a Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K.G.
dated 16th May 1820.

MY LORD,

Government House, Belize, Honduras, May 16th, 1820.

IT is with much concern I do myself the honour to report to your Lordship, that on the 24th ultimo I received a communication from the magistrates, apprising me that information had just reached them from the interior of the country, that a considerable number of slaves had formed themselves into a body in the river Belize, and being well armed, and having already committed various depredations, the most serious consequences were to be apprehended. This information was soon after further confirmed by a very strong memorial, which was addressed to me by the principal woodcutters, setting forth the perilous situation in which they were placed in their works, and earnestly praying for immediate protection.

Orders were in consequence issued for a party of the 2nd West India Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant M^cPherson, to proceed the following morning up the river Belize as far as Bermudian Landing, and another party, under the command of Major Noel, to proceed up the river Sibun, and take up a position so as to co-operate with the troops in the Belize, or to check the progress of the slaves should they move from the Belize towards the provision grounds in the Sibun.

Having completed these arrangements, and given the necessary instructions to Major Bradley in case the spirit of disaffection should extend itself to the town, I left Belize on the morning of the 26th accompanied by the senior magistrate, in the hope of being enabled by the milder means of persuasion to bring these poor deluded people to a due sense of the impropriety of their conduct, without having recourse to military force.

In my progress up the river I was much concerned to ascertain that the negroes who had first deserted, and excited others to join them, had been treated with very unnecessary harshness by their owner, and had certainly good grounds for complaint, if happily they had pursued that course, rather than having resorted to the unlawful means they were pursuing; but, as their animosity had not led them to any greater excess than the destruction of some cattle and the robbery of one or two houses, a proclamation was issued, offering a free pardon to all such as would immediately come in and lay down their arms, but at the same time martial law was proclaimed, and a liberal reward for the apprehension of all such as should still continue in a state of rebellion.

I then proceeded from work to work to the distance of 220 miles up the river Belize, directing the different gangs of slaves to be assembled, and by thus timely inquiring into their several grievances, causing the proclamation to be read, and pointing out to them the fatal consequences which they would inevitably bring upon themselves if they were seduced by the bad example of those who had so misconducted themselves,—the evil seemed happily staid; and many of those who had perhaps been hastily led at the moment to unite with the disaffected, were induced to return peaceably to their works.

I cannot ascertain that the number now remaining of the principal body in the river Belize exceeds 20; and I have every reason to conclude that even these are separated, and of course no longer formidable.

On the 10th instant I left Lieutenant M^cPherson in the woods at the head of the Belize in pursuit of this gang, and am in the daily expectation of his report of their capture.

Som

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Some of the runaways having given information of two slave towns, which it appears have been formed in the Blue Mountains to the northward of Sibun, it was judged expedient that Major Noel should march in that direction, and as soon as his report is received I hope it may be no longer necessary to continue martial law in force.

I feel it, my Lord, an unspeakable mercy that the country has been thus delivered by the hand of Providence from a commotion which at first appeared to threaten very alarming consequences; and I trust the gratitude of the settlers will be fully awakened on the occasion, and evidenced by increased acts of uniform kindness and humanity towards the poor Slave population.

The Right hon. Earl Bathurst, K.G.
&c. &c. &c.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

—N^o 2.—

Extract of a Letter from Lieut.-Colonel Arthur to the Right hon. Earl Bathurst;
dated October 7th, 1820.

IN the dispatches which I had the honour to address to your Lordship shortly after my arrival in this settlement, it afforded me the greatest pleasure to bear testimony to the humanity which I observed generally exercised by the woodcutters, towards their slaves.

On the necessity I was under, however, in my dispatch of the 21st October 1816, of detailing to your Lordship the cruelty which has been exercised by a settler named Michael Carty, I was called upon to make some observations upon the extreme inhumanity of many of the lower class of settlers residing in the town of Belize towards their slaves; and as it appeared to be an evil greatly increasing, I submitted at the same time the total inadequacy of the courts of this settlement to check this vicious disposition.

In my Report to your Lordship of the 16th May last, N^o 27, upon the insurrection which had taken place in the interior of the colony, I represented that it had originated from the harshness with which some of the slaves had been treated, and that I was not without hope the consequences on that occasion would have had the beneficial tendency of exciting a greater degree of humanity towards these unfortunate people:—I am much distressed, my Lord, that my expectations have not been answered; and such is the increasing severity and cruelty which is now practised with impunity, that although I am very conscious of the difficulty which has hitherto presented itself to His Majesty's government upon the general question of the administration of justice in Honduras, I am most reluctantly constrained to bring the subject again under your Lordship's consideration. The result of a trial, which was instituted on the 6th instant against an inhabitant for excessive cruelty towards a poor slave, absolutely excludes every hope, under the present system of jurisprudence, of bringing offenders to punishment when guilty of the most flagrant acts of inhumanity and oppression. The trial to which I allude was instituted against a free woman of colour, named Duncanette Campbell, under a bench warrant, "for punishing her slave named Kitty in an illegal, "cruel, and severe manner, by chaining her and repeatedly whipping her, and for "confining her for a considerable time in the said chains in the loft of her house."

As the sufferings of this poor slave deeply excited my commiseration, I made it a point to attend the Court: the female slave appeared covered with wounds and stripes. The medical gentleman, who had examined her by order of the magistrates as soon as she was taken into custody, deposed: "I examined the slave Kitty, and "observed the scores of several wounds, which appeared to have been recently "inflicted with a whip or cow-skin; they were chiefly upon the shoulders, but there "was also a considerable number on the left arm, the neck and face: those on the "face had produced considerable swelling and other symptoms of inflammation; one "of the stripes had divided the ala of the left ear, another had wounded the left "eye-ball; both eyes were much swelled and inflamed, and her whole countenance was so much disfigured that it was some time before I could recognize her."

The police officer deposed, "On proceeding to the dwelling of Miss Duncanette "Campbell, I found the slave Kitty at the foot of a bed, with a pair of handcuffs "on, and chained round the legs with a double padlock; the chain was bound "round so close that she could not stand or move. I saw a cut upon the left ear, "and

“ and many stripes upon the back ; her face also bore visible marks of whipping, “ and there was a bruise under her eye. I tried to lift her up, but she could not stand ; she informed me that she had been in this situation for six weeks.” In fact every charge stated in the warrant was most fully proved.

To deny the punishment which had been so cruelly inflicted was of course impossible ; and therefore the only defence which the prisoner attempted to set up was, that the gentleman with whom she had cohabited and lived for many years had instigated the slave to neglect her business, disobey her orders, and to behave with the greatest insubordination ; that the slave was her own property, and that therefore she had a right to punish her as she thought proper. The prisoner admitted, indeed voluntarily bore testimony to, the uniform excellent conduct of the poor slave for many years, and stated that the circumstance for which she had now chastised her was the only misconduct of which she had ever been guilty.

The Bench, which was composed of four magistrates, in charging the jury, in no way whatever adverted to the dreadful instrument with which the punishment had been inflicted ; to the poor slave’s ear having been cut through ; to the frightful blows on her face, or to the confinement in chains, (every part of which is illegal by the consolidated slave-act of Jamaica, which is by the law professed to be acknowledged in the courts of this settlement, *although the act is not in the country*) but briefly observed, that by law every owner was justified in punishing to the extent of 39 lashes ; and therefore the only point for the consideration of the jury was, Whether a greater number of lashes had been inflicted in the present case ? Without five minutes hesitation the prisoner was acquitted !!

—N° 3.—

Extract of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K.G.
dated Honduras, 28th September 1821.

ON the 11th instant, I received the enclosed report, N° 1, from the officer of police, stating the illegal punishment he had been required, by Mr. Bowen, a magistrate, to inflict on one of his slaves ; and also detailing a most severe punishment which he had in part carried into effect at the instance of the Bench, but with the further execution of which he hesitated to proceed, as it appeared to him contrary to law. Immediately on receiving this information I addressed the magistrates, informing them, I was sorry to find, on a bare commitment, without any trial or evidence whatever, a very severe punishment had been ordered on four slaves, and intimating, it was unknown to me that any power was vested in the Bench to cause punishment to be so summarily inflicted. I requested some explanation on the subject.

In their reply the Bench endeavoured to gloss over the matter as well as they could, setting forth, that the trial of slaves by jury was a heavy expense to the country ; that they had acted with no intention of infringing the laws of the settlement, or the rights of the slaves ; that under a heavy penalty, whether competent or not, they were obliged to act as magistrates, and consequently, their fellow settlers always viewed their conduct, when not strictly regular, with every indulgence.

Although their proceeding was in direct violation of the law, I animadverted upon it in milder terms than I should otherwise have been disposed to have done, from the impression that two of the magistrates (it being their first year in office,) might have acted without consideration, under the influence of Mr. Bowen, who, as an older magistrate, was well acquainted with the laws and customs of the court ; and to whom, from his well-known character, I could have no hesitation in referring the whole matter, although it was difficult in such a case officially to attach the blame where I felt it ought to have rested ; I did so, however, as far as I could with propriety, and also directed all the poor slaves to be instantly liberated and delivered up to their respective owners.

In the course of investigating this flagrant attempt upon the rights of the slaves, I was led to the knowledge of Mr. Bowen having confined the poor slave in chains in his own premises, whom the police officer had refused to place in that situation in the jail ; and an affidavit made before one of the magistrates of his general cruelty and inhumanity was at the same time laid before me. Having fully ascertained the unexceptionable character of the complainant, and made every investigation which

No 1.
In the year 1807, in consequence of the peremptory interference of His Majesty’s then superintendent, it was resolved, that for capital offences slaves should be tried by a Jury of twelve, and for minor offences by a Jury of seven settlers.

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prudence could suggest, I determined to issue a search-warrant, and your Lordship will perceive by the return of the officer of police on the back of the warrant that the slaves were found chained in the manner described in the affidavit.

The warrant having been examined on the following morning by the Bench, Mr. Bowen was ordered for trial on the 25th instant; but I must here observe, that although the evidence on the examination was most clear and distinct, the majority of the three magistrates deemed it so very doubtful whether the offence could be considered a breach of any law, or whether there had been any further punishment inflicted by Mr. Bowen than an owner was justified in giving his slave, that they were much disposed to question the propriety of any prosecution; this, of course, convinced me of the feeling and disposition of the Bench.

In order that I might be under no error from misrepresentation, I attended the trial, and the following circumstances were most clearly and distinctly proved, indeed not denied; that on the bare suspicion of having made away with some handkerchiefs committed to her care to dispose of, a poor female slave was tied up by order of her owner and severely flogged, and then handcuffed and shackled, placed in an old store, infested with vermin and the noisome flies of this country; after being in this situation for five days and nights, Serjeant Rush, a military pensioner interceded with Mr. Bowen for her release, and having pledged himself, if the handkerchiefs were not found, to pay the exorbitant sum demanded, the poor creature was liberated on Sunday about mid-day; on the following morning she left her owner's house to make her complaint and seek redress. For this, and no other grounds whatever, she was again seized upon, tied down on her belly to the ground, her arms and legs being stretched out, and secured to four stakes with sharp cords, and in this shocking attitude, in the heat of the sun, exposed before the men in a perfect state of nature, she was again severely flogged, in presence of her inhuman master and his brother, upon her back and posteriors, and then sent back to her place of torment, and there again confined in hand-cuffs and chains, subsisted on the wretched pittance of twenty plantains and two mackarel per week for above fourteen days. Occasionally, indeed, it appeared, the miserable being was led out by day, and chained to a tree in the yard, and there compelled to wash. This, my Lord, was an offence for which the magistrates could find no law on which to charge the jury, nor the jury any against which to find the prisoner guilty! Most truly, indeed, was it observed by the advocate, in open court, that if they rejected the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica, which by custom and usage had been considered for years as the law of the settlement, he shuddered to remind them that there was the 21st Act of Geo. 3d, chap. 67, which protected even brutes from inhumanity.

The case of the male slaves actually apprehended by the officer of police, handcuffed, shackled, and loaded with an enormous cattle-chain, in the very dwelling of this magistrate, I need not in this despatch enlarge upon. If the enormity against the poor female was no violation of the law, this of course could not be deemed illegal.

The slaves in this country have, for some time past, appeared to require no incentive to agitate their already irritated minds; and therefore to quiet in some degree the alarm which will no doubt quickly spread amongst them, of their being thus deprived of all protection, I have, after assembling the members of the supreme court as a council, this day issued a proclamation in His Majesty's name, declaring the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica to be in force until others are enacted, copy of which, with my letter to the magistrates, I beg to submit, and of which I trust your Lordship will approve. The measure will no doubt be offensive enough to Mr. Bowen and his partisans, and to many others who have always manifested the most violent opposition to any interference with the dealings of owners with their slaves; but I regard them with indifference in comparison to the manifest injustice and cruelty of abandoning all the slaves to the mercy of their proprietors, although I still hope there are many who treat them with all the kindness and humanity consistent with their state of bondage.

Enclosure N^o 1, in Colonel Arthur's, of 28th September 1821.

Sir,

Belize, Honduras, 11th September 1821.

I BEG leave to acquaint you that on the 4th instant, it was reported to me that M. W. Bowen, Esq. a magistrate, had sent a slave of his, by the name of Guy, to the common gaol, with orders to the constable that he, Guy, should be worked

The severity of this punishment can only be understood at Belize, where the mosquitos, sand-flies and doctor-flies, are at times so tormenting, that even with the liberty of the hand their attacks are excruciatingly painful.

N^o 3

N^o 4

N^o 5

N^o 6

on the public works with the convicts in chains. Conceiving that the order was irregular, coming from only one magistrate, and he being the proprietor of the slave, I gave directions to the constable not to pay any attention to the order until I saw the gentleman myself, it being my intention to state my reason for not complying with his order; but being unfortunately unwell, I did not see him until the 10th instant, when a meeting of the magistrates took place at the Court-house, where, in the presence of two other magistrates, M. W. Bowen, esq. told me, that he had taken his slave out of gaol in consequence of directions given by me for his not being worked in chains on the public works. Upon my replying to him, that without the sanction of the bench I did not think myself authorized to punish a slave in that manner at the instance of his master, he said that he conceived that an order from any magistrate was sufficient authority for me. To this the other two magistrates made no kind of observation, and consequently I am left in the very delicate situation of questioning the orders of a magistrate, or violating what I conceive to be the laws of the settlement.

I beg also to state, that four runaway slaves were delivered into the charge of the constable on the 3d instant, two of which, named Hero and Marriott, belong to the estate of the late S. Burnaham, John to George and James Hyde, and Glasgow to Mr. John Young. The three former were brought from the northward by some Spaniards; the latter was delivered by Mr. Harrison, a clerk, to Messrs. Young and Wright, requesting that he might be kept in gaol until Mr. Wright came down the river: That on the 5th instant they were brought by an order of the magistrates before the bench, and without any trial whatever, they (the four) were ordered to be imprisoned and worked in chains on the public works for two months, and to receive a corporal punishment of 128 lashes each, at four separate times, a part of which sentence has been carried into execution; but I feel so uncomfortable in proceeding with the further punishment of those people, under the impression that they have not been regularly tried, that I must beg with great submission to bring this representation under your consideration.

To Colonel Arthur
His Majesty's Superintendent,
Honduras.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
your most obedient and humble servant,
William S. Eve, Officer of Police.

Enclosure N^o 2.; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 28th September 1821.

Honduras fs.

PRISCILLA HICKEY being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith, That she has been frequently in the habit of going about the premises where Manfield William Bowen resides, and has seen the slaves of the estate of the late Mary Hickey, deceased, most cruelly and barbarously treated, as also those the property of the said Manfield William Bowen, by being fastened with their faces downwards to four stakes placed in the ground for that purpose, and then and there most severely whipped, and beat with a cat; particularly a woman slave named Peggy, who was some short time ago fastened to the stake afore-mentioned, and most severely whipped.

Deponent further saith, That the general place of confinement for the women slaves, is a room or store under the apothecary's shop, on the premises of the said Manfield William Bowen; and when put in there, they are handcuffed and shackled: That at night they are fastened to a post inside this room or store, by means of a chain passed through the handcuffs, and then round the post.

That there are at present two men, the property of the said Manfield William Bowen, named Guy and Robert, who are confined in the aforesaid room or store during the day, but at night are taken out; and after the said Robert's having both his feet put in irons, and Guy having a handcuff put on one of his wrists, they are fastened together by means of a chain being passed from the shackles of the one to the handcuff of the other, and then passed round the bannisters of the stairs, leading from the pantry to the upper story of the dwelling-house of the said Manfield William Bowen, where they remain all night.

All which staking, whipping, confining, shackling, and handcuffing, deponent verily believes is, not only done and inflicted with the sanction and knowledge of the said Manfield William Bowen, but by his express orders.

Sworn before me, at Government House.
Belize, Honduras, Sept. 14th 1821,
James Hyde.

Her
Priscilla  Hickey
mark.

Honduras fs.

(Seal.)

Whereas it appears unto me from the annexed affidavit of a free person of colour, named Priscilla Hickey, that for some time past there has been great cruelty used by Manfield William Bowen towards the slaves the property of the late Mary Hickey, deceased, as also towards those his own property, a more full recital of which cruel treatment will appear by the said annexed affidavit; and as I have reason to believe that the men slaves, named Guy and Robert, are now confined as therein described;—

These are therefore, in His Majesty's name, to require and command you to enter into and search the premises of the said Manfield William Bowen, and if therein you shall find the said slaves named Guy and Robert, that you do immediately take them into your possession, as also all implements of cruelty or correction, and make your report to me accordingly, and for so doing this shall be your sufficient warrant and authority.

Given under my hand and seal at the Government House, Belize, Honduras, September 14th, 1821.

George Arthur, Colonel Superintendent Com^d.

To the Officer of Police.

James A. Carmichael,
Assistant Keeper of Records and Clerk of the Courts.

(Indorsed.)

Search Warrant

vs.

House and Premises

of

M. W. Bowen, Esq.

Searched the house and premises as above, and found the within-mentioned slaves, Guy with a handcuff, and Robert in shackles on both feet, a large chain passed round the lower post of the stair leading from the pantry upwards, which chain was passed round the bar of the shackles, and through the handcuff, and was padlocked.

14th September 1821.

William S. Eve, Officer of Police.

I, James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of the public records of the settlement at Belize, in the bay of Honduras, do certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the original search warrant against the house and premises of Manfield William Bowen, as lodged in my office, after being executed by William S. Eve, esq. officer of police.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the said settlement, this 11th day of January anno Domini 1822.

Jas. A. Carmichael,

Assistant Keeper of Records.

(Seal.)

Enclosure N^o 3, in Colonel Arthur's, 28th September 1822.

Honduras to wit.

Minutes of the Proceedings of a Council assembled at the Government House,
Belize, Honduras, 28th September 1821.

Present:—George Arthur, esq. Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent,
Commander in Chief, &c. &c.

James Hyde and George Gibson, esqs.

John Coatquelvin, esq. attended the council, as acting King's advocate to the supreme court; and

James Alexander Carmichael, esq. assistant keeper of the public records and clerk to the supreme court, as clerk of the council.

His Majesty's superintendent stated to the council, that he had assembled them for the purpose of being advised by them upon the present judicial state of the country; the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica having been disallowed as being in force at a recent trial, and consequently no law was now acknowledged in the settlement for the protection of the slave population, which if promulgated amongst the slaves might be attended with the most dangerous consequences.

The members of the council most fully concur with His Majesty's superintendent
in

in the consequences to be apprehended from leaving the country without a slave-law, and advise, That

The slave-law of Jamaica should be enforced by His Majesty's proclamation until other laws duly approved should be enacted.

James Hyde and George Gibson, Esquires, having waited on Thomas Frain, Esquire, one of the commissioners of the supreme court, who in consequence of indisposition was unable to attend the council at government-house, and having presented him with a copy of the minutes thus far, they returned, and signified to His Majesty's superintendent the entire approbation of the said Thomas Frain, Esquire, to their proceedings.

His Majesty's superintendent then desired that the following free persons might be called upon to depose before the Council the circumstances within their knowledge respecting the punishment which had been recently inflicted on a slave named Peggy, in the premises of Mr. Bowen.

Stephen Panting sworn, states that some time ago he was sitting in his mother's shop, and a little girl called him to see a woman who was being flogged in Doctor Bowen's yard. He went into the kitchen of his sister Ann Champagne, and on looking through a hole in the boards saw a woman named Peggy fastened to four stakes placed in the ground, and laying on her belly, her legs and arms being distended, and tied to the stakes by cords, so that she had no power to alter her position; the cords appeared to be about the size of my little finger. Her clothes, when I first saw her, were fastened round her hips, and after she was flogged some time by a woman, with a cat, her clothes were dragged down until they were below the small part of the thigh, when the whole of her posteriors were exposed. The woman again flogged her on the posteriors, at which I was so disgusted, that I turned away. After the screaming of the woman had ceased I again looked, and saw that she was released; she was then tying up her clothes.

This was about ten or eleven o'clock in the forenoon.

Doctor Bowen was present during the whole of the punishment, and his brother, Mr. Frederick Bowen, was there until the woman's clothes were dragged down, when he turned aside.

Margaret Jones being sworn, states that some time ago she heard the screams of some one being punished, and on going into Ann Champagne's kitchen she saw a woman named Peggy fastened to four stakes, placed in the ground in Doctor Bowen's yard, to which her hands and feet (being distended) were tied; she was laying on her belly; her clothes at this time were rolled about her waist, so that her back and shoulders, and also her posteriors, were entirely bare.

A woman named Nancy was flogging her with a cat.

When I saw the woman being punished Doctor Bowen was present.

Jas. A. Carmichael,
Clerk of the Council.

A true copy,
Jas. A. Carmichael, Clerk of the Council.

Enclosure N^o 4, in Colonel Arthur's, 28th Sep. 1821.

Government House, Belize, 28 September 1821.

Gentlemen,

I ENCLOSE for your information His Majesty's proclamation of this date, by which you will observe, that the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica, of which Honduras is a dependency, is declared to be in force in this settlement until other laws shall be enacted, and I have accordingly to require you will be guided thereby in all proceedings in your court until His Majesty's further pleasure herein is duly promulgated.

I am deeply grieved that the influence of a few ill-disposed persons should compel me thus publicly, by proclamation, to cast the disgraceful imputation upon this community that it has hitherto left the slave population wholly unprotected by law; and that every punishment which has been inflicted upon the slaves by the Bench, either by trial or otherwise, has been altogether illegal; for if by custom and usage the slave-law of Jamaica has not been considered in force here, as far as it would apply to the local circumstances of the country, then there has been no law; and if it has been so recognized, the Bench in declining the admission of the 25th and 29th articles of that law, on the recent trial of Mr. Bowen, has violated the sacred obligation by which every magistrate is bound, on his admission into office.

Is it, gentlemen, to be tolerated, that an inhuman and exasperated proprietor has the power to cause a wretched female to be laid prostrate on the ground in a state of nature, having her arms and legs extended by cords to four stakes, and after being thus, in the presence of men, severely lashed over the back and buttocks, in the burning heat of the sun, in a tropical climate, placed in confinement, handcuffed and chained, tormented by flies and vermin, and fed upon the miserable pittance of two mackarel and twenty plantains per week; and shall it be said there is no law in a British colony to punish such inhumanity? Is this an offence of so light a nature, that one of your body thought it scarcely worthy of notice, and would not proceed even to the trial of it without my interference? our Sovereign and our country, believe me, will think very differently!

I have only in conclusion to observe, that eight days have now elapsed since I transmitted to the Bench the petition of a poor family who have been in slavery, illegally, for fifty years; you have, gentlemen, before you, the original manumission of this family; you have also on the public books of the country in your Court House, this deed duly entered and recorded; and surely you will no longer defer to assert the claim of these people to their freedom, and place them in a condition to establish the same before a jury.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(signed) *Geo. Arthur,*

Colonel,

Superintend' & Command'.

The Magistrates, &c. &c. &c.

Enclosure N° 5, in Colonel Arthur's, 28th September 1821.

Honduras, fs.

By the King.—A Proclamation.

(Seal.)

WHEREAS it has appeared to Us, on occasion of a late trial, at a special court held at Belize river's mouth on the 25th instant, that doubts have arisen in the minds of several of Our subjects settled in Honduras, whether an Act of the legislature of our island of Jamaica, commonly called "The Consolidated Slave Law," is considered in force in our settlement of Honduras: And whereas there are no other laws whatever for the protection of the slave population known or promulgated in our said settlement, and deeming it to be absolutely necessary that the slaves should not be deprived of that protection which humanity dictates, and the very existence of the country demands, We, by and with the advice of the commissioners of our supreme court, now at Belize as a council assembled, have issued this Our royal proclamation, commanding that the consolidated slave-law now in force in our island of Jamaica, of which Honduras is a dependency, shall be the law of our settlement of Honduras, until other laws approved by Us, or by any having authority from us, shall be enacted for the protection of the slave population.

Witness, George Arthur, Esquire, colonel, commanding our troops in the Bay of Honduras, first commissioner of our supreme court, and superintendant in and over our subjects settled at Honduras, this twenty-eighth day of September, annoque Domini One thousand eight hundred and twenty-one, and in the second year of our reign.

(signed)

Geo. Arthur.

By command, (signed) *B. Willis,* Secretary.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

Honduras, fs.

At a Special Court, held at the Court House, Belize, in Honduras, on the 25th day of September 1821;

Present: James Hyde, Charles Eyans, esqs., and John W. Wright.

The court was opened in usual form; and the suit, the King *versus* Bowen Manf^d W. was called, being a warrant for cruelly whipping a negro woman slave named Peggy, and loading, or causing to be loaded, with irons, two negro men slaves named Guy and Robert.

The following persons were then called as jurors, who took their seats :

William Maskall,
William Walsh,
Thomas Pickstock,
Frederick Coffin,
William Jeckell,
George B. Carter,

Robert Stephenson,
James John Monk,
David Betson,
William Beck,
James C. Altereith,
Andrew Bayntun.

The prisoner, Manfield William Bowen, being brought to take his trial, challenged three of the jurors, viz. William Maskall, William Jeckell and Robert Stephenson, and gave as his reason for so challenging them, that they had not been sufficiently long in this country to be perfectly acquainted with the customs of the West Indies.

The court having heard the prisoner's objections, acquiesce in the same, as far as regards William Jeckell and Robert Stephenson, but deem William Maskall capable of sitting as a juror on the matter about to come before the court.

The King's advocate then objected to any person sitting on the jury who had not been as long in this settlement as William Jeckell and Robert Stephenson, who had been rejected on the objection of the prisoner, but declined naming them. He then objected to Geo. B. Carter and James Jn^r Monk, on the plea that both of them had laid under a charge for the same crime for which the prisoner was about to be tried.

The magistrates having considered the objection acquiesce in the same.

The following jurors were then sworn :

Thomas Pickstock, F. M.
Frederick Coffin,
John M^r Kenny,
Samuel Burn,
William Beck,
David Betson,

Jurors.

Michael Gavin,
Charles Bull,
William Maskall,
J. C. Altereith,
Andrew Bayntun,
William Walsh.

The King's advocate requested the Bench would order subpoenas to be issued to Sarah, Thisbe and Nancy, three free women held in slavery by Manfield William Bowen, and who were material evidences on the matter now about to come before the court, and declared he would substantiate by the records of this settlement the claim that these people have to their freedom.

To which Manfield William Bowen objected, declaring that the family has been held in slavery these 50 or 60 years, and that they have no claim whatever to their freedom, in consequence of their original owner dying so much in debt that the whole of his estate was obliged to be sold to pay those debts; and as the deed of manumission was not to take place until after the death of their original owner, it thereby became on a footing with a will.

A record of the manumission by William Cahoon, dated 11th October 1767, and recorded the 14th February 1774, in which the names of Rhode Island, Phillis, and their offspring named Bess, Jery, Adam, Quamim and Hagan were inserted, was then produced to the court by the assistant-keeper of records; as also a subsequent manumission of the above-named Rhode Island and Phillis, executed by Jonathan Card, executor and sole legatee of the afore-mentioned William Cahoon, dated the 18th June 1775, and recorded the 22d day of the same month.

(By the court to M. W. Bowen.)—Whose property do you maintain those persons to be, for whom the King's advocate has requested subpoenas to be issued, and under whose directions are they at present?—They are the property of the estate of the late Mary Hickey deceased, for whom I am executor.

The King's advocate having replied to the objection of Manf^d W. Bowen, relative to the freedom of the persons before named, Mr. Bowen declared that he would be prepared, when called upon by a court and jury, to substantiate that the negroes in question have no claim whatever to their freedom.

The magistrates having considered the grounds upon which the King's advocate claims the evidence of Thisbe, Nancy and Sarah, as free persons, as also the objections of Manfield W. Bowen thereto (he considering them as slaves):—are of opinion, that under all the circumstances of the case, they are not, whether free or slaves, admissible evidence on the particular trial about to come before the court; but consider that these persons have strong grounds for instituting a suit against Mr. Bowen to establish their freedom.

The action was then again called, and it was handed to the jury.

The King *versus* Bowen Man^d W^m.

Bench warrant for cruelly whipping a negro woman slave named Peggy, and for loading or causing to be loaded with irons two negro men slaves named Guy and Robert.

The King's advocate then addressed the court.

Priscilla Hickey sworn, states that one night as she was passing the apothecary's shop in Doctor Bowen's yard, the wench Peggy called to her, and told her she was confined there; and stated that it was in consequence of her being accused of having made away with some handkerchiefs which had been given to her to sell.

Peggy was at this time handcuffed, and fastened to a post in the room or store under the said shop.

That every evening as she went into the yard of Man^d W. Bowen she inquired of Peggy whether she was still confined, when she replied "Yes."

On the Sunday following, when she went into the yard, she saw that Peggy was released, and on asking her how that happened, Peggy replied that her master had released her in consequence of Serjeant Rose's begging her off, and in consideration of her paying her master a doubloon for the handkerchiefs that were missing.

Deponent then asked her whether she really ever had the handkerchiefs, and advised her, if she had ever received them, to endeavour to pay for them; when Peggy most positively declared that she had never had the handkerchiefs in her possession, and that rather than pay for them she would lose her head, as she never had taken them.

That on Monday morning she understood Peggy had absconded; and that either on the same day, or on Tuesday, as she was passing the yard, she saw a man looking through the fence, and thinking that some person was being flogged, she also looked and saw the wench Peggy tied, with her face downwards, to four stakes placed in the ground, and saw a wench, named Nancy, flogging her with a cat on the shoulders and back. Dr. Bowen and his brother, Mr. Frederick Bowen, were present at this time; after she had been flogged some time on her back, deponent heard Manfield W. Bowen say, "pull down her coat," and accordingly Nancy broke the coat-string and dragged it down below her hips, and then again flogged her on her buttocks.

You have stated that the wench Peggy was confined in chains, and handcuffed under the doctor's shop; did you see her in that state yourself?—During the day I saw her in handcuffs, but during the night I could neither see the handcuffs nor chains; but when the woman moved, I could hear the chains rattle.

What hour was it when you saw the flogging inflicted on the wench Peggy?—About 10 or 11 o'clock in the forenoon.

At what distance were the stakes asunder to which Peggy was tied?—They were so far apart that neither of her hands could reach them.

At what distance asunder were the stakes from each other to which Peggy's feet were tied at the time she was flogged?—A good yard, and better.

What kind of a place was it where Peggy was confined?—It is under the doctor's shop, and is used as a store for lumber.

Does it come within your knowledge how Peggy was fed during her confinement?—I do not know.

Did you see Guy and Robert confined in Doctor Bowen's house, if so, state how you saw them?—I saw Robert confined under the store with his feet in shackles, when he first came from the southward, but did not know that he was confined in chains until one Sunday evening, when I was at Doctor Bowen's house, and being obliged to remain there all night, I went into the pantry to sleep; in the morning when I was leaving the pantry, I saw Robert handcuffed, and a chain passed from the shackles through the handcuffs, and fastened to the post and padlocked.

When you were in the pantry that night did you hear the rattling of chains?—Yes.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Does it come within your knowledge that the woman Peggy stole an immense quantity of money from her late mistress?—I did understand that Miss Hickey lost a quantity of money, but do not know that Peggy stole it.

During 15 years you were under my charge, how often did I flog you?—Twice.

Did the Rev. John Armstrong take you to His Majesty's superintendent to make the complaint for cruelty with which I am now charged?—No.

Did not the Rev. John Armstrong advise you to go and complain to His Majesty's superintendent?

superintendent?—He told me I had better go to the colonel, as he had nothing to do with it.

Have you not said that you were very sorry you ever had any thing to do with this business; that you were advised to it?—I never did.

(*By Jury.*)—What distance were you from Peggy when you saw her flogged?—About as far as from here to that window; [*which is about ten yards.*]

Did you see Robert in chains?—I heard the chains rattle and saw him in chains.

Did you ever see Guy in chains?—No, I never saw him in chains, but I heard that he was chained.

You say Robert was in chains on the Monday, was he also in chains the day following?—I do not know.

John Henderson called and sworn.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—Are you a clerk to Dr. Bowen?—Yes.

Does it come within your knowledge that Peggy was flogged on or about the 1st of August last past; and if so, relate to the court and jury how she was flogged, and why she was flogged?—She was flogged on the 1st of August on account of some handkerchiefs being missing out of her tray.

Were you present at the punishment?—I was on the premises, but did not see the flogging.

Who delivered the handkerchiefs to Peggy to sell?—Miss Clarissa Paslow picked them out, and I counted and delivered them to her.

Who counted the handkerchiefs when she returned?—I did.

How many were found missing?—I cannot exactly recollect, but think it was seventeen.

What was the price of those handkerchiefs that were missing?—I cannot say, they were at different prices.

Sum it up, and endeavour to find it out?—I do not know.

Was not a part of those handkerchiefs found out afterwards?—Not of those seventeen; there were at first twenty-seven wanting; and the girl Peggy examined the trunk, and found ten in there, which she said belonged to her; and I recollect giving her twelve of the same kind, which were not in the tray when I counted them in coming back.

Was that after or before she was punished?—Before she was punished.

How could those ten handkerchiefs find their way into the trunk?—They were not put in there when I was in the store.

Who had access to that trunk?—There is another young lad in the store, and Miss Clarissa Paslow, who used to pick them out for the women.

Could Peggy have put them there herself?—Not unless some person was with her.

What person?—One of the two I stated before.

Am I to conclude, that upon your oath you firmly believe that those handkerchiefs were put in that trunk after being delivered to Peggy, with the knowledge and participation of Miss Clara Paslow or William Fagan?—They must have been put there, either with the knowledge of Miss Clarissa Paslow or William Fagan; but I cannot say whether they were put there and changed for others or not.

Was Peggy confined after being flogged?—Yes.

How long?—Until Sunday morning following, when Miss Clarissa Paslow told me she had begged her off, and directed me to release her, which I did.

Then she was confined five days?—She was confined from the 1st of August to the Sunday following.

Where was she confined?—Under the medical shop.

Was she in irons?—She was in handcuffs, night and day.

Was the place locked up?—Yes.

Are you positive she was not fastened to any chain whatever during the night?—She was not.

How was she fed?—On plantains, mackarel and water.

Did she receive the mackarel from you, or from her fellow-servants in the yard?—From me she received the mackarel and plantains; I gave it out to the cook to cook for her; and any other little thing her fellow-servants chose to give her, I used to let it in to her.

Did you see Guy and Robert in irons?—Robert was in irons on his feet, and Guy had handcuffs on during the day and night too for a few days; when Guy complained to me that he could only lay on one side, and begged of me to release one hand, and allow the handcuff to remain on the other during the night, which I did.

Were they never tied to a chain during the night?—Yes.

What kind of chain and how was it fastened?—For the two or three last nights they were confined it was to a cattle chain, but before then it was a smaller one; the reason they were confined with a cattle chain was, because the other one was taken to chain a dorey. Robert was chained to the shackles on his feet, and Guy to the handcuffs.

[*The shackles, chain, handcuffs and padlock, were then produced in court.*]

Are the irons now produced the same which were used to confine Guy and Robert?—The shackles and handcuffs are the same, but I cannot swear positively to the chain.

After Peggy was released, how long was she absent; she absented herself I believe?—She was absent, but I do not recollect how many days, whether it was one or two.

I believe you have said she was released on the Sunday, and therefore if she was absent only one day, she was absent only on the Sunday?—She was absent one or two days.

Was she punished for that; and if so, what punishment did she receive?—She was confined; but I do not recollect whether she was flogged or not.

How long was she confined?—I cannot positively say how long, but I think it was about two weeks. She was not shut up the whole of that time; she was out in the day-time, chained by her foot to a tree in the yard, washing.

How was she confined during the night?—In handcuffs.

Was she fed upon plantains and mackarel also at this time?—Yes; it was delivered to herself on the Monday morning, when I gave out the allowance to the rest of the women.

How many mackarel a week?—Two, and twenty plantains.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Could Peggy return any handkerchiefs without Miss Clarissa Paslow's, William Fagan's, or your knowledge?—She could not return them without the knowledge of either of the other two; but I am certain she never returned when I was in the store.

Were there not many handkerchiefs in the trunks the same as those that were missing?—I do not know whether there were any the same as those missing; but I know there were some, the same as those which were found in the trunks.

If Peggy returned handkerchiefs at any time, were there not others given in their place?—I recollect her once coming to me to change some and I refused, when she went up stairs and brought down Miss C. Paslow, who changed them.

Could not two handkerchiefs be cut off a piece of handkerchiefs, such as Peggy said she returned into the trunk, without your knowledge?—They could have been cut off when I was not in the store; but if any had been cut off and sold, I should have seen it entered in the retail account book, or William Fagan would have told me of it, as he was in the habit of telling me when he gives out any thing during my absence.

