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**SLAVE EMANCIPATION:
CROWN SLAVES.**

RETURN to an Address to HIS MAJESTY, dated 18 August 1831;—*for*,

COPIES of the several ORDERS sent to the COLONIES for emancipating the SLAVES belonging to the CROWN, and of any Report (subsequent to that already presented to the House) made to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, from the Governors of the Colonies, in relation to that Measure, and any Directions as to the Means by which the Slaves emancipated are to be maintained.

Colonial Department, }
Downing-street, }
6 October 1831. }

HOWICK.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
6 October 1831.*

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CROWN SLAVES.

—1.—

CIRCULAR to all the SLAVE COLONIES except *Mauritius*.

SIR,

Downing-street, 12 March 1831.

HIS Majesty's Government have had under their serious consideration the circumstance, that in several of His Majesty's Possessions abroad, there are Negroes held in Slavery as the property of the Crown. The King's Government have felt it their duty humbly to represent to His Majesty, that this is a species of property which many considerations concur to recommend that the Crown should forthwith relinquish; and His Majesty has been graciously pleased to direct, that measures should be taken accordingly, for releasing these Negroes.

From all the inquiries which I have been enabled to make, I am not led to apprehend, that any practical inconvenience will arise either to these persons themselves or to the Colonial communities of which they are a part, from their immediate enfranchisement. In the year 1828, a Circular Instruction, of which I enclose you a Copy,* was issued to the Governors of those Colonies, in which there were Negroes forfeited to the Crown, under the Abolition Laws, the purport of which was, to direct that those Negroes should be placed upon the footing of other free persons of African birth or descent, and left to seek their own subsistence. In some of those Colonies, the number of forfeited Negroes amounted to several hundreds. The Reports which have since been received from the respective Governors, fully justify the expectations which were entertained, that the people in question would be able and willing to support themselves by honest means, without being a charge upon the funds either of the Government or of the Colonies, and without detriment to the Colonial societies. The experience thus obtained affords a satisfactory assurance that the Negroes, now the property of the Crown, will, when manumitted, support themselves by their own exertions, in a manner equally innocuous. I am aware, however, that in the case of these Negroes, as of others, some instances will probably occur in which the aid of Government may be required by persons who are incapacitated, through age or infirmity. Cases such as these must be provided for in the manner which you will perceive to have been pointed out by the enclosed Despatch, in regard to similar cases occurring amongst the forfeited Negroes after their manumission. The charge which such a provision has been found to impose upon Government, is of very trifling amount.

* Dated 16 Oct. 1828, *vide* Papers on Apprenticed Africans, ordered to be printed, by the House of Commons, 6 October 1831. No. 304.

I understand that many of the Slaves belonging to the Crown in the Colonies, are either given gratuitously or let out to public functionaries. It may thus be necessary to give time to their employers either to make agreements with the Negroes, for retaining their voluntary services, in return for wages, after their manumission, or to supply themselves in some other way with the services which they require. You will therefore allow one month, and no more, to elapse, before you carry into full effect His Majesty's commands, by completing the Enfranchisement of all Negroes the property of the Crown.

I have, &c.

(signed)

Goderich.

— 2. —

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS respecting the LIBERATION of CROWN SLAVES in *Mauritius*, to which Colony the Circular Instruction was considered inapplicable, owing to the numbers of the Crown Slaves there, and other circumstances.

To Sir *C. Colville*, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

Downing-street, 29th July 1831.

MAURITIUS.

IN conformity with the intention expressed in my Despatch of the 28th instant, I proceed to address you separately on the subject of the liberation of Government Slaves. This important question has occupied the serious attention of His Majesty's Government, and I have not failed to consult the Despatches from the Colony upon it, as well as the Reports of the Commissioners. Upon the whole, I have come to the conclusion, that although the labour of the Government Slaves, as *Slaves*, will not be henceforth available for the Public Service, in the various departments in which they are employed, yet it is not necessary to take any such measure for their general location, as is recommended by the Commissioners, whereby they would be precluded from continuing in the employment of the public under a voluntary engagement. The Colonial Government will continue to have a demand for their services, more or less; and as their maintenance and management as Government Slaves, amounts to upwards of 7,000*l.* per annum, whilst the numbers employed in labour, which the public must necessarily pay, seem to be under 500, I apprehend that, although probably no saving may be effected by the liberation of these Slaves, yet that such numbers of them as are really wanted, might, if they were willing, be continued upon wages, without involving much additional charge upon the Colonial revenues. It is not, however, with reference to considerations of economy, that His Majesty's Government have resolved upon the enfranchisement of Slaves belonging to the Crown in Mauritius and elsewhere. Considerations of a general nature, and of great importance, have induced them to regard such a measure as one which is absolutely indispensable, and which must be carried into effect without any further delay than may be necessary for ensuring, as far as possible, the future welfare and good conduct of the Negroes in question. After having given the most careful attention, therefore, to the several modes by which it appeared practicable to dispose of these people, with due regard for the interests of the Colonial society, as well as for their own, it has appeared to His Majesty's Government, that the following are the principles on which the measure may be best executed:—

1st. The Enfranchisement of all Government Slaves whatsoever is to be effected within twelve months from the date of your receipt of this Despatch.

2dly. Wages at the market rate of the Colony are to be offered to those who may, at the time of their enfranchisement, be employed as labourers, couriers, messengers, boatmen or mechanics in the several departments of the Public Service; and the same wages are to be secured to them for one year from that time, provided they be willing to work, and do actually perform a fair portion of work in return for such wages. After the expiration of the year they will continue to be hired, or not, according to the demands of the public service for their labour, as well as according to their willingness to be employed.

3dly. Those who are employed as domestic servants by the Governor or other public officers, will, of course, be at liberty to enter into contracts for continuing their services to their employers, if desired, in return for wages, the amount of which must be adjusted by the parties as in other cases of hiring free servants, but the wages must be paid by the officers and not from the Colonial Revenue.

4thly. The issue of rations, clothes, or other allowances must cease from the date of their liberation, in respect of all the Negroes, except in cases hereinafter specified; and except the aged, the infirm, and the orphans, who must continue to be maintained at the public charge.

5thly. For those to whom the public service does not afford a prospect of employment on wages, and also for those domestics whom their present employers are

are unwilling to retain on wages, it will be necessary that some provision should be made, if there be no such demand for their labour in the Colony, as will enable them to subsist themselves. In this case, grants of land sufficient for their subsistence must be assigned to them, together with a supply of such implements as may be necessary for the cultivation thereof, and rations for one year, as recommended by the Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry. Whether an issue of rations for a further period be required, (as conjectured by the Commissioners of Colonial Inquiry,) will be seen at the expiration of the former; and unless it be absolutely indispensable for the subsistence of the Negroes, it must not be permitted.

6thly. Those who are hired out by the Government to private individuals, will be at liberty to continue in the service of those individuals on the same terms, with the difference of receiving for themselves as wages, the amount of their hire, and relinquishing their claim upon the Government for clothing and maintenance. If they are unwilling to continue in those situations they will be free to quit them; but they must fully understand, that if they do so voluntarily, not being discharged by their employers, they will not receive any assistance from the Government in seeking the means of subsistence. If any be discharged by their present employers, and are unable to meet with others, they may be located on grants of land, under the same rules of location as I have already prescribed.

7thly. Those who have been apprenticed must serve out the terms of their Apprenticeships, but must be subject to no other discipline or controul than is lawfully in use in respect of apprentices of free condition.

8thly. In carrying into effect the liberation of the Government Slaves, you will not fail to attach to the Grants of Freedom, a Proviso that the persons so enfranchised shall not be capable of holding any property in Slaves. There are many considerations, to which it is not necessary that I should here advert, which render it highly important that such a condition should in every instance be strictly enforced.

You will perceive that, in giving you these Instructions, I have adopted but very partially the suggestions of the Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry. The Commissioners propose an indiscriminate offer of allotments of land to all the Negroes who may desire it. I, on the contrary, have not found any sufficient reason for inducing a number of Negroes to withdraw themselves from the employments in the Public Service to which they have been accustomed; since their continuance in those employments would apparently at once afford to the Public Departments the supply of labour which they require, and afford to the Negroes the wages which may be necessary for their subsistence, and which, if not received by them, must be given to others. So long as the Negro is placed in the situation of a free man, and enjoys all the rights and privileges of freedom, I desire to avoid any further change. The Commissioners contemplate the postponement of complete enfranchisement for a period of three years, one third of the labour of the Negroes being given to the Government in the intermediate time; whereas the object of my instructions is to effect the enfranchisement as early as possible. The Commissioners have not entered into any explanation of their reasons for recommending delay. They have not explained whether their purpose was to compensate the Government, more or less, by the partial exaction of labour, for the cost of rations, &c., for one year, which their plan of location involved; or whether they conceived that, in the course of a graduated transition from slavery to freedom, the Negroes would undergo some desirable preparation for the latter state. I have, indeed, been informed that the Government Slaves bear the character of an ill-conducted and disorderly class of people, and I fear there is too much reason to suppose that their situation has been such as very naturally to render them so. Whilst their physical condition has been in all probability more easy than that of other Slaves, their exemption from the pressure of private interest in the exaction of labour, has been accompanied by an equal exemption from that domestic discipline which would be the more required the less they were employed, and which results to other persons in the condition of slavery, from an identification, to a certain extent, of the moral interests of the Slave with the pecuniary advantage of the owner. I can easily believe, therefore, that, under such circumstances as these, emancipated from domestic restraint, and nevertheless deprived of the motives for good conduct which self-dependence generates, the Government Negroes may have acquired irregular and disorderly habits of life. But whilst I attribute the evil