If I had cut off two handkerchiefs myself and given to a negro without making any entry of them, are you positive that William Fagan would have told you?—I am not positive.

Can you positively swear that the ten handkerchiefs found in the trunk by Peggy are the same that had been counted out and delivered to her?—I stated before, that I recollected giving her some of the same pattern, which were not in the tray when it was examined.

Are there many pieces of handkerchiefs of the same pattern to be found in that trunk?—There are some more of the same kind as the ten before mentioned.

Did not Peggy absent herself all Monday after she was released?—I cannot positively say what day it was; she was absent one or two days.

Was Peggy dissatisfied with the provisions you gave her?—She did not complain to me.

(*By Jury.*)—You say that you saw Robert and Guy in chains; who put the chains on?—I put the handcuffs on Guy, and chained Robert and him for a few nights, and William Fagan chained them during the other part of the time they were confined.

By whose orders were they chained?—By Dr. Bowen, my employer.

Was he present?—No, he was not.

You have said you released Guy from the handcuffs, did Dr. Bowen know of that?—I can't say; I did not tell him.

In what manner was Robert chained?—He had irons on his feet, and at night was chained to them.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—When I directed you to secure the two negroes at night with a chain,

a chain, did I particularly desire you to use a cattle chain?—No; nor did I use it until the other chain was taken to secure a dorey, which was two or three nights before they were taken out of the premises.

Clarissa Paslow called and sworn; stated that the woman Peggy had been confined with a chain attached to one of her legs during the morning, and that she, the evidence, had, unknown to Doctor Bowen, loosed the chain from her legs during the day; but that it still remained near the place where the woman stood up to wash, but was not attached to her leg: That she allowed her to walk about accompanied by a woman under whose charge she placed her, and that during two nights of her confinement there were no chains fastened to her at all.

Does it come within your knowledge that she was ever chained at night?—I never was in the place where she was confined and never saw her chained there; one of the boys told me so.

Did Peggy with your knowledge return ten handkerchiefs in the trunk?—No.

Is Peggy in the habit of going into the store without your knowledge, or that of the clerks?—No.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—Was Peggy flogged for the handkerchiefs she had lost?—Yes.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Did not Peggy abscond all Monday?—She was away more than one day, and I sent people to look for her.

Does it come within your knowledge that she was away during the whole of one Monday?—Yes.

Were you present when Peggy was flogged?—No, I was up stairs, and heard that Peggy was being flogged.

William Fagan called and sworn.

Are you a clerk to Doctor Bowen?—Yes.

Does it come within your knowledge that a woman named Peggy, under the care of Doctor Bowen, was punished for the loss of some handkerchiefs?—Yes.

Were you present at the punishment?—No.

Were not some of the handkerchiefs, for the loss of which she was punished, found afterwards?—There were about seven or eight handkerchiefs found before she was flogged, which she said belonged to her, and even if they did belong to her, there was still a deficiency of nearly twenty; and I have no other proof of the handkerchiefs, which were found, being her's, but her bare word.

Does it come within your knowledge that after being punished she was confined?—Yes.

Was she confined in irons?—She was in handcuffs.

How many days was she confined?—About five days; she was then released and pardoned; she then ran away and was absent two or three days, and when Mr. Mannin brought her back she was again confined eight or ten days, or thereabouts.

Was she flogged a second time?—I cannot say.

Could Peggy return any handkerchiefs into the trunk without *Clarissa Paslow's*, *John E. Henderson's*, or your knowledge?—No.

Does it come within your knowledge that she ever returned any handkerchiefs into the trunk?—No.

When you were securing the negro Guy at night with a chain did he not beg you to chain him round the neck?—Yes.

Did you not refuse to do it?—Yes.

Jane Hinks called and sworn.

Were you present about the beginning of last month when a negro woman slave named Peggy was flogged in Doctor Bowen's yard?—Yes; I was in *Ann Champagny's* kitchen, and saw the woman Peggy tied down to four stakes, and saw her flogged by a woman named Nancy; Doctor Bowen and his brother were both there.

How was she tied to the stakes?—Her legs and arms were stretched out.

On what part of the body was she flogged?—Her coats were dropped down to her legs, and she was being flogged upon her bottom when I saw her.

Did you see the beginning of the punishment?—No.

Did she appear to you to be flogged very severely?—Yes.

Can you recollect the date when she was flogged?—No, I cannot.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Was not Peggy's clothes placed by the woman who flogged her, so as to preserve decency?—I saw Nancy place her clothes between her legs.

Did you see one single drop of blood from the flogging Peggy had?—No.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—At what distance were you from Peggy when she was flogged?—About the same distance as from where I stand to the foreman of the jury. [*about three yards.*]

You have said that you saw Peggy tied down hands and feet, was she tied very tight?—No, not very tight.

Did you see her loosed from the stakes?—Yes.

Did she walk by herself?—Yes; she walked into the house by herself.

Ned Rush, (alias Sergeant Rose,) called and sworn.

Are you not the husband of the wench named Peggy?—Yes.

What do you know about Dr. Bowen punishing the wench Peggy about some handkerchiefs?—Some time ago, Peggy was flogged for some handkerchiefs, which it was said she had not accounted for, and was afterwards confined under the doctor's shop, in handcuffs, and a chain about her legs: That one Sunday morning I went and begged Doctor Bowen to release her, when he asked me, if he let her go, who was to pay him for the handkerchiefs that were missing: I then asked him how much the handkerchiefs came to, and he replied six pounds; I told him that I would be responsible for the money rather than Peggy should be so confined; I then went to church, and on my return saw that the girl was released. On Monday morning Doctor Bowen sent for me, and told me that Peggy had run away, and that as it was on my account he had released her, if I did not find her immediately he would get a warrant against me; I then went to the barracks and Queen Charlotte Town to look for the girl, and afterwards on hearing that she was in gaol I went to the gaol, and there found her; I and Mr. Mannin took her to Dr. Bowen, and when I had delivered her up, he, Dr. Bowen, ordered me to go about my business. I that evening set off for St. George's Quay, and when I returned I heard that Peggy had been again punished.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Have I since releasing Peggy on the Sunday morning asked you for the payment of any money for the handkerchiefs which were missing?—Yes, you asked me on the Monday morning.

Have I ever asked you for any payment since Peggy was brought back?—No.

Do you positively swear that you have seen Peggy chained by the leg at the time she was handcuffed?—Yes, every night in the store, and handcuffed.

Was you there every night?—Yes.

Did you remain under the place where she was confined?—No, I used to remain outside.

How long was you at St. George's Quay?—Four days.

You have said you saw her every night; how could you see her when you were at St. George's Quay?—It was before I went to St. George's Quay that I saw her.

You say that you were not in the store where she was confined, how could you then see her chained?—The place is open railed, and I could see as plain as through those bannisters.

James A. Carmichael sworn.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—Describe the kind of place that is under the doctor's shop?—About five years ago, when I was employed by Dr. Bowen, it was an open railed store, used principally to contain lumber and wet provisions; but as I have not been much in the yard lately, cannot say what it is at present.

(*By a Juror.*)—Do you conceive that a person confined there for two or three days would be materially injured?—I conceive not, from the situation of the place itself; but I remember about the time before mentioned to have seen some snakes come out of it.

William S. Eve, officer of police, sworn; states, On the evening of the 14th inst. I received a search-warrant to search the house and premises of Dr. Bowen, for two slaves named Robert and Guy, who were said to be confined in irons. Between the hours of seven and eight o'clock, P. M., I waited upon the doctor, and told him the purport of my visit, who immediately ordered Mr. Henderson to get a light, and show me where these men were. I followed Mr. Henderson into the pantry, and found Robert in shackles on both his legs, and Guy with one handcuff on; a chain passed round the lower part of the stairs; the hook was passed through the ring of the chain, and then round the bar of the shackle, and passed through the vacant handcuff, and there padlocked. I immediately unlocked the padlock, took the chain from round the post, and brought the two men, as also the chain, immediately to gaol.

The chain, &c. being produced, the evidence was asked if they were the same he had taken out of Dr. Bowen's house, when he replied, "I believe they are."

(*By*

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Did the chain by which the two negroes were secured prevent them from lying down in their beds?—No.

Do you consider, securing two negroes with a chain, leading from the bolt of the shackles of one of them to a handcuff on one hand of the other negro, secured to a post, can be considered loading with irons?—Not if they are lying down.

Could they not sit down with ease to themselves, without the chain bearing any weight on their bodies or limbs?—If Guy's hand that had the handcuff on was resting on the floor, he could feel no weight from the chain, and Robert could only feel the weight of the chain that was passed over the shackle.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—Could Guy move the hand that had the handcuff on without feeling the weight of the chain?—No.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Could not Guy, by using the other hand, suspend the weight of the chain, without any material inconvenience to himself?—Only in transferring the weight of the chain from one hand to the other.

Do you conceive that Guy would have been much incommoded had the other hand been placed in a handcuff also?—Certainly.

James Hyde, Esquire, called and sworn.

(*By the King's Advocate.*)—How long have you been an inhabitant of this settlement?—Upwards of thirty-two years.

Have you not always considered the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica to be in force here for the protection of the slave population?—I have considered it so for a number of years past, as far as it could apply to the local circumstances of the settlement. I cannot say positively, but am strongly impressed with an idea, that there is a resolve of the public to that effect; and recollect for a number of years back, it was the custom to have the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica placed upon the magistrates table; at least that was the case before I went to England in 1809.

Can you state a case in question, where the consolidated slave law in Jamaica had been laid before a jury in this settlement, and considered among the laws of this country?—No; I cannot charge my memory.

Can you swear that the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica are a part of the laws of this country, or have ever been acted upon by any jury in this country?—I cannot say on what the juries have acted, and can say no more than I have already said in my first answer.

When slaves are found guilty by a jury, are they generally punished by the bench according to the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica?—No, I cannot say that they are; the bench generally exercise their own discretion in awarding the punishment.

The prosecution here closed and the prisoner entered on his defence, and called upon—

Frederick Bowen, who was sworn; and stated, That on or about the 25th of last August I returned to my brother's mahogany works; and on my arrival found that the gang in general had refused to do their duty for some time past, and other frivolous grievances, which I inquired into; and when in the act of so doing, the greater part of the gang surrounded me, with this man Robert at the head of them, swearing that unless I granted him, and all hands, liberty to go to Belize, they would take to the bush. I endeavoured to remonstrate with him, as being an unfit character to appear on such a mutinous occasion, he having either been sick or skulking for a great length of time, consequently ought to be the last to come forward on such like an occasion, but could neither by argument nor persuasive means get him from me, he repeatedly jumping up before me, which I with difficulty kept off for a time.

On pushing him from me he ran forcibly towards me and pushed me down; I immediately, when I got upon my legs again, laid hold of him by the shirt, and called for assistance to have him secured in a chain round his leg in my house, until an opportunity offered of sending him to Belize as a prisoner. Immediately after having done so, the whole of the gang entered my house, and swore unless I released him from chains I should also put all of them in. Finding myself likely to be overpowered, and dreading the ill consequences which might result if I did not comply, I released him; after which, it was with the greatest difficulty that I could get him out of doors. The next morning the same proceedings took place; at which time I gave the negroes, one and all, permission to take the crafts for the purpose of proceeding to Belize, when I told them I would state their conduct to their owner, and which I did on my arrival; and I believe on my representation of Robert's bad conduct, he was placed in some part of Dr. Bowen's premises as a prisoner.

John Coatquevin, esq. King's advocate, was then called and sworn; states, On the 4th of September instant, the negro Guy was put up for sale at the Court-house, under my directions; the bidding was much contested, and at last he was knocked down to Dr. Bowen for 275 *l.* The doctor had bid often during the sale openly; when the negro was knocked down to him, he said he would not belong to the doctor; Dr. Bowen answered him, that he ought to have said that sooner, that if he had known that he did not wish to belong to him, he would not have bid 5 *l.* for him. Guy continued saying he would not belong to him, and if he did not sell him to somebody else, he would lose his money, or that he would go in the bush, or words to that effect; upon which the doctor directed Mr. Mannin to take him to gaol, and that he would keep him there until he could find another master, who would give him his money back again.

Next morning Guy sent for me, and I censured him very much for what he had said and done, and advised him to send a message to the doctor to beg his pardon, and assure him he would be a good servant to him if he would release him, which he promised me to do.

Elizabeth Mannin was then called and sworn.

(*By the Prisoner.*)—Did you not hear Guy say that he would have his head cut off sooner than he would send to ask my pardon, or words to that effect?—Yes, he said in the gaol twice, he would sooner have his head cut off than ask pardon of Dr. Bowen, and that sooner than belong to him he would run away.

The prisoner here declared he had no further evidence to adduce, and addressed the court and jury at some length.

The King's Advocate having replied to the arguments the prisoner had set up in his defence,

The jury retired, and on returning into court handed in the following verdict—Not Guilty.

(signed) *Tho^s Pickstock*, Foreman.

I, James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of the public records at Belize, in the bay of Honduras, do certify, that the foregoing is truly copied from the records of the proceedings of a special court held at Honduras aforesaid, on the 25th day of September 1821.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal of the said settlement, this 2d day of April, anno Domini 1822.

(Seal.)

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Assistant Keeper of Records.

—N^o 4.—

Extract of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to Earl Bathurst, K.B. dated Honduras, 10th of January 1822; with Six Enclosures.

I DID myself the honour to report to your Lordship in my dispatch of the 28th September last, the circumstances under which I had felt myself called upon to enforce by proclamation the consolidated slave-law of Jamaica, as far as it would apply in this settlement, for the protection of the slave population.

Although my dispatches will have apprised your Lordship, I had ascertained beyond all doubt, that in many cases the slaves were severely oppressed, I had certainly hitherto formed no just idea of the extent of their grievances. Encouraged by the proclamation (of the force and intent of which they appeared to form at the moment an erroneous notion), the numbers who came forward in a few days filled me with no less astonishment than the fraud and injustice which had so long been secretly practised towards them. Many of the representations I could well suppose were unfounded, and others exaggerated; but those which bore the stamp and character of plain truth, were still sufficient to create alarm for the consequences of so much just excitement.

The greater body of petitioners represented themselves to be native Indians, or the descendants of Indians, and supplicated for my protection on the grounds of their having been brought from the Mosquito shore, and for many years illegally held in slavery by the woodcutters. On investigation, I found that their claim had been

been set up at sundry times many years ago ; and its validity being denied by the bench and juries, the poor Indians had since patiently submitted to a yoke they were unable to cast off.

The general history of this continent, and the principles which His Majesty's government has invariably observed towards its native inhabitants, left no doubt on my mind that the pretensions of these claimants were founded no less in justice than in law : but as in a confined community, such as this, the interest of one is the interest of all, and as the question of right had been positively negatived by the court, I considered it would be advisable to suspend any measures until I had referred the point for the advice of some competent professional gentleman. Submitting, therefore, the case of the Indians for the opinion of His Majesty's attorney-general at Jamaica, I determined in the mean time that the issue of one or two of those suits should be tried which related to the freedom of whole families of African negroes.

After considerable hesitation and delay, the bench consented that writs of *replevin* should be issued to the descendants of two slaves, named "Rhode Island" and "Phillis," who claimed their freedom by virtue of the manumission of their master, Mr. Cahoon, who died in the year 1768 ; but as bonds amounting to the enormous sum of 4,000*l.* were necessary to be entered into before the writs could be taken up, a difficulty still presented itself, which would have been insurmountable to these poor people without my assistance. The bonds, however, being executed, the case came on at the October grand court ; and by the verdict of a jury, a family of eighteen poor creatures, who had been unjustly held in slavery for fifty-three years, were set at liberty. The slavery of this family was mainly insisted upon by Mr. Bowen, who held six of them in servitude, and whose inhuman conduct formed the subject of my last despatch.

The second case which came on was unsuccessful, although the grounds were the same with those which had been favourably disposed of only the day before. At this trial no less than three of the magistrates left their seats, as parties interested to defend the suit against the slaves ; but notwithstanding the effect of this, (which your Lordship may well conceive in such a community,) the first jury sat the day and night without agreeing in a verdict ; and it was not until a new trial with another jury was ordered, that the slaves were nonsuited.

The result of this trial, and the evident spirit of opposition to the poor slaves, determined me never again to seek redress for them in the Court as it is at present constituted ; and on receiving, therefore, the opinion of His Majesty's attorney-general, respecting the poor Indians, it became necessary to resort to other means ; and I trust the plan to which I have had recourse will meet your Lordship's approbation.

On the 31st ult. I assembled the commissioners of the supreme court, and the magistrates, with the principal inhabitants, (all being parties concerned,) at the government-house ; and having laid before them the opinion of His Majesty's attorney-general, that it was illegal to hold the Indians or their descendants in slavery, and having read to them the extract of the consolidated slave-law upon the subject, I proposed the appointment of commissioners to investigate into the descent of the reputed Indians, who should also award fair and reasonable reparation to such as had been illegally held in slavery.

Conviction of the injury done these wretched people, and alarm for the consequences of a criminal prosecution, whilst the opinion of the attorney-general left no room to doubt the issue before any court which might be established by His Majesty, led the meeting to close immediately with my proposition, and I now do myself the honour to lay before your Lordship my proclamation, asserting the right of all Indians and their descendants to their freedom, with copies of my letter to the magistrates, and the warrant by which the commission is constituted.

Having first proposed the measure to the principal woodcutters and inhabitants, and leaving it now optional on either side, after the descent is proved, to submit to the award of the Commissioners, or abide the consequences, I hope your Lordship will not consider that I have acted arbitrarily in thus indirectly taking the matter out of the hands of the magistrates ; and if I have rather exceeded the restricted limits of my authority as superintendent by this interference, I must rest my excuse in the great necessity of doing justice to so many poor, oppressed, and much-injured people. The descent of these Indians, in many cases, can alone be established by the evidence of *very aged* people, consequently, the delay of only a few months, in appealing to your Lordship, might have irrecoverably fixed many in slavery for ever !

Major General Pye having just arrived from Jamaica, attended the meeting on the 31st ult. and has kindly afforded me the benefit of his rank and experience by acting as President of the commission, and as the cases appear generally to be exceedingly clear, the labours of the commissioners will not, I trust, be of long duration.

Enclosure N^o 1. in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Sir,

Government House, Belize, Honduras, 26th November 1821.

I Do myself the honour to communicate to you, that in consequence of some proceedings in the courts of this settlement about six weeks since, it was developed, that a large number of persons were most unjustly held in slavery; a prosecution was in consequence instituted by the acting King's advocate, (Major Coatquelvin) and notwithstanding the greatest opposition, the freedom of eighteen was established by a bench and jury.

The petitions from persons representing themselves to be unjustly held in slavery, which have since been laid before me, are so numerous, and the injustice which has for years been practised is so extensive, that I feel it necessary to proceed with the greatest circumspection.

Amongst other applicants, a very large body of persons claim their freedom from Indian descent.

After a strict search into the old Mosquito-Shore records, the enclosed proclamation by Sir Basil Keith has been discovered, with an advertisement by Colvil Briton, by which it appears the Governor of Jamaica had obtained information that several native Indians had been enslaved at the Mosquito Shore, and after noticing the illegality and inhumanity of the measure, the proclamation most strictly prohibited the practice. This proclamation was forwarded to Mr. Laurie, the then Acting Superintendent, who being himself deeply implicated in this inhuman transaction, seems to have shuffled over the difficulty by calling for a return of the Indian slaves in possession of British subjects, and prohibiting the enslaving of any more, without taking any steps towards the emancipation of those who were at the time held in slavery; the consequence was, that on the evacuation of the Shore, these poor creatures, with their children, were shipped off for Honduras, where, with their descendants, they have ever since been continued in bondage.

These Indians have, of course, in some cases, passed by sale from their original importers into other hands; and such proprietors refuse to admit their right to freedom on the grounds of their having (as they consider) fairly purchased them; others maintain, that although Sir Basil Keith's proclamation prohibited the further slavery of Indians, he did not require those to be given up who were already in slavery. Both arguments appear to me equally weak and untenable: Sir Basil Keith's proclamation can never be considered to sanction an act, which, I believe, has ever been deemed illegal; and although his proclamation did not specifically require the immediate emancipation of the Indians then in slavery, it is very probable instructions to that effect accompanied the proclamation; besides, it expressly interdicts any more Indians being shipped off from the Shore, and of course, without an infraction of that part of the proclamation they could not have been brought to Honduras; but as I am unassisted by any professional adviser, I beg to entreat you will have the goodness to lay this despatch before his Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, who, in compassion to these much-injured people, will, I am sure, permit their case to be referred for the opinion of his Majesty's law-officers at Jamaica, in order to my being advised upon the following points:

First.—Can British subjects, under any circumstances, hold in slavery the native Indians of the continent of America, or their descendants?

Second.—If so, can His Majesty's subjects whether the original importers, or others (who have since become possessed of them) legally retain in slavery the Indians brought into this settlement from the Mosquito-Shore, or their descendants?

Third.—Is there any penalty attached to British subjects persisting in holding these Indians in slavery; and can they only be compelled to give them up by a legal process? This is very essential, because there is no hope of obtaining a verdict in the Courts of the settlement in favour of the Indians.

Fourth.—Are the Indians (many being advanced in years) entitled to damages for the injury they have sustained?

If any record of Sir Basil Keith's instructions, which accompanied the proclamation, can be found, his Excellency General Conran will probably allow me to be furnished with a copy, together with any other documents which may throw light upon this interesting subject.

The schooner Pompey, by which I transmit this despatch, will return immediately to Belize; and as, in consequence of the death of one of the old Mosquito-Shore settlers, a large body of these Indians are on the eve of being disposed of, I very earnestly beg, if it is possible, to be favoured with the advice of which I stand so greatly in need.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

P. S.—There is a very large family of poor slaves who were brought up from the Mosquito Shore on the evacuation by the widow of a Mr. William Cahoon, generally known by the name of Captain Cahoon. These people have ever maintained, that they were freed from slavery by their master previous to his death, and that the manumission of their grandmother, named Rose or Rosetta, is on record in Jamaica.

There are papers which give the strongest appearance of truth to their statements, and the manumission will be most probably dated in the year 1762; but it might not have been recorded for some years after. Is it possible to trace whether there is on record any manumission of slaves by the said Mr. William Cahoon?

Wm. Bullock, esq.
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Recorded by order of John Fergusson, esq. Superintendent of the Mosquito Shore.

BY THE KING:

Jamaica, fs.

A Proclamation.

WHEREAS many of our subjects at Black River, on the Mosquito Shore, misled by ill-designing people, and forgetting the allegiance which they owe to us, have lately presumed to form and establish a constitution of civil government among themselves, and to elect officers and magistrates for the administration of the same, without any powers or authority derived from us for that purpose, which proceedings are against our peace, crown, and dignity:

And whereas many of our said subjects, through an ungoverned and insatiable desire of lawless gain, have made slaves of several native Indians of the said shore or the parts adjacent, and shipped them off for sale, in violation of the common feelings of and rights of humanity, and also of the obvious principles of sound policy; To the end therefore that none of our subjects may, for the future, violate their duty in the particulars above-mentioned, We have thought fit to issue this our royal proclamation, hereby declaring our just displeasure at such insults offered to our authority, and that all such proceedings are acts of usurpation against our royal prerogative, and against the personal rights of the said native Indians, and hereby strictly forbidding all our loyal subjects on the said Mosquito Shore to offend in the like instances, under the pains and penalties that will fall thereon.

Witness his Excellency Sir Basil Keith, knight, Captain General and Governor in Chief of our said Island of Jamaica, and other territories thereon depending in America, Chancellor and Vice Admiral of the same; at Saint Jago de la Vega, the twenty-ninth day of December, in the sixteenth year of our reign, annoq. Domini one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five.

Basil Keith.

By his Excellency's command,
Richard Lewing, Secy.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

By the desire of James Laurie, esq. Superintendent.

Advertisement:—THIS is to give notice to all the British subjects settled on the Southern part of the Mosquito Shore.

WHEREAS in consequence of my instructions, bearing date the 29th October 1776, from James Laurie, esq. superintendent, captain and commander in chief of all his Majesty's subjects in that part of America called the Mosquito Shore, wherein he strictly forbids for the future the enslaving of Indians, and recommends to me to see that all the debts already contracted with the British subjects may

be honestly paid ; at the same time it is desired, that I should do my utmost to prevent my people running in debt with the British subjects for the future, I shall most certainly see that my people discharge all that they are indebted to the British subjects, and as far as within me lieth prevent any more Indians being enslaved ; I am therefore to forbid the British subjects to give any more credit to my people from and after the 1st day of January 1777, as I shall not oblige them to pay any debts that may be contracted after that time, without having my leave so to do. I am likewise to forbid any of the British subjects for the future to buy tortoiseshell from any of my people, who are employed or fitted out in the crafts of the British subjects, as I shall punish any of my men whom I may find guilty of the like crime most severely, and shall complain to the superintendent of the same ; I do further promise as a reward, a young able Indian slave to any white man of good repute, who will prove, upon oath, of any of my men selling of any tortoiseshell for the future, who may be in the employ of any of the British subjects ; and for every back of tortoiseshell so sold by them, he or they who sells the same, upon conviction of said crime, shall pay a young able Indian slave, or twenty backs of merchantable tortoiseshell, as a forfeit to his or their employer or owner of the craft he may belong to ; the captain of the said craft shall forfeit the like penalty to his employer or owner of the craft that he may have charge of. I hope all his Majesty's subjects will pay proper attention to this, as it is the particular desire of the superintendent that I should put an effectual stop to this destructive and dishonest trade. It is likewise my desire that none of my men for the future, who are in the employ of the British subjects shall, on any pretence whatsoever, go on board of any vessel or vessels during the time they may be out on a shelling voyage, nor are they to sell any green turtle, or any kind of bread kind or provisions, to any persons whatsoever during said voyage. I further desire, that all the captains of the said crafts are to keep their men constantly striking tortoiseshell, and to see that they go to no other employ. All my men who are indebted to the British subjects are to go out to the southward, and to strike their debts whenever their employers may order them, without giving them or me any trouble, otherwise such offenders I shall severely punish. And it is further my desire, that all my officers may put these my orders into execution, otherwise they will incur my displeasure.

Given under my hand this 29th day of November 1776.

(L. s.)

his
Colvil \times Briton,
mark.

Received into the office the 31st December 1776, and recorded the same day

By *W^m Stanford*, Sec^r.

Enclosure N^o 2 ; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, Honduras, 2d October 1821.

THE extract from the minutes of your proceedings on the 29th instant, relative to the descendants of Rhode Island and Phillis, I have caused to be referred to the King's Advocate, and have instructed Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General Hayward to give the necessary security in behalf of Priscilla Hickey, to obtain writs of replevin, in order to proceed against Mr. Bowen and Mrs. Maria Emery for the freedom of this family.

This measure I have on this occasion submitted to, from the interest I take in obtaining freedom for this apparently much-injured family ; but I must observe, that I consider from my first communication, accompanied by such powerful testimonials as the original manumission, confirmed and fully established on the public records of the country, the bench should have taken these poor slaves under its own protection, and have afforded them every encouragement and support to prosecute for their freedom.

The spirit which has manifested itself upon the interest I have taken in protecting the slave population ; the opposition which has been but too apparent on the bench, and the threats which were vented on a very recent occasion (when I might have hoped the magistrates would have screened me from personal insult), will have no other effect than that of determining me to prosecute, with increased zeal, my inquiries into the grievances and situations of the slaves, who have, perhaps, a more powerful claim upon my protection than any other part of the community ; and with a sincere regard for their reputation, I do most earnestly entreat such members of the bench, who are anxious that their names should not be associated with in-

humanity

humanity or injustice, to separate themselves by a decided protest against any decision which may appear unjust, or to bear hard upon the slave population.

I have the honour to be, &c. &c. &c.

To the Magistrates,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Copy of the Opinion of the King's Attorney General, respecting the Indians and their Descendants.

Sir,

King's House, Jamaica, 12th Dec. 1821.

I HAVE received and laid before the lieutenant-governor your letter to me of the 26th ult. with its two enclosures, and now enclose, for your information, the attorney-general's opinion upon the several points referred to him.

His Honor is glad to find the opinion of Mr. Burge coincides so completely with yours, and that you will be able to persevere in your humane and considerate endeavours to relieve the poor Indians, who appear to have been unjustly detained in bondage, from their present unhappy state, and he hopes you will omit no means of doing these persons ample justice.

I may not possibly be able to satisfy your inquiries as to the manumission supposed to be on record here, by the present opportunity, as the search may occupy some time; but I will send you all the information on this point that can be obtained here, as soon as possible.

I have, &c.

Colonel Arthur.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

Enclosure N° 3; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Sir,

Spanish Town, 11th December 1821.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, enclosing a letter from His Majesty's superintendent at Honduras, together with two documents which accompanied it. Having perused and considered them, I beg leave to report to you, for the information of his Honor the lieutenant-governor, my opinion on the four questions proposed in the superintendent's letter, as follow:

First.—British subjects cannot, under any circumstances, hold in slavery the native Indians of the continent of America, or their descendants.

Second.—British subjects, (whether the original importers, or others who have since become possessed of them,) cannot legally retain in slavery the Indians brought into the settlement from the Mosquito Shore, or their descendants.

Third.—British subjects who knowingly persist in holding these Indians in slavery, are liable to a criminal prosecution. For the purpose of recovering such Indians from the control of those who hold them in slavery, writs of *hominem replegiando* should be issued against such persons at the suit of the Indians detained.

Fourth.—Such Indians would be entitled to damages from the persons who had knowingly detained them in slavery.

I have to express my entire concurrence in the opinion which the superintendent has formed of the effect of Sir Basil Keith's proclamation, and of the total inadmissibility of any title which can be alleged against the right of these persons to their freedom. Their right is so clear, and has been, from a very early period in the history of this island, so constantly protected by His Majesty's government, that I strongly recommend that the superintendent should afford them every aid which his official situation supplies, in asserting and recovering it.

I will direct the solicitor of the crown to make the requisite search, in the secretary's office, for the manumission referred to in the postscript of the superintendent's letter. I have thought it advisable not to delay my report until it has been found.

Wm. Bullock, esq.
King's House.

I am, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Wm. Burge.*

Enclosure N° 4 ; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Honduras fs.

A Proclamation.

(seal.) By George Arthur, Esquire, Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent and Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's subjects settled in Honduras, &c. &c. &c.

WHEREAS it appears by sundry petitions which have been presented to me, that a great number of native Indians or their descendants are held in slavery in this colony ; and whereas the same is illegal : I do hereby in His Majesty's name assert the right of all such Indians or their descendants to their freedom. And in order that these persons may have the means of fully establishing their descent, a Board of Commissioners will be forthwith constituted and appointed, with ample powers to investigate into the same ; and all persons who, under any pretensions whatsoever, hold these Indians or their descendants in servitude, are hereby required and enjoined to afford them every facility in appearing before the said Commissioners.

Given under my hand and seal at arms, at the Government House, Belize, Honduras, this the 5th day of January, in the second year of His Majesty's reign, annoque Domini, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-two.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Entered by command of His Majesty's Superintendent.

(signed) *R. Willis, Sec^r.*

Enclosure N° 5 ; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 5th January 1822.

REFERRING to the proceedings at government house on the 13st ultimo, finding a number of Indians are on the eve of being sent into the interior, I have this day issued a proclamation, asserting the right of all Indians and their descendants to their freedom, and pointing out the means provided by which they may establish their descent.

As I am desirous that no unnecessary unpleasant sensation may be excited at this season, whilst so many African negroes are in the town, I beg to enclose the proclamation to the bench, that it may be promulgated in such manner as may be considered most advisable by the magistrates, taking care of course that all parties concerned are duly apprised thereof.

The duty which will be imposed on the commissioners, although it may be of short duration, will necessarily be, as far as regards the inhabitants, of an unpleasant nature, and it is not to be expected that their services should be gratuitous. I would therefore propose, that one half of the expense incurred should be defrayed by His Majesty's government in behalf of the Indians, and the other moiety, as the community at large are so generally concerned, by the public treasurer.

The right of the Indians and their descendants being now so incontrovertibly established, you will, I am persuaded, be convinced that it is my duty to afford them all the protection in my power ; but in vindicating their rights, and looking for a just and reasonable indemnification for the injury they have sustained, I would desire to act with the utmost forbearance towards those inhabitants who have, unconscious of those rights, held them in a state of slavery.

The Magistrates,
&c. &c. &c.

I have the honor to be, &c. &c. &c.
(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Enclosure N° 6. ; in Colonel Arthur's, of the 10th January 1822.

Honduras. By George Arthur, Esquire, Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent, and Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's subjects settled in Honduras, &c. &c. &c.

To A. H. Pye, Esquire, Major General in His Majesty's forces, James Hyde, Esquire, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, and John Coatquelin, Esquire, Major in His Majesty's forces, and Acting King's Advocate.

WHEREAS I have in my proclamation, bearing date the 5th day of January instant, declared, that it is illegal to hold native Indians or their descendants in slavery ; and whereas I have also declared, that a Board of Commissioners should be constituted

tuted for the purpose of investigating into the descent of all persons asserting themselves to be Indians, or the descendants of Indians: I have, in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty, constituted and appointed you, and by these presents do constitute and appoint you, Major General Pye, James Hyde, esquire, and John Coatquelin, esquire, to be His Majesty's Commissioners for the purpose of inquiring into and reporting upon all such matters as relate to the claims of all persons so representing themselves to be Indians, or of Indian descent, regulating your proceedings according to the spirit of the proclamation, and agreeably to the intent and meaning of the articles contained in this commission and warrant, under which you are especially authorized to act.

Article 1.—James A. Carmichael, esquire, keeper of the public records, is appointed clerk of the commission for the purpose of duly recording its proceedings.

Article 2.—The annexed oath having been respectively administered to the president and members, the commissioners will proceed with all convenient despatch to examine into the merits of the several claims which will be laid before them by persons purporting to be Indians, or the descendants of Indians, and will adjourn from time to time as occasion may require.

Article 3.—The desired object in constituting the commission is to enable His Majesty's superintendent to do justice to all those persons who represent themselves to be of Indian descent, with the least possible injury to the inhabitants, many of whom appear to have held them in slavery, some unconscious of their descent, and others of their right to freedom. It is therefore presumed, that their descent being proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, and just and reasonable indemnification proposed by the Board, that both parties will acquiesce therein, without any reference to a legal tribunal.

The Commissioners will therefore, first, ascertain the descent of the families or the persons asserting themselves to be of Indian descent, and secondly, report what in their judgment may be considered a just and reasonable compensation for such illegal servitude to which such persons or families have been subject. In adjudging compensation, various contingences must be considered, viz. age, health, number of children, length of servitude, &c. &c. &c. the whole eventually to be referred to the standard of wages customary in the country. It will be a relief to the Commissioners to consider, that the amount of compensation awarded will not be absolutely binding upon either party, as each will have an opportunity, when the decision of the Commissioners is proposed, either to accede thereto, or abide the consequences of refusing.

Article 4.—As it is of indispensable necessity that the Commissioners should have access to all public documents to assist their investigation and determine their judgment, you are hereby empowered and invested with authority to call upon the public officers, and all other individuals in the settlement, for full and satisfactory explanation or examination of all papers, records, or documents of whatever denomination, connected with the subject of your commission, and all such persons are hereby enjoined and required to afford all possible information, and to answer on oath, such interrogations as the commissioners may deem it necessary to put.

Article 5.—In order to facilitate the business of the Board, the Provost Marshal General will attend to summon such evidences as the commissioners may require to appear before them.

Given under my hand and seal, at the Government House, Belize, this 8th day of January 1822.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Entered by command.

(signed) *B. Willis, Sec^r.*

I do swear, that in the course of the proceedings of the commission under which as president I am called upon to act, by virtue of the warrant of His Majesty's superintendent, I will decide and give my opinion in all matters which may come before me to the best of my judgment, without partiality, favour or affection.
So help me God.

I do swear, that in the course of the proceedings of the commission, under which as a member I am called upon to act, by virtue of the warrant of His Majesty's superintendent, I will decide and give my opinion in all matters which may come before me to the best of my judgment, without partiality, favour or affection.
So help me God.

—N^o 5.—

Copy of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K. G.
dated 22d. February 1822, with two enclosures.

My Lord, Government House, Belize, Honduras, 22d February 1822.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship, that at the close of the poll, on the 31st of December last, for the election of seven magistrates to serve for the year 1822, Mr. Manfield William Bowen, whose character and conduct I have so frequently been under the painful necessity of bringing under your Lordship's notice, was of the number returned; and on the Provost Marshal General's waiting upon me, agreeably to usage, with the return of the poll, for my approval or disapproval, I objected to his person.

As Mr. Bowen, I understand, petitions through some solicitor in London, your Lordship for redress, I beg, by submitting copy of my letter to the magistrates at the moment of his disqualification, with copies annexed of the documents to which that letter refers, to place your Lordship in the full possession of the circumstances which have governed my conduct towards this individual; and to those documents, I would earnestly beg to draw your Lordship's particular attention, as an additional evidence of the total and absolute impossibility of protecting the slave population, under the present system of jurisprudence in the colony.

My avowed motive for dissenting to the return of Mr. Bowen was to paralyze the capacity of a person so disposed to treat the slave population with severity and cruelty; and how far subsequent events have confirmed the necessity of such a measure, your Lordship will judge on the perusal of the accompanying examination, taken on oath before the commissioners appointed to investigate into the claims of reputed Indians.