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MAURITIUS.

to the modified state of slavery in which they have lived, I cannot, of course, admit, that a further modification of that state would cure it, or prepare the way for any thing better. The proposals of the Commissioners are not explicit as to the system of discipline or coercion under which the Negroes are to cultivate their own grounds during the four days of the week given them for that purpose; they merely recommend that instruction in the mode of cultivation should be afforded by an overseer, and rather imply, therefore, that the Negroes are to be left to perform the requisite labour, or not, as they are disposed; and that they are to be placed under no constraint at all, except for two days in the week, whilst subsistence is secured to them for the time being, whatever be their course of life or their quantum of exertion. I cannot regard as a measure of moral improvement and preparation for freedom, this further relaxation of the bonds of slavery, unaccompanied by any substitution of that natural discipline of circumstances, which governs the conduct of the labouring classes in a state of freedom. I perceive much less objection to an exchange at once of all the obligations of slavery for the obligations, such as they are, of freedom; and my desire would be, in all cases, were it possible in all, to withdraw every means of subsistence which is not derived from voluntary and independent labour. For these reasons I have approved the system of location and the issue of rations, &c. after enfranchisement, only in those cases where it may be absolutely necessary, owing to the possible absence of demand, public or private, for the services of liberated Negroes. In such cases it would neither be just to the Negroes themselves, nor to the free Colonial society, to throw them suddenly upon that society without the means of subsistence; and the evil of the measure would be greater than any which may be anticipated from admitting the system of location in those particular cases. In cases where public employment or wages cannot be offered, I must leave it to your discretion to adopt the best means for resolving any doubt which may arise whether the Negro have, or have not, the means of procuring subsistence without claiming land or rations.

Such are the views which His Majesty's Government have been led to entertain of the manner in which the Government Slaves may be liberated, with the best prospect of benefit to themselves, and the least risk of injury to the interests of the Colony. They are not unconscious, however, that the subject is one of considerable difficulty; and that the liberation of the Slaves belonging to the Crown, in Mauritius, requires to be proceeded in with the more caution, on account of their numbers and of the habits of life which, through whatever fault of management, or other cause, they are said to have acquired. In the West India Colonies, the apprenticed Negroes were (as you will perceive by the enclosed printed copy of Papers laid before Parliament,) liberated at once, and their conduct as free men, has not led to any complaints; and in the island of Antigua, where they were most numerous, has been very favourably reported upon by the Governor. The result of this measure has therefore appeared to justify His Majesty's Government in directing the immediate enfranchisement of the Government Slaves in the West Indies, of whom, in respect to general behaviour and habits of life, they had no reason to think less favourably than of the apprenticed Africans. But the character of the Government Slaves in Mauritius, is represented to be so bad, that the difficulty of devising proper measures for accomplishing their liberation, is considerably increased. I have thus been induced to admit of twelve months delay in carrying it into effect; and if the opinions of yourself and the Council, should not coincide with my own, as to the best means of executing this indispensable measure, you will have an opportunity, within that period, of suggesting such modifications or substitutions as may be desired. You will be pleased, however, to understand, that whatever plan may be proposed, must contemplate the adoption of the necessary measures within twelve months from your receipt of this Despatch, and must be directed towards placing the Negroes in a condition comprizing all the essentials of freedom.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(signed)

Goderich.

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— 3. —

DESPATCH from Sir *James Lyon* to the Right Hon^{ble} Viscount *Goderich*,
&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD, Government House, Barbadoes, June 1st, 1831.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Circular Despatch, dated 12th March 1831, relative to the relinquishment of the Slaves held as property by the Crown; and I beg leave to acquaint your Lordship, that I have seen many of the Slaves, heretofore considered as such, and have explained to them the most gracious intention of His Majesty; and it gives me pleasure to inform you, that from their appearance, as to health and attire, I consider no aid from Government will for the present be required for these persons. Should any cases of incapacity to earn subsistence hereafter occur amongst them, I shall take care to have them provided for in the manner pointed out by your Lordship's Despatch.

BARBADOES.

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

(signed) *James Lyon.*

— 4. —

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from Sir *J. Carmichael Smith*, addressed to Viscount *Goderich*, dated Bahamas, 20 May 1831.

“ I AM to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Despatch of the 12 March 1831, relative to the Negroes held in slavery, as the property of the Crown. “ There are in these Islands fortunately no Slaves whatever, the property of the Crown.”

BAHAMAS.

— 5. —

DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to the Officer administering the Government of Dominica.

SIR, Downing-street, 23d July 1831.