The flagrant conduct of Mr. Bowen and Clarissa Paslow towards the poor female Indian, whose complaint forms the matter of examination, and who is held in slavery by Clarissa Paslow, it is impossible to pass over, and no less impossible to punish in this country; and I therefore beg to submit the case to your Lordship's consideration and judgment.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

P. S. In the body of my despatch I have already entreated your Lordship's attention to the enclosures. In my letter of the 24th of October your Lordship will observe that I called most earnestly upon the magistrates to interfere in behalf of the slaves under the management of Doctor Bowen; my intercession has been totally disregarded; and it is now reported to me that a large body of these slaves have taken to the woods.

(signed) *G. A.*

The Right Honourable Earl Bathurst,
&c. &c. &c.

Enclosure N^o 1; in Lieutenant Colonel Arthur's, of 22d February 1822.

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 1st January 1822.

THE Provost Marshal General has just presented for my approval the poll for magistrates for the ensuing year, and I am sorry to have felt myself compelled to dissent to the return of Mr. Manfield William Bowen.

Although so respectable a body as Major General Pye, and the field officers of the garrison, comprehending the militia, together with the judges of the supreme court, the magistrates, and principal officers in the colony, unanimously pronounced, at a general meeting yesterday, this individual guilty of falsehood, yet I desire to be distinctly understood that these are not the grounds on which I object to his sitting as a magistrate.

As

As the natural protector of the slave population, I do in their behalf feel myself bound to paralyze the capacity of a person so disposed to treat them with severity and cruelty, and desire to refer you to my letters to the bench of the 23d and 24th of October last (the latter of which has never been acknowledged) as my objection to Mr. Bowen's acting in the capacity of a magistrate.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,
The Magistrates, &c. &c. &c. (signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 22d October 1821.

I UNDERSTAND a slave court is held this day for the trial of certain slaves, the property or under the management of Mr. Bowen; and I therefore lose not a moment in transmitting to you a letter which I have just received from Mrs. Carmichael, and one from the garrison adjutant, with an affidavit enclosed.

The haste with which I necessarily forward these papers prevents my offering any observations upon their importance; but as they are originals, I beg to request they may be returned to me after your proceedings are closed.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,
The Magistrates, &c. &c. &c. (signed) *George Arthur.*

Sir,

Belize, 22d October 1821.

I FIND myself compelled to apply to you to save me and my family from impending ruin. My mother, Mrs. Mary Hickey, left me, at her death, a share of her property equal to that she left her other children, and appointed Dr. M. W. Bowen her executor, directing at the same time that the property may be kept up until the youngest child be of age, as will appear more fully reference being had to the will. Now, either by misfortune, mismanagement, or oppression, it so happens that the negroes belonging to the estate are in a state bordering on sedition and exasperation. They daily apply to me, even those that I knew the greatest favourites of my mother, and complain of harsh treatment and cruel punishment being inflicted upon them by the doctor, and plainly tell me that they cannot endure that state of misery much longer. If their complaint is founded or not I have no means of ascertaining, not wishing to pry into the doctor's interior management of his affairs; but it is certain that I have myself seen this morning the shoulders and body of two of them cruelly lacerated, when they told me they had been severely flogged, one on Thursday and the other on Friday last; and the same severe punishment repeated this morning on both. Florizelle, another negro belonging to the estate, is actually now in gaol in irons, though reduced almost to a skeleton by sickness. The punishment of Venture (one of those whom I saw) was particularly severe, having being inflicted by a disbanded soldier of the 7th West India regiment, who was considered in his regiment as a very heavy whip, and who did not conceal that he owed a grudge to that poor negro.

I do therefore apply to you that you may be pleased to appoint, or cause to be appointed, a manager to the estate, by which, without violating the right of an executor, the property may be saved from ruin, and the mind of those negroes set at ease, or to give whatever relief you in your wisdom may think fit.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
Colonel Arthur, (signed) *E. M. Carmichael.*
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c.

Sir,

Brigade-Major's Office, 22d October 1821.

I do myself the honour to acquaint you, that having obtained information that drummer Teague, one of the government military pensioners, who was always remarkable in his corps for punishing very severely, has been employed by one of the inhabitants in flogging slaves; I have sent for the man to attend at this office, and enclose the affidavit which he has made upon the subject in the presence of Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General Hayward.

I have thus been particular before I would report the circumstance to you, because I consider it a most dangerous evil, thus to employ the military pensioners, as it must lead to disturbances between them and the slaves; and you are already aware, sir, how difficult it is, especially during the Christmas, to prevent the most serious disputes

disputes between them ; moreover it seems quite derogatory to the character of a government pensioner to be thus employed, and the drummer excuses himself by saying, that as Mr. Bowen is a magistrate, he did not think he could refuse to obey his orders.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,
 (signed) *Edward Wells*, Garrison Adjutant.
 In the absence of the Brigade-Major
 Colonel Geo. Arthur, Commandant, in the charge of the military pensioners.
 &c. &c. &c.

Honduras fs.

TEAGUE, late a drummer in His Majesty's 7th West India regiment, and now a military pensioner settled in Belize, being duly sworn upon the holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposes and saith,

That at or about Christmas last he had a quarrel with a slave belonging to Doctor Bowen, which was afterwards made up. That on Thursday night last, after eight o'clock, John Henderson, who is clerk to Doctor Bowen, came to deponent and told him that the doctor wanted to speak to him. On deponent going to the house, the doctor said, "Teague, I want you to-morrow morning;" that accordingly deponent went to the doctor's house on the following morning, and he, deponent, presently saw the man with whom he had the quarrel at Christmas last, brought handcuffed from the gaol by said John Henderson, who unlocked the hand-cuffs, and Doctor Bowen told deponent that, that was the man with whom he had the quarrel; that he had called him (the doctor) a damned rascal, and a damned thief, and that deponent must flog him. That the man replied, "Master I beg your pardon, I was drunk, and don't know what I said."

That deponent also told Doctor Bowen that it was so long ago since he had had the quarrel with the slave that he had quite forgotten it all; and deponent states that the said slave had begged his pardon. That, however, Doctor Bowen ordered some of his people to tie the man up, and by direction of the doctor deponent inflicted a punishment of thirty-nine lashes on the slave, the doctor at the same time telling deponent to give it him (the slave) well, and not to spare him a lash; and that after the punishment had been inflicted the slave was handcuffed again, and carried back to gaol; and further this deponent saith not.

Sworn before me at the Brigade Major's Office,
 Belize, this 22d day of October, 1821.

(signed) *Edward Wells*,

Ensign, Acting Brigade Major.

(signed)

The mark
 ✕
 of Teague.

Witness

(signed) *G. Hayward*.

D. A. C. General.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 24th October 1821.

I ADDRESSED you on the 22d instant in much haste, as I considered it very important that the information contained in Mrs. Carmichael's letter, as well as the circumstances sworn to by drummer Teague, should be before the court whilst sitting for the trial of certain slaves under the management of Mr. Bowen; and I was sorry to find the court had closed its proceedings before those papers could possibly reach the magistrates: orders were however, I understand, issued for the suspension of any punishment; and as you now propose taking those documents into consideration, I desire to avail myself of the interval to express my sentiments more fully therein.

That the conduct of the four slaves who have been tried has been improper I make no doubt; but I entertain as little that the excitements to insubordination on the part of Mr. Bowen have been such as required more magnanimity of mind to submit to patiently than poor slaves can be expected to possess; and consequently, humanity and justice equally call upon you boldly to maintain an inquiry into the management of the large estate of the late Mary Hickey, and at once, by decisive measures, to put a stop to a system of oppression which is fraught with ruin to the property, and, what is of much more importance, with imminent danger to the public tranquillity.

From

From my experience of the character of negroes, I am persuaded the plan now pursued will never subdue the spirit which has been excited amongst these slaves; and a continuance of severity will only drive them to take to the woods, if it does not rouse them into open rebellion; and I am fully convinced, from what came under my own observation during the disturbance up the old river last year, that in either case the consequences will be most ruinous to the wood-cutters.

Mr. Bowen's extreme severity is a matter of public notoriety; his recent acquittal for chaining and other acts of cruelty, when the circumstances which led to the verdict are considered, can never remove the impression of his barbarity and indecent treatment of his slaves; and after having now, in direct violation of the law, twice flogged and lacerated, within the space of three or four days (by the hands of a most severe drummer whom he strived to stimulate by feelings of revenge) the ringleader of a disturbance which he excited by his own arbitrary measures, with what face has he subsequently applied to a court and jury to punish the less guilty! is not his object in involving the court perfectly apparent?

If drummer Teague has not committed perjury, and if Mrs. Carmichael's representation can be fully established to the conviction of your minds, I have not the smallest hesitation in saying that you are imperatively called upon, in the exercise of the office as ordinary, immediately to place some discreet, disinterested, and confidential person in charge of Hickey's estate, with full powers to manage it until such time as you have a confidence that Mr. Bowen will act with more prudence and humanity; there is no undue exercise of authority in this arrangement; and any responsibility which may devolve upon the Bench I freely offer, for the public good, to take upon myself.

Well knowing the delicacy of your situation as merchants, and the objection which has always been entertained in this settlement, of interfering judicially with each other, I submit this proposition as a means fully adequate at present to restore confidence and peace amongst the slaves; and, emanating with myself, the Bench will, in a great degree, be relieved from embarrassment.

It was very distressing to me that my personal advice to the Bench, on a recent occasion respecting the slave-law of Jamaica, was so very lightly regarded; and the measures which in consequence were finally necessary to be resorted to by proclamation, you will perhaps have regretted. You must be sensible it is my duty to protect the slave population; that I can have no earthly object in view but humanity and the welfare of the community; and by animating you to adopt reasonable and timely measures, I evince my desire to preserve the settlement from commotion and disorder, and consequently I have every reason to hope to be met by a cordial feeling on your part. In the present instance, I neither look for or desire any unreasonable acquiescence on your part to the measure I suggest; if any other more salutary can be devised I shall be most happy to promote it. It has ever been my object to support the Bench, and I most sincerely declare to you, that nothing but absolute necessity shall ever induce me to withdraw that support; but I must confess to you, my mind is now overpowered with the conviction, that in many instances which have recently come before me the slaves have been most unjustly treated; and with this impression, you must be sensible that I shall be exceedingly tenacious in employing the military against those whom I consider deeply injured and cruelly oppressed.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obedient humble servant,
(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Inclosure N° 2, in Colonel Arthur's, 22d. February 1822.

Sir, Board of India Claims, Belize, February 1st. 1822.

WE have the honour to enclose, for your information, copies of the examinations which have been taken before us relative to the complaint of "Bess Meighan."

We have the honour to be Sir, your most obedient humble servants,

R. Pye, M. C. President,

James Hyde.

John Coatquevin.

George Arthur, Esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent, Commandant, &c. &c. &c.
Honduras.

Honduras, fs.

Extracts from the Proceedings of a Board of Commissioners appointed to investigate the Claims of Indians and their descendants.

Tuesday, January 22d, 1822 ;

Present : Major General Pye, President, James Hyde, and John Coatquelvin, Esquires.

A COMPLAINT having been made to the Commissioners that one of the petitioners for freedom, claiming as a descendant from the Indian race, named Bess Meighan, had been severely and cruelly beat, and confined in irons during the last night, by her present possessor Miss Clarissa Paslow, the said woman named Bess was accordingly sent for.

Doctor M. W. Bowen attended the Board, and stated that the woman Bess had last night used a great deal of very insolent language to her present mistress, Miss Clarissa Paslow, in consequence of which he had flogged her himself, and afterwards confined her with a chain round her ankle, fastened to a post under the house.

Susannah, the mother, and Sabena, the sister of Bess, attended the Commissioners to complain of the cruel treatment, which had been exercised towards the said Bess ; and stated, that as they were passing by the house where Doctor Bowen, and Miss Clarissa Paslow reside, last evening about dusk, they heard the cries of Bess, but were not able to see her being flogged, as they did not go into the yard.

That they both asked John Henderson, the clerk of Doctor Bowen, to be allowed to see Bess, when he replied that they could not, as she was in chains under the house.

Bess Meighan having attended, she appeared to the Board to have been most severely beat about the head and face, one of her eyes being completely closed, and also marks of a whipping on the back and shoulders ; her left foot was also swelled, as she stated from the effects of the chain with which she was fastened, and which was not taken off until eleven o'clock to-day, but, that she remained in the store until sent for by the Commissioners : That it was Doctor Bowen who inflicted the corporal punishment upon her ; that Miss Clarissa Paslow was present at the time ; Miss Clarissa beat her up stairs, as also the Doctor ; when the complainant went down stairs the Doctor repeated the beating, and Miss Clarissa stood between her and the Doctor as if to prevent it.

A copy of the foregoing minute was enclosed in a letter to His Majesty's superintendent, requesting to receive his instructions on the subject of the complaint.

When he requested an interview with the Commissioners at the Government House.

The Commissioners having waited on His Majesty's superintendent at Government House, and the subject of the complaints of the reputed Indians, as also those of their possessors, having been agitated, the Commissioners resumed their sitting at the Court House, when the following warrant was received from Government House ;

Honduras, fs.

(Seal.) BY George Arthur, Esquire, Colonel, His Majesty's superintendent and commander in chief of all His Majesty's subjects settled in Honduras, &c. &c. &c.

To A. H. Pye, Esquire, Major General in His Majesty's forces, James Hyde, Esquire, one of the judges of the supreme court, and John Coatquelvin, Esquire, Major in His Majesty's forces, and acting King's Advocate, His Majesty's Commissioners for investigating the descent of reputed Indians, and their descendants.

WHEREAS it appears by the representation you have made to me this day, touching the punishment which has been inflicted on "Bess Meighan," a reputed Indian (held in slavery by Clarissa Paslow, a mulatto woman cohabiting with and living in the house of an inhabitant named Manfield William Bowen, commonly called Doctor Bowen) as well as by other complaints which have been personally made

made to me, that these reputed Indians are exposed to much severe treatment by the prejudice excited against them in consequence of your investigation:

And whereas it is my bounden duty, during the inquiry of the Commissioners, to afford these poor people all the protection in my power, I do hereby authorize and require you, in His Majesty's name, to take all the reputed Indians under your especial charge, and to afford them the like protection which they would enjoy in case writs of homine replegiando had been issued from any of His Majesty's courts at their suit.

And you are hereby further empowered to investigate, inquire, and examine on oath, into the complaints of these people, especially into that which is the subject of your representation, touching any ill usage they may have received from the persons who hold them in slavery, or others, in order that you may fully report to me thereon.

Given under my hand and seal at the Government House, Belize Honduras, this 22d day of January 1822.

Geo. Arthur.

In consequence of which the Board proceeded to hear evidence on oath as to the complaint of the woman "Bess Meighan."

John Henderson, called and sworn; states, About five or six o'clock yesterday evening I was standing at the back gate of Doctor Bowen's premises, when I was sent for by him; on reaching the house I saw the Doctor, Miss Clarissa, and the woman named Bess Meighan, on the top of the stairs; the Doctor ordered me to put Bess in the store; I gave him the key of the store-door, and went to get a padlock to fasten the woman Bess with; when I returned to the store I saw Bess with her arms clasped round Miss Clarissa's waist; Doctor Bowen ordered her to loose herself from her mistress, and at the same time gave her a blow with a piece of small rope he had in his hand; there was a man-slave at this time endeavouring to separate Bess from Miss Clarissa, and at last succeeded with some trouble. Bess was then confined in the store, with a chain fastened round one of her ancles; the store where Bess was confined is the brick store underneath the house where Doctor Bowen and Miss Clarissa reside.

I did not hear any altercation which took place between Bess and Miss Clarissa previous to my being called; a negro man named Florizelle chained the girl in the store by Doctor Bowen's orders; the girl Bess complained that the chain was too tight, when the doctor desired me to examine it; and finding that it was so, I altered it. The rope with which Dr. Bowen struck Bess the blow, that I have before mentioned, was about the size of my little finger; it was single. I do not know that Bess received any other corporal punishment than the blow I have mentioned.

The mother and sister of Bess applied to me to know whether they could come into the yard, when I answered, no: they then asked me if they did come in, whether or no they could see Bess; I replied, that they could not, as she was locked up. I cannot positively say the exact time to day that Bess was released from the irons, but think it was about nine o'clock; she remained in confinement some time after the irons were taken off, but cannot say how long.

Cross-examined by Dr. Bowen.

Dr. Bowen particularly mentioned to me not to put the chain on too tight; but to put it on so that it could not fall off the foot.

William Fagan, a clerk to Dr. Bowen, called, and sworn; states, I was in the store of Dr. Bowen yesterday evening; I heard the woman Bess Meighan and Miss Clarissa Paslow talking very loud up stairs as if they were quarrelling; but did not hear any blows given. That presently after they passed the store-door going down stairs. I saw nothing more, as I did not leave the store; I saw the woman Bess in chains this morning in the bottom store.

I could not see whether the chain was tight or slack about her foot, as she was sitting-down and her petticoats covered it. The chain was taken off, as near as I can recollect, between eight and nine o'clock this morning; and the woman was released from confinement between ten and eleven o'clock this forenoon.

Cross-examined by Dr. Bowen.

I did not hear the doctor's voice until he called to John Henderson to lock Bess up in the lower store.

Miss Clarissa Paslow came forward, and stated to the Board that she had suffered considerably until this moment from the violence of the grasp of the complainant.

The Board then adjourned until Thursday next at eleven o'clock

James A. Carmichael,

Clerk to the Commissioners.

Thursday, January 24, 1822.

THE Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment, and proceeded to hear further evidence on the complaint of Bess Meighan.

Nathaniel Hulse, Deputy Provost Marshal, sworn; states, last Monday evening about 5 o'clock I heard violent screams and cries of murder, which appeared to proceed from the yard of Dr. Bowen. On riding past the house of Dr. Bowen I perceived the wench Bess Meighan at the grated window of the store (underneath the house) facing the street, but cannot say whether she was tied or not. Miss Clarissa Paslow was there, and also another person, but who it was I could not distinguish: the woman Bess was receiving the punishment of flogging; I saw the lashes given, but cannot tell who it was that inflicted them. The woman Bess was screaming out all the time I saw her; and when I first heard her cries I was at my own gate, which is distant from Doctor Bowen's in a direct line about one hundred yards.

Bess appeared to me, at the time they were flogging her, to be tied to the grates of the window, as her arms were extended; but I cannot positively say whether she was or was not tied.

William Fagan, called again, and sworn; states, in amendment of the evidence given by him on Tuesday last, That on Monday evening last, after Bess Meighan was taken down into the lower store, the man named Florizelle took a rope down there, after which I heard her scream, but did not hear any blows given. At the time I heard Bess Meighan scream out Miss Clarissa Paslow and Doctor Bowen were in the lower store; and I believe she (Bess) was not chained at that time, but she was afterwards. The chain with which Bess Meighan was fastened was a pretty large one, about the same size as the one produced to the court in October last, with which Guy and Robert were fastened. I was not directed by any person whatever in what manner I was to give my evidence on Tuesday last; nor had I any conversation with any one on that subject. The rope which Florizelle took into the lower store was rattlin, about the size of a man's little finger.

Edward Meighan, Esquire, having waited upon the Commissioners to give evidence as to the presumed possessor of the complainant Bess Meighan, was sworn, and states:—That he understood that the late Mrs. Mary Meighan had placed the woman named Bess Meighan under the charge of Clarissa Paslow, as a punishment; that at the death of the late Mr. Edmond Meighan, Mrs. Meighan directed Mr. Francis Meighan to insert her, the said Bess, in a list of her private property, as a slave of hers under the charge of Clarissa Paslow.

Evidence states that he has never seen any title by which Miss Paslow holds the woman in question; nor does he know by what means she holds her in possession. He has heard that Miss Clarissa says she was a gift from Mrs. Meighan to her; but he has since heard that Mrs. Meighan said that she had sold her to Miss Clarissa Paslow, but that she had not been paid for.

Further states, that Mr. Bennett, the attorney to the executor of Edmond Meighan's estate, informed him that he had once asked Miss Clarissa to produce her title to the woman Bess, and that she had behaved to him in such a manner as to oblige him to quit the house.

In consequence of the evidence of Edward Meighan, Esquire, the Commissioners directed a letter to be written to Miss Clarissa Paslow, requiring her attendance at the Board to-morrow morning, at eleven o'clock, then to produce the title by which she has hitherto held Bess Meighan in slavery.

John

John E. Henderson, called and sworn; states, in amendment of the evidence given by him on Tuesday last, That after he had given the padlock to Florizelle for the purpose of fastening the woman Bess, he did not remain in the store, but went into the yard, about the middle of it; he heard Bess scream out frequently, but did not hear any blows given. Clarissa Paslow and Dr. Bowen remained in the store with the woman Bess about ten minutes, during which time she was screaming out most violently; does not know that any other person was in the store with her.

Evidence afterwards went into the store to see that Bess was fastened with a chain, at which time she was clasping Clarissa Paslow by the waist. Bess was complaining of the pain in her eye while he was chaining her; she laid her hand on her eye. States that some days previous to this affair, Bess and Clarissa Paslow had some altercation, after which Bess told this evidence, that had Clarissa struck her, she should have called upon him to take notice of it, and that this was his reason for going away from the store, when Bess was taken in there.

The chain with which Bess was fastened was a little smaller in the links than a common cattle chain, and was about eight feet long; that the links of the chain were passed round the woman's ankle, and had not a shackle attached to it.

Evidence does not know whether the woman had any kind of bedding sent into the store to her; he saw William Fagan go in there frequently with a lanthorn after dark; does not know for what purpose nor by whose orders.

The Commissioners then adjourned until to-morrow at eleven o'clock.

James A. Carmichael.
Clerk to the Commissioners.

Friday, January 25th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Read a letter from Manfield William Bowen, as representative of Clarissa Paslow, in reply to the one transmitted to her through the clerk of this Board, as follows:

Sir,

Belize, Honduras, January 25th, 1822.

I HAVE to acknowledge, "as the friend and representative of Miss Clarissa Paslow," the receipt of a letter addressed to her the 24th instant, from the Commissioners of a Board of Indian Claims, of which you are president.

The letter from said Commissioners states, that in consequence of information they received yesterday relative to the woman lately under Miss Clarissa Paslow's charge, named "Bess Meighan," they require her attendance this morning at eleven o'clock, and to produce before them the title by which she has hitherto held that person in slavery.

The negro woman slave in question named "Bess Meighan," was purchased by the late Mrs. Mary Meighan, deceased, from the estate of Miss B. Bourke, and Miss Clarissa Paslow bought the said woman slave Bess about twelve months previous to the death of Mrs. Meighan.

I have further to state, that the attorneys to the executors of the late Edmund Meighan, esquire, deceased, and representatives to the estate of his wife, the late Mary Meighan deceased, were incorrectly informed that Miss Clarissa Paslow had not given full value for *Bess*; they accordingly required proof, that the said *slave Bess Meighan* was paid for, and the attorneys to the executors aforesaid were fully satisfied with the several respectable evidences to whom Miss Clarissa referred them to on that occasion, and they confirmed the same accordingly; which they were induced to do, from being convinced that Miss Clarissa Paslow had paid full value for the negro woman *slave Bess*, in the life-time of the late Mrs. Mary Meighan, deceased.

The great grandmother of Miss Clarissa Paslow's slave "Bess Meighan" may probably have descended from the Indian race upwards of one hundred years since, a period long previous to the legislative Act of the Governor and Assembly of Jamaica, dated in the year 1741.

I am not aware that Miss Clarissa Paslow is bound to produce any further proof of her claim to "Bess Meighan," who is her absolute property, which no proceeding whatever can divest her of but a court and jury.

I am, Sir, your respectful and most obedient humble servant,

To Major-General Pye,

Manfield W. Bowen.

President of a Board of Indian Claims.

After which the Commissioners directed the Deputy Provost Marshal to warn Clarissa Paslow to attend them immediately, and for which purpose he was furnished with a subpoena, addressed to her.

On his return he informed the Board, that he had not been able to see Miss Clarissa Paslow, but that Dr. Bowen informed him, that any communication that he had to make to Miss Clarissa might be made through him, on which he delivered the subpoena to the doctor, who then said that Miss Clarissa was unwell; but even if she was in good health, that she would not attend, as he had never seen such a circumstance before, as any one being called on behalf of their slave.

The Board adjourned until Monday at 11 o'clock.

James A. Carmichael,
Clerk to the Commissioners.

Monday, January 28th, 1822.

THE Board having met according to adjournment, took into consideration the non-attendance of Miss Clarissa Paslow, with her title to the woman Bess Meighan, although regularly warned to do so; and are of opinion, that Miss Clarissa Paslow's failing to produce any title to the woman in question, amounts to a virtual acknowledgment of her not being possessed of any.

The Commissioners then adjourned *sine die*.

James A. Carmichael,
Clerk to the Commissioners.

Wednesday, January 30th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met, and proceeded to hear further evidence relative to the complaint of Bess Meighan.

Alexander Anderson being sworn, states, That on the afternoon of the 22d instant, as he was riding past the house where Manf^d W. Bowen resides, in company with Nathaniel Hulse, he heard very loud and repeated cries, which proceeded from the store under the house; and also the sound of very severe lashes inflicting on some one, but cannot say who it was, the voice appeared to be that of a female. Mr. Hulse immediately asked this evidence, if he saw the woman tied up to the gratings, when he replied "No," he did not.

William Maskall sworn, states, That on the evening of the instant, as he was on the wharf in front of the house where Dr. Bowen resides, he heard violent and repeated screams and cries of murder; which proceeded from Dr. Bowen's house, the voice appeared to be that of a negro wench; on looking up at the house, evidence heard a bell ring, and immediately saw the boy, William Fagan, run up stairs.

A few moments after this, Dr. Bowen came upon the wharf where evidence was, and observed that Miss Clarissa's wench Bess had been very insolent to Miss Clarissa, and had been absent from her house a day or two, and upon Miss Clarissa speaking to her about it, she had seized hold of her, and had endeavoured to fight her, or to throw her down, when he was compelled to interfere and beat her; that he had given her a good thrashing, and had confined her in the store with a chain fastened to her foot, and that he thought he was justified in so doing, as the woman was the property of Clarissa Paslow, for whom she had paid a large sum of money.

The Commissioners then directed the whole of the proceedings relative to "Bess Meighan" to be transmitted to His Majesty's superintendent for his information.

James A. Carmichael,
Clerk to the Commissioners.

True copies from the records of the proceedings of the Commissioners appointed to investigate the claims of Indians, and their descendants.

Belize, Honduras, February 1st, 1822.

James A. Carmichael,
Clerk to the Board of Commissioners appointed to investigate the claims of Indians and their descendants.

—N° 6.—

Extract of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to Earl Bathurst, K.G. dated Government House, Belize, Honduras, February 28th, 1822; with Three Enclosures.

THE despatch which I did myself the honour to address to your Lordship on the 10th of January last, will have informed your Lordship, that a number of persons had petitioned in this colony, representing themselves to be Indians or descendants of Indians; that His Majesty's attorney-general at Jamaica had given his unqualified opinion, that these people could not be held in slavery; that from some difficulties it was not possible to follow any mode of proceeding by law; and that, therefore, at the most respectable general meeting it was in my power to convene, I had proposed the investigation of the descent of these petitioners by commissioners, who should also be empowered to award reasonable reparation for the injury they had sustained, which proposition having met the unanimous concurrence of the meeting, Major-General Pye, James Hyde and John Coatquelin, esquires, had been appointed commissioners.

It is now my duty to report, that the Board opened their commission and proceeded to business the 9th of January, and matters went on in a satisfactory manner for some days, when it was discovered by some of the asserted proprietors, that a law had been passed by the legislature of Jamaica, in the year 1741, upon the subject of enslaved Indians, by a provision of which Act, although the practice was strongly reprobated and strictly prohibited, the owners of such Indians were continued in possession of their property, and were only required to register their Indian slaves.

It was insisted therefore that a partial registry of Indians which took place upon the Musquito Shore in the year 1777, equally justified the British subjects settled there in retaining such property; and that the petitioners who now claim their freedom must, for the most part, have been the Indians then registered or their descendants; or that at least it was for them to prove the negative.

This discovery was no sooner made, and the inference drawn from it promulgated, than much excitement manifested itself amongst the proprietors, who considering they had now found plausible grounds on which they might make a stand for holding the Indians in slavery, suddenly changed the opinion they had formed at the meeting on the 31st of December, and seemed to entertain a very general determination not to give up the reputed Indians, however clearly their descent might be proved. The poor petitioners in many cases soon experienced the sad effects of this alteration of sentiment, and one instance of inhumanity and severity so greatly excited the commiseration of the Board of Commissioners, that they made it the subject of a special examination and report, submitting at the same time that the authority with which they were invested was not adequate to the effectual protection of the reputed Indians. After an interview and consultation with the Commissioners, I issued a warrant, enlarging their powers so as to enable them to afford these poor people the same protection as they would enjoy in case writs of *homine replegiando* had been issued at their suits from any of His Majesty's courts.

The Board having closed its report on Friday the 8th, I requested the magistrates to summons for Monday the 11th instant the meeting which had been before convened, and beg to lay before your Lordship copy of the minute of the proceedings, the result of which, your Lordship will perceive, has left me no alternative, but submitting the report of the Commissioners, with the appendix, for the consideration and decision of His Majesty's government. Wholly disregarding the arbitration of the Commissioners, the general determination is, not to give up the Indians, whose descent, with the exception of one family, has been clearly proved, but by compulsion!

No other plea was offered at the meeting for this determination but the Act of 1741, which, whilst it branded the practice of enslaving the poor Indians as "unfair, barbarous, and pernicious," most unaccountably admitted a clause, dooming the wretched beings, who already had been torn from the bosom of their families, and introduced into Jamaica, to the misery of slavery; and it is within this extraordinary provision of the Act that the proprietors now entrench themselves.

Unacquainted with all the circumstances under which this Act of 1741 was passed, it may be harsh to stigmatize it as a disgrace to the statute book of Jamaica; but it appears most preposterous to contend that it ever could have any force upon the continent of America, much less that any provision it contains can convey a right

to the servitude of those Indians and their descendants, who were registered on the Mosquito Shore thirty-six years after the Act was passed. The authority of the legislature of Jamaica indeed never extended over that colony; it was subject only to the control of the governor, who, it is most clearly substantiated by the documents comprehended in the report, repeatedly sent down orders and proclamations strictly prohibiting the enslaving of Indians. The instructions also recited in the report, which were sent out by His Majesty's government, breathe nothing but kindness and humanity towards the poor Indians, and uniformly manifest the most tender concern to secure the mildest treatment towards this inoffensive race of men; in place of which, by the affidavit of some of the most respectable evidences, your Lordship will observe, these poor Indians were hunted down in all quarters, and absolutely smoked out of the holes and caves in which they had taken refuge from their rapacious and merciless pursuers.

But the whole subject, my Lord, is so deeply considered in the report of the Commissioners, that it is unnecessary for me to pursue it to any greater length. Every argument which it was in my power to advance I strenuously urged at the meeting, to induce the parties concerned to submit to the arbitration of the Commissioners.

The protection which I have from necessity caused to be extended to the poor Indians, by placing them under the care of the Provost Marshal General, although in strict conformity to the proceeding of the council of protection in Jamaica, (being deemed exceedingly arbitrary,) has given great offence, and strong measures are threatened to be pursued against me immediately on my arrival in England; but even if from the apprehension of personal consequences, I could now wish to abandon these poor people at such a moment, I have gone too far to retract; and it alone remains for me to submit the case to the wisdom of His Majesty's government, in the confident hope it will be considered that I have done nothing more than my duty; and that some authority will be constituted, with ample powers to emancipate these poor Indians from slavery, and to award them just and liberal reparation for the injury they have sustained.

I have, &c. (signed) *Geo. Arthur,*
Colonel Superintendent and Comm^r.

Enclosure N^o 1. in Colonel Arthur's, of 28th February 1822.

Honduras fs.

AT a Meeting assembled at the Government House, Belize, in Honduras,
Monday the 31st of December 1821;—

Present:—His Majesty's Superintendent, Major-General Pye, the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Magistrates of the Settlement, the Reverend John Armstrong, the principal Officers of the Garrison, the Field Officers of the Prince Regent's Royal Honduras Militia, the Secretary and Assistant-Secretary of His Majesty's Superintendent, the King's Advocate, P. T., the Keeper of Public Records, P. T., the Provost Marshal General, the Officer of Police, the Crown Surveyor, the Paymaster of the Prince Regent's Royal Honduras Militia;—

His Majesty's Superintendent addressed the meeting on the subject of the Indians as follows:

“ At the opening of the late public meeting, Gentlemen, I alluded to the state
“ of slavery in which several Indians and their descendants were held by some of the
“ inhabitants of this settlement; and I also suggested measures which I proposed
“ adopting upon the subject, trusting it would have met with general approbation.

“ The circumstance, however, passed without the smallest attention, and I am left
“ in ignorance, to the present moment, whether the proposition was satisfactory, or
“ otherwise, to the community.

“ The Pompey having, since the public meeting, presented me with an opportunity
“ of referring the case for the opinion of the attorney-general at Jamaica, I shall
“ beg to read to you the answer I received from William Bullock, esq.

Sir,

King's House, Jamaica, 12th December 1821.

I have received and laid before the lieutenant-governor, your letter to me of the 26th of November last, with its two enclosures, and now enclose, for your information, the attorney-general's opinion upon the several points referred to him.

His

His honour is glad to find that the opinion of Mr. Burge coincides so completely with yours, and that you will be able to persevere in your humane and considerate endeavours to relieve the poor Indians, who appear to have been unjustly detained in bondage, from their present unhappy state; and he hopes you will omit no means of doing these persons ample justice.

I may not probably be able to satisfy your inquiries as to the manumission supposed to be on record here by the present opportunity, as the search may occupy some time; but I will send you all the information on this point that can be obtained here as soon as possible.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(signed) *W. Bullock.*

Spanish Town, 11th Dec. 1821.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, enclosing a letter from His Majesty's superintendent at Honduras, together with two documents which accompanied it. Having perused and considered them, I beg leave to report to you, for the information of his honour the Lieutenant-General, my opinion on the four questions proposed in the superintendent's letter, as follows:

First.—British subjects cannot, under any circumstances, hold in slavery the native Indians of the Continent of America, or their descendants.

Second.—British subjects, (whether the original importers, or others who have since become possessed of them) cannot legally retain in slavery the Indians brought into the settlement of Honduras from the Mosquito Shore, or their descendants.

Third.—British subjects who knowingly persist in holding these Indians in slavery are subject to a criminal prosecution. For the purpose of removing such Indians from the control of those who hold them in slavery, writs of *homine replegiando* should be issued against such persons at the suit of the Indians detained.

Fourth.—Such Indians would be entitled to damages from the persons who had knowingly detained them in slavery.

I have to express my entire concurrence in the opinion which the superintendent has formed of the effect of Sir Basil Keith's proclamation, and of the total inadmissibility of any title which can be alleged against the right of these persons to their freedom. This right is so clear, and has been from a very early period in the history of this Island so constantly protected by His Majesty's Government, that I strongly recommend that the superintendent should afford them every aid, which his official situation supplies, in asserting and recovering it.

I will direct the solicitor of the Crown to make the requisite search in the secretary's office for the manumission referred to in the postscript of the superintendent's letter.

I have thought it advisable not to delay my report until it has been found.

William Bullock, Esquire,
King's House.

I am, &c.
(signed.) *William Burge.*

His Majesty's superintendent then referred the meeting to the consolidated slave law of Jamaica, cap. 28, clause 1; and having expressed, that although it was his fixed determination to do justice to the Indians held in slavery, he still desired to excite the least possible commotion in the community, or prejudice to those who unknowingly held these people in slavery; and suggested, whether the appointment of a commission to hear the evidence in proof of Indian descent, and of the arguments opposed by their proprietors, would be satisfactory; requesting the gentlemen would propose any plan by which justice could be done to the Indians without reference to legal prosecutions.

The meeting unanimously expressed it as their opinion, that if his Majesty's superintendent would appoint a commission, with adequate powers, for the purpose of investigating the claims of the Indians, or their descendants, on the one hand, and of the proprietors on the other, it would be the means of affording justice to all parties, as individuals would then have an opportunity of either emancipating persons proving themselves to be Indians, or of standing a prosecution for holding them in slavery.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,*
Assistant keeper of records, and clerk of the meeting.

Honduras fs.

AT a meeting assembled at the Government House, Belize, Honduras, on Monday the 11th of February 1822.

Present:—His Majesty's Superintendent,
Major-General Pye, The Reverend John Armstrong.
James Hyde, William Marshall,
Thomas Iles, William S. Eve,
David Betson, R. D. Bull,
Browne Willis, William Usher,
John S. August, Thomas Pickstock,
John Coatquelvin, Richard Ward,
Arch^d Colquhoun, George Sproat.

James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of records as clerk to the meeting.

His Majesty's Superintendent then addressed the meeting as follows :

“ Gentlemen,
“ In the following letter which I addressed to the magistrates on the 28th ultimo,
“ I have detailed my proceedings respecting the claims of the reputed Indians and
“ their descendants, up to that date.”

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 28th January 1822.

At the meeting held at the Government House on the 31st of December last, after laying before the Gentlemen assembled, the opinion of the King's attorney-general at Jamaica upon the subject of the claim of certain petitioners who asserted their right to freedom, on the ground of their being native Indians, and having read an extract from the laws of Jamaica thereon, it seemed to be unanimously admitted that such claimants, if they proved their descent, could not be legally held in slavery; with this understanding, instead of agitating the question in a court of law, I suggested the appointment of Commissioners to investigate into the descent of the reputed Indians; and to propose such reparation as they might consider these people entitled to for the injury they had sustained, declaring it was my intention, after receiving the report of the Commissioners, not to compel either party to submit to their decision, but to make it optional to accede thereto, or abide the consequences of proceedings before such tribunal as His Majesty in his pleasure might be pleased to establish.

This proposition being unanimously approved, on the 5th instant I issued a proclamation, declaring, in general terms, the freedom of the native Indians and their descendants; and the 8th instant, a Board was constituted by Commission to investigate the claims of such individuals as asserted themselves to be of Indian descent.

This arrangement, I then believed, (and am now confirmed in the supposition) to be most calculated to do justice to the reputed Indians with the least possible prejudice to that part of the community who might unknowingly hold such persons in slavery. And, although I foresaw that much irritation was almost unavoidable as soon as the Indians should discover that their rights would be protected, I still depended that the personal responsibility of those who had illegally held them in slavery, would be sufficient to prevent any very violent proceedings.

It was with deep regret I found myself disappointed in this expectation. In place of making due allowance for the situation and feelings of these much-injured people, such a spirit of resentment has been manifested towards them in several instances, that I have been constrained, upon the representation of the Commissioners, to enlarge their powers for the protection of the Indians; and they have very prudently placed them under the charge of the Provost Marshal General.

This, gentlemen, is the actual state of the case up to the present moment; and in place of any attempt to intimidate the Provost Marshal General in the execution of his duty, I am persuaded it will be the wisdom of all parties concerned quietly to acquiesce therein until the Commissioners have concluded and laid their report before me, when every case which can be adjusted here will be referred to the persons interested, for their allowance or disallowance.

I am induced to make this full communication, in the hope that the Bench will use all its influence, (and much may certainly be done by explanation and persuasion) to prevent unnecessary irritation; at the same time, I must frankly declare, that

that I have taken the fixed determination to allow no compromise or accommodation on behalf of those who shall excite further commotion; but placing the Indians under the protection of the Provost Marshal General, I shall, by the earliest opportunity, refer all such cases to His Majesty's government, praying that a mandamus from the Court of King's Bench may be issued to remove such parties to England for trial, at the suit of the Indians.

The present excitement appears to me to be founded in the very injurious and erroneous notion entertained upon this important question by the parties who hold the Indians in slavery. They seem to consider that their interest and their convenience are the primary objects to be consulted; whereas, by every unprejudiced mind, any loss they may sustain, or any privation they may endure, must be regarded as very secondary considerations *in comparison* to the overruling necessity of doing justice to the injured and degraded Indians.

I have the honour to be, &c.

To the Magistrates, &c. &c. &c.
Court House, Belize.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

In addition to the observations contained in this letter, it escaped me to remark, that after having suggested the appointment of Commissioners, I proposed your taking some little time to consider the measure, and that the meeting might be again convened in the course of a few days.

This precaution, you will recollect, was deemed unnecessary; and I am persuaded it was at that time the deliberate judgment of the meeting that the attorney-general's opinion was so clear and decisive, that any legal prosecution in behalf of the Indians should by all means, if possible, be avoided.

Thus much I have thought it necessary to premise before I enter upon the report of the Commissioners, because, on a perusal of it I find that pretensions have been since set up to establish the right of holding these Indians in slavery which certainly were not thought of at the meeting.

I am not weighing the strength of these pretensions, nor am I questioning the propriety of any individuals subsequently bringing forward arguments which did not present themselves to his mind, or, more probably, did not come within his knowledge, at the meeting of the 31st of December; my only desire is that it should be strictly borne in remembrance how the question stood on that day, as it was the foundation on which I have since proceeded.

The clerk of the Board of Commissioners will now read the Report of the Commissioners.

[*Report read.*]

Such, gentlemen, is the deliberate judgment which the Commissioners, on their oath, have formed upon this important case; and I cannot avoid this public opportunity of expressing the great obligation I feel for the comprehensive view they have afforded me of this very interesting subject, and of bearing my testimony to the strict integrity of principle which is apparent throughout the whole of their proceedings, as well towards the poor Indians, as their asserted proprietors.

As I stated at the former meeting, I shall not take upon myself to give freedom to one single Indian; but the temporary protection which I have been constrained to afford them must now be continued until their fate is finally determined; and it appears to me so just, and so reasonable, and so equitable, that this protection should be afforded them, (and which you must be sensible would be extended to them by every court of law in the West Indies) that with a perfect knowledge of its having excited much dissatisfaction, I cannot hesitate one moment in taking all the responsibility upon myself. But having done thus much in behalf of the Indians, I am very far from being desirous to hurry the proprietors to any hasty decision; if either to gain further information, to obtain legal advice, to search the records here or at Jamaica, or, as I have understood, some are desirous of doing, to petition His Majesty's Government, more time is desired, all that is reasonable will be fully and readily allowed, and the petition, I do assure you, I will most cheerfully forward, even though it contains a representation of your alleged grievances on my having taken these people from under your control; for I can most truly and conscientiously affirm it is my sincere desire, as I have expressed in the main article of the instructions to the Commissioners, to do justice to the petitioners with the least possible injury to the inhabitants.

There are cases which admit of no arrangement but the decision of a court of law;

law; but sincerely advising you, generally and dispassionately, to weigh the consequences of legal prosecutions, it now only remains for me to propose, (agreeably to my original declaration) to the decision of the parties concerned, as well the Indians as their asserted owners, whether they will acquiesce or not in the report of the Commissioners, which fully substantiates, with the exception of one family, the Indian descent of all the petitioners who have appeared before them; and it must be remembered, that of this descent you cannot plead ignorance from this day."

After much conversation, His Majesty's superintendent stated, "that he was sorry to perceive that transmitting the whole of the documents to His Majesty's government was the only alternative; but begged all the parties concerned to understand, that if they had any petition or case which they desired to transmit, he would be most ready to forward it with the report of the Commissioners."

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael,*

Ass: Keeper of Records & Clerk to the Meeting.

Enclosure N^o 2, in Colonel Arthur's of the 28th February 1822.

Appendix, No. 1.

THE Board of Commissioners appointed by virtue of a warrant and commission of His Majesty's superintendent at Honduras, dated the 8th day of January 1822, to investigate and inquire into the petitions of such persons as claim their freedom from their being native Indians of this continent, or their descendants, having met from time to time, and received all the information and evidence which they could collect by testimony upon oath, by such of the records of the Mosquito Shore as have been preserved, and by all other means in their power, have agreed upon the following report:—

Before they enter immediately upon their task the Board deemed it proper to premise two things:

The first is, that the records of the Mosquito Shore, which have been preserved in the Record Office of this settlement, are in a very mutilated condition; that it appears probable a part of them may have been sent to Jamaica, and, consequently, that considerable additional information might be obtained, if deemed necessary, by inquiry at the proper offices of that island.

About the year 1776
or 1777,
Appendix, No. 9.

The second is, that in consequence of the great length of time elapsed since the nefarious practice of enslaving the Indians in the neighbourhood of the Mosquito Shore has been abrogated, the living witnesses who personally knew the native Indians from whom have lineally descended the present claimants, are few in number, very old and infirm, and being mostly negroes, are illiterate, and unable to form a correct idea of dates, or to answer any questions but as to matter of fact; their evidence, however, has appeared to the Board to have been given fairly and honestly, and, as far as their knowledge goes, entirely to be depended upon.

The establishment of the English upon the Mosquito Shore appears to have taken place at an early period; first by the Buccaneers, and afterwards by men employed in the contraband trade carried on between Jamaica and the Spanish Main.

As early as the year 1671, Sir Thomas Lynch, the governor of Jamaica, transmitted to King Charles the Second, in consequence of His Majesty's instructions, a full account of the right by which His Majesty's subjects were settled on the Mosquito Shore, as well as of His Majesty's subjects settled on the coast of Yucatan, as appears by a report made in the year 1717 by the Board of Trade and Plantations.

Mosquito Shore
Record.

On the 31st of July 1741, Colonel Edward Trelawny, then governor of Jamaica, appointed Robert Hodgson and William Pitt, esquires, the former captain, and the latter captain-lieutenant of all the forces raised, or to be raised, within the islands of Rattan, Bonares, and the Bay of Honduras, and by his warrant and commission of the same date did appoint those two gentlemen justices for the keeping of the peace within the said territories; and authorizing them to hold sessions for the trial and punishment of murder, burglary, felonies, and all other offences committed in the said territories.

Geo. 2, in addition
to his usual titles, is
called in that com-
mission "of Rattan,
Bonaco, and the
Honduras Lord."

The English settled on the Mosquito Shore very early contracted an intimate acquaintance and connection with the Mosquito Indians, a nation at that time very populous, and of a warlike disposition. They boast of never having been conquered by the Spaniards, and their attachment to the English nation has been carried so far by means of the English settlers, that under the government of the Duke of

Albermarle

Albermarle over Jamaica, they made a formal cession of their territory to the King of England, and from that time it has been usual for their kings upon their accession, to repair to Jamaica to render homage at the hands of the governor of that island.

The Mosquito Indians are a barbarous and cruel people ; they are in the lowest state of civilization, and are under the most abject subjection to their king and chiefs—a state directly opposed to that of all other Indian nations, whose inhabitants are a mild, timid, and peaceful race, and who appear to live under patriarchal government.

The Mosquito Indians pay considerable attention to the raising of cattle, while the other Indian nations seem to subsist by hunting. Differences so striking between nations of the same continent, and divided by no inaccessible barriers, have given rise to a conjecture, by no means improbable, that their origin has been different ; and this conjecture is confirmed by a current tradition prevalent both among themselves and their neighbours, viz. that a ship loaded with negro men from Africa was, at some very remote period, wrecked upon the Mosquito Shore ; that those negroes revolted, seized upon the male inhabitants of the sea coast, and massacred them ; and that, by intermixing with the Indian females, they have altered the race and habits of that nation. This conjecture also receives a further confirmation from the Mosquito Indians themselves, whose personal appearance strongly indicates this mixture of race between the negro and the Indian.

It may therefore be inferred, from what has been said, as well as from matter of fact, that the Mosquito Indians kept the other Indian nations around them in a state of subjection, several of whom paid, and still continue to pay, tribute to the Mosquito king.

The English settlers on the Mosquito Shore employed the Mosquito Indians in fishing, collecting tortoiseshell, sarsaparilla, &c. &c. and paid them in osnaburghs, knives, gunpowder, shot, iron pots, &c. It appears, also, that when these Mosquito Indians had made any inroads into the territories of their neighbours, and taken any of them prisoners, they found ready purchasers for them in the English, who paid for them in the same trifling articles ; and indeed it is highly probable that these poor ignorant Indians were instigated by their employers to make frequent incursions of this description, in order to kidnap and enslave the unhappy inhabitants of the interior, although the Board is not fully authorized by the evidence before them to conclude positively that such was the case. It is however certain, that the number of Indians so obtained must have been considerable, if, as Mrs. Robinson says in her evidence, that almost the whole of the labour of the southern part of the Mosquito Shore was performed by the Indian slaves.

It is also highly probable that considerable numbers of these kidnapped Indians must have been sent to Jamaica by the English settlers for sale in that island, and which caused the Act of the legislature of Jamaica, 14 Geo. 2. c. 6. to be passed : Appendix, No. 2. an Act which, by its preamble and different clauses, is a disgrace to the statute book of that colony ; and so great is the alteration in the feeling of men in the colonies, that the Board feel convinced such an Act, at this period, would not find a single member of the Assembly hardy enough to move ; but which, even as it exists, is so far from being a ground of right to the English settlers on the Mosquito Shore to retain in slavery the Indians whom they obtained in the manner already described, that it conveys the greatest censure upon their cruel and iniquitous transactions. Besides, the legislature of Jamaica never possessed any share in the government of the Mosquito Shore, which from the earliest time was placed under the direction of the governor and council of that island only, and consequently the influence of the Act alluded to could not extend beyond the island itself ; it could have no force upon the Mosquito Shore ; and all sanction and confirmation thereof of the servitude of those Indians enslaved before 1741, derived from that Act, must be entirely void and groundless.

In the year 1749, Captain Robert Hodgson was appointed the first superintendent of the Musquito Shore.

The letter of his grace the Duke of Bedford, then his Majesty's principal secretary of state for the home department, to Governor Trelawny, is too much to the purpose of this Report not to be inserted here at length. It is as follows :

Sir,

I have the satisfaction of being able to acquaint you, that his Majesty has resolved to send Captain Hodgson to the Musquito Shore, in order to regulate and superintend the settlement there, and likewise to cultivate such an union and friendship with the Indians in those parts, as may induce them to prefer his Majesty's alliance and protection to that of any other power whatever; which must, at all events, be of advantage to this nation, but especially in case of any future rupture with the crown of Spain.

On the death of Captain Hodgson, in the year 1758, engineer Richard Jones was commissioned by Henry Moore, esquire, then lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, to succeed him as superintendent, who, (remarks Mr. White, the agent for the Mosquito Shore settlers) kept the same line of duty as his predecessor, in cultivating the affection, friendship, and fidelity of the Indians.

In the year 1760, Governor Lyttleton, on his arrival in Jamaica, appointed Captain Joseph Otway superintendent on the Mosquito Shore, superseding Engineer Jones. This gentleman (observes Mr. White again) invariably pursued the same tract of duty in attending to his ministerial and political functions of keeping the Indians affectionately attached to the interests of England.

In the year 1767, Robert Hodgson, esquire, the son of Captain Hodgson the first superintendent, was appointed to succeed Captain Otway, who died early in that year; and in the ministerial letter of Lord Hillsborough, his Majesty's principal secretary of state, dated the 20th February 1768, acquainting him with that nomination, he is directed to apply himself with all zeal and diligence, amongst other duties, to cultivate a strict union and friendship with the Indians in those parts.

In the year 1775, Mr. Hodgson was recalled by Lord Dartmouth, in consequence of complaints preferred against him by the settlers, and Sir Basil Keith, then governor of Jamaica, appointed John Ferguson, esquire, to act as his Majesty's superintendant upon the Mosquito Shore for the time being, furnishing him with instructions for the better government of that country, and ordered him on his arrival to publish a proclamation drawn up in the terms directed by the Earl of Dartmouth's letter to Sir Basil Keith, dated 2d August 1775.

On the 17th May 1776, Captain Lawrie was appointed his Majesty's superintendent by Lord George Germain, his Majesty's secretary of state; and as appears by his lordship's letter of instructions of that date to Captain Lawrie, one of his principal duties as superintendent was, to cultivate a strict union and friendship with the Indians in those parts.

On the 29th day of August 1776, Captain Lawrie arrived at Black River upon the Mosquito Shore, and took upon himself the superintendency of the settlement according to his instructions from home, and the commission given him by Sir Basil Keith, dated the 19th of August 1776.

On the 28th of February 1777, Sir Basil Keith wrote to Captain Lawrie as follows:

"As you will be answerable to the ministry for your conduct on the Shore, it behoves you to prevent the perpetration of such horrid murders as have been committed by the Mosquito men on the Wolva Indians; and you ought to exert yourself to the utmost to bring the offenders to justice, and thereby show the several Indian nations on the Shore in what abhorrence the English hold such villains, and how ready they are to punish them and protect those who are peaceable and friendly to us.

"My predecessors and myself have repeatedly sent down orders, and issued proclamations, against the making slaves of any Indians; last sessions the legislature of this island have, I trust, effectually struck the axe to the root of that mischief by passing a law, a copy of which I enclose for your particular information and guidance."

Captain Lawrie remained superintendent until the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore in the year 1787, agreeably to the convention treaty with Spain of 1786.

The Board have been thus particular in referring to, and quoting the above extracts from the records of the Mosquito Shore, in order to enable His Majesty's superintendent

Case of the agent to the settlers on the coast of Yucatan and Musquito Shore. 1793.

Appendix, No. 3.

17 Geo. 3,
Appendix, No. 4.

superintendent to judge how far His Majesty's government at home, or the governors of Jamaica from the first moment of their assuming any authority or control over the Mosquito Shore, have been anxious to protect the native Indians, and to secure their friendship and union; and also to judge whether that country has ever been considered an appendage of the Jamaica legislature, or solely subject to the directions of the governor and council of that island; and, consequently, whether the Act of 1741, (the 14th Geo. 2. c. 6.) already referred to, or any other Act explanatory thereof, can have any bearing whatever upon the subject of Indian slavery on the Mosquito Shore.

The Board beg leave to observe, that they have found in the Mosquito Shore records a partial and imperfect registry of Indians held in slavery in that country, made in the year 1777; but though they have perused with the greatest attention the instructions of Sir Basil Keith to John Ferguson, esquire, in sending him to the Shore as superintendent, Sir Robert Basil Keith's letter to the council at Black River, dated the 29th December 1775, and the letter from that Board in answer thereto, together with their minutes from their first formation to the evacuation of the Shore, so far at least as those minutes have been preserved on the records, yet they have not been able to discover the least intimation by which they might judge in whom, and by whose authority, that measure originated; they think it proper, however to remark, that superintendent Ferguson and Lawrie's letters to Sir Basil Keith, reporting to him their arrival, and what measures they had adopted to carry into execution his instructions and proclamations, do not appear upon the records, and the Board consider it very likely that this correspondence might throw considerable light upon the transaction; but it is not at all probable that it would strengthen and support in the smallest degree the argument of those gentlemen who have appeared before them; and who, with a view to retain the petitioners in slavery, have assumed that an Act, similar to that passed in Jamaica in the year 1741, must have been passed at the Mosquito Shore in the year 1777; and which, as they further presume, received the sanction and approval of his Majesty's government, or the governor of Jamaica. This correspondence, however, may easily be procured if required.

Appendix, No. 5.

Appendix, No. 6.

Robt. Douglas, esq. who was clerk to the council and secretary to superintendent Lawrie, is still alive, and referred to might afford considerable information on this and other subjects: he resides in Hutchiestown, Glasgow.

In reference to another objection advanced, the Board feel no difficulty whatever in deciding that the demand urged by some of the defendants, that the *burden of proof* of such an Act not having been passed, and that the ancestors of the petitioners were not registered in Jamaica in the year 1741, pursuant to the Act of that year, already alluded to, *lays on the petitioners*, is totally inadmissible, and entirely opposed to all justice and equity.

The Board have examined with the greatest care the evidence adduced by the petitioners, who have appeared before them in support of their claims to freedom by proving their descent from native Indians; and, as the result of their inquiries, they have annexed to this Report three different schedules.

The Schedule marked (A.) includes the names of all those who have proved their lineal descent from native Indians to the satisfaction of the Board.

The schedule marked (B.) includes the names of a family, who, though they have not satisfactorily proved their descent, have left a strong impression upon the mind of the Board that they may succeed in finding sufficient evidence in Jamaica, from whence their ancestor, a sambo woman, was brought to the Musquito Shore. The Board have been very particular in their inquiries into this case, in order to enable the law-officer of the crown in Jamaica to discover a sister of the petitioners, and by her means to obtain better proof of their ancestor, who was brought from Jamaica, being descended from an Indian woman.

The Schedule marked (C.) includes the names (already inserted in the Schedule marked (A.) of those against whom, though they have clearly proved their descent from native Indians, it is urged by the defendants that their ancestors were in a state of slavery prior to the year 1741.

The Board beg to observe, that in consequence of one of the petitioners, named Hector, having inserted in his petition the circumstance of his having been a soldier in the 6th West India regiment, from which he had been returned by his commanding

manding officer to his former owner, they have allowed Mr. John W. Wright, who claims him as his property, to adduce, and to enter into their minutes, evidence tending to prove that the said Hector was a runaway slave at the time of his enlisting, although that enrolment took place in England; but the Board deem it incumbent on them to declare, that they have not taken this part of the petitioners case under their consideration, conceiving it their duty to be entirely confined to the one object of ascertaining the lineal descent of the petitioners, and which, in this case, has been most satisfactorily proved to be from Indians of North America.

In reference to that part of His Majesty's superintendent's warrant which directs the Commissioners to assess damages in behalf of such of the petitioners as shall satisfactorily prove their descent from the native Indians of the Mosquito Shore, the Board having most maturely deliberated thereon, do feel no difficulty in declaring that such persons would be entitled to damages as could be proved to have been kept unjustly and knowingly in slavery; and therefore they have prepared and annexed to this Report a scale of remuneration, which in their judgment they deem would be a fair and equitable recompense.

The Commissioners however, notwithstanding this explicit declaration in favour of the claims of the Indians, do feel themselves bound to declare, that such are the extenuating circumstances under which it appears they have long been held in bondage, as greatly, if not entirely, to exculpate their present possessors; and therefore, that it would be unjust, except in some few cases, wherein it might be both just and proper, to charge upon them what might be considered as adequate and equitable indemnifications.

The following are some of the circumstances which the Board deem it but just to state on behalf of the present possessors of the petitioners:

That by the records of the Mosquito Shore, it appears Indians are held and publicly registered in that country as slaves, not only by the judges, the magistrates, and the settlers in general, but also by the officers representing His Majesty on the shore, and whose very commissions directed them to afford them all possible protection; and they were, moreover, openly levied upon and sold under the writs of the courts duly authorized.

That since the removal of the present petitioners or their parents from the Mosquito Shore, upon the evacuation thereof in the year 1787, they, or some of them, have, as the Commissioners understand, petitioned every superintendent in succession to assist and protect them in establishing their claims and recovering their freedom; and that, with the exception of two cases only which have come within the knowledge of the Board, they have invariably been referred to the magistrates for the time being.

The two cases alluded to were,

First, that which occurred during the superintendency of Colonel Edward Marcus Despard, who actually released one family of Spanish tributary Indians; and the other took place during the time of the last superintendant Colonel John Nugent Smyth, who, upon a petition from a family of Indian extraction, instituted a process in the court of the settlement for the establishment and recovery of their freedom; but the issue of the trial was, although the Indian descent of the family was both clearly proved and admitted, that the jury, notwithstanding, returned a verdict which confirmed the slavery of the parties.

That it has been the constant practice of this country, as it was on the Mosquito Shore, to levy upon all slaves, whether Indians or of Indian descent, under writs of execution for debt, and to sell them publicly in the presence of, and under the authority of the courts in all respects as negro slaves.

That many of the petitioners who have appeared before the Board, from their repeated admixtures with the African race, have so lost the appearance of their Indian origin as not to be distinguished from negro slaves; and in many cases have been bought and sold as such, without the least suspicion to the contrary; and the present possessors will now, many of them, necessarily become heavy sufferers in the loss of property, which they considered they legally held.

Under,

Under, therefore, all the circumstances of the case, the Commissioners consider it would be unjust, in addition to the actual loss of property which many of them must sustain, to burthen the present possessors with damages and penalties for crimes which did not originate with them, and for holding property which, until now, they have considered themselves entitled to, both under the legal authorities of the Mosquito Shore, for nearly a century past, and of this country, since the removal of the settlers and their properties hither in the year 1787.

In conclusion, the Board would moreover remark, that in consequence of the great length of time which the petitioners have been considered as slaves, they have passed through the hands of many persons whose estates, as well as many of those of the importers of the Indians from the Mosquito Shore, are either insolvent, or without representatives; and therefore that attempts to recover damages would not only create much painful and tedious litigation and re-action, but that if the petitioners should substantiate any claim to indemnification, the damages thereof must, necessarily, in most cases, fall upon the last purchasers, it being highly improbable that they could recover them from the holders prior to themselves, which the Board, upon the best of their judgment, have already deemed unjust, and, more especially, when the loss of the principal or purchase-money which such persons will sustain, be taken into consideration.

Finally, therefore, the Board conceive, that although, if the complainants or petitioners be free, their freedom is an inherent or unalienable right, of which no consideration can deprive them, yet, with respect to any damages which may be their due, their claims should only attach in equity unto those who have unjustly brought or held them in bondage; and that, in the event of the estates of such persons being insolvent, unrepresented, or extinct, the petitioners claim should be considered in the light of private debts; and consequently, subject, like other debts, to the contingency of insolvency.

Court House, Belize, Honduras, }
8th February 1822. }

Schedule (A.)

NAMES of the PETITIONERS.	Sex.	Supposed Age.	NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of the Persons under whom they were brought from the Musquitto Shore.	Names of the Native Indians from whom descended.	REMARKS.
Sam Potts	male	40 years	estate J. Potts and C. Ferrall	John Potts, sen. deceased	Marjery	Registered 27th Feb. 1777, by Joseph Wood.
Sally Wilson	female	36	estate John Potts	Gill, deceased	Massalah	
Peggy, and her children	male	40	estate of J. Potts, deceased	Captain Campbell	Betty	
Charles	male	24				
Billy	female	under 21 years.				
Violet	female					
Betty	male					
Darby	female					
Eleanor	female					
Rose	female					
Peggy's brother, named George	male	38	{ estate John Potts, deceased, and C. Ferrall }	Ditto	Ditto	
Fidelia Lawrie	female	40 & upwards	John Potts's estate	Colonel Lawrie	Rose	
Smart	male	25 years	Arch ^d Colquhoun J. C. Altereith Henrietta Godfrey Elizabeth Thurston Thomas Frain Eliz. Thurston, alias Tyler	Ditto	Nanny	Registered the 27th of Feb. 1777, by James and John Lawrie.
Phebe	female	15				
Quaw	male	29				
Eady, and two small children	female	25				
Nanny, and child	female	27				
Diego, or James	male	17				
Ann	female	14				
Cicely	female	25				
Betty Tyler	female	40	Thomas Frain	Colonel Lowrie's family	Fidelia	
Eleanor	female	15	Susan Usher	Stephen Winter	Isabella	
Fidelia	female	21				
Maria	female	19				
Catto	male	50				
Abigal	female	41				
Grace	female	39				
Nancy	female	17				
Ben	male	7				

Name	Sex	Age	Owner	Agent	Remarks
Jack	male	37 years	Marshal Bennett	Stephen Winter	Isabella.
Michael Prince	-	42	John W. Wright	-	-
Cynthia	female	34	-	Ditto	-
Sarah	female	38	-	-	-
Cumberland	male	5	-	-	-
Margaret	female	20	-	-	-
Grace	female	4	-	-	-
Bellouisa	-	1	-	-	-
Marjery	-	45	Sarah Keefe	Ditto	Ditto.
Green	male	26	-	-	-
Frank	male	22	-	-	-
George	male	17	-	-	-
Nancy	female	8	-	-	-
Catherine	female	7	-	-	-
Royal	male	2	-	-	-
Rebecca	female	5	-	-	-
Teruse	female	26	Sarah Winter	Ditto	Ditto.
Marina	-	27	-	-	-
Jack	male	10	-	-	-
George	male	6	George Gillett	Richard Gillett	Rosetta.
Mary	female	4	-	-	-
Mary	female	25	-	-	-
Hector, alias James Wright	male	50	John W. Wright	James D. Yarborough	The petitioner is descended from the North American Indians.
Horatio Lawrie	-	-	-	-	-
Susannah Bourke	female	46	Thomas Paslow	Colonel Lawrie's family	-
Sabina	female	50	-	-	-
James	male	26	-	-	-
Louisa	male	6	-	-	-
Emma	female	3	Edward Meighan	-	-
Bess	female	9	Owner not ascertained.	Mary Bourke's family	Bess
Betsy	-	24	See proceedings of commissioners on this subject, 24th Jan. 1822	-	-
Harriett	-	52	-	-	-
Will Patinett	male	37	-	-	-
James Patinett	male	28	-	-	-
Theresa	female	26	Ann and Lucy Patinett	John Gill	Rosanna
Abraham	female	22	-	-	-
Ben	male	15	-	-	-
Ben	male	3	-	-	-

Registered on the 28th of February 1777, by Mrs. Elizabeth Young, of Bragan's, on the Mosquito shore.

Registered by the representative of Abraham Gill's estate, on the Mosquito shore, 28th February 1777.

Schedule (A.)—continued.

NAMES of the PETITIONERS.	Sex.	Supposed Age.	NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of the Persons under whom they were brought from the Mosquito Shore.	Names of the Native Indians from whom descended.	REMARKS.
George	female	22 years	George Hume	Rebecca Hume	Cretia.	native Indian.
Charlotte M'Aulay	female	65	Leah M'Aulay	Messrs. Fox and Scholey	- - -	
Deptford	male	22	estate John Potts	James Rigby	Lucretia.	
Scipio	male	19				
Lucretia	female	15	Samuel F. August	Lydia Caddle	Celia.	
Martha	female	25				
Clarissa	female	6	John Alexander	-	-	
Celia Caddle	female	27	Marshal Bennett	John Bourke's family	Henrietta.	
Nancy	female	1½	estate John Potts	John Potts, deceased	Perkin.	
Andrew	male	20	Susanna Burrell	Dick Burrell	Maria.	
Glasgow	female	50				
Lettice	female	44				
Adelne	female	8				
Clarissa Burrell	female	46				
Francis	male	not ascertained				
Isaac	male					

Schedule (B.)

Memba	female	16 years	James Hyde	Captain Stoddart	said by the petitioner Mariana to be Wanakah.
John	male	12			
Toby	male	7	Charlotte Douglas	-	-
Peter	male	50			
Maurice	male	28	M. W. Bowen	-	-
Monimia	female	19	estate A ⁿ Anderson	-	-
Eliza	female	3 months			
Guy	male	42 years			
Scipio	male	36			

Schedule (C.)

Quaco	male	female	years	Arch ^d Colquhoun.	Stephen Winter	Isabella.
Eady and two small children	-	-	29	-	-	-
Nanny and child	-	-	25	-	-	-
Diego, or James	male	-	27	T. C. Altereith.	-	-
	-	-	17	Henrietta Godfrey.	-	-
Catto	-	-	50	-	-	-
Abigail	-	female	41	-	-	-
Grace	-	-	39	Susan Usher	-	-
Nancy	-	-	17	-	-	-
Ben	male	-	7	-	-	-
Jack	-	-	37	Marshal Bennett	-	-
Michael	-	-	42	-	-	-
Prince	-	-	34	John W. Wright	-	-
Cynthia	-	-	38	-	-	-
Sarah	female	-	5	-	-	-
Cumberland	-	male	20	-	-	-
Margaret	-	female	4	-	-	-
Grace	-	-	1	-	-	-
Bellouisa	-	-	45	-	-	-
Marjery	-	-	26	Sarah Keefe	-	ditto.
Green	-	-	22	-	-	-
Frank	male	-	17	-	-	-
George	-	-	8	-	-	-
Nancy	-	female	7	-	-	-
Catherine	-	-	2	-	-	-
Royal	male	-	5	-	-	-
Rebecca	-	female	26	Sarah Winter	-	ditto.
Hector, alias James Wright	male	-	50	John W. Wright	James D. Yarborough	Diana Fitz
Horatio Lawrie	-	-	46	Thomas Paslow	Colonel Lawrie's family	Roboy.

This petitioner is descended from the North American Indians.

Appendix, N° 1.

Warrant and Commission of His Majesty's Superintendent,
dated 8th day of January 1822.

By George Arthur, Esq. His Majesty's Superintendent and Commander-in-Chief of all His Majesty's subjects settled in Honduras, &c. &c. &c.

To A. H. Pye, esq. Major-General in His Majesty's forces; James Hyde, one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, and John Coatquelvin, esq. Major in His Majesty's forces, and acting King's Advocate.

WHEREAS I have in my Proclamation, bearing date the 5th day of January instant, declared that it is illegal to hold native Indians, or their descendants, in slavery: And whereas I have also declared that a Board of Commissioners should be constituted for the purpose of investigating into the descent of all persons asserting themselves to be Indians, or the descendants of Indians, I have, in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty, constituted and appointed you, and by these presents do constitute and appoint you, Major-General Pye, James Hyde, esq. and John Coatquelvin, esq. to be His Majesty's Commissioners for the purpose of investigating into, and reporting upon, all such matters as relate to the claims of all persons so representing themselves to be Indians, or of Indian descent; regulating your proceedings according to the spirit of the proclamation, and agreeably to the intent and meaning of the articles contained in this Commission and Warrant, under which you are specially authorized to act. James A. Carmichael, esq. keeper of the public records, is appointed clerk to the Commissioners for the purpose of duly recording its proceedings.

The annexed oath having been respectively administered to the President and members, the Commissioners will proceed with all convenient despatch to examine into the merits of the several claims which will be laid before them by persons purporting to be Indians, or the descendants of Indians; and will adjourn from time to time as occasion may require.

The desired object in constituting the commission is to enable His Majesty's superintendent to do justice to all those persons who represent themselves to be of Indian descent, with the least possible injury to the inhabitants, many of whom appear to have held them in slavery, some unconscious of their descent, and others of their right to freedom.

It is therefore presumed, that their descent being proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioners, and just and reasonable indemnification proposed by the Board, that both parties will acquiesce therein without any reference to a legal tribunal.

The Commissioners will therefore, first, ascertain the descent of the families or persons asserting themselves to be of Indian descent; and, secondly, report what in their judgment may be considered a just and reasonable compensation for the illegal servitude to which such persons or families have been subject. In adjudging compensation, various contingencies must be considered, viz. age, health, number of children, length of servitude, &c. &c.; the whole eventually to be referred to the standard of wages customary in the country. It will be a relief to the Commissioners to consider that the amount of compensation awarded will not be absolutely binding upon either party, as each will have an opportunity, when the decision of the Commissioners is proposed, either to accede thereto or abide the consequence of refusing.

As it is of indispensable necessity that the Commissioners should have access to all public documents to assist the investigation, and determine their judgment, you are hereby empowered and invested with authority to call upon the public officers, and all other individuals in the settlement, for full and satisfactory explanation, or examination of all papers, records, or documents of whatever denomination, connected with the subject of your commission, and all such persons are hereby enjoined and required to afford all possible information, and to answer, on oath, such interrogatories as the Commissioners may deem it necessary to put.

In order to facilitate the business of the Board, the Provost Marshal General will attend to summon such evidence as the Commissioners may require to appear before them.

Given under my hand and seal at the Government House, Belize, Honduras,
this 8th day of January 1822.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

I, Allen Hampden Pye, do swear, that in the course of the proceedings of the commission, under which, as President, I am called upon to act, by virtue of the warrant of His Majesty's superintendent, I will decide and give my opinion in all matters which may come before me, to the best of my judgment, without partiality, favour, or affection.

So help me God.

(signed) *A. Pye, M. G.*

I, James Hyde, do swear, that in the course of the proceedings of the commission, under which, as a member I am called upon to act, by virtue of the warrant of His Majesty's superintendent, I will decide and give my opinion in all matters which may come before me, to the best of my judgment, without partiality, favour, or affection.

So help me God.

(signed) *Jas Hyde.*

I, John Coatquelvin, do swear, that in the course of the proceedings of the Commission under which, as a member, I am called upon to act, by virtue of the warrant of His Majesty's superintendent, I will decide and give my opinion in all matters which may come before me, to the best of my judgment, without partiality, favour or affection.

So help me God.

(signed) *J. Coatquelvin.*

Major-General Pye sworn before me January the 9th 1822.

(signed) *Jas. Hyde, Judge of the Supreme Court.*

James Hyde, esquire, sworn before me the 9th of January 1822.

(signed) *A. Pye, M. G.*

John Coatquelvin, esquire, sworn before me, January the 9th 1822.

(signed) *A. Pye, M. G.*

Appendix, N^o 2.

Copy of an Act of the Legislature of Jamaica, dated 1741.

Anno Decimo Quarto Georgii II, c. vi.

AN Act for recovering and extending the trade with the Indian Settlements in America; and preventing for the future some evil practices formerly committed in that trade.

Preamble.

Whereas great advantages might be derived to His Majesty's subjects in general, and more particularly to the inhabitants of this island, if a good correspondence and open commerce were established between them and the Indians on the continent in America :

And whereas the evil practices of several traders of this island, who have frequently taken Indians from their settlements clandestinely, and sold them in this island for slaves, have occasioned some of the Indian settlements in America, with whom His Majesty's subjects held a friendly intercourse, and carried on a beneficial trade, particularly those Dariei and Samblas, to withdraw their friendship from His Majesty's subjects, and to enter into an alliance and friendship with the Spaniards, and have not only discouraged those settlements from continuing, but many others of the Indians (it may be presumed) from engaging in any commerce with us; In order, therefore, to prevent for the future such unfair, barbarous, and pernicious practices, and to remove the ill effects of those already committed, We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Assembly of this Your Island of Jamaica, most humbly beseech Your Majesty, that it may be enacted; Be it therefore enacted and ordained by the authority of the Governor, Council, and Assembly of this Your Majesty's Island, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, that all Indians who shall arrive or be imported for sale into this island, from and after the first day of June, in the year of our Lord 1741, shall be free, to all intents and purposes, as any other aliens or foreigners are; and that all sales made in this island to any person or persons residing or that shall reside or belong to this Island, of any Indian or Indians, from and after the said first day of June in the said year 1741, shall be absolutely null and void; and that if any person or persons shall, from and after the said first day of June 1741, sell or buy any Indian or Indians so imported, every such person or persons shall forfeit for every such offence the sum of 50 *l.* to be recovered

Indians arriving or brought for sale declared free.

Buyers and sellers to forfeit 50 *l.* each; now 500 *l.*

Recovery and application thereof.

recovered in the Supreme Court of Judicature of this island, by action of debt, bill, plaint or information, wherein no essoin, protection, wager of law, or injunction, shall be granted or allowed, or *non vult ulterius prosequi* be entered; and one moiety whereof shall be to the informer, or him or them who shall sue for the same, and the other moiety to the use of His Majesty, his heirs, and successors for and towards the support of the government of this island, and the contingent charges thereof.

2. And be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That all owners of Indian slaves in this island, their agents or attornies, shall on or before the 28th day of December in the said year of our Lord 1741, give in the names and sexes of all Indians which belong to them respectively, to the secretary of this island, to be registered in his office, or to the clerk of the vestry in the parishes where they reside, to be there entered in the vestry-books of the said parishes; and that all and every Indian and Indians, whose name or names, sex or sexes, shall not be given in as aforesaid, shall be free to all intents and purposes.