I HAVE received your Despatch of the 2d June, in answer to mine of the 12th March last (Circular), enclosing a Return of all the Africans and Creoles which had been condemned to the Crown, and were under the charge of the Collector of the Customs. As my Despatch of March last had no reference to this class of persons, whom I fully understood to have been liberated, under the instructions issued by my predecessor, I request that you will inform me, whether there are any Negroes, the property of the Crown, (acquired by forfeiture, purchase, or in any other manner whatsoever,) who remain in a state of slavery; and if there be, you will carry my instructions of 12th March last into execution in their favour.

DOMINICA.

I have, &c.
(signed) *Goderich.*

— 6. —

DESPATCH from Sir *James Campbell* to the Right Hon^{ble} Viscount *Goderich*,
&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD, Gov^t House, Grenada, 3rd May 1831.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's Circular, dated 12th March last, on the subject of Slaves escheating to the Crown, and who are thereby directed to be liberated.

GRENADA.

Your Lordship will perceive by the enclosed Letter, which I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship from the casual receiver of His Majesty's Revenues, that there are certain Slaves in this Colony belonging to His Majesty, not in the actual possession of the casual receiver; but as I conceive they come under that description in your Lordship's Despatch, “ of Slaves belonging to the Crown in the

GRENADA.

the Colonies, either given gratuitously, or let out to public bodies," I shall not fail to observe your Lordship's directions respecting them, and report to your Lordship my having liberated them after the expiration of one month, as directed by your Lordship's Despatch.

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

(signed) *James Campbell.*

SIR,

Grenada, 2d May 1831.

I BEG to acquaint you, for the information of his Excellency the Governor, that there are no Slaves belonging to His Majesty in my actual possession, though there are seven nominally so, named respectively, Francois, Dorothy, Thyley, Zabeth (1), Zabeth (2), Marie, and Marie Anne. These Slaves, together with another named Elizabeth, and her five infant children, were found, by an Inquisition taken in this Island in the year 1817, to have escheated to the Crown, in consequence of their owner, one Javotte Alexander, having died intestate and without heir. At the time of the holding this Inquest, these Slaves were in the possession of a coloured person named Jean Marie la Pierre, (the brother, I believe, of the intestate,) who had been so in possession for some years, and had brought them to this island from St. Vincent, where he had administered to his sister's estate. The Slave Elizabeth having claimed her freedom, a petition was forwarded and recommended by Governor Riall to His Majesty's Government, and another petition was at the same time forwarded by him, praying that a grant of the other Slaves might be made to the said J. M. La Pierre and his family; and he was permitted to retain the possession of them until His Majesty's pleasure should be signified thereon. In the year 1819 directions were received from His Majesty's Government by General Riall, to emancipate Elizabeth and her children, which was done; but no instructions have ever been received in regard to the others, and they have remained in the possession and service of the said Jean Marie La Pierre and his family, as if no inquest of office had ever been held or found. I enclose a copy of the Letters Patent granting Elizabeth her freedom, for your Excellency's information.

I remain, Sir, &c. &c. &c.

To Felix Palmer, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

Ousley Rowley.

— 7. —

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore*, dated King's House, Jamaica, 10th May 1831, to Viscount *Goderich*.

JAMAICA.

" I HAVE had the honour to receive your Lordship's Despatch of the 12th March, marked 'Circular,' relative to Negroes held in Slavery in His Majesty's possessions abroad, the property of the Crown; and am to acquaint your Lordship, that the Slaves formerly belonging to the Crown, who were attached to the service of the governor, were sold during the administration of Major General Couran, and an annual sum of 1,000*l.* was voted to the governor, as a compensation for the loss of their services."

— 8. —

DESPATCH from the Earl of *Belmore* to the Right Honourable
Viscount *Goderich*, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

King's House, Jamaica, 4th June 1831.

REFERRING to your Lordship's Despatch of 12th March last, marked Circular, I have the honour to inform you, that the only places where Africans captured under the Abolition Acts, have been apprenticed by the officers of the Customs, are the Ports of Port Maria, Kingston, and Saint Ann's Bay; and I enclose a copy of the Returns made by the Officers of the Customs at those Ports.

By the Returns from Port Maria and Kingston, your Lordship will find that seventeen of the individuals originally apprenticed at the former port, are now alive, and that they have had ten children born since their arrival in Jamaica. I shall of course lose no time in granting to all these persons a certificate of the nature your Lordship has directed.

With respect to the Return from Kingston, I am afraid it will be difficult to carry His Majesty's gracious intentions into effect. Indeed the only persons whom there

CROWN SLAVES IN THE COLONIES.

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there seems any chance of finding is Sibelle, who is stated to have been married in 1829, to a Slave.

In regard to the two Africans apprenticed at Saint Ann