3. Provided always, that [and] it is the true intent and meaning of this, so that all and every person or persons who is or are already seised of any Indian slave or slaves shall have power to sell and otherwise dispose of all and every such Indian and Indians, in as full and ample manner as he or they might have done before the making of this Act.

A true copy.

Jas A. Carmichael.

Clerk to the Commrs investigating Indian Claims.

Names of Indian slaves now here to be registered.

In default they become free.

Such slaves may still be sold.

Appendix, No. 3.

Copy of Sir Basil Keith's Proclamation, dated 29th December 1775.

BY THE KING.

Jamaica fs.

A Proclamation.

WHEREAS, many of our subjects at Black River on the Mosquito Shore, misled by ill-designing people, and forgetting the allegiance which they owe to us, have lately presumed to form and establish a constitution of civil government among themselves, and to elect officers and magistrates for the administration of the same, without any powers or authority derived from us for that purpose, which proceedings are against our peace, court, and dignity: And whereas many of our said subjects, through an ungoverned and insatiable desire of lawless gain, have made slaves of several native Indians of the said Shore, or the parts adjacent, and shipped them off for sale in violation of the common feeling and rights of humanity, and also of the obvious principles of policy; To the end therefore that none of our subjects may for the future violate their duty in the particulars above recited, we have thought fit to issue this our royal proclamation, hereby declaring our just displeasure at such insults offered to our authority, and that all such proceedings are acts of usurpation against our royal prerogative, and against the personal rights of the said native Indians, and hereby strictly forbidding all our loyal subjects on the said Mosquito Shore to offend in the like instances under the pains and penalties that will fall thereon.

Witness, his Excellency Sir Basil Keith, Captain General and Governor in chief of our said Island of Jamaica, and other the territories thereon depending, in America, Chancellor and Vice-Admiral of the same, at St. Jago de la Vega, the 29th day of December, in the sixteenth year of our reign Annoque Domini, 1775.

BASIL KEITH.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

By his Excellency's command (signed) *Richard Lewing*, Secretary.

(Great
Seal.)

A true copy from the Records of the Mosquito Shore,

(signed) *James A. Carmichael.*

Clerk to the Commissioners Investigating Indian Claims.

Appendix, N^o 4.

Copy of an Act of the Legislature of Jamaica, 1776.

Anno Decimo Septimo Georgii III. c. xxiii.

AN ACT to explain and amend an Act, intituled "An Act for Recovering and
 "Extending the Trade with the Indian Settlement in America, and preventing
 "for the future some evil Practices formerly committed in that Trade." 14 Geo. 3. c. 6.

WHEREAS the Act, intituled "An Act for Recovering and Extending the Trade
 "with the Indian Settlement in America, and preventing for the future some evil
 "Practices formerly committed in that Trade," hath not been effectual to prevent
 several ill-disposed persons, traders from this island, from stealing Indians upon
 the continent in America, and transporting them from their habitations, and selling
 them for slaves, or as indented servants, to the great prejudice of the trade with
 the Indian settlements on the continent of America;—In order therefore to pre-
 vent such unfair, barbarous, and pernicious practices, We, Your Majesty's most
 dutiful and loyal subjects, the Assembly of Jamaica, most humbly beseech Your
 Majesty that it may be enacted; Be it therefore enacted and ordained, by the
 authority of the Governor, Council, and Assembly of this Your Majesty's island of
 Jamaica, and it is hereby enacted and declared by the authority of the same, That all
 Indians whatsoever brought to this island since the 28th day of December, which
 was in the year of our Lord 1741, and their descendants, are hereby declared to
 be free people, to all intents and purposes whatsoever, any law, custom, usage, or
 agreement to the contrary thereof in anywise notwithstanding; and that if any
 person or persons shall sell or buy such Indian or Indians, such person or persons
 shall forfeit the sum of 500*l.* to be recovered by action of debt, bill, plaint, or in-
 formation, in the supreme court of judicature, at the instance of the attorney-
 general or clerk of the crown in the same court, who are hereby directed to
 prosecute and sue for the same; in which actions no *essoign*, protection, wager of
 law, imparlance, or injunction, shall be allowed, or *non vult ulterius prosequi* be
 entered; the whole of which penalty when recovered, after deducting necessary
 charges and expenses of prosecution, shall be paid to the receiver general for the
 use of his Majesty, his heirs and successors, for and towards the support of the
 government of this island, and the contingent charges thereof.

Preamble.

Indians brought
since Dec. 28, 1741,
and their descendants
declared free.500*l.* penalty on
buyer and sellers of
them.Recovery of such
penalty,

and application.

2. And whereas the kidnapping or stealing of any Indians, and transporting them
 from their settlement, or elsewhere, to this island or elsewhere for sale, is a very
 great offence; Be it Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That if any person or persons
 whatsoever shall be convicted in His Majesty's supreme court of judicature, or
 courts of assize in this island, of kidnapping or stealing any Indian, or transporting
 him, her or them, from their settlements or elsewhere to this island or elsewhere
 for sale, such person or persons shall be deemed guilty of felony, and shall suffer
 death as a felon, without benefit of clergy; any law, custom, or usage to the contrary
 notwithstanding.

Persons kidnapping,
or stealing Indians,
with intent to sell
them, to suffer death.

(A true copy.)

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,*
 Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian Claims.

Appendix, N° 5.

RETURN of Indians Registered on the Records of the Mosquito Shore,
in the Year 1777.

NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of Indians.	Sex.	Age per Register.	Date of Registry.	REMARKS.	
Bryan M'Daniell - -	Pickle - -	male - -	years. not mentioned	1777 :		
John Pitt - - -	Johnny - - -	- - -	20	} 24 Feb.		
Daniel Young - - -	Copeland - - -	- - -	30			
	Catto - - -	- - -	18			
David Grey - - -	Dublin - - -	- - -	12	} 25 Feb.		
William Stoddard - - -	Phœbe - - -	female - - -	15			
	Nancy - - -	- - -	9			
Susannah Burrell - - -	Dido - - -	- - -	14 or 15	} 26 Feb.		
Bartholomew Gilbert - - -	Dublin - - -	male - - -	not mentioned			
	Simon - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Cillia - - -	female - - -	- - -			
	Juana - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Cillia - - -	- - -	- - -			
Robert Hodgson - - -	Margaritta - - -	- - -	not mentioned			
	Jemimo - - -	- - -	30	} 26 Feb.		
	Loraina - - -	- - -	20			at the Corn Islands.
	Dinas - - -	- - -	25			at Cape Gracios a Dios.
	Nelly - - -	- - -	13		at Black River.	
James Hoy - - -	Lucy - - -	- - -	20			
	Mary - - -	- - -	22			
Philip Bode, and Wil- liam Lister Hoy - - -	Toby - - -	male - - -	30			
	Lucy - - -	female - - -	15			
	Statira - - -	- - -	30			
	Patience - - -	- - -	35			
	Ame - - -	- - -	30			
	Monimia - - -	- - -	17			
Robert Kaye - - -	Charles - - -	male - - -	25	} 27 Feb.		
	Jack - - -	- - -	25			
Lawrence Rowson - - -	Hannah - - -	female - - -	45			
	Beauty - - -	- - -	25			
	Maugy - - -	- - -	20			
	Phillis - - -	- - -	16			
	Kate - - -	- - -	11			
Joseph Wood - - -	Jack & his wife	male - - -	- - -		5 feet 1 inch high.	
	Mary, with five small children - - -	female - - -	- - -		5 feet.	
	Adam & his wife - - -	male - - -	- - -		5 feet.	
	Hannah with 3 children - - -	female - - -	- - -		5 feet 2 inches.	
	Tom - - -	male - - -	- - -	} 27 Feb.	5 feet 2 inches.	
	Shallaba - - -	female - - -	- - -			5 feet 10 inches.
	Janey, & her 4 children - - -	- - -	- - -	} not mentioned		
	Sarah, & her 2 children - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Massalah, & one child - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Bess, & her 4 children - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Pasiance, & her 4 chil- dren - - -	- - -	- - -			
	Peggy, & her 2 children - - -	- - -	- - -			
Matthew Earnest's estate	Fortune - - -	male - - -	18			
	Jenny - - -	female - - -	28			
	Lilly - - -	- - -	6			

NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of Indians.	Sex.	Age, per Register.	Date of Registry.	REMARKS.		
Daniel Hewlett - -	Quamino -	male -	years. 20	1777:			
	Cupid -	- -	16				
	Bob -	- -	12				
	Juba -	female	30				
	Marian -	- -	20				
	Holyday -	male -	2				
John Gallen - - -	Toby -	- -	16				
John Wagner - - -	Nolly -	female	} not mentioned				
George Hewm - - -	Cyrus -	male -				18	
	Diana -	female	30				
Lewis Harris - - -	Isaac -	male -	-				
	Toby -	- -	-				
	Cain -	- -	-				
Elizabeth Young, of Bragman's	Thomas -	- -	-			} 28 Feb.	
	Will -	- -	-				
		Maria -	female				-
		Silla -	- -				-
		Lucy -	- -				-
		Jenny -	- -				-
		Beckey -	- -				-
		Malina -	- -				-
		Lucinda -	- -				-
		Jemima -	- -				-
		Mary -	- -				-
		Clara -	- -				-
		Bess -	- -	-			
		Patrona -	- -	-			
		Louis -	- -	-			
		Starboard -	- -	-			
		Sabil -	- -	-			
		Soma -	- -	-			
		Lettice -	- -	-			
		Peggy -	- -	-			
		Shalibah -	- -	-			
		Phillis -	- -	-			
	William Young's estate	Rosanna -	- -	} not mentioned			
		Maria -	- -				-
		Kitty -	- -				-
	Man -	- -	-				
Abraham Gill's estate -	Kingsale -	male -	-				
	Cork -	- -	-				
	Labrina -	- -	-				
	Bristol -	- -	-				
	Drogheda -	- -	-				
	Antrim -	- -	-				
	Thorn -	- -	-				
	Wang -	- -	-				
	James -	- -	-				
	Rosannah -	female	-				
	Marcilla -	- -	-				
	Hannah -	- -	-				
	Boatswain -	- -	-				
	Molly -	- -	-				
	Toublow -	- -	-				
	Monomy -	- -	-				
	Isabella -	- -	-				
	Peggy -	- -	-				
	Sophia -	- -	-				
	Sally -	- -	-				
	Deliah -	female	-				
	Diana -	- -	-				
	Maria -	- -	-				
	Paulina -	- -	-				
	Venus -	- -	-				
	Nelly -	- -	-				
James and John Laurie -	Bristol -	male -	30				
	Lancaster -	- -	18				

(continued)

NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of Indians.	Sex.	Age per Register.	Date of Registry.	REMARKS.
James and John Laurie— <i>continued.</i>	Montezuma	male	20	1777 :	
	Mahio	-	20		
	Frank	-	20		
	H. Clinker	-	10		
	Nancy	female	25		
	Mary	-	30		
	Rose	-	25		
	Cuba	-	9		
	Fanny	-	12		
	Jenny	-	25		
Charles Keeffe - -	Thomas	male	18	28 Feb.	
	Andrew	-	30		
John Bourke - -	Prince	-	15		
	March	-	14		
	Rose	female	35		
Thomas Marriott Perkins	Isaac	male	not	- -	run away from H. M. P.
Adam P. Durant - -	Charlotte	female	mentioned		
	Bess	-	20		
John Allum - - -	Jenny	-	18		
	Jannett	-	9 months		
	Blanco	male	21		
	Joseph	-	5		
	Chance	-	24		
	Toby	-	20		
	Harry	-	18		
	Tom	-	25		
	Jack	-	16		
	Dick	-	23		
William Reed - -	Jane	female	30		
	Juliet	-	15		
Benjamin Hemmin - -	Pistol	male	not		
	Zinen	-	16		
John Broster - -	Mary	female	40		
John and Mary Galley -	Dann	male	20		
	Phillis	female	-		Bocotora. Valiante. Zerrebee. Zoluskey.
	Celia	-	not		
Glouster	male	mentioned			
Thomas Whitehead - -	Hannah	female	-		
John Neale - - -	Adam	male	-		
	Elizabeth Vezey - -	Phillis	female	30	
Nancy		-	18		
Chrestian Thed. Post -	Hannah	-	35		Wolwa Indians.
	Sally	-	25		
Thomas Pattonett - -	Edenborough	male	30	1 Mar.	
	Toby	-	20		
	Dick	-	28		
	Sinbad	-	3		
	Sophia	female	23		
Charles Russell - - -	Joe	male	26		Returned by T. Pattonett as slaves under his charge, and in his possession.
David Saby - - -	Dianah	female	24		
	Edenborough	male	6		Returned by W. Hunt.
William Hunt - - -	Billy	-	4		
	Jeany	female	24		
Sally Lock - - -	Francisca	-	40		
	Tom	male	30		Returned by Mr. Jennison.
Catherine Jennison -	Robin	-	25		
	George	-	20		
	James	-	5		
	Phœbe	female	24		
Mary Walker - - -	Sicily	-	10		
	Hannah	-	30		
Edward Caddle - - -	Tyrone	male	14	27 Mar.	run away.
	Newton	-	20		

NAMES of PROPRIETORS.	Names of Indians.	Sex.	Age per Register.	Date of Registry	REMARKS.	
William Anderson	Roger Tagg	male	years.	1777 :	Bocotora Zerrybee Woolwa - - - Zerrybee - - Bocotora Blanco Valiante - - - Sambo - - Shargana Shallibah Woolwa Valiante Cookra - - Children born in the family.	
	Tom	-	-	-		
	Toby	-	-	-		-
	Casto	-	-	-		-
	Woolwich	-	-	-		-
	Terrible	-	-	-		-
	O' Cromwell	-	-	-		-
	Chelsea	-	-	-		-
	Glasgow	-	-	-		-
	Perth	-	-	-		-
	Dundee	-	-	-		-
	Elgin	-	-	-		-
	Sweepstakes	-	-	-		7 April
	Cupid	-	-	-		-
	Lettice	female	-	-		-
	Phoebe	-	-	-		-
	Nancy	-	-	-		-
	Nancy	-	-	-		-
	Phillis	-	-	-		-
	Lorena	-	-	-		-
	Lucinda	-	-	-		-
Phillis	-	-	-	-		
Dorinda	-	-	-	-		
Jeremiah Rigby and Rebecca Fox.	Humphrey	-	Not mentioned.	-	-	
	Rosanny	-		-	-	
	Santon	-		-	-	
	Bricksome	-		-	-	
	Euter	-		-	-	
	Will	-		-	-	
	Tom	-		-	-	
	Cornwall	-		-	-	
	Bristol	-		-	-	
	Toby	-		-	-	
	Robin	-		-	-	
	Rosannah	female		-	-	
	Iding	-		-	-	
	Passquall	-		-	-	
	Chloe	-		-	20 Aug.	
	Isabella	-		-	-	
	Dianna	-		-	-	
Kate	-	-	-			
Nelly	-	-	-			
Betty	-	-	-			
Mary	-	-	-			
Joan	-	-	-			
Myrilla	-	-	-			
Susannah	-	-	-			
Rebecca Fox	Quash	male	-	-	-	
	Dorinda	female	-	-	-	
	Patrona	-	-	-	-	

Truly extracted from the Records of the Mosquito Shore, lodged in the Office of Records at Belize, in the Bay of Honduras.

February 8th, 1822.

(signed)

James A. Carmichael,
As Keeper of Records.

Appendix, N° 6.

May it please your Excellency,

WE, the council and magistrates of the Mosquito Shore, for ourselves and in behalf of the other inhabitants, beg leave by this opportunity to acknowledge having received your Excellency's letter, directed to the principal inhabitants of this colony, by John Fergusson, esquire, our present superintendent; and permit us to assure your Excellency, that we retain in our minds the most grateful sense of your Excellency's goodness in bestowing so much care and attention upon the concerns of this infant colony, particularly by appointing Mr. Fergusson to succeed Mr. Hodgson, who by his illegal and unconstitutional proceedings since his arrival here, as superintendent, has drawn upon himself the contempt and indignation of all the inhabitants of this settlement; and we flatter ourselves, that when your Excellency is informed how greatly our conduct has been misrepresented by Mr. Hodgson to Lord Dartmouth, late secretary of state for American affairs, that you will use your interest to prevent his ever returning to this country in any public capacity whatever.

At present we have the fairest prospect of enjoying internal peace and quiet, in consequence of the harmony and good understanding which subsists between Mr. Fergusson, the present superintendent, and his Majesty's loyal subjects settled here; and we shall esteem his continuance amongst us in that character as a singular happiness. With respect to what has happened relative to the colony since Mr. Fergusson's arrival here we leave entirely to him, who will no doubt acquaint your Excellency with every material occurrence since that period; but before we conclude, we cannot forget assuring your Excellency, that we will at all times most cheerfully obey his Majesty's commands that may be transmitted to us by your Excellency, or any other of his Majesty's governors; and so far are we from wishing to live in the lawless manner as represented by Mr. Hodgson, we now think ourselves particularly fortunate in having a regular form of government established amongst us, which has in a great measure been the means of restoring that peace and tranquillity we have so long been strangers to.

We have the honour to be, with the greatest respect, &c.

(signed)

John Bourke,	William Reid,	Philip Bocle,
John Lawrie,	John Gallen,	John Orrett,
Dan. Hewlett,	James Howe,	Joshua Stoddart.

To his Excellency Sir Basil Keith, Governor and Commander in Chief, &c. &c. &c. of his Majesty's Island of Jamaica.	Black River, Mosquito Shore, 20th April 1776.
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The foregoing letters are truly copied from the records of the Mosquito Shore, as lodged in the office of records at the settlement of Belize, in the Bay of Honduras.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,*
A' Keeper of Records.

Appendix, N° 7.

Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of Indian Claims, with the Correspondence and Documents appertaining to the same.

Honduras *Is.*

AT a Board of Commissioners of Indian claims, assembled at Belize, on the 9th of January 1822, under and by virtue of a commission from George Arthur, esquire, His Majesty's superintendent, dated January 8th, 1822, addressed to Major General Pye, James Hyde, and John Coatquelvin, esquires.

(N° 1.)

THE commission having been opened and read,

Major General Pye took the oath prescribed as president of the Board; and afterwards administered the oath to James Hyde, esquire, and John Coatquelvin, esquire, as members thereof, who took their seats accordingly.

The

The Board then came to the following resolutions :

First.—That the Board will assemble every morning at eleven o'clock.

Second.—That the investigation of the claims of the Indians shall be conducted as in the Court of Chancery, by affidavit.

Third.—That when the assumed owner of an individual, claiming himself as an Indian, or one of their descendants, shall oppose or deny the evidence adduced, the burden of proof shall, according to law, rest with the owner.

Fourth.—That the following standard of compensation will form the rule by which they shall be generally guided :

Men of twenty years of age to be entitled to 5*l.*, and above that age 10*l.* more for every year above twenty, and below forty ; beyond which there shall be no further compensation.

Women of twenty years of age to be entitled to 5*l.* and above that age 5*l.* more for every year to the age of forty, beyond which there shall be no further compensation.

The Commissioners deeming it expedient that some one should be in constant attendance on them to call evidence, &c. &c. &c. William White is employed as a messenger, to receive hire from this day.

Read the petition of Samuel Potts.

Dorinda Potts, called and sworn ; states, That she knows the petitioner ; that his mother was named Marjery, and that she was an Indian woman, who was purchased from Mr. Bentlett by the late Thomas Potts, esquire.

James Gladding, called in and sworn ; states, He knows the grandmother and mother of the petitioner, that they were both Indians ; he knew them at the Corn Islands, they were at that time in the possession of the late Mr. John Potts' father ; that he (this evidence) was, in the year 1779, living at the same place with the petitioner's mother ; petitioner was at that time about three years old, as near as he can recollect, and it was generally understood that the petitioner was the son of the Indian woman whom he knew at the Corn Islands.

The petitioner appeared to the Commissioners to be upwards of forty years of age.

For further evidence on this case, see Proceedings on Tuesday, January 15th, page 66.

Read the petition of Tinah Sutherland, on behalf of her sister, named Sally Wilson.

Tinah Sutherland, called and sworn ; states, That she is the sister of Sally Wilson ; that their mother was named Violet, alias Mary Wood ; was an Indian, and that their grandmother was named Massalah, who was held in possession of Joseph Wood on the Mosquito Shore.

Reference being had to the records of the Mosquito Shore, the name of Massalah and one child appeared on the return handed in by Joseph Wood, and recorded the 27th February 1777.

Dorinda Potts, called and sworn ; states, That she knows the petitioner and Sally Wilson, her sister ; that their mother was named Violet, and was an Indian, held in possession by Captain Hugh Wilson ; but does not know who was Mary, alias Violet's mother.

The petitioner appeared to be about 36 years old.

Examination resumed on *Thursday, January 10th, 1822.*

Mary Wood, called and sworn ; states, She knows the petitioner's mother and grandmother, who were both Indians of the Buccatora nation. The grandmother was named Maria and the mother named Violet.

The Buccatora Indians were generally smoked out of their holes by the Mosquito men.

Read

Read the petition of Peggy, on behalf of herself, her brother named George, and her children named Charles, Billy, Violet, Betty, Darby, Eleanor and Rose.

Violet Smith, called and sworn; states, She knows the petitioners, Peggy and George, also their mother, whose name was Betty; she was an Indian, held by Major Campbell on the Mosquito Shore.

Dorinda Potts, being already sworn, states, That she knew the mother of Peggy and George; her name was Betty; she was an Indian, and as she heard, was held in possession of Major Campbell, on the Mosquito Shore; she also knows that the petitioners, named Charles, Billy, Violet, Betty, Darby, Eleanor and Rose, are the children of the said Indian woman named Peggy.

It appeared to the Commissioners that Peggy is upwards of 40 years of age, and that George is about 38 years, Charles 24, Billy 19 years old, and the rest under that age.

Read the petition of Fidelia Lawrie, on behalf of herself and her children, Smart and Phœbe.

Schebreen Lawrie, called and sworn; states, He knows the petitioner, as also her mother, who was an Indian, named Rose. She was held in slavery by Colonel Lawrie on the Mosquito Shore; the petitioner came to this place along with Colonel Lawrie's family from the Shore, and remained in possession of his son Mr. James Pitt Lawrie, until his death, when she was purchased by the late John Potts, deceased, in whose possession she remained until his death, a short time ago; he knows the other petitioners, named Smart and Phœbe, to be the children of Fidelia.

Abraham Lawrie, called and sworn; states, He knows the petitioner Fidelia, and her mother, whose name was Rose; that Rose was an Indian, and held in possession of Mr. Lawrie, on the Mosquito Shore, to whom he also belonged. He knows that the petitioner Smart is the son of Fidelia, but does not know the girl Phœbe, as she must have been born since he left the family.

The petitioner Fidelia appears to be upwards of 40 years of age, her son Smart to be about 25 years, and Phœbe appears to be under 15 years of age.

The Commissioners then adjourned until to-morrow morning, at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners for investigating Indian Claims.

Thursday, January 10th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met according to adjournment.

Read the petition of Sarah Flowers, on behalf of herself and her brother Quaw, her sisters Eady and Nanny and their issue, and her brother Diego, alias James.

Sea-Born, called and sworn; states, He knows the petitioners Sarah, Eady, Quaw, Nanny and Diego; that their mother's name was Juba, and their grandmother named Nanny, who was an Indian; that Nanny, the grandmother, belonged to Mr. John Lawrie, on the Mosquito Shore; did not know the mother of Indian Nanny, she being brought from the Indians when she was quite a young woman; does not know the nation to which she belonged, but it was to windward of the Black River.

Abraham Lawrie, called and sworn; states, That he knew Mr. Lawrie brought a little Indian girl, named Cookrah Nanny, from Bluefields to Black River; that she was naked, but does not know whether he purchased her, nor how he became possessed of her: That she remained in the family of Mr. Lawrie, at the Mosquito Shore, until the evacuation of that place, when she accompanied his family here; that she had a child, named Juba; and that he knows the petitioners named Quaw, Eady and Nanny, to be the children of the said Juba. At the time Mr. Lawrie brought Nanny from Bluefields, Mr. Courant was settled there, and had a number of slaves, but does not know whether he had any Indian slaves. Does not know the mother of Nanny, but supposes that she was in the Bush, as two of Nanny's cousins came occasionally to see her, and they were both Indians.

Catherine

Catherine Savery called, and sworn; states, She knows the petitioners, viz. Sarah, Quaw, Eady, Nanny, and Diego or James, as also their mother, whose name was Juba, and their grandmother, named Nanny, whom she knows to have been an Indian.

Reference being had to the records of the Mosquito Shore, the name of Nanny, aged 25 years, appeared returned as one of the Indians held in possession of Mr. James and John Lawrie, dated 27th February 1777.

Mr. Archibald Colquhoun, as owner of Quaw and Eady, and her issue, read and delivered to the Commissioners a paper; a certified copy of which is attached to these proceedings (No. 1.)

It appears to the Commissioners that Eady is about 25 years old, Nanny, 27, and Quaw, 29; Diego, 17, and the rest of the petitioners quite children.

Read the petition of Mary Lawrie, on behalf of her son James, her daughter Ann, and her sister Cicely.

Abraham Lawrie called, and being previously sworn, states, That he knows the petitioners named Mary and Cicely; that they are the children of an Indian woman named Cuba; he also knew Cuba's mother, who was named Mary, who was of the Woolvah nation of Indians: both Mary and Cuba were held by Colonel Lawrie on the Mosquito Shore, but does not know how he became possessed of them.

Elizabeth Lawrie called and sworn; states, She knows the petitioners Mary and Cicely; that their mother, named Cuba, belonged to her father, Superintendent Lawrie, on the Mosquito Shore, and afterwards to her brother; she was a real Indian of the Mosquito Shore.

James Neal, the father of the petitioner James, who had purchased him for his freedom, being sworn, declared the said James to be free, although he had not given a legal deed to that effect.

The petitioner Cecilia appeared to the Commissioners to be about 25 years of age, and Ann about 14 years old.

Cuba and Mary, the mother and grandmother of the petitioners Mary and Cicely, appeared on the records of the Mosquito Shore returned as the property of James and John Lawrie, which return was recorded the 27th February 1777.

Read the petition of Betty Tyler, on behalf of herself and her children, named Fidelia, Maria, and Eleanor.

John Courant called and sworn; states, That he knows the petitioner Betty, as also her mother, who was an Indian, named Fidelia, in the possession of his former master Mr. Courant, on the Mosquito Shore; Fidelia was an Indian of the Cookrah nation. Also knows the petitioners, Fidelia and Eleanor, to be the children of the said Betty, and that she has another child who is up the river at present.

Mary Wood called and sworn; states, That she knew the mother of the petitioner, whose name was Fidelia, an Indian woman, whom Mr. Courant purchased from some Mosquito men at Bluefields, when the witness was a very young woman: [the witness appeared to the Commissioners to be about 50 years old] she also knows the petitioners, named Fidelia and Eleanor, now before the Commissioners, are the children of Betty, and that she has also another child, who is at present up the river.

The petitioner Betty appeared to the Commissioners to be about 40 years old, Fidelia, 21, Maria, 19, and Eleanor, 15 years of age.

The Commissioners then adjourned until to-morrow, at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commiss^{rs} for investigating Indian claims.

Friday, January 11th 1822.

THE Commissioners met.

Read the petition of Cumberland Winter, on behalf of Catto, Jack, Abigail, and Grace, Michael and Prince, Cynthia, Bellouisa, and Rebecca, all the grandchildren of a woman named Isabella; Ben and Nancy the children of Grace; Cumberland,
Sarah,

Sarah, Margaret, and Grace, the children of Cynthia ; Marjery, Green, and Frank, the children of Bellouisa ; and Grace, Nancy, Catherine and Royal, the children of Marjery.

On this petition being read, all the petitioners appeared before the Commissioners, except Rebecca, who was reported to be unable to attend in consequence of sickness.

A genealogical table of this family is attached to these proceedings, (N^o 2.)

Chloe Sparkes, called and sworn ; states, That she knows the petitioners named Catto, Jack, Abigail, Grace, Michael, Prince, Cynthia, Bellouisa and Rebecca.

On the petitioners being shown to her, she said she did not recognize Rebecca among them.

That she knew the grandmother of Catto, Jack, Abigail, and Grace, named Isabella, who was an Indian ; also their mother, whose name was Beck, and was a Sambo. That when she knew Isabella she lived at the Mosquito Shore, and was in the family of Stephen Winter. She knows Michael and Prince to be the children of Patience, a daughter of Rebecca or Beck, who is now free ; also that Ben and Nancy are the children of Grace ; that Cynthia and Bellouisa are the children of Bella, who is now dead, and was one of the children of the said Rebecca. That Isabella died on the Mosquito Shore, in the service of the said Stephen Winter ; and that Rebecca died here. She does not know of what nation of Indians Isabella was ; does not know how Isabella came in possession of Stephen Winter, as when she was at the Shore she found her in his family. Rebecca was born before she knew Isabella, and was a little older than her. When she, the evidence, had her first child, Captain Cahoon was not dead, but he was blind, and Rebecca's child was older than hers, from which evidence the Commissioners conclude that Rebecca was born about the year 1745, and her mother Isabella in the year 1725.

Elizabeth Cahoon, called and sworn ; states ; That she knew Isabella, an Indian woman, and has heard that she was of the Sambolah nation ; that Isabella was older than her, but when she had her first child, she, the evidence, was a young woman grown up. Isabella belonged to Mr. Winter when she first knew her. The first of her children that Evidence knew was named Beck.

That she, the Evidence, was born on the Mosquito Shore, in the family of Thomas Goff, and afterwards lived in the family of Captain Cahoon. That at the time Captain Cahoon was first married she was a young woman, and had a husband, and knew both Captain Cahoon and his first wife before they were married.

From which the Commissioners conclude this evidence to be about ninety-two years old, which is confirmed by her personal appearance.

Hannah Myvett, the eldest daughter of the last witness, called and sworn ; states, That she knows the petitioners named Catto, Jack, Abigail, and Grace, to be the children of a woman named Beck, but does not know Beck's mother.

Sam Hickey, son of *Elizabeth Cahoon*, called and sworn ; states, That he was a man grow up when the expedition was fitted out from Jamaica to attack Omoa, and was on that expedition ; and that his brother was a little older than himself.

Elizabeth Cahoon called again ; states, That her son Valentine was about 18 months older than Sam. That when Valentine was born she was about 25 years old.

Catto appeared to the Commissioners to be about 50 years old.

Abigail - -	41 years of age.	Sarah - -	5 years of age.
Grace - -	39	Margaret - -	4
Jack - -	37	Grace - -	1
Cynthia - -	38	Margery - -	26
Bellouisa - -	45	Green - -	22
Rebecca - -	26	Frank - -	17
Nancy - -	17	George - -	8
Ben - -	7	Nancy - -	7
Michael - -	42	Royal - -	5
Prince - -	34	Catharine - -	2
Cumberland	20		

John W. Wright, esquire, the present proprietor of Michael and Prince, handed to the Commissioners his objections.—(N^o 3.)

Read the petition of Mimba, on behalf of herself and her uncles, Peter and Maurice, and her brothers, John and Toby, accompanied by a letter from James Hyde, esquire (the present owner of the petitioners, to George Arthur, esquire, His Majesty's superintendent (N° 4.)

Read the petition of Marina Douglas, on behalf of her daughter Monimia, her brothers, Guy and Scipio, and her grand-daughter, the infant of Monimia.

These two Petitions were laid before the Commissioners together; the two families appearing to be connected (see Schedule B.) and N° 23, at the end of these proceedings.

Elizabeth Cahoon called and sworn; states, That she knew the grandmother of Marina; she was of Indian descent, her name was Mimba; but does not know whether it was her father or her mother who was an Indian, as she did not know either of them; Mimba was brought from Jamaica by Captain Stoddart; Evidence was free four or five years before Captain Stoddart brought Mimba from Jamaica.

The petitioner, Marina, states, That she was informed by her mother, that her grandmother was named Mimba, and her great-grandmother named Wannekah, who was a real Indian; that a Mustee woman, who was living with the gentleman who sent her mother and grandmother from the Island of Jamaica to the Mosquito Shore by Captain Stoddart, requested him to leave petitioner's sister behind at Jamaica; saying, that she was so young it would never be discovered that she was of the Indian race; her mother told her, that her sister was used to be called Lucy; but she has since heard that her name is changed to Betsey.

It appeared to the Commissioners that Peter is about 50 years old, Guy, 42 years, Scipio, 36 years, Maurice, 28 years, Monimia, 19 years, Mimba, 16 years, John, 12 years, Toby, 7 years, and Monimia's infant Eliza, about three months old.

The Commissioners then adjourned until to-morrow morning, at 11 o'clock, then to meet at the house of an aged woman, named Barbara M'Ginnett, who is unable to attend the Board from age and infirmity.

(signed)

Jas. A. Carmichael.

Clerk to the Commissioners for investigating Indian claims.

Saturday, January 12, 1822.

THE Commissioners met agreeable to adjournment at the house of Barbara M'Ginnett, who being sworn, deposed, That she knew the grandmother of Marina, named Mimba, who was an Indian Sambo, as also Marina's mother, whose name was Samantee. A Captain Stoddart brought Mimba from Jamaica to the Mosquito Shore; did not know Mimba's mother.

The Commissioners having assembled at the Court House, Cæsar Harran was called and sworn; and stated, That he knows the sister of the petitioner Marina, named Betsy, who lives at present in Jamaica, at Spanish Town; that when he was at Jamaica some years ago, a black woman named Maria, (who was at that time a slave, but who has since been made free) informed him that she knew where the woman named Betsy lived, and on going to see her, found that she was living in the family of a brown woman as a slave, but does not know her name; she lived behind the church in Spanish Town. Betsy informed him that her family were brought from Montego Bay.

Henry Pascall called and sworn; states, That he knows the woman alluded to in the evidence of Cæsar Harran, named Maria; that she was a slave to Mr. William Mitchell, of Spanish Town, Jamaica.

Read the petition of Margaret Alexander, on behalf of her sisters, Jeruse and Mary and Jeruse's children, named Marina, Jack, and George.

Benjamin Ferrell called and sworn; states, That he knew the mother of Margaret, Mary, and Jeruse, whose name was Rosetta; she was an Indian woman; does not know of what nation; when he knew her she was in possession of Dick Gillett, at this place. She was an Indian, without any mixture of blood. Rosetta had no children when he first knew her.

James Gladding called and sworn; states, That he knows the petitioners Margaret, Mary, and Jeruse; that their mother was an Indian woman named

Rosetta. At the time he first knew her she was in possession of William Gillett, at this place, the father of the family who now claim Mary and Jeruse. When Rosetta came here she was quite young, and was a real Indian, without any mixture of blood; she was about 14 years old when this Evidence first knew her, in the year 1787. He also knew Rosetta's mother, named Mannela, on the coast to windward of the Mosquito Shore; she was a real Indian also, and lived in the family of John Gillett, the father of William Gillett before mentioned.

Mary Wagner called and sworn; states, That she knew the mother of the petitioners Margaret, Mary, and Jeruse, from her childhood; she was a real Indian, without any mixture of blood; when she knew her she was in possession of Dick Gillett. Evidence lived on the Mosquito Shore, but did not know her there, as she came from the coast to windward of the Mosquito Shore. Rosetta, when she first knew her, was about 14 years old, which was a year or two after the evacuation of the Shore.

Jeruse appeared to the Commissioners to be about 27 years old, and Mary, 25; Marina, about 10 years, Jack, 6, and George, 4 years of age.

Read the petition of Joe Brecher, on behalf of his nephew, named James Wright, alias Hector.

Joe Brecher sworn; states, He is a native of Charlestown, in the United States of America; that Hector is the child of his sister Phillis; that their mother's name was Mary; he recollects his mother; she had long hair, and was of a much lighter complexion than him; she was not a real Indian, but had some negro blood in her. States, that he is between 60 and 70 years old, as near as he can recollect; his sister Phillis was older than him.

Affy James called, and sworn; states, She knew the great-grandmother of the petitioner Hector, whose name was Diana Fitz; she was a real Indian, but does not know to what nation she belonged. She knew Diana in Charlestown; she, the said Indian, lived in the family of a Miss Fitz, as a slave, and was employed as a sempstress; she had a daughter named Mary, who had a child named Phillis, the mother of the petitioner Hector, alias James. She was put to learn to sew under Diana, being her niece by the father's side, and was but a child compared to her. That Miss Nanny Fitz married Mr. Yarborough, who by that means became possessed of the slaves of the Fitz family, and with them went to Jamaica, from thence to Black River, Mosquito Shore, and afterwards came to this place. Hector was born before Mr. and Mrs. Yarborough left America with their slaves, which was during the American revolutionary war. Evidence states her eldest child had a husband at the commencement of the war.

Jacob Myers called, and sworn; states, He knew the grandmother of the petitioner Hector; she was named Mary; she was of the Indian race, but was not a real Indian, having negro blood in her.

Mary Yarborough sworn; states, That she knew the petitioner's mother, named Phillis, and also her mother, who was named Mary, and grandmother, named Diana, who was a clear Indian; her master, Mr. Jonathan Fitz, traded amongst the Indians, and brought Diana to Charlestown, in the United States of America, when she was quite a little girl; she was a little older than this Evidence.

Hector appeared to the Commissioners to be about 50 years old.

Read the petition of Horatio Lawrie.

Abraham Lawrie called, and sworn; states, He knows the petitioner, who was formerly called London, but is now called Horatio; that his mother's name was Eleanor; she was an Indian Sambo. Evidence has seen the mother of Eleanor, who was an Indian of the Cookrah nation, but did not know her name. Eleanor and her son, the present petitioner, came from Bluefields on the Mosquito Shore, along with Colonel Lawrie's family; petitioner was at that time a little boy, about 10 years old. See Jan. 15, 1822.

The Board then adjourned until Monday morning at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian Claims.

Monday, January 14th, 1822.

THE Board met per adjournment.

Read, the petition of Susannah Bourke, on behalf of herself and her daughters, Sabina, Bess and Emma, and Sabina's children, James and Louisa.

Sukey Thompson called and sworn; states, She knows the petitioners, Sabina, Bess, and Emma, to be the children of the petitioner Susannah; that she knew the mother of Susannah, whose name was Bess; she was an Indian woman, in the possession of Mrs. Mary Bourke, on the Mosquito Shore, Bess was a real Indian, of the Valiante nation; she, the Evidence belonged to the family of Mrs. Mary Bourke; but was not there at the time Bess first lived there; when she first knew Bess it was before the people left the Mosquito Shore to go to Rattan; also knows the two petitioners, named James and Louisa, to be the children of Sabina.

Jesse Bourke called and sworn; states, She knows the petitioners, Sabina, and Bess and Emma, to be the children of the petitioner Susannah, and that the two youngest petitioners are the children of Sabina; she also knew the mother of Susannah, named Bess; she was a real Indian, but does not know of what nation. When she first knew Bess, she belonged to Mr. Young, of Bragman's, on the Shore, and afterwards was exchanged to Mrs. Mary Bourke, to whom Evidence belonged, for a woman, named Mary, and her daughter, named Phœbe.

On referring to the Mosquito Shore records, the name of Bess appeared returned as Indian, possessed by Mrs. Elizabeth Young, of Bragman's, under date the 28th February 1777.

The petitioner, Susannah, appeared to be about 50 years old, Sabina, about 26, Bess, 24, Emma, 9, James, 6, and Louisa, 3 years of age.

Read the petition of Sukey Walker alias Sukey Thompson, on behalf of her sister Betsy, and Betsy's children, named Harriett, Will Pattinett, James Pattinett, and Teresa, Harriet's son, named Abraham, and Teresa's, son named Ben.

Sukey Walker called and sworn; states, That she knows the petitioner Betsy, and her children, Harriett, Will, James and Teresa, as also Harriett's son, named Abraham, and Teresa's son, named Ben; that she knew the mother of the petitioner Betsy; her name was Rosannah; she was a real Indian of the Shalibah nation; that she belonged to Mrs. Rachel Gill, on the Mosquito Shore.

On referring to the records of the Mosquito Shore, the name of Rosannah appeared in a return of Indians held by the estate of Abraham Gill, dated 28th February 1777.

Evidence further states, That *her* mother was an Indian, named Rose; that *her* father was also the father of the petitioner Betsy, but by the afore-mentioned Indian woman named Rosannah; that she belonged to the same family as Rosannah, and her daughter, the petitioner Betsy; that Rosannah died before the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore, and at the time of her decease was about 52 years old.

James Gladding called and sworn; states, That he knew the petitioner, Betsy's mother, named Rosannah; that she was a real Indian; does not know of what nation, nor can he now recollect the person's name to whom she belonged on the Mosquito Shore; when he first knew Rosannah she was at Bragman's (a place on the Mosquito Shore), and was a grown-up woman. She came to this country with a Mr. John Gill, at the evacuation of the Shore. He knows the petitioner Harriett to be the daughter of Betsy, but cannot identify any of the other petitioners.

Betsy appeared to the Commissioners to be about 52 years old, Harriett, 37, Will, 28, James, 26, Teresa, 22, Abraham 15, and Ben, 3 years of age.

The appearance of the petitioners confirmed the testimony given by the two evidences.

Read the petition of Leah, on behalf of herself and her son George.

George Hume sworn; deposed, That the petitioner Leah formerly belonged to him; that he sold her to George Gibson, alias George Buckle, at a very moderate rate, for the purpose and with the full intent that she should be free; that he gave the said George Buckle a bill of sale of the said woman, on the before-mentioned conditions; that he has been fully paid, and that the last note for the purchase-money was destroyed about two months ago.

George Gibson, alias *Buckle* then came forward, and manumised the petitioner *Leah*.

Seaborn called and sworn; states, That she knows the petitioner *George's* mother, named *Leah*, and also his grandmother, named *Cretia*; she formerly belonged to a *Mr. Collins* at *Bluefields*, and at his decease he left her to *Miss Rebecca Hume*; *Cretia* was a real Indian woman, she was said to be of the *Cookrah* nation; *Cretia's* daughter, *Leah*, was about two years old when she left the *Shore* in 1787; he knew *Cretia* about five or six years.

[See proceedings, January 16th 1822.]

Read the petition of *Charlotte M'Aulay*.

The petitioner appeared before the Board, and being evidently an Indian, it did not think it necessary to call witnesses to establish her Indian descent.

She stated, She was brought from the *Calashke* country, with her mother, when she was an infant, and the first owner whom she recollects was a *Mr. Cairns*, at *Bluefields*, on the *Musquito Shore*. That when she was able to walk she was taken from *Bluefields* by *Mr. Cairns*, to a place called *Tupapi*, and there sold to a *Mr. Fox*, with whom, and *Mr. Scholey*, she came to the *Bay of Honduras*, and was there sold to *Mr. M'Aulay*, at whose death she became the property of *Leah M'Aulay*, a free black woman, with whom she has remained ever since.

James Gladding being previously sworn, states, He knows the petitioner; that she is younger than him, and he will be 70 years old next August; that when he first knew her, it was at *Bluefields*, on the *Mosquito Shore*; she was in the possession of *Colvil Cairns*.

The Petitioner appeared to be about 65 years of age.

The Board then adjourned until to-morrow morning, at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael.*

Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

Tuesday, January 15th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met agreeable to adjournment.

The Commissioners proceeded to hear further evidence on the petition of *Horatio Lawrie*.

Thomas Paslow, esquire, then produced his title to the petitioner, and handed a written document, for which see, (N^o 5.)

John Courant, alias *Warrior*, sworn; states, He knew the petitioner's mother, named *Orena*, and his grandmother, who was a real *Cookrah* Indian, named *Roboy*; she belonged to his, this Evidence's, former master, *Mr. Courant*, at *Bluefields*, on the *Mosquito shore*. *Roboy* belonged to the estate of *Mr. Courant*, at *Bluefields*, when she died. At *Mr. Courant's* death, *Mr. Lawrie* came to *Bluefields*, took possession of his estate, and carried the petitioner's mother, and the other slaves, with him to *Black River*, where this petitioner was born.

Evidence states, that *Mr. Courant* purchased him in *Jamaica*, and took him down to *Bluefields* with him; and he saw *Roboy* and her daughter, who was then quite a girl, in the family of *Mr. Courant*; he was at that time a young man, but not yet arrived at his prime.

Mary Wood, called and sworn; states, She knows that the grandmother of the petitioner was an Indian woman of the *Cookrah* Nation, named *Roboy*; that his mother was named *Orena*, they belonged to *Captain Courant*; that she belonged to a *Captain Wood*, at *Bluefields*, on the *Mosquito Shore*; but that *Mr. Courant's* family lived close to her master, so that she was perfectly acquainted with all of them. Evidence was older than *Orena* when she knew her first. *Mr. Laurie* went, after *Mr. Courant's* death, to *Bluefields*, and brought some of *Mr. Courant's* family to *Black River*, among whom was *Orena*, the petitioner's mother. *Roboy* at this time was dead, and *Mr. Courant* died before her.

Thomas Paslow, esquire, informed the Commissioners, that he would, by evidence, prove that the grandmother of the petitioner went by other names than that of *Roboy*; that she had an English and an Indian name.

It appears to the Commissioners, that the petitioner is about 46 years of age.

Read

Read the petition of Clarissa Potts, on behalf of her children Deptford, Scipio, Lucretia, Martha, and Martha's children, Marjery and Clarissa.

Dorinda Potts, called and sworn; states, That she knew the mother of the petitioner Clarissa, named Lucretia, she was a real Indian of the Bocotora nation; she, Lucretia, was purchased from the Mosquito men by a Mr. John Steers, who sold her to Mr. Jerry Rigby. Clarissa was brought from the Mosquito Shore by a Mr. James Rigby, the son of Jerry Rigby, from whom she came into the possession of the late Thomas Potts, but evidence does not know how. Evidence identified the petitioners Scipio, Deptford, Martha and Lucretia, as the children of Clarissa, and Marjery and Clarissa as the children of the petitioner Martha.

James Gladding, called and sworn; states, He knows the petitioner Clarissa, as also her mother, named Lucretia, who was an Indian; at the time Evidence first knew her she belonged to Mr. Jerry Rigby, at the Corn Islands; she came down here at the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore, to Mr. Thomas Potts; does not know how Mr. Potts became possessed of her, whether by purchase, or otherwise.

It appeared to the Commissioners that Martha is about 25 years old, Deptford, 22, Scipio, 19, Lucretia, 15, Marjery, 8, and Clarissa, 6 years of age.

Read the petition of Celia Caddle, on behalf of herself, her child, named Nancy, and her brother, named Andrew.

Clemeno Campbell called and sworn; states, That she knew the mother of the petitioner Celia Caddle, named Dorcas, as also her grandmother, named Celia; she, Celia, was a real Indian woman; Evidence does not know of what nation. Celia was a good deal older than her, for when she was quite a young woman, she, Celia, had two children; that they both belonged to a Miss Nelly Christopher, at Black River, on the Mosquito Shore, at whose death they devolved to Miss Lydia Caddle, who brought petitioner's mother, Dorcas, along with her to this place. (Celia the grandmother died before Miss Caddle left the Shore.) Evidence further states, that the petitioner has a brother younger than her, named Andrew; they were both born here.

Peter Harris, alias *Peter Rodney*, called and sworn; states, That he knows the petitioner Celia, also knew her mother named Dorcas, and her grandmother named Celia, who was a real Indian. When he first knew petitioner's grandmother named Celia, she belonged to Miss Nelly Christopher, Mustee Creek, Black River, on the Mosquito Shore, in whose possession she died. Dorcas devolved at Miss Christopher's death to Miss Lydia Caddle, her daughter, who brought her to this place. States that petitioner has a brother younger than her, named Andrew.

The petitioner Celia appeared to be about 27 years old; Andrew about 20, and Nancy 1½ year old.

The Commissioners proceeded to hear further evidence on the petition of Samuel Potts.

Clarissa Potts called and sworn; states, That she knew the mother of the petitioner; that she was a real Indian, named Marjery; when Evidence first knew Margery she belonged to the late Mr. Thomas Potts.

The Board then adjourned until to-morrow morning, at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

Wednesday, January 16, 1822.

THE Commissioners met.

Mr. John Alexander, the present possessor of the petitioner Andrew Caddle, attended the Commissioners, and produced the title by which he holds him as a slave. (see N° 9.)

Read the petition of Glasgow Bennett.

James Gladding called and sworn; states, That he knew the petitioner's mother, named Hannah, also his grandmother named Henrietta, who was an Indian, but

does not know to what nation she belonged; when he first knew Henrietta she belonged to Mr. John Bourke of the Mosquito Shore.

The Commissioners proceeded to hear further evidence on the petition of Leah, on behalf of her son George.

Ralph Tinah called, and sworn; states, He knew the mother of the petitioner Leah, whose name was Cretia; she was a real Indian, but Evidence does not know to what nation she belonged. Cretia belonged to Captain Scholey, on the Mosquito Shore, and died there; at Mr. Scholey's death Leah was left to Miss Becky Tyson, alias Hume, who brought her here.

George appeared to be about 22 years of age.

An Indian woman, named Lettice, with her daughter, named Adeline, appeared before the Commissioners, and stated that she was held in slavery by the heir and heiresses of the late John Potts, deceased; that her mother's name was Perkin, who was caught by the Mosquito men on the Shore, and sold by them to Mr. John Potts, in whose possession she was when this claimant was born.

Her appearance fully corroborated her statement, as she appeared to the Commissioners to be an Indian, without any mixture of blood. She appeared to be about 44 years old, and her daughter, named Adeline, for whom she also claimed freedom, about 8 years of age.

Wrote a letter to His Majesty's superintendent relative to the complaints of the owners of the Indian claimants (No. 6.); and received a letter in reply (No. 7): also wrote a letter to His Majesty's superintendent, informing him that the Board had adjourned until Monday next. (See No. 8.)

The Commissioners then adjourned until 11 o'clock on Monday next, to give time for any further claimants to apply.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian Claims.

Monday, January 21st, 1822.

THE Commissioners met according to adjournment.

John W. Wright, esquire, the present claimant and possessor of the petitioner Hector, requested to be allowed to call evidence on that case, which was granted.

Peter Stain called, and sworn; states, He knows the petitioner Hector; that he knew him when he belonged to Mr. Yarborough; that he ran away from his master, but does not know where he went, nor how he got off the country, and did not see him again till he returned to this settlement as a soldier in His Majesty's 6th West India regiment. Evidence never heard that the petitioner laid any claim to his freedom, either as being descended from Indians, or from any other cause.

John S. August called, and sworn; states, That he knew the petitioner Hector, in the year 1793, at which time he belonged to Mr. Yarborough; he afterwards ran away, and on his return to this country he was a private soldier in His Majesty's 6th West India regiment; he was then claimed as the property of Mr. Yarborough, and given up during the superintendence of Colonel Barrow.

Dorinda Potts being called upon to state to the Board the manner in which the Indians were originally enslaved by the Mosquito men, and being sworn, deposed, That the last Indian who was taken by the Mosquito men is a man lately the property of John Potts, deceased, named Mercury: as near as Evidence can remember, it was about the time that Omoa was attacked by the English. That the Indians and Mosquito men had repeated battles, and that all the Indian prisoners were sold by the captors to the Englishmen settled on the Mosquito Shore. Evidence further states, that when the Indians took refuge in the holes and caves the Mosquito men smoked them out, and made prisoners of them. That the articles given by the English in exchange for the Indians were principally Osnaburghs, axes, masheats, iron pots, powder and shot, guns, &c. &c. &c.

The Commissioners then adjourned, until to-morrow morning at, 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

Tuesday, January 22d, 1822.

THE Commissioners met.

A complaint having been made to the Commissioners, that one of the petitioners for freedom (claiming as a descendant from the Indian race), named Bess Meighan, had been severely and cruelly beat, and confined in irons during the last night, by her present possessor, Miss Clarissa Paslow; the said woman named Bess was accordingly sent for.

Dr M. W. Bowen attended the Board, and stated, that the woman Bess had last night used a great deal of very violent language to her present mistress, Miss Clarissa Paslow, in consequence of which he had flogged her himself, and afterwards confined her, with a chain round her ancle, fastened to a post under the house.

Susannah the mother, and Sabina, the sister of Bess, attended the Commissioners to complain of the cruel treatment which had been exercised towards the said Bess; and stated, that as they were passing by the house where Dr. Bowen and Miss Clarissa Paslow reside, last evening about dusk, they heard the cries of Bess, but were not able to see her in the act of being flogged, as they did not go into the yard.

That they both asked John Henderson, the clerk to Dr. Bowen, to be allowed to see Bess, when he replied that they could not, as she was in chains under the house.

Bess Meighan having attended, she appeared to the Board to have been most severely beat about the head and face, one of her eyes being completely closed, and had also marks of a whipping on the back and shoulders; her left foot was also swelled, as she stated, from the effect of the chain with which she was fastened, and which was not taken off until eleven o'clock to-day, but that she remained confined in the store until sent for by the Commissioners; that it was Dr. Bowen who inflicted the corporal punishment upon her; that Miss Clarissa Paslow was present at the time. Miss Clarissa beat her up stairs, as also the doctor; when complainant went down stairs, the doctor repeated the beating, and Miss Clarissa stood between her and the doctor, as if to prevent it.

A copy of the foregoing minute was inclosed in a letter to His Majesty's superintendent, requesting to receive his instructions on the subject of the complaint, when he requested an interview with the Commissioners at Government House. (See N^o 10 and 11.)

Thomas Paslow, esquire, waited on the Commissioners and reported to them, that a man at this time possessed by him, who has claimed his freedom as an Indian descendant, named Horatio, had absented himself from his employment, since the sitting of this Board.

The Commissioners having waited on His Majesty's superintendent at Government House, and the subject of the complaints of the reputed Indians, as also those of their possessors, having been agitated;

The Commissioners resumed their sitting at the Court House, when a letter was received from Government House, enclosing a warrant to the Commissioners for certain purposes. (See N^o 12 and 13.)

In consequence of which, the Commissioners issued their warrant to the Pro. Mar. Gen. and the Board proceeded to hear evidence on oath as to the complaint of the woman Bess Meighan.

N^o 14.

John Henderson, called and sworn; states, About 5 or 6 o'clock yesterday evening, I was standing at the back gate of Dr. Bowen's premises, when I was sent for by him; on reaching the house, I saw the doctor, Miss Clarissa and the woman named Bess Meighan, on the top of the stairs; the doctor ordered me to put Bess in the store, I gave him the key of the store door, and went to get a padlock, to fasten the woman Bess with; when I returned to the store, I saw Bess with her arms clasped round Miss Clarissa's waist; Dr. Bowen ordered her to loose herself from her mistress, and at the same time gave her a blow with a piece of small rope he had in his hand; there was a man slave at this time endeavouring to separate Bess from Miss Clarissa, who at last succeeded with some trouble. Bess was then confined in the store with a chain fastened round one of her ancles. The store where Bess was confined is the brick store, underneath the house where Dr. Bowen and Miss Clarissa reside. I did not hear any altercation which took place between Bess and Miss Clarissa, previous to my being called; a negro man named Florizelle chained the girl in the store, by Dr. Bowen's orders. The girl

Bess complained that the chain was too tight, when the doctor desired me to examine it, and finding that it was so, I altered it. The rope with which Dr. Bowen struck Bess the blow that I have before mentioned, was about the size of my little finger; it was single. I do not know that Bess received any other corporal punishment than the blow I have mentioned.

The mother and sister of Bess applied to me yesterday evening to know whether they could come into the yard, when I answered "No;" they then asked me, if they did come in, whether or no they could see Bess, I replied that they could not, as she was locked up. I cannot positively say the exact time of day that Bess was released from irons, but I think it was about nine o'clock; she remained in confinement some time after the irons were taken off, but I cannot say how long.

Cross-examined by Dr. Bowen.

Dr. Bowen positively mentioned to me, not to put the chain on too tight; but to put it on so that it could not fall off the foot.

William Fagan, a clerk to Dr. Bowen, called and sworn; states, I was in the store of Dr. Bowen yesterday evening, I heard the woman Bess Meighan and Miss Clarissa talking very loud up stairs, as if they were quarrelling, but did not hear any blows given; that presently after, they passed the store-door, going down stairs. I saw the woman Bess in chains this morning, in the bottom store; I could not see whether the chain was tight or slack about her foot, as she was sitting down, and her petticoats covered it. The chain was taken off, as near as I can recollect, between 8 and 9 o'clock this morning, and the woman was released from confinement between 10 and 11 o'clock this forenoon.

Cross-examined by Dr. Bowen.

I did not hear the doctor's voice until he called to John Henderson to lock Bess up in the lower store.

Miss Clarissa Parslow came forward, and stated, That she had suffered considerably until this moment, from the violence of the grasp of the complainant.

The Board then adjourned until Thursday next, at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *Jas. A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

Thursday, January 24th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment, and proceeded to hear further evidence on the complaint of Bess Meighan.

Nathaniel Hulse, Deputy Provost Marshal sworn; states, Last Monday evening I heard violent screams and cries of murder, which appeared to proceed from the yard of Dr. Bowen; on riding past the house of Dr. Bowen, I perceived the wench Bess Meighan at the grated window of the store underneath the house, facing the street, but cannot say whether she was tied or not. Miss Clarissa Paslow was there, and also another person; but who it was I could not distinguish. The woman Bess was receiving the punishment of flogging. I saw the lashes given, but cannot say who it was that inflicted them. The woman Bess, was screaming out all the time I saw her; and when I first heard the cries I was at my own gate, which is distant from Dr. Bowen's, in a direct line, about 100 yards. Bess appeared to me, at the time they were flogging her, to be tied to the grates of the window, as her arms were extended; but I cannot positively say whether she was or was not tied.

William Fagan, called again and sworn; states, in amendment of the evidence given by him on Tuesday last, That on Monday evening last, after Bess Meighan was taken down into the lower store, the man named Florizelle took a rope down there, after which I heard her scream, but did not hear any blows given; at the time I heard Bess Meighan scream out, Miss Clarissa Paslow and Dr. Bowen were in the lower store, and I believe she (Bess) was not chained at that time, but she was afterwards. The chain with which Bess Meighan was fastened was a pretty large one, about the same size as the one produced to the court in October last, with which Gray and Robert were fastened. I was not directed by any person
whatever,

whatever, in what manner I was to give my evidence on Tuesday last, nor had I any conversation with any one on that subject. The rope which Florizelle took down into the lower store, was rattlin, about the size of a man's little finger.

Edward Meighan, esq. having waited upon the Commissioners to give evidence as to the presumed possessor of the complainant Bess Meighan, was sworn; and stated, That he understood that the late Mrs. Mary Meighan had placed the woman named Bess Meighan, under the charge of Clarissa Paslow, as a punishment; that at the death of the late Mr. Edmund Meighan, Mrs. Meighan directed Mr. Francis Meighan to insert her, the said Bess, in a list of her private property as a slave of hers, under the charge of Clarissa Paslow.

Evidence states that he has never seen any title by which Miss Paslow holds the woman in question, nor does he know by what means she holds her in possession.

He has heard that Miss Clarissa says, she was a gift from Mrs. Meighan, but he has since heard that Mrs. Meighan said, that she had sold her to Miss Clarissa Paslow, but that she had not been paid for.

Further states, that Mr. Bennett, the attorney to the executor of Edmund Meighan's estate, informed him that he once asked Miss Clarissa to produce her title to the woman Bess, and that she had behaved to him in such a manner as to oblige him to quit the house.

John E. Henderson called and sworn; states in amendment of the evidence given by him on Tuesday last, That after he had given a padlock to Florizelle for the purpose of fastening the woman Bess, he did not remain at the store, but went into the yard, about the middle of it. He heard Bess scream out frequently, but did not hear any blows given. Clarissa Paslow and Dr. Bowen remained in the store with the woman Bess about ten minutes, during which time she was screaming out most violently; does not know that any other person was in the store with them.

Evidence afterwards went into the store, to see that Bess was fastened with a chain, at which time she was clasping Miss Clarissa by the waist; Bess was complaining of the pain in her eye, and while he was chaining her she laid her hand on her eye.

States that some days previous to this affair, Bess and Clarissa Paslow had some altercation; after which Bess told this evidence, that had Clarissa Paslow struck her she would have called upon him to take notice of it, and that this was his reason for going away from the store when Bess was taken in there.

The chain with which Bess was fastened was a little smaller in the links than a common cattle chain, and was about eight feet long; that the links of the chain were passed round the woman's ankle, and had not a shackle attached to it.

Evidence does not know whether the woman had any kind of bedding sent into the store to her, he saw William Fagan go in there frequently with a lanthorn after dark; does not know for what purpose, nor by whose orders.

In consequence of the evidence of Edward Meighan, esquire.

The Commissioners directed a letter to be written to Miss Clarissa Paslow, requiring her attendance at their Board to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock, then to produce the title by which she has hitherto held Bess Meighan in slavery. (N^o 14.)

The Commissioners attended at the house of Mrs. Catherine Robinson, (who had been called upon, as an evidence by the claimant Glasgow,) who being sworn, states, That she knows the petitioner Glasgow, that his mother was a sambo woman named Hannah, who belonged to her father in law on the Mosquito Shore. Did not know petitioner's grandmother. Hannah formerly belonged to a Mr. Couchay, at Black River, and was purchased when she was quite young.

Mrs. Robinson further stated to the Commissioners, That her step-father, Mr. John Bourke, was chief justice on the Mosquito Shore in the year 1775 and 1776, and that after that period, to the best of her recollection, no Indians were suffered to be enslaved; but those who possessed Indians, still kept them in slavery.

She understands that the settlers first became possessed of Indian slaves by purchasing them from the Mosquito men, who caught them, and brought them to the British settlement for sale. She further stated, that almost the whole of the labour on the Southern part of the Mosquito Shore was executed by Indian slaves.

The Commissioners then adjourned until to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock.

(signed,) *James A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims

Friday, January 25th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Read the petition of Clarissa Burrell, on behalf of herself and her sons Isaac and Francis.

Susannah Burrell, sworn, states, That she knew an Indian woman named Maria, at Black River, on the Mosquito Shore, who had a child named Rhoda, but does not know whether the petitioner is the daughter of the said Maria or not.

When evidence knew Maria, she belonged to her grandfather, named Dick Burrell, and afterwards devolved to her mother.

She knew Maria during Colonel Lawrie's superintendence at the Mosquito Shore.

Sarah Burrell sworn, states, That she knew the reputed mother of the petitioner named Maria, who was an Indian woman: when she first knew Maria, she, the evidence, was a little girl. She remembers also having seen the petitioner with her mother, after the rout at Patook.

Nancy Crook being sworn, states, That she knew the petitioner's mother, named Indian Maria, she was an Indian of the Wolva nation, and was very fair. When she first knew Maria, she had the petitioner sucking at her breast; it was at Pearl Key Lagoon, during the rout, at the time the British troops went to attack Omoa.

The personal appearance of the petitioner corroborated the evidence given, and she appeared to the Commissioners to be about 46 years old.

Read a letter from Manf^d W. Bowen as representative of Clarissa Paslow, in reply to the one transmitted to her through the clerk of this Board.—(N^o 16.)

After which the Commissioners directed the Deputy Provost Marshal to warn Clarissa Paslow to attend them immediately, and for which purpose he was furnished with a subpœna addressed to her.

On his return, he informed the Board that he had not been able to see Miss Clarissa Paslow, but that Dr. Bowen informed him that any communication he had to make to Miss Clarissa might be made through him; on which he delivered the subpœna to the doctor, who then said, that Miss Clarissa was unwell, but even if she was in good health, that she would not attend, as he had never seen such a circumstance before as any one being called on behalf of their slave.

The Commissioners then addressed a letter to His Majesty's superintendent on the subject.—(N^o 17.)

The Board then adjourned until Monday at 11 o'clock.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

On Saturday the 26th January 1822, received a letter from His Majesty's superintendent to the Commissioners in reply to theirs of date the 25th instant.—(N^o 18.)

Monday January, 28th, 1822.

THE Board having met according to adjournment, took into consideration the non-attendance of Miss Clarissa Paslow, with her title to the woman "Bess Meighan," although regularly warned to do so.

And are of opinion, that Miss Clarissa Paslow's failing to produce any title to the woman in question, amounts to a virtual acknowledgement of her not being possessed of any.

Received a letter from His Majesty's superintendent of this date, enclosing the copy of one addressed by him to the magistrates, on the subject of the proceedings of this Board. (N^{os} 19 and 20.)

The Commissioners then adjourned *sine die* to prepare their report.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

Wednesday, January 30th, 1822.

THE Commissioners met, and proceeded to hear further evidence relative to the complaint of Bess Meighan.

Alexander Anderson, being sworn, states, That on the afternoon of the 22d instant, as he was riding past the house where Manfield William Bowen resided, in company with Nathaniel Hulse, he heard very loud and repeated cries, which proceeded from the store under the house; and also the sound of very severe lashes, inflicted on some one, but cannot say who it was. The voice appeared to be that of a female.

Mr. Hulse immediately asked this evidence, if he saw the woman tied up to the gratings, when he replied "no, he did not."

William Maskall sworn, states, That on the evening of the 22d, as he was on the wharf in front of the house where Dr. Bowen resides, he heard violent and repeated screams, and cries of murder, which proceeded from Dr. Bowen's house. The voice appeared to be that of a negro wench; on looking up at the house, evidence heard a bell ring, and immediately saw the boy William Fagan run up stairs. A few moments after this Dr. Bowen came upon the wharf where evidence was, and observed that Miss Clarissa's wench Bess had been very insolent to Miss Clarissa, and had been absent from her house a day or two, and upon Miss Clarissa's speaking to her about it, she had seized hold of her, and had endeavoured to fight her, or throw her down; when he was compelled to interfere and beat her; that he had given her a good thrashing, and had confined her in the store, with a chain fastened to her foot. And that he thought he was justified in so doing, as the woman was the property of Clarissa Paslow, for whom she had paid a large sum of money.

Wrote a letter to His Majesty's superintendent, in reply to his of date the 28th instant. (N° 21.)

The Commissioners then directed the whole of the proceedings relative to "Bess Meighan," to be transmitted to His Majesty's superintendent, for his information, and wrote a letter enclosing the same. (N° 22.)

(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commrs investigating Indian claims.

Saturday, February 2d, 1822.

THE Commissioners having met, revised their proceedings, and agreed on their report, which they directed to be handed in to His Majesty's superintendent, so soon as the necessary documents to form the appendix, and also these proceedings, can be fairly transcribed; and which they ordered to be prepared without delay.

(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commrs investigating Indian claims.

(N° 1.)

In answer to the pretensions of these two persons, named Quaw and Eadie, who were purchased by me at public auction, as negro slaves, for the sum of 645 *l.* cash, Jamaica currency, and who now set up a claim to freedom, on the ground of their being descended from an Indian, I beg leave to offer the following observations:—

It appears, by the laws of Jamaica, that in the year 1741, the House of Assembly of that island found it necessary, in consequence of a practice which had obtained there of enslaving the native Indians of this continent, to enact a law for the prohibition thereof in future; but governed by a due regard to the rights of property, they did not attempt to set free the Indians and their descendants then held in slavery; they were merely required to be registered, and at the same time were plainly declared in that law to be the undoubted property of the possessors.

In the public records of the British settlement on the Mosquito Shore, will be found a proclamation of Sir Basil Keith, the Governor of Jamaica, dated in the year 1775, wherein he sets forth, that understanding a practice of enslaving Indians had long existed on the Mosquito Shore, he very humanely forbids the farther enslaving of Indians;

Indians ; but in strict conformity to the intent and meaning of the aforesaid law, he does not assert the freedom of those already held in slavery ; and, be it remarked, that this seems to be the first instance whereby the illegality of enslaving Indians was noticed or promulgated in that settlement.

It would appear that the Act of 1741, did not prove quite effectual in restraining the people of Jamaica from continuing to introduce into the island Indians as slaves, since in the year 1777, another Act of the legislature of that island took place, enfranchising all such Indians as were brought there as slaves since the Act of 1741, and laying an additional penalty on the farther violation of that law, but in no way whatsoever affecting the right of the proprietor to the descendants of those Indians enslaved previous the Act of 1741.

On the records of the Mosquito Shore will be found a register, which took place there in the year 1777, of the Indian and other slaves held by the British inhabitants of that settlement, and in one or more of the returns given in, it is declared, they are made in obedience to a certain *Act*, but whether of Jamaica or the Mosquito Shore is not known, as the *Act* itself is not to be found ; but there can be no doubt that this registry took place in order to put the proprietors of Indian slaves on the Mosquito Shore on the same footing as those in Jamaica who were the descendants of Indians that were in slavery previous to the Act of 1741.

I therefore consider it requisite, in justice to the holders of these people, that the claimants should prove, the Indian or Indians from whom they are descended, were enslaved after the proclamation of Sir Basil Keith, in 1775, which does not question the right of possession in the Indians then in slavery, but whose names on the contrary appear on the records of the Mosquito Shore as slaves, registered doubtless either in consequence of that proclamation, or some other subsequent authority vested in the executive government of that settlement.

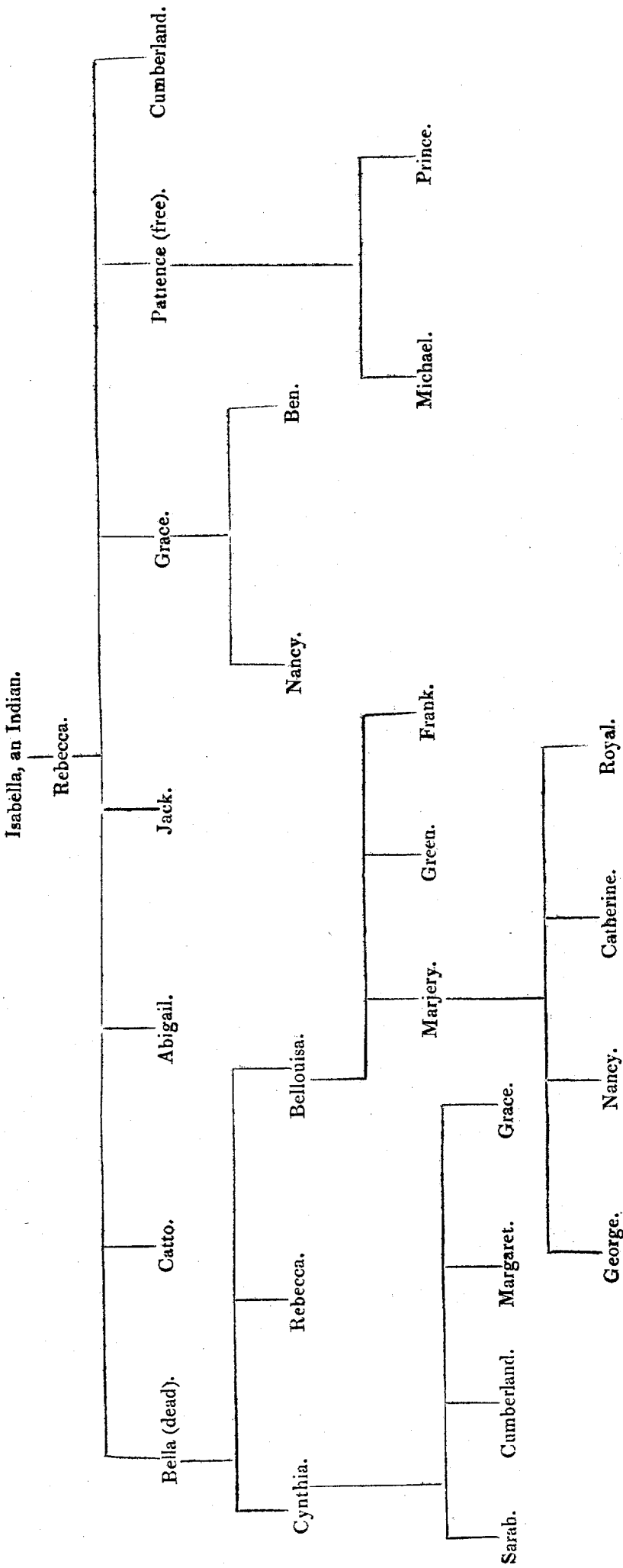
Belize, Honduras,
10th January 1822.

(signed) *Arch^d Colquhoun,*

A true copy.

(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commissrs investigating Indian claims.

(N° 2.)



Child of Isabella, the native Indian, Rebecca.

- Grandchildren of Isabella - - - - - Bella, Catto, Abigail, Jack, Grace, Patience and Cumberland.
- Great grandchildren of Isabella - - - - - Cynthia, Rebecca, Bellouisa, Nancy, Ben, Michael and Prince.
- Great great grandchildren of Isabella - - - - - Sarah, Cumberland, Margaret, Grace, Marjery, Green and Frank.
- Great great great grandchildren of Isabella - - - - - George, Nancy, Catherine and Royal.

(N^o 3.)

JOHN W. WRIGHT, the present owner of two of the descendants of Isabella, "Michael" and "Prince" possessed by purchase at the Provost-Marshal's sales, begs leave to draw your consideration to the matter deduced from the evidence brought forward on behalf of those people.

The testimony of Sam Hickey proves that *he was twenty-five years of age* at the time of the expedition sent from Jamaica against the town of *Omoa*, when he states himself to have been impressed on board one of His Majesty's ships at Rattan.

That expedition is now *forty-three years* since, which, added to the man's acknowledged age at the time of his impressment at Rattan, makes him sixty years old.

Now his mother, Elizabeth Cahoon, swears that she had a son named Valentine, one and a half year older than the evidence, Sam Hickey, and that she was twenty-five years before she bore the said Valentine, the result of which most clearly proves that the said evidence, Elizabeth Cahoon, is ninety-five years of age; and she further swears, that Indian "Isabella" was considerably older than herself, and was a slave to a Mr. Winter. There is therefore the strongest proof that the said Isabella was in slavery upwards of a century back, and was consequently confirmed and made absolute property, as such, by the Act of 1741, providing for the enslaving of Indians prior to that period; the reason of which these persons now claim their freedom is obvious, from inquiries made amongst them, they were given to understand, that the bare proof of Indian origin would at once liberate them, without the slightest knowledge that any Act was in existence to the contrary.

A true copy.

(signed) *Ja^s A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N^o 4.)

Sir,

Honduras, 20th October 1821.

HAVING seen the copy of a petition this day sent into you by a black girl named Mimba, one of the children of a woman named Florinda, whom I purchased from the late Alexander Anderson, esq. deceased, in January 1809, as a negro slave, stating that she the said Mimba, and her brothers John and Toby, and her uncles Peter and Maurice, are the descendants of an Indian woman, and soliciting that the fact of such their descent may be traced and ascertained with a view to the establishment of their freedom.

On this subject, Sir, I may truly assure you that I purchased the whole of this family as negro slaves, without the most distant surmise or suspicion of their being of Indian descent; and the enclosed copies of the titles I hold for these people will satisfy you as to the fact of their being sold to me as negro slaves, and my only wish is that they may be instructed to proceed to establish their descent from an Indian woman, and consequently freedom, in such a legal manner as to secure to me a just recourse upon the properties of those from whom I purchased them for indemnification.

George Arthur, esq.
His Majesty's Superintendent,
&c. &c. &c.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
(signed) *Ja^s Hyde.*

Mr. Alexander Anderson,

Honduras, 23d Dec. 1808.

Bought at public sale, property of the estate of Doctor Sproat, deceased:
A negro wench, named Florinda, and her two children, for - £. 500 - -

Received payment at same time.

(signed) *Fran^s Meany,*
Executor to estate of Doctor Robert Sproat, deceased.

James Hyde, esq.

Bought of Alexander Anderson:
1809, Jan. 13th.—The above negro wench named Florinda, } £. 500 - -
and her two children - - - }

Received payment value in account.

(signed) *Alex. Anderson.*

James Hyde, esq.

Honduras, 23d Dec. 1808.

Bought at public sale, property of the estate of the late Dr. Robert Sproat, deceased :

	£.	s.	d.
A negro man slave named Peter, for - - - -	305	-	-
A ditto - - - named Morris, for - - - -	320	-	-
	<hr/>		
Jamaica currency - -	£. 625	-	-

Received payment at same time in full of the above purchase.

(signed) *Francis Meany,*

Executor to the estate of Dr Robert Sproat, deceased.

True Copies.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,*

Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 5.)

HAVING produced my title to my negro man slave named London, *alias Horatio*, whom I purchased at public vendue for 530 *l.* Jamaica currency, and who now claims freedom on the ground of being descended from an Indian, although apparently a *real negro*, it must be unnecessary for me in this stage of the business to expatiate on the justice of his claim, as the law passed by the House of Assembly of Jamaica in the year 1741, for the express purpose of preventing the farther enslaving of native Indians of this continent from and after that date, is so very explicit; which law most tenderly regards and secures the right of property, by enacting and declaring that such Indians and their descendants, as were *then* held as slaves, should continue to be the property of their possessors, only requiring a registry thereof; therefore, it must be requisite, in justice to the present holders or possessors of those people, for the claimants to prove that the *Indian* or *Indians* from whom they may be descended were enslaved *after* 1741, otherwise the said Act of Assembly of Jamaica particularly provides that they shall remain in *bondage*.

In the year 1777, another Act of the House of Assembly of Jamaica was passed, *strengthening* and *confirming* the Act of 1741, and laying on an additional *heavy* penalty on the violators of that law, but in no way affecting the right of proprietors to those Indians or their descendants who were enslaved previous to 1741.

The ancestors of the claimant (*Horatio*) originally belonged to different proprietors, people of *much* respectability; and those ancestors went by and were known under different names. Those proprietors resided at Black River, Mosquito Shore, at Blue Fields and Corn Islands, between which latter *two places* and *Jamaica* there was, and I believe, still subsists a continual intercourse. And as it is well known that individuals living at those places frequently recorded their most valuable documents in Jamaica, it is only reasonable to suppose that the registry of Indians and their descendants were made by their proprietors, in compliance with the Act of the Assembly of that island in 1741, and in compliance with Sir Basil Keith's proclamation of 1775. Therefore, I humbly presume, it is only consistent with strict justice, that proprietors of Indians and their descendants be allowed sufficient time to search the records of Jamaica in case the registry of *those claimants* or *their ancestors* shall not be found upon the records of the Mosquito Shore, as it is not to be expected that proprietors of these people can possibly be enabled, at so short a notice, to counteract evidence of some whom, (I am afraid at this remote period) are of a questionable description.

I beg leave to claim a reasonable time for searching the records of Jamaica and Mosquito Shore, and obtaining all other information respecting this interesting subject, agreeable to the Act of Assembly of 1741, and Sir Basil Keith's proclamation in 1775; and I beg leave to repeat, that justice to the possessors and holders of those claimants requires that said claimants prove the *Indian* or *Indians* from whom they may be descended, *were* and *have been enslaved* after and *since* the year 1741; otherwise the said Act of the House of Assembly of Jamaica particularly provides that they *remain* in bondage.

It has been urged by one individual, that proof lay upon the possessor or proprietor, against which unconstitutional doctrine *I solemnly protest*, as all claimants

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or plaintiffs, throughout the British dominions, are obliged to allege cause; and to the law of my country I implicitly bow.

I hope it may not be too much to request, that until this business is decided, the claimant, Horatio, may be ordered to return to his duty.

(signed) *Thos Paslow,*

Belize, 15th January 1822.

Major General Pye, President,

Commissioners investigating claims of Indians descendants.

Thomas Paslow, esq.

Honduras.

Bought at vendue, from the executors of James Pitt Laurie, esq. deceased :				
1811, Jan. 17th.—To a negro woman named Mary, and man		£.	s.	d.
Oronokoa, for	- - - - -	255	-	-
Feb. 5th.—To a negro man named London, for	- - - - -	530	-	-
		<hr/>		
		£.	785	- -

Received payment per Mr. Paslow's sett of exchange per 537*l.* 5*s.* 8*d.* sterling, on Henry Cooke, esq. London, in favour of Thomas Galt, premium a' 4 per cent.

(signed) *Pat. Grant,* executor, for James P. Laurie.

True copies.

(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael,*

Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 6.)

Sir,

Belize, January 16th, 1822.

THE OWNERS of those descendants of Indians, whose claims have come under our consideration, bring us daily complaints that they refuse to do any duty whatever to them as servants, and that some of them have even absented themselves entirely.

As the power given to us by your commission, does not authorize us to free those people from their state of bondage, but only to investigate and report, so as to enable you to do justice to those persons, we beg to lay the case before you, that you may give them such relief as you may think fit.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servants.

Geo. Arthur, esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed)

{ *A. Pye, M. G.*
Jas Hyde.
J. Coatquebin.

A true copy.

(signed)

Jas A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N° 7.)

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 16th Jan. 1822.

I DO myself the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, respecting the complaints of the owners of the descendants of Indians, whose claims of freedom have been under your consideration.

I am extremely sorry that these poor people should conduct themselves with any kind of impropriety; at the same time, having, under legal advice, asserted the right of all Indians and their descendants to their freedom; and having published the same, by proclamation, it is but natural to suppose that many of them are impatient to exercise that independence of which they must now consider they have long been deprived; and much allowance must be made for ignorant people, in their very novel and remarkable situation.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

The Commissioners appointed
to investigate into the claims of reputed
Indians and their descendants,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(signed)

Geo. Arthur.

A true copy.

(signed)

Jas A. Carmichael,

Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 8.)

Sir,

Belize, Honduras, 16th Jan. 1822.

WE have the honour to inform you, that we have investigated the claims of all the Indians and their descendants which have come before us, and have in consequence adjourned our sitting until Monday next, to give time to any further claimants to send in petitions.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

Geo. Arthur, esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c. Honduras.

Your most obedient humble servants,

(signed) { *A. Pye*, M. G.
Ja^s Hyde,
J. Coatquelvin.

A true copy.

(signed) *Ja^s A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 9.)

Marshal Bennett and John Alexander,

Bought of Rich^d Touoston :

1816, Jan.—A sambo boy, my property, named Andrew, and	} Cash.	
lately recovered by me on a writ of replevin from		£. 220 - -
Edward Cadle - - - - -		

Received the 16th of March 1816, from Marshal Bennett, the above sum of 220 l. cash, Jamaica currency, in full of the above-named sambo slave named Andrew, which slave I warrant and defend.

(signed) Witness, *Marshal Bennett*, jun. (signed) *Rich^d Touoston*.

A true copy.

(signed) *Ja^s A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 10.)

Sir,

Board of Indian claims, Jan. 22d, 1822.

WE have the honour to report to you, that during our sitting yesterday, it was intimated to us that a woman named Bess (claiming her descent from native Indians, and who had appeared before us a few days before to ascertain that claim,) had been threatened by Miss Clarissa Paslow, who holds her in slavery.

We considered it our duty to send for Miss Clarissa Paslow, who denied having made use of any threats whatsoever; and she was dismissed, being strongly warned by the Board, that Bess, and all others in her situation, were under their protection pending the investigation of their claims, and that therefore we expected no punishment of any kind should be inflicted or threatened, which Miss Clarissa Paslow acceded to and retired.

It is now our painful duty to send you enclosed a copy of our proceedings this morning, and as we have no authority given to us by your commission and warrant, so as to enable us to give effectual protection in like case and complaint, we beg to lay the subject before you before we proceed to an examination on oath, that you may give them such relief as you may think proper.

We beg further to mention, that the Board remains sitting in order to receive such instructions as you may think expedient to give, in consequence of the present representation.

We have the honour to be, Sir,

George Arthur, esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c. Honduras.

Your most obedient humble servants,

(signed) { *A. Pye*, M. G. President,
Ja^s Hyde,
J. Coatquelvin.

A true copy.

(signed) *Ja^s A. Carmichael*, Clerk to the Board.

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(N° 11.)

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, the 22d Jan. 1822.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, and consider its contents of so much importance, that I must request to have an interview with the Commissioners upon the subject.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble servant,

The Commissioners appointed to investigate
claims of reputed Indians and their descendants,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur,*
Superintendent.

A true copy.

(signed) *Ja. A. Carmichael,*
Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

(N° 12.)

Government House, Belize, Honduras, 22d Jan. 1822.

Gentlemen,

IN reply to your communication of this date, I do myself the honour to enclose a warrant which I trust will prove effectual in affording protection to all the poor Indians who are thereby placed under your especial care.

The usage which poor Bess Meighan has received, by Mr. Bowen's own acknowledgment, is so cruel and inhuman, that I cannot too strongly express the satisfaction I feel in your earnestness to develop all the circumstances of her complaint.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

The Commissioners appointed to investigate
into the claims of reputed Indians and their descendants,
&c. &c. &c. Belize.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur,*
Superintendent.

A true copy.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,* Clerk to the Board.

(N° 13.)

Honduras, fs. By George Arthur, esq. Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent and Commander in Chief of all His Majesty's subjects, settled in Honduras, &c. &c. &c.

To A. H. Pye, esq. Major-General in His Majesty's forces, James Hyde, esq. one of the Judges of the Supreme Court, and John Coatquelvin, esq. Major in His Majesty's forces, and Acting King's Advocate, His Majesty's Commissioners for investigating the descent of reputed Indians and their descendants.

Whereas, it appears by the representation which you have made to me this day, touching the punishment which has been inflicted on "Bess Meighan" a reputed Indian (held in slavery by Clarissa Paslow, a mulatto woman, cohabiting with and living in the house of an inhabitant named Manfield William Bowen, commonly called Doctor Bowen) as well as by other complaints which have been personally made to me, that these reputed Indians are exposed to much severe treatment by the prejudice excited against them in consequence of your investigation: And whereas, it is my bounden duty during the inquiry of the Commissioners to afford these poor people all the protection in my power, I do hereby authorize and require you, in His Majesty's name, to take all the reputed Indians under your especial charge, and to afford them the like protection which they would enjoy in case writs of homine replegiando had been issued from any of His Majesty's courts at their suit.

And you are hereby further empowered to investigate, inquire and examine on oath into the complaints of these people, especially into that which is the subject of your representation, touching any ill-usage they may have received from the persons who hold them in slavery, or others, in order that you may fully report to me thereon.

Given under my hand and seal at the Government House, Belize, Honduras,
this 22d day of January 1822.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

A true copy.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael,* Clerk to the Board.

N^o 14.

Honduras *fs.* By A. H. Pye, esquire, Major-General of His Majesty's forces; James Hyde, esq. one of the Judges of the Supreme Court; and John Coatquelvin, esq. Major in His Majesty's forces, and Acting King's Advocate, His Majesty's Commissioners for investigating the descent of reputed Indians and their descendants, &c. &c. &c.

To Richard Davies Bull, esq. Provost-Marshal General of this settlement.

By virtue of the power and authority vested in us, by a warrant issued by His Majesty's Superintendent, this day, wherein we are authorised and required to take all the reputed Indians under our especial charge, and to afford them the like protection which they would enjoy in case writs of homine replegiando had been issued from any of His Majesty's courts at their suit.

These are therefore in His Majesty's name to require and command you to carry into full effect the intent and meaning of the said warrant to us issued, and that you do inform the present possessor or possessors of all reputed Indians, whose claims to freedom have been laid before us, of the same, for their guidance.

Given under our hands and seals at Belize in Honduras aforesaid, this 22d day of January 1822.

By Command,	(signed)	{ <i>A. Pye</i> , M. G. President (seal.) <i>Jas Hyde</i> , (seal.) <i>J. Coatquelvin</i> . (seal.)
(signed) <i>Jas A. Carmichael</i> ,		
Clerk to the Board of Indian claims.		

Vera Copia.
(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael*.

(N^o 15.)

Madam, Board of Indian claims, Belize, Jan. 24th, 1822.

I AM directed by the commissioners appointed to investigate the claims of Indians and their descendants, to acquaint you, that in consequence of information they have this day received, relative to the woman lately under your charge, named "Bess Meighan," they require your attendance to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, and that you will then produce to them the title by which you have hitherto held that person in slavery.

I am, Madam, your obedient servant,
Miss Clarissa Paslow. (signed) *Jas A. Carmichael*,
Clerk to the Board of Indian claims.

A true copy.
(signed) *Jas A. Carmichael*.

(N^o 16.)

Sir, Belize, Honduras, Jan. 25th, 1822.

I HAVE to acknowledge, "as the friend and representative of Miss Clarissa Paslow," the receipt of a letter addressed to her the 24th instant, from the Commissioners of a Board of Indian claims, of which you are *president*.

The letter from said Commissioners states, that in consequence of information they received yesterday relative to the woman lately under Miss Clarissa Paslow's charge, named "Bess Meighan," they require her attendance this morning at eleven o'clock, and to produce before them the title by which she has hitherto held that person in slavery.

The negro woman slave in question, named "Bess Meighan," was purchased by the late Mrs. Mary Meighan, deceased, from the estate of Miss M. Bourke, and Miss Clarissa Paslow bought the said woman slave Bess about twelve months previous to the death of Mrs. Meighan.

I have further to state, that the attornies to the executors of the late Edmond Meighan, esq. deceased, and representatives to the estate of his wife, the late Mary Meighan, deceased, were incorrectly informed that Miss Clarissa Paslow had not given full value for Bess, they accordingly required proof that the said slave, *Bess Meighan*, was paid for, and the attornies to the executors aforesaid were fully satisfied with the several respectable evidences to whom Miss Clarissa referred them on that occasion, and they confirmed the same accordingly, which they were induced to do, from being convinced that Miss Clarissa Paslow had paid full value

value for the negro woman *slave*, *Bess*, in the life-time of the late Mrs. Mary Meighan, deceased.

The grandmother of Miss Clarissa Paslow's slave, Bess Meighan, may probably have descended from the Indian race upwards of one hundred years since, a period long previous to the legislative act of the governor and assembly of Jamaica, dated in the year 1741.

I am not aware that Miss Clarissa Paslow is bound to produce any further proof of her claim to "Bess Meighan," who is her absolute property, which no proceeding whatever can divest her of, but a court and jury.

I am, Sir, your respectful and
most obedient humble servant,
(signed) *Manf^d W. Bowen.*

To Major General Pye,
President of a Board of Indian claims,
&c. &c. &c.

A true copy.
Jas A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N^o 17.)

Sir, Board of Indian claims, January 25th, 1822.

WE have to refer to your consideration, a circumstance which happened in regard to Miss Clarissa Paslow, who being sent for in virtue of the power invested in us by your instructions, dated 8th January 1822, to answer to some questions necessary toward the investigation of her conduct, with regard to Bess Meighan, refused to come, when we thought it expedient to send a subpoena, which being taken to her residence by the deputy marshal, he, on his return, informed us that he had not been able to see Miss Clarissa Paslow, but that Doctor Bowen informed him that any communication he had to make to Miss Clarissa, might be made through him; on which he delivered the subpoena to the Doctor, who then said Miss Clarissa was unwell, but even if she was in good health, that she would not attend, as he had never seen such a circumstance before, as any one being called on behalf of their slave; the above being a most wanton mark of disrespect shown to the Commission, if not punished so as to prevent the recurrence of it in future, it will be impossible for us to do justice to the claimants under our investigation, whose best title to freedom could thus be eluded, by evidences refusing to appear before us for examination.

We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient humble servants,

(signed) { *A. Pye, M. G.*
Jas Hyde,
J. Coatquewin.

George Arthur, esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c.

A true copy.
Jas A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N^o 18.)

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 26th January 1822.

I AM very much distressed to find by your communication of yesterday's date, that any inhabitants should endeavour to evade your examination, much less treat the Board with disrespect.

The opinion of His Majesty's Attorney General at Jamaica, and the adoption of which he *strongly* recommends, is that His Majesty's Superintendent should afford the reputed Indians every aid in asserting and recovering their freedom.

To this end it was my intention, in issuing the commission and warrant which constitutes your Board, to invest the Commissioners with adequate powers, to enable me to carry the recommendation of the Attorney-General (which is warmly supported by his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica) into the fullest effect.

The powers with which you are invested as His Majesty's Commissioners, must at least place you in command of the same means which the magistrates of the settlement consider themselves authorized to use in similar cases; I would therefore suggest, in the first place, your having recourse to the measures adopted by the Court to the utmost extent. Should this prove ineffectual, and your authority be still treated with contempt, I would then recommend your notifying to the parties, that

that from the date of such notification, you consider their conduct, by exciting the already irritated feelings of these much injured Indians, as endangering the tranquillity of the colony. I shall not fail, on receiving your representation, to adopt those steps which are pointed out by my instructions as a dernier resort.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient humble servant,

To the Commissioners appointed to (signed) *George Arthur*.
investigate claims of reputed Indians and their descendants,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) A true copy.
James A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N° 19.)

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 28th Jan. 1822.

MUCH unnecessary excitement having been occasioned by the judicious step you have taken in placing the Indians under the protection of the Provost-Marshal General; and as there appears to be a feeling, that by acquiescing in this measure, an intention is indicated of liberating these people without any reference whatever to the concurrence of those who claim their servitude, I have thought it necessary, in order to remove all misunderstanding, to address the magistrates upon the subject, and do myself the honour, for your information, to enclose copy of my letter to the Bench.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient humble servant,

To the Commissioners for investigating (signed) *Geo. Arthur*.
the claims of the Indians and their descendants,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) A true copy.
James A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N° 20.)

Gentlemen, Government House, Belize, 28th Jan. 1822.

At the meeting held at the Government House, on the 31st December last, after laying before the Gentlemen assembled, the opinion of the King's Attorney-General at Jamaica upon the subject of the claim of certain petitioners, who asserted their right to freedom on the grounds of their being native Indians or the descendants of Indians; and having read an extract from the laws of Jamaica thereon, it seemed to be unanimously admitted that such claimants, if they proved their descent, could not be legally held in slavery. With this understanding, in place of agitating the question in a court of law, I suggested the appointment of commissions to investigate into the descent of the reputed Indians, and to propose such reparation as they might consider these people entitled to for the injury they had sustained; declaring it was my intention, after receiving the report of the Commissioners, not to compel either party to submit to their decision, but to make it optional to accede thereto, or abide the consequence of proceedings before such tribunals as His Majesty in His pleasure might be pleased to establish.

This proposition being unanimously approved on the 3d instant, I issued a proclamation, declaring in general terms the freedom of the native Indians and their descendants, and on the 8th instant a Board was constituted by commission, to investigate the claims of such individuals as asserted themselves to be of Indian descent.

This arrangement I then believed (and am now confirmed in the supposition) to be most calculated to do justice to the reputed Indians, with the least possible prejudice to that part of the community who might unknowingly hold such persons in slavery; and although I foresaw that much irritation was almost unavoidable, as soon as the Indians should discover that their rights would be protected, I still depended that the personal responsibility of those who had illegally held them in slavery would be sufficient to prevent any very violent proceedings.

It was with deep regret I found myself disappointed in this expectation; in place of making due allowance for the situation and feelings of these much injured people, such a spirit of resentment has been manifested towards them in several instances, that I have been constrained, upon the representation of the Commissioners,

sioners, to enlarge their powers for the protection of the Indians, and they have very prudently placed them under the charge of the Provost-Marshal General.

This, Gentlemen, is the actual state of the case up to the present moment, and in place of any attempt to intimidate the Provost-Marshal General in the execution of his duty, I am persuaded it will be the wisdom of all parties concerned quietly to acquiesce therein until the Commissioners have concluded and laid their report before me, when every case which can be adjusted here will be referred to the persons interested for their allowance or disallowance. I am induced to make this full communication in the hope that the Bench will use its influence (and much may certainly be done by explanation and persuasion) to prevent unnecessary irritation. At the same time I must frankly declare, that I have taken the fixed determination to allow no compromise or accommodation on behalf of those who shall excite further commotion; but placing the Indians under the protection of the Provost-Marshal General, I shall, by the earliest opportunity, refer all such cases to His Majesty's government, praying that a mandamus from the Court of King's Bench may be issued to remove such parties to England for trial at the suit of the Indians.

The present excitement appears to me to be founded in the very injurious and erroneous notion entertained upon this important question, by the parties who hold the Indians in slavery; they seem to consider that their interest and their convenience are the primary objects to be consulted, whereas, by every unprejudiced mind, any loss they may sustain or any privation they may endure, must be regarded as a very secondary consideration, in *comparison* to the overruling necessity of doing justice to the injured and degraded Indians.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient humble servant,
(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

The Magistrates,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) A true copy.
Ja. A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N^o 21.)

Sir,

Board of Indian claims, Jan. 30th, 1822.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th instant, and enclosure, and hope that the letter you have written to the magistrates, and have done us the honour of communicating to us, will have the effect of convincing the community at large of the expediency of the measures we have taken in conformity and obedience with your positive requisition, contained in your warrant of the 27th instant.

We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your very obedient servants,
(signed) *A. Pye*, M. G. President.
Ja^r Hyde,
J. Coatquelvin.

To Colonel Arthur,
His Majesty's Superintendent,
&c. &c. &c. Honduras.

(signed) A true copy.
Ja^s A. Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N^o 22.)

Sir,

Board of Indian claims, Belize, Feb. 1st, 1822.

WE have the honour to enclose, for your information, copies of examinations which have been taken before us, relative to the complaint of Bess Meighan.

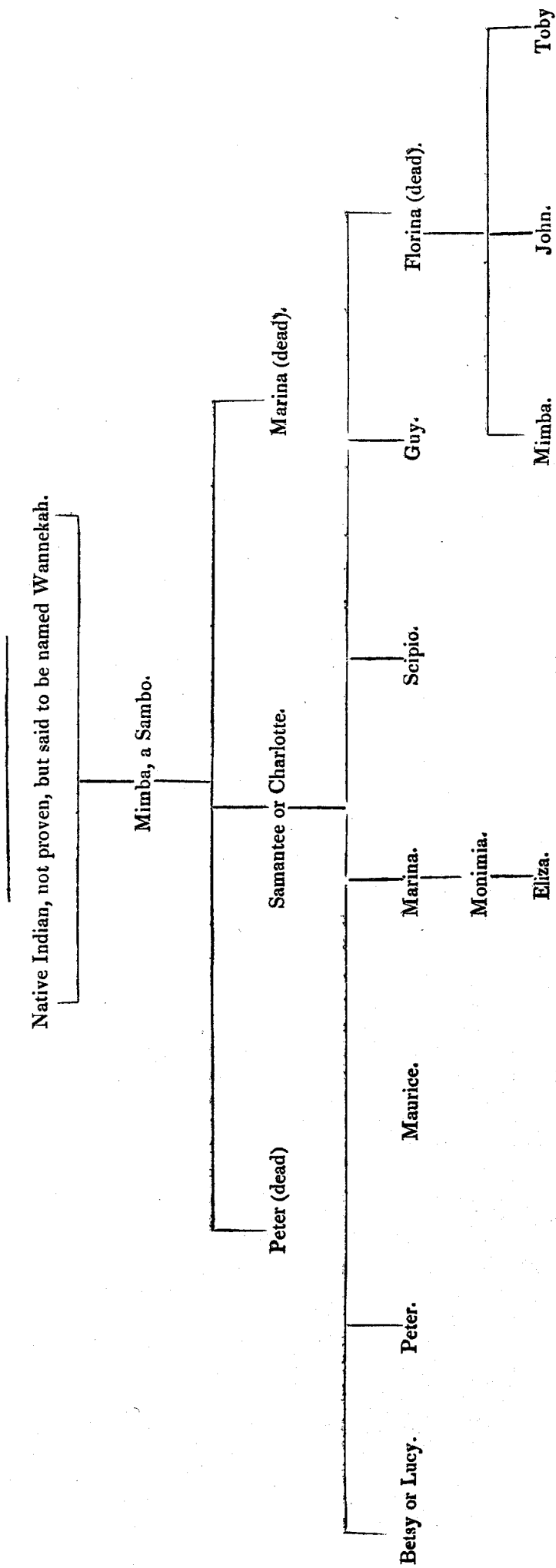
We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient humble servants,
(signed) *A. Pye*, M. G. President.
Ja^r Hyde,
J. Coatquelvin.

To Geo. Arthur, esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant,
&c. &c. &c. Honduras.

(signed) A true copy.
Ja^s Carmichael, Clerk to the Board.

(N° 23.)

TABLE of the Descendants of Mimba, a Sambo, referred to in the Proceedings of the Commissioners for investigating Indians Claims, on the Petitions of Marina and Mimba.



Appendix, N^o 8.

(Honduras to wit.)

AT the Grand Court, held in and for this Settlement, June 1810.

Friday the 29th June 1810.

Magistrates.		
John Potts, James Gordon, Man ^d . W. Bowen, Peter C. Wall,	}	Esquires
Edward Thomas, foreman. J. B. Everett,	}	Jurors
Alex ^r Kidd, Cha ^s Craig, Arch ^d Colquhoun, John Brown,	}	Sworn
32. John Nugent Smyth, esq. His Majesty's Super- intendent, &c. on behalf of Betty Tyler,	}	{ William Gentle, { Thomas Paslow, and { John Gray. { William Thomas, { John Johnson. { John Gibson, { Patrick Grant. { William Leckie, { C. P. W. Breon.
<i>versus</i>		Summons for 300 <i>l.</i> cash, Jamaica currency, and to establish the said Betty Tyler's freedom.
Frain Thomas.		

Lieutenant-Colonel Smyth having requested Mr. Hunt to appear on his behalf as prosecutor, Mr. Hunt was accordingly sworn, when he solicited that Mr. Gatehouse might be allowed to conduct the prosecution, he being in possession of the documents.

Mr. Hunt also stated that Lieutenant-Colonel Smyth requested, if it were not inconvenient with the rules of Court, he wished the evidence to be taken down; which request was granted; but not to be considered as a precedent in future.

William Young sworn; deposeth, That he knew the mother of the woman Betty, named Fidelia, and that he knew she was an Indian; but cannot say whether she was free or a slave; he says he knew her about three years before the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore, as near as he can judge.

Warrior Courant, free black man, sworn; deposeth, That he knew the mother of this woman, Betty, to be an Indian, and a servant in his late master's, Mr. Conant's house, on the Mosquito Shore; and he never knew whether she was a slave or free; he never heard her say she was free.

Robert Douglas sworn; deposeth, That Colonel Lawrie, to whom he was secretary, on the Mosquito Shore, had the charge of Blue Fields estate, and he imagined the family of that estate was sent down to Honduras, by his direction, upon the evacuation of the Mosquito Shore in the year 1787; that on deponent's arrival in this country, he found that such part of the estate as had been sent to the Bay, was living as part of Colonel Lawrie's family here, under the direction of his son, James P. Lawrie, where they remained, to the best of deponent's belief, until some time in the year 1789, when deponent purchased the negro named Joe, the reputed father of the girl Betty; that Betty was sold as part of said estate, and purchased of, by Mr. Neal, from whom deponent bought her in consequence of the repeated solicitations of her father Joe, who never told deponent that his daughter Betty was free; for if he had deponent would not have sold her. That deponent afterwards disposed of her to Lizzy Tyler; and after that he understands the deponent, Mr. Frain, bought her. Deponent further says, that previous to disposing of her, she ran away, and preferred a complaint to Lieutenant-Colonel Barrow, His Majesty's Superintendent at that time; but, as he was not summoned to attend, he does not know what passed. Deponent further saith, he never was at Blue Fields; and that at the time he bought the girl Betty she was quite a little girl, about five or six years old.

The Reverend *William Stanford* sworn; deposeth, That Colonel Barrow sent for me, and informed me he had received a petition from the woman Betty, and asked me, as I was well acquainted with Mosquito Shore matters, what I thought of it. I told him I begged to be excused giving any opinion, as I stood in a very delicate situation. That I considered it as a very invidious business, and advised that he

he should lay the petition before the magistrates, requesting their advice and opinion, after considering it; in consequence of which I waited on the magistrates, and delivered His Majesty's Superintendent's message, and the petition, to them.

The magistrates returned for answer, that they would investigate and return an answer as soon as possible to Colonel Barrow:—their answer was, that they had minutely and closely investigated the business, and were unanimously of opinion that she was not entitled to her freedom.

(*On behalf of the plaintiff.*) Does it come within your knowledge, that any examination of evidences took place on the petition before the magistrates?—I perfectly understood that all the evidences were examined that could be procured.

Do you know of any official documents remaining, relative to the evidence you have stated?—No.

John Potts, sworn;—deposeth, That he was living at Blue Fields estate with his father, and knew the reputed mother of the woman Betty, named Fidelia, who was always considered as a slave; deponent was, at that time, about 14 years of age, and he is now about 51.

Had you any particular reason to know the woman Fidelia was a slave?—I never knew any Indian would live in any family as slaves, or servants, without being slaves.

The evidence being closed, the Jury retired, and in a few minutes returned the following verdict;

The Jurors unanimously find for the defendant, with costs.

(signed) *Edward Thomas*, Foreman.

I, James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of the records of the settlement at Belize, in the Bay of Honduras, do certify that the foregoing is truly extracted from the records of the proceedings at the June Grand Court, 1810.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the said settlement, this 25th day of October 1821.

(signed) *James A. Carmichael*,
Assis^t Keeper of the Records.

Appendix, N^o 9.

Advertisement.—THIS is to give notice to all the British subjects settled on southern part of the Mosquito Shore.

WHEREAS, in consequence of my instructions, bearing date the 29th October 1776, from James Laurie, esq. superintendent, captain, and commander-in-chief of all His Majesty's subjects in that part of America called the Mosquito Shore, wherein he strictly forbids for the future the enslaving of Indians, and recommends it to me to see that all the debts already contracted with the British subjects may be honourably paid; at the same time it is his desire that I should do my utmost to prevent my people running in debt with the British subjects for the future; I shall most certainly see that my people discharge all that they are indebted to the British subjects, and, as far as within me lieth, prevent any more Indians being enslaved. I am, therefore, to forbid the British subjects to give any more credit to my people from and after the 1st day of January 1777, as I shall not oblige them to pay any debts that may be contracted after that time without having my leave so to do.

I am likewise to forbid any of the British subjects for the future to buy tortoise-shell from any of my people who are employed or fitted out in the crafts of the British subjects, as I shall punish any of my men who I may find guilty of the like crime most severely, and shall complain to the superintendent of the same. I do further promise, as a reward, a young able Indian slave to any white man of good repute, who will prove upon oath of any of my men selling of any tortoise-shell for the future, who may be in the employ of any of the British subjects; and for every back of tortoise-shell so sold by them, he or they who sells the same, upon conviction of said crime, shall pay a young able Indian slave, or twenty backs of merchantable tortoise-shell, as a forfeit to his or their employer or owner of the craft he may belong to; the captain of the said craft shall forfeit the like penalty to his employer

employer or owner of the craft that he may have charge of. I hope all His Majesty's subjects will pay proper attention to this, as it is the particular desire of the superintendent that I should put an effectual stop to this destructive and dishonest trade.

It is likewise my desire that none of my men for the future, who are in the employ of the British subjects, shall, on any pretence whatsoever, go on board of any vessel or vessels during the time they may be on a shelling voyage, nor are they to sell any green turtle, or any kind of bread or provisions to any person whatsoever during said voyage.

I further desire that all the captains of said crafts are to keep their men constantly striking tortoise-shell, and to see that they go to no other employ. All my men who are indebted to the British subjects are to go out to the southward, and strike their debts whenever their employers may order them, without giving them or me any trouble: otherwise such offenders I shall severely punish, and it is further my desire that all my officers may put these my orders in execution, otherwise they will incur my displeasure.

Given under my hand the 29th day of November 1776.

Colvil ^{his} Briton. (seal.)
mark.

A true copy from the Records of the Mosquito Shore.
(signed) *Ja A. Carmichael*, Acting Keeper of Records,
and Clerk to the Commissioners investigating Indian claims.

—N^o 7.—

COPY of a Letter from Colonel Arthur to the Earl Bathurst, K. G. ;
dated Honduras, 2d March 1822 ; with Four Inclosures.

My Lord, Government House, Belize, Honduras, 2d March 1822.

I do myself the honour to submit to your Lordship's consideration the accompanying petition, N^o 1, from a free black woman named Elizabeth Sproat, to whom I am sorry I am not enabled to afford redress in this country.

The petition with its vouchers sets forth, that Dr. Sproat, who died at Honduras in the year 1804, directed by his will that certain of his most faithful slaves should be manumized immediately after his death, but that they were held in slavery for many years by his executor, until they finally purchased their freedom ; that others who were directed to be manumized at the expiration of seven years, were sold into unconditional slavery, in which state some had died, and others still live.

After having enquired into, and ascertained, the very respectable character of the petitioner, I referred her petition to the magistrates, requesting they would examine the will of Dr. Sproat, and inform me how far it supported the statements of the petitioner. The Bench in reply communicated, that on reference to the records, they perceived debts on judgment to a greater amount than the appraisement of the property of Dr. Sproat, which they imagined was the cause of bringing to sale the slaves who had been manumized by will.

As this statement was very unsatisfactory, and the insinuation of the insolvency of the estate totally contradictory to circumstances which came within my own knowledge, I proceeded myself to the office of public records to satisfy my mind upon the subject, and there I found that the will not only expressly and most fully corroborated the circumstances set forth in the petition, but I also found, on a final adjustment of the estate, that by a judgment of court, the residuary legatees had actually received the sum of 5,809 l. 10 s.

A most vexatious correspondence with the magistrates, some of whom are parties concerned, followed, by which your Lordship will perceive that the ultimatum to which I could bring the Bench was, that they would consent to order writs of replevin to be issued to enable the family to try for their freedom ; but to which proposition I objected in behalf of the poor slaves, considering their freedoms already clearly and legally established by the public records of the country.

Deeming

Deeming it therefore most unjust that the question of their liberty should be exposed to the more than doubtful issue of a trial in the present courts of this settlement, I cannot but hope that in a case of such very flagrant injustice your Lordship will be pleased to authorize more effectual means being resorted to for the protection of these injured people, who have been for so many years, and are still, so fraudulently and unjustly held in slavery.

I have, &c.

The Right hon. Earl Bathurst,
&c. &c. &c.

Geo. Arthur, Colonel,
Superintendent and Commandant.

Enclosure N° 1, in Colonel Arthur's, of the 2d March 1822.

To Colonel Arthur, His Majesty's Superintendent, &c. &c. &c.

Honduras, 6th December 1821.

THE humble petition of Elizabeth Sproat, in behalf of her family and friends.

Your petitioner was brought with her family and other negroes from the Mosquito Shore, by her master Mr. Robert Sproat, (who died in this settlement); your petitioner heard her master's will read, and, according to the tenor of that will, she believes that *Toby* and *Rose* were to be *immediately emancipated*; and *all* the men that came with my master from the Mosquito Shore were to be free in *seven* years after his death. Some years after the death of my master all his slaves were sold at Public Vendue, without reference to the term mentioned in his will.

Rose, (mentioned by my master in his will,) bought herself for 40 *l.*, and four for 25 *l.* currency, of Mr. Meany, executor to the estate of my master.

Your petitioner was sold to Mr. Meighan, and at his death she gave 10 *l.* for herself. All the other persons who came with my master from the Mosquito Shore (except *Toby*) are still in slavery, with no other prospect of freedom than what comes from your kind attention to this, the humble petition of your unworthy petitioner.

Elizabeth Sproat, her \times mark.

Names of the Persons who came with my master from the Mosquito Shore :

Elizabeth Sproat, (free)	Mundinge.	Creshee Sproat,	} Indian parents.
Ned Sproat,	} Creoles of Jamaica.	Duke Sproat,	
Kingston Sproat, (dead)		Gay Sproat,	
Eve Sproat, (dead)		Peter Sproat,	
Batty Sproat,		Tom Sproat, (free.)	
James Sproat,		Toby Sproat, (free.)	
Stephen Sproat, (Coromantee.)		Betsy Duke Sproat, (dead.)	Rose Sproat, (free.)
London Sproat, (dead.)		Bristol Sproat.	

Mr. Abraham Anderson.

Bought at Public Vendue, property of the Estate of Dr. Robert Sproat, deceased, 23d December 1809,

A negro woman slave, named Rose, £. 40.

Received payment at same time.

(signed) *Francis Meany*,

Executor to the estate of

Dr. Robert Sproat, deceased.

£. 40.

Witness, Al. Perie.

I do hereby acknowledge to have received from the above woman Rose, 40 *l.* cash, Jamaica currency, as a full consideration for her own freedom, and declare her from this time free accordingly.

£. 40.

(signed) *Alexander Anderson*.

Witness, Al. Perie.

Honduras fs.

William Usher, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposeth and saith, That he is well acquainted with the hand-writing of Alexander Anderson and Alexander Pirie, (both deceased), whose names are subscribed to the within instrument of writing, and that the same is the hand-writing of both the said persons.

Sworn before me, the 22d October 1818. (signed) *W. Usher.*
(signed) *John W. Wright.*

Entered on the public records of Honduras, Book Y. folio 893, this 22d day of October 1818. (signed) *George Westby.*

KNOW all men by these presents, That we, Marshal Bennett, Thomas Paslow, John Gray, and William Gentle, administrators to the estate of Mary Meighan, as attornies to the executors of Edward Meighan, deceased, for and in consideration of the sum of ten pounds cash, current money of Jamaica, to us in hand well and truly paid before the sealing and delivery of these presents, the receipt of which we do hereby acknowledge, have manumized, enfranchised, and set free, and by this instrument of writing do manumize, enfranchise, and set free, of and from all manner of slavery, a certain negro woman named Betty, together with her future issue and increase for ever; and we do hereby, as representatives aforesaid, for ever warrant and defend unto the said negro woman named Betty, with her future issue, her full and absolute freedom against any claim or claims whatsoever. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands and seals at Belize, in Honduras aforesaid, the 18th day of September 1815.

Signed, sealed, and delivered, (signed) *Marshal Bennett,*
in presence of *Thomas Paslow,*
(signed) *David Bertie.* *John Gray,*
William Gentle.

Received the day and year before written the sum of ten pounds cash, current money of Jamaica, being the full consideration mentioned to be paid unto us in the manumission of the said negro woman named Betty.

Witness, (signed) *Marshal Bennett,* *John Gray,*
(signed) *David Bertie.* *Thomas Paslow,* *William Gentle.*

Honduras fs.

David Bertie, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, deposes and saith, That he was personally present, and did see Marshal Bennett, Thomas Paslow, John Gray, and William Gentle, administrators to the estate of Mary Meighan, as attornies to the executors of Edward Meighan, deceased, sign, seal, and duly execute the foregoing manumission for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

Sworn before me, 20th September 1815. (signed) *David Bertie.*
(signed) *James Waldron,* Magistrate.

Entered on the records of Honduras, Book Y. folio 527, the 20th Sept. 1815.
(signed) *William Hunt,*
Keeper of Records.

Received, Honduras, 27th September 1813, from Thomas Goodwill the sum of twenty-five pounds, Jamaica currency, being the full amount of his purchase at the sale of his late master, Francis Meany, esq. deceased; and for which he will receive his regular manumission as soon as possible.

(signed) *William Lewis,* Administrator.

Enclosure No 2. in Colonel Arthur's, of the 2d March 1822.

Memorandum Testamentarium of Robert Sproat.

TOBY (Faithful) and Rose to be duly emancipated from the publication of this my last will, and all the negro men who belonged to me at Black River (on the Mosquito Shore), besides Thomas, commonly called Tom, to be manumized seven years

years after my decease; the rest to be sold immediately after the expiration of that term, unless one of my children should be on the spot, and considered capable of managing them. What property may remain after paying my just debts to be equally divided amongst my three children, viz. R. St. George, Lawrie Pitt Francis, and Patience Susannah; and in case of the defailance, or death of one or two of them, the survivor or survivors to become the heir or heiress of such defunct; and should all three die, the issue of the late Elizabeth L'Estrange, late of this place, and of my sister Patience, to be made joint heirs, making in every case a becoming provision for my good old mother (should she be living.) The executors to this my last will I entreat to be my truly worthy friends, Mr. Henry Walters of London, and Mr. Francis Meany of this place; recommending the latter to nominate a third person to assist him in the management of the negroes, &c. and trust his long unfeigned attachment will pardon whatever trouble he may have to encounter in the execution of this trust.

This memorandum was begun December 1800, concluded the 9th of February 1802, and lastly signed the 24th of December of the same year.

(signed) *Robert Sproat.*

Honduras fs.

James Grey, practitioner in physic, *Edward Thomas* and *William Lewis*, mahogany cutters, all of this settlement, being duly sworn upon the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God, severally depose and say, That they have for many years been particularly and intimately acquainted with the late Robert Sproat, doctor of medicine, formerly residing at the Mosquito Shore, but latterly at Honduras; that they are perfectly acquainted with his hand-writing, and have repeatedly seen him write and sign his name; and they do upon their oaths aforesaid solemnly testify, declare, and believe, that the whole of the foregoing instrument of writing, purporting to be the *testamentarium* of the said Robert Sproat, and the name Robert Sproat signed thereto, is the proper hand-writing and signature of the said Robert Sproat, doctor of medicine, lately deceased.

Sworn before us, the 7th Sept. 1804.

(signed)

Tho^s Davis,
W^m Gibson,
Mars^l Bennett.

(signed)

James Grey,
Edward Thomas,
W^m Lewis.

Recorded from the original, the 10th of September 1804.

I, James Alexander Carmichael, keeper of records at Belize in Honduras, do certify that the foregoing is truly copied from the said records, as entered in Book R. folios 405 and 406.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the said settlement, this 9th day of March 1822.

(signed)

Ja^s A. Carmichael,
Assis' keeper of Records.

Enclosure, N^o 3, in Colonel Arthur's, of the 2d March 1822.

Copy of Judgment, October Grand Court, October 1813;
Sproat, George, *versus* Estate Meany, Francis.

Honduras to wit.

At the Grand Court, held in and for this settlement, October 1813.

Friday, the 29th October.

Magistrates :

James Gordon,	} Esquires {	Peter C. Wall
Archibald Colquhoun,		and
Thomas Paslow,		John Potts.

Sproat, George,	} Summons 5,000 <i>l.</i> cash, Jamaica currency, for	
<i>versus</i>		a final settlement of all accounts with said
Estate Meaney, Francis.		estate, and to establish his one-third proportion

of the residuary property of the late Robert Sproat.

Left to auditors in the usual form :

Appointed by the plaintiff, H. C. Duvernay,—Charles Craig.

Appointed by the defendant, John Johnston,—R. D. Bull.

Appointed by the court,—John Gray.

Auditors sworn in before John Potts, esquire.

The auditors unanimously find for the plaintiff the sum of 1,936*l.* 10*s.* cash, Jamaica currency, with interest from this date till paid, as a full and final settlement of his George Sproat's claims of one-third of the residuary property of Robert Sproat, deceased, and a final settlement of all accounts with him George Sproat and Francis Meany's estate, as executor to the estate of Robert Sproat, deceased, with costs of suit.

December 8th, 1813.

(signed)

H. C. Duvernay,

Charles Craig,

John Gray, Umpire.

John Johnston,

R. D. Bull.

Satisfaction entered on this judgment in the sum of 1,936*l.* 10*s.* with interest up to 29th January 1814, by order of George Sproat this 29th January 1814.

(signed)

William Hunt, Clerk Ct.

I, James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of records at Belize in the settlement of Honduras, do certify that the foregoing exemplification of a judgment, Sproat, George, *versus* Estate Meany, Francis, is truly copied from the Grand Court Judgment Records of the said settlement, as entered in Book X. folio 150.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the said settlement, this 9th day of March 1822.

(signed)

James A. Carmichael,

(seal.)

Assis^t keeper of Records.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 9th January 1822.

I BEG to enclose a petition, with three vouchers, which has been laid before me by a family formerly the property of the late Dr. Sproat.

The petition sets forth that Toby, Tom Rose, and Betty, alias Elizabeth, were left free by their master's will, but that notwithstanding they were kept in slavery for many years, and eventually purchased their freedom.

It also sets forth, that all the male slaves, who belonged to the said Dr. Sproat at the shore, were to be manumized seven years after his death, in place of which they were sold into unconditional slavery, in which state some have died, and the remainder still live.

A reference to the will of the late Dr. Sproat will of course develope, at once, the truth of this alleged act of fraud and injustice ; and I would request you would have the goodness to inform me of the result of your investigation, and whether it is your opinion, that the freedom of these people is illegally withholden from them, and whether those who were compelled to purchase their manumission, have been justly dealt with.

I have, &c.

(signed)

George Arthur.

The enclosures are :

- 1.—Receipt of William Lewis for the sum of twenty-five pounds from Thomas Goodwill.
- 2.—Bill of sale from estate of Sproat to Mr. Anderson, with his receipt to Rose for forty pounds.
- 3.—Receipt of the administrators of Mary Meighan and Edmond Meighan to Betty Meighan, for the sum of ten pounds.

To the Magistrates.

(signed)

G. A.

Sir,

Court House, Belize, Honduras, January 14th, 1822.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of date the 9th instant, enclosing the petition of Elizabeth Sproat on behalf of her family and friends, formerly the slaves of Robert Sproat, deceased ; also three other documents, vouchers of the purchase of manumission of three slaves from the estate of the said Sproat.

In answer we beg to inform you that we perceive by the records of this settlement, debts on judgment to a greater amount than the appraisement of the property of Robert Sproat, deceased, which we imagine was the cause of bringing to sale those slaves manumized by the will of the late Robert Sproat.

In

In reference to the three receipts for the manumission of Thomas Goodwill, Rose, and Betty, we are impressed with the idea, that from the very low sums for which their liberty was given, viz. 25*l.* 40*l.* and 10*l.* it would imply that the object in view was their freedom, and not the benefit of the creditors.

We have, &c.

(signed) *E. Meighan. William Gentle.*
Geo. Gibson. John W. Wright.

Government House, Belize,
19th January 1822.

Gentlemen,

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant, in which you inform me, in reference to the petition of Elizabeth Sproat, that by the records you perceive debts on judgment to a greater amount than the appraisement of the property of Robert Sproat, which, you imagine, was the cause of bringing to sale those slaves who were manumised by the will of Robert Sproat; and that you are impressed with the idea, that Thomas Goodwill, Rose, and Betty, were rather sold with a view to their freedom than for the benefit of the creditors.

This statement, as to the insolvency of the estate of Sproat, is so entirely opposed to circumstances which came within my knowledge four or five years ago, that, as an act of justice towards the petitioners, I have felt myself constrained personally to examine the records, and also to interrogate the petitioners; and my inquiries have led me to a very different conclusion from that which you have drawn.

By the public records I find, so far from the debts on judgment exceeding the appraisement of the property of Robert Sproat, that no appraisement was made of the estate during the life-time of his executor, Mr. Meaney, who, it appears, never could be brought to any settlement. In the month of November 1813, full nine years after the death of Mr. Sproat, a warrant of appraisement was issued, and an award returned of the sum of 3,873*l.*; and at the October Grand Court 1813, Mr. George Sproat obtained judgment by the award of auditors against the estate of Meaney, for the sum of 1,936*l.* for his one-third as residuary legatee. Hence it is most positively established (without adverting to any former sum or sums which the legatees may have received for expense of education or otherwise) that the estate of Sproat not only paid all just demands whatever, but left a clear residue of 5,809*l.* 10*s.*; nor is it less evident, that, by every obligation of law and humanity, the slaves left free by will should have been manumised at the period stipulated by the testator, before one dollar was paid into the hands of legatees. That there were debts due by the estate of Sproat at his death is very probable, but that there was abundant property to cover those debts is demonstrated by the result; and had the executor sold the slaves who were to be freed at the expiration of seven years, for the period of their servitude, in place of making a property himself out of the estate, it is manifest there would still have been enough to answer the just demands of the creditors, and to have set the slaves at liberty.

The secret of the three slaves "Tom, Rose, and Betty," being sold for such very trifling sums (after being unjustly held in slavery eleven years after the death of their master) is very well explained, I find, by their appearance; at such an age they must have been rather a burthen than an acquisition), and the poor female Rose, was still most inhumanly held in slavery many years after she had actually paid the money for her freedom.

I can readily enter into the hardship of their case; and feel the greatest concern for those individuals who have, unconscious of their situation, purchased any of these much-injured people; but I must, notwithstanding, claim your protection, as a Court of Ordinary, in behalf of the slaves, hoping you will cause the will of the late Dr. Sproat to be faithfully observed towards them, as they cannot, under any pretensions, be deprived of their freedom by the fraud or caprice of his executor.

I have, &c.

The Magistrates, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Court House, Belize, Honduras,
23d January 1822.

Sir,

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, conveying the difference which exists of our opinion with yours, as expressed in our communication of the 14th instant, on the solvency of Robert Sproat, deceased.

In reply, we beg leave to state that we perceive, in forming that opinion, you have not been aware of the appraisement of the estate of Robert Sproat, deceased, executed in October 1804, of which we beg leave to hand you a copy, for your information.

We have, &c.

Geo. Arthur, esq.
Colonel, H. M. Superintendent,
Commandant, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *E. Meighan,
John W. Wright,
William Gentle.*

Honduras, fs.

To Edward Thomas, and William Lewis of this settlement,

Greeting,

By virtue of the power and authority vested in us, and agreeable to the custom and usage of Honduras in like cases, you are hereby authorized and required to inventory and appraise all and singular the goods and chattels, rights and credits, which were of Robert Sproat, Esq. doctor of medicine, lately deceased, in this settlement, as they shall be shown unto you by Francis Meaney, one of his executors, or that you know did belong to his estate at the time of his decease, and this you are to perform to the best of your knowledge and consciences, and a due return thereof make unto the clerk of Court's Office, within three months from this date, or within such further time as the magistrates may appoint for that purpose, that the same may be filed and recorded.

Given under our hands and seals at Honduras aforesaid, the 28th Sept. 1804.

(signed) *George Thomson,
Clerk of Courts.*

(signed) *Thomas Potts,
Marshal Bennett,
Benjamin Garnett.*

In conformity to the within warrant of appraisement I have administered the oath in manner and form prescribed, unto Edmund Thomas and William Lewis, the persons appointed to inventory and appraise the goods and chattels, rights and credits, of Robert Sproat, Esq. late of this settlement, deceased.

Given under my hand and seal the 11th April, 1804.

(signed) *William Gibson.*

The execution of the within warrant of appraisement appears by the return hereto annexed.

Given under our hands and seals at Honduras, the _____ of _____ 1804.

(signed) *E. Thomas,
William Lewis.*

Inventory and appraisement of the goods and chattels, rights and credits, in this settlement, of Robert Sproat, Esq. lately deceased, as shown unto us by Francis Meaney his executor; viz:

	£.	s.	d.
A negro man named Peter	170	—	—
A - - ditto - - Gay	170	—	—
A - - ditto - - Scipio	170	—	—
A - - ditto - - Bristol	80	—	—
A - - ditto - - Tom, alias Tom Godwill	140	—	—
A - - ditto - - Dicke	170	—	—
A - - ditto - - Harry	140	—	—
A - - ditto - - Stephen	140	—	—
A - - ditto - - Jemmy	170	—	—
A - - ditto - - Long Ben	160	—	—
A - - ditto - - Sam	140	—	—
A - - ditto - - Little Ben	140	—	—
A - - ditto - - Daniel	120	—	—
A - - ditto - - Stephen Fife	100	—	—
A - - ditto - - Collins	70	—	—
A - - ditto - - Charles	40	—	—
A - - ditto - - Jack	80	—	—
A - - boy - - Ned	120	—	—
A - - ditto - - Kingston	100	—	—
A - - ditto - - Morris	120	—	—
A - - ditto - - Baldy	120	—	—
A negro woman - - Betty, and her two daughters, named Eve and Lucretia	300	—	—
A negro woman - - Betty, and her son Belford	150	—	—
A - - ditto - - Rose, ordered to be manumised	90	—	—
A - - ditto - - Bess	70	—	—
A - - ditto - - Florina	140	—	—

(continued)

Cattle :—		£	s.	d.
Twenty-two steers, average per pair, 60 <i>l.</i>	- - - - -	660	-	-
One bull	- - - - -	20	-	-
Seven cows, same, with followers at 20 <i>l.</i>	- - - - -	140	-	-
A horse, saddle, and bridle	- - - - -	40	-	-
Mahogany fallen in Indian creek	- - - - -	100	-	-
Trucks, 50 <i>l.</i> chains, yokes, ox-bows, and iron-work, 30 <i>l.</i>	- - - - -	80	-	-
Four cross-cut saws, sundry axes, and masheats	- - - - -	25	-	-
A pit-pan, 25 <i>l.</i> a small ditto, 6 <i>l.</i> 3 dorys, 26 <i>l.</i>	- - - - -	57	-	-
A craft, called the wanny sound	- - - - -	140	-	-
A proportion in Co. with estate Rumbull of a small scow, called the Mameluke	- - - - -	30	-	-
Tryall plantation	- - - - -	25	-	-
New Egypt ditto, with the houses thereon, and the adjoining plantations	- - - - -	200	-	-
Houses and Lotts land on the south side of Belize	- - - - -	700	-	-
A bookcase, with chest drawers, secretary, &c.	- - - - -	40	-	-
Two mahogany chests, two tables, and sideboard, eight mahogany chairs, a settee, four bedsteads, mahogany liquor-case, two trunks	- - - - -	68	10	-
A patent sofa, with covers, &c. complete	- - - - -	35	-	-
A pair canteens	- - - - -	16	-	-
A family medicine-case, with some medicines	- - - - -	12	-	-
A variety of printed books, Encyclopedia, &c.	- - - - -	50	-	-
Three pictures, descriptive of the Battle of the Nile	- - - - -	20	-	-
Three teaboard, old, seven new ones, drip-stone	- - - - -	20	-	-
A double-barrelled gun	- - - - -	20	-	-
Two mattresses, bolster and pillow	- - - - -	30	-	-
Spyglass	- - - - -	3	-	-
Half coil four-inch rope, two jugs oil, one jug spirits of turpentine, fifteen kegs paint, four dozen whip-saw files, one dozen cross-cut files, forty-five small iron pots	- - - - -	52	15	-
Six sheets, two coverlids, three pavilions, and four tablecloths	- - - - -	16	-	-
Plate and Jewellery :—				
Eighteen gold waistcoat buttons, eighteen ditto coat ditto	- - - - -	36	-	-
One pair gold shoe buckles, one ditto ditto knee ditto	- - - - -	30	-	-
One gold mourning ring, one ditto topaze, set with pearls	- - - - -	9	6	8
One gold medallion with a picture, one ditto Spanish	- - - - -	15	13	4
One pair silver shoe buckles	- - - - -	2	-	-
A silver lancet-case	- - - - -	2	-	-
A ditto cruet-stand	- - - - -	15	-	-
A ditto large deep dish, 12 <i>l.</i> two silver cups, 16 <i>l.</i>	- - - - -	28	-	-
A gravyspoon, three tablespoons, one teaspoon, one pair sugar-tongs, and seven desert spoons	- - - - -	8	-	-
Two old silver candlesticks	- - - - -	1	10	-
A silver inkstand	- - - - -	15	-	-
A gold watch with two seals	- - - - -	50	-	-
Wearing Apparel, new :—				
One dozen new shirts, very fine	- - - - -	18	-	-
Five pair silk hose	- - - - -	6	13	4
Ten pairs breeches and pantaloons	- - - - -	15	-	-
Two new coats	- - - - -	12	-	-
Two dozen pocket handkerchiefs	- - - - -	3	-	-
Six neck-kerchiefs	- - - - -	2	-	-
		56	13	4
A large quantity of old wearing apparel, to be divided among the negroes	- - - - -	20	-	-
Crockery ware, glass, and kitchen furniture	- - - - -	16	-	-
Twelve bed curtain-hooks (silver)	- - - - -	8	-	-
A quantity of bricks and paving stones	- - - - -	15	-	-
(signed) <i>E. Thomas.</i>		£.	6,338	8 4
<i>Wm Lewis.</i>				

I, James Alexander Carmichael, assistant keeper of records, do certify that the foregoing appraisement is truly copied from the original as entered on the Records of the Settlement of Honduras, in Book Wo, folios 381, 2, 3 and 4, on the 28th day of January 1811.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the said settlement, this 23d day of January, Anno Domini 1822.

(Seal.)

(signed) *A. Carmichael,*

A. keeper of Records.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 24th January 1822.

I BEG to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, with the appraisal which accompanied it.

You will, I am sure, easily comprehend my not imagining it possible there could be any other appraisal than the one to which I referred, as probably another instance is not to be found upon the Records of the country of a second appraisal being ordered by the Bench after an interval of nine years. Some plausible pretext will no doubt be set up for this, but to the impartial eye of justice the whole transaction can admit but of one construction! It is not, however, my wish to perpetuate any misunderstanding as to the appraisal; if indeed it was important to the cause of the slaves, it possibly might be effectually argued that the first appraisal was not executed in 1804, as you suppose; for the document was of no validity, and consequently could not be considered as executed until it was returned to the Bench in the year 1811, very nearly seven years after Mr. Sproat's death.

But, gentlemen, in referring again to my letter of the 19th instant, you will perceive that I have not argued the solvency of Mr. Sproat's estate, and the consequent injustice done the poor slaves, on any appraisal whatever. I consider the solvency of the estate as a point demonstrated by the sum of 5,809*l.* 10*s.* having been finally awarded to the residuary legatees; and from these premises the inference of the just title of the slaves in question to their freedom is so clear, that I am only surprised there should be a difference of opinion upon the subject; nor can I suppress repeating the hope, that, without rendering it necessary to have recourse to any other measure, you will, as a Court of Ordinary, do that justice to the slaves to which, on reconsideration, you must, I conceive, consider them justly entitled.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

Sir,

Court House, Belize, Honduras, January 29th, 1822.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of date the 24th instant, relative to the claims of sundry persons manumised by the will of the late R. Sproat, deceased, conveying different remarks as to the solvency of the said estate, and urging us, as a Court of Ordinary, to do that justice to the slaves that the nature of the case requires.

In reply, we beg leave to inform you, that, after having given the requisite consideration to the case, we find the most prudent step we can adopt, in justice to all parties concerned, is to grant writs of replevin to the petitioner Rose Sproat, on behalf of the persons manumised by the will of R^t Sproat, deceased, which we have accordingly directed to be done, as also the public Treasurer to enter into the requisite bonds on their behalf.

We have, &c.

Geo. Arthur, Esq. Colonel,
His Majesty's Superintendent, Commandant,
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *John W. Wright.*
W^m Gentle.
Tho^s Iles.

Gentlemen,

Government House, Belize, 2d February 1822.

THE correspondence upon the subject of the claims of the persons left free by the will of the late Dr. Sproat has already been so protracted, that I am the more concerned at being under the necessity of still differing in opinion with the Bench.

In doubtful cases, a proceeding, such as you propose, by writs of replevin, might be advisable; but under the circumstances of this case, especially with reference to the people who are still held in slavery, I cannot think it ought in justice to be resorted to.

The freedom of these people appears to me already most fully and legally established by the will of Mr. Sproat, and the solvency of his estate; and therefore, why their liberty should be exposed to the doubtful issue of a trial, and that at a moment when the public mind is already unusually excited upon such matters, I cannot understand.

With this impression, I would not desire to agitate the question further in behalf of the petitioners, until their petition has been submitted to His Majesty's Government; the more so, as it appears to me the case is one which comes strictly within the power and authority of the Court of Chancery.

I have, &c.

The Magistrates, &c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Geo. Arthur.*

—N° 8.—

Extract of a Letter from Lieutenant Colonel Arthur, to the Earl Bathurst, K.G. dated Honduras, 5th March 1822; with two Enclosures.

On the arrival of Major-General Pye, in December last, before the offensive matter of the Indians was investigated, and when it was supposed I was on the eve of my departure for England, the accompanying addresses from the inhabitants were presented to me through the magistrates, being some of those very individuals who are now most angry and most violent.

The sentiments conveyed in the address of the white inhabitants, when compared with the present feeling, is no feeble confirmation of the vacillating disposition which I have always given of the public: and although indeed, I was well aware that it did not speak the real sentiments of many, such testimony, as to the line of proceeding by which I have uniformly been guided, is perhaps the strongest I could possibly lay before your Lordship, and may help by comparison, to illustrate any obscurity in the representations which now may go forth. The address of the free people of colour comprehends, I believe without exception, the name of every male inhabitant of that class of any reputation in the colony, and although its language is less ardent, it is infinitely more acceptable to me, being founded in the sincere respect and gratitude of those unfortunate people, who have been rather the objects of suspicion and dread in every other colony.

Sir,

Court House, Belize, 28th December 1821.

IT being the desire of the subscribers to the address to you upon the occasion of your departure for Europe, that the same should be conveyed in the most respectful manner:

It affords us the greatest satisfaction, as magistrates of the settlement, to present to you a document so very numerous and respectably signed; and expressive of the just sense entertained by the community over whom you have so long presided, of the important benefits derived by the settlement from your able and impartial administration and superintendance; and when we reflect on the very great improvement of the settlement under your superintendance, and above all, upon the establishments for the religious education and instruction of the rising generation, which, under your personal auspices and influence, are now placed on a permanent footing, it is matter of real gratification to us to find your merits and public services so very generally and justly appreciated by the inhabitants at large, as it seems probable, from the recent establishment of the independence of the Spanish provinces bordering on this settlement, that some important arrangements may become necessary with the new governments, we trust His Majesty's ministers, in any negotiations respecting this settlement, will avail themselves of the information which your intimate knowledge of the settlement, its interests, and local and geographical advantages enable you to supply; and we cannot but express our hope, that if your health will permit, and it does not interfere with your advancement in His Majesty's service, that you may return to your charge here, so long, at least, as it may be necessary to establish the boundaries of the colony, and fix and regulate its commercial intercourse with the neighbouring independent governments, which appear to us objects of high importance, and for which services your ability and local knowledge seem peculiarly to fit you.

We have the honour to be, &c.

(signed) *James Hyde,* *Edward Meighan,*
Thomas Iles, *Charles Evans.*

George Arthur, esq.

Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent, &c. &c. &c. Honduras.

Sir,

Belize, Honduras, 22d November 1821.

WE, His Majesty's most loyal and dutiful subjects, settled at Honduras, beg leave to assure you, that although it has given us pain to find the rumour of your intended departure from this country confirmed, it has been highly gratifying to have received that personal communication from you, as a mark of respect towards us.

We are fully persuaded, that during your long administration in this country, you have always endeavoured to act up to the spirit of your instructions; and that your unceasing object has been to introduce order and regularity in our judicial and legislative proceedings; to raise the tone of public morals; to advance the cause of religion; to protect the oppressed, without the smallest distinction of persons; and

and to promote, in every respect, what to your judgment appeared to be our real happiness and chief good, both individually and collectively.

We beg to assure you, that we firmly believe, that during the number of years you have presided over the interest of the settlement, the governing motive of all your measures has embraced the tranquillity and prosperity of the community at large.

We have heard with the most heartfelt satisfaction, the expression of your feeling towards us as a public body, for the personal respect and kindness you have experienced, and for the very flattering resolutions with which we have frequently testified our sense of your conduct as our superintendant; and, in taking leave of you, we beg to testify our most sincere wish for your welfare and prosperity; and we hope that our gracious Sovereign will be pleased to confer upon you some mark of his royal approbation.

(signed)

We have the honour to be, &c.

Thomas Frewin, James Hyde, William Eve, Edward Meighan, Jas. A. Carmichael, Thomas Iles, R. D. Bull, George Gibson, Nathaniel Hulse, John Armstrong, W. H. Coats, J. Coatquelin, John Living, L. M^cLenan, Robert Stephenson, L. E. Williams, Charles Bull, Charles Evans, John Hughes, William Usher, George Usher, M. Gavin, Francis Wood, Jas. Waldeon, Geo. Hyde, William Maskall, John Armstrong, John Moore, John Fenell, W. B. Legan, Robert Turnbull, W. Turnbull, H. H. Freeman, James Usher, Robert Moore, J. Day Betson, Henry Moore, John Potts, Wm. Tekell, Jas. Forrester, Jas. C. Altereith, Samuel Howard, James M^cDonald, Joseph Siddons, William Gabornet, John Howard, Andrew Baynton, John M^cConachie, Alex. Anderson, Charles Craig, F. W. Martiny, Robert Wagnes, William Potts, J. B. Rabateau, John Smith, Daniel Wagner, William F. Cherrington, Joseph Rabateau, John Young, Joseph E. Swasey, George Horne, James Neal, Fras. Meighan, William Hamilton, James Wood, William Jackson, George Peddee, John Crabb, Alexander Anderson, Robert Walters, Jeremiah Myvett, Abraham Heyliger, William Courtnay, Benjamin Myvett, Francis Winter, Christopher Lofthouse, Robert Alexander, Jacob Muslar, Charles Jeffreys, James Cornish, Edward Bennett, Daniel Tillet.

Enclosure N^o 2, in Colonel Arthur's, of the 5th March 1822.

Sir,

Court-House, Belize, Honduras, 19th Jan. 1822.

WE have the honor to enclose to you an Address, signed by a number of individuals, denominating themselves the men of colour of this settlement, which we have been solicited to present.

We have the honour to be, &c.

(signed)

John W. Wright,

William Gentle,

Edward Meighan,

George Gibson.

George Arthur, esq.

His Majesty's Superintendent Commandant, &c. &c. &c. Honduras.

To George Arthur, Esq. Colonel, His Majesty's Superintendent and
Commandant, &c. &c. &c. Honduras.

Sir,

WE, the undersigned, people of colour of this settlement, sensible of the civil and moral advantages which we have enjoyed during the time of your government in this colony, and understanding that you are about to take your departure for England, (we hope only for a short time,) do desire to avail ourselves of the opportunity which such an event affords, to express our high esteem of your character, as well as our obligations for the good will which you have ever evinced towards us; and therefore, we humbly hope you will be pleased to receive this our dutiful address as a small mark of our thankful acknowledgement for the many and important benefits which our order of society has received from your judicious and impartial administration.

Among the principal of these advantages we enumerate, with grateful pleasure, the repeated testimonies which you have borne to the peaceful and orderly disposition of the people of colour, the condescending manner in which you have listened to their complaints; and when well grounded, the readiness with which you have used your influence and authority to obtain for them redress and relief; you have not only assisted them with your advice, but have afforded them the friendly aid of your personal influence and public interference, by which many of them have been greatly benefitted, and will be bound in duty to hold you in grateful remembrance.

But while you have ever been so mindful of our temporary interests, you have not been less desirous of promoting our moral welfare. This appears in your unwearied exertions to promote the great cause of religion among us in general, and especially, in exciting the attention of all orders towards the important concerns of religious instruction and education. The public have certainly evinced a noble generosity
in

in the support which they have afforded to our free school; a generosity which demands from us the highest acknowledgement; but we feel persuaded that all must unite to render unto you that tribute of thanks, which you so justly merit, for the zeal and diligence with which you have ever promoted the objects of those valuable institutions; and we here venture to express our hope, that although you may not be a witness and spectator of their usefulness, you may hear of the improvement which they are producing in our rising generation, and so encourage your future exertions in the same good cause, wherever it may please God, in his providence, to appoint the place of your residence and the sphere of your services. We trust, Sir, that your zealous endeavours to promote the best interests of your fellow creatures, will ever prove a source of grateful recollection to you, as we are sure they will ever redound to your present and future honour.

We congratulate ourselves upon the more than usual length of time which, as our superintendent, you have presided over us, but we cannot refrain from expressing our earnest wish, that if it should not greatly tend to the prejudice of your promotion and interests in life, you may again return to your government in this settlement, here to continue, at least for some few years longer, in the exercise of that office, which you have hitherto filled with so much consideration, for the general well being and prosperity of the community. If, however, the great disposer of all events has ordered otherwise, we beg you will accept our very best wishes for your own personal happiness, and that prosperity may attend you throughout every future situation in life.

In conclusion, we beg leave to express the unfeigned esteem and undissembled gratitude with which we are,

Belize, in the Bay of Honduras,

7th January 1822.

Sir,

your most faithful and most

obedient humble servants,

William Roy, Samuel Rogers, John Ferrall, Benjamin Croft, Charles Jeffreys, James Trapp, Robert Wagner, Uriah Trapp, Daniel Wagner, John Kennedy, Thomas Bates, William Longsworth, sen. William Neal, Henry Baley, J. B. Raboteau, William Baley, Joseph Raboteau, John H. Smith, Keith Catto, John Gill, Stephen Panting, William Gill, William Longsworth, Joseph Abraham, George Hinks, Philip Meighan, William Gibson, John Lock, John H. Stain, James Platt, Stephen Stain, Samuel Grant, Peter Stain, Joseph Fenell, George D. Hewlett, John Cuttante, George Garnell, William Jordan, sen. William Wagner, William Jordan, jun. William Jackson, John Wagner, George Neal, P. Graham, William Orgill, Matty Hamilton, James W. H. Card, Anthony Beley, John Courtney, Robert Alexander, William Courtney, Henry Arnold, Benjamin Theus, Richard Stain, James Neal, Joseph Geneson, John Johnson, Daniel Ewing, Simon Flusher, Ralph Cunningham, Samuel Savery, Jeremiah Mivett, Joseph Hinks, Dan Hoare, Mathew Smith, Robert Haylock, James Wagner, Francis Winter, Benjamin Vernon, David Dixon, William Edwards, John Brouyet, Bernard Belisle, Sincler Andrewen, Joseph Yoney, John Flowers, Bryan Meighan, Thomas Billey, John Himmons, Coffee Smith, James Tucker, W. C. Card, John Allen, George Gillett, Samuel Belisle, Richard Burrell, George Hullett, James Cunningham, William Hemsley, Simon Grant, John Wilton, Hope Grant, William Potts, William Flowers, Archibald Grant, Charles Bennett, Thomas Vernon, Joseph Eames, Joseph Belisle, John Morris, William Henry, William Carr, Jean Martin, Scotland Grant, Devonsheer Meighan, Thomas Flowers, James Stibbins, William Flowers, William J. Croft, Cezar Flowers, Cadet Yonkley, Adam Flowers, William Grant, Charles Flowers, John Young, Joseph Flowers, Cezar Cannedy, Jacob Flowers, Francis Haylock, jun. Lawrence Meighan, Richard Debaptiste, John Tyler, Thomas Eves, Catto Grant, Archibald W. Flowers, Joseph Fisher, Benjamin Mivett, John Cross, David Hamilton, James Humsley, Thomas Slusher, James Pitt Laurie, James Flowers, Charles Raban, John Parks, Sidne Jillett, Primes Longsworth, Duncan Neal, Samuel Pitt, Joseph Domingo, Jean Culice, James Pitt, James Grant, Joseph Bumo, Cumb^d Winter, George Gilbert Frazer, G. Colquhoun, Robert Card, Peter Harris, William Morrison, Henry Rand, William Crabb, A. Douglass, William Yuxey, Robert Laurie, William Barnard, John Broster, John Ran, William Young, Joseph Flowers, John Young, Providence Flowers, Alexander Grant, Quamina Flowers, Jacob Mils, John Thomas Flowers, Richard Smith, Thomas Belisle, James Brown, John Trapp, George Card, Benjamin Farel, Robert Bruher, John O. Craft, Hercules Card, Benjamin Hickey, William Edward, Benjamin Fox, Thomas Moody, jun. William Casey, Joseph Cusey, William Harris, George Henny, John Pitt, Joseph Neal, Robert Walters, Joseph Renaud, William Hamilton, William Bibbey, Joseph Jones, Francis Ramington, Guamin Edward, Robert Gladden, Charles Asque, Francis Hoylock, sen. William Wilson, Alexander Anderson.

—No. 9.—

EXTRACT of a Letter from Major-General Codd, to the Earl Bathurst, K. G. ;
dated Honduras, 8th March 1823.

THE principal property of the Honduras settlers, is their negroes, and here there exists great emulation amongst them, and which is greatly encouraged by the owner ; here the negro is well fed, well clothed, and every comfort suiting his station is liberally provided for him ; here he is, at all times, admitted into a participation of his industry ; here are no drivers with whips to urge him to his duty, nor regular systems of punishment ; here are no workhouses ; and I really believe in no part of the world, where slavery exists, can the government of them be in a more indulgent form ; and the expense attending each negro annually, is beyond what I have ever known before ; the best Irish mess pork, and good flour, are weekly delivered to him, and if not flour, plantains, which they in general prefer, they have the unlimited use of. The plantain yielding here in abundance, these, with the addition of rum, tobacco, pipes, a knife, powder and shot, and a short sword, here called a mascheat, constitute all their wants ; he literally only works five days for his master, he is allowed to saw boards, build canoes and flat-bottomed boats, called here pitpans, raise stock, and cultivate the soil to any extent, for his own immediate profit ; indeed his industry is always encouraged by the owner, who purchases a large portion of the produce of his labour, and it is quite common for slaves here to lay by hundreds of pounds, with which they purchase themselves, or obtain a friend with their money to purchase their wives or children.

But sorry am I, my Lord, to report, that clouds appear gathering over this bright state of things, and feelings appear to be awakened, and passions roused, injurious to the happiness of the negro, and, I fear, detrimental to the interests of the settlement. Since Christmas, it is ascertained, (for I have called for their names and owners) 39, as they are represented, of the very best negroes, have absconded, without any apparent cause, no severity, no punishment, that I can learn, has been inflicted ; but they have secretly left their homes ; and it appears the general feeling that it arises from the effects of so many persons standing up for their freedom, who have been for many years their fellow-slaves.

—N^o 10.—

EXTRACT of a Letter from Major-General Codd, to the Earl Bathurst, K. G. ;
dated Honduras, 22d January 1823.

WITH respect to the case of the Indians, I beg to acquaint your Lordship that no application has been made to me relative to them ; and I have every reason to feel assured that both parties are patiently awaiting the decision of His Majesty's Government ; nor from the communications which have been received from your Lordship, as well as a letter from his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Jamaica, do I feel myself at liberty to make any alteration in the situation in which they have been placed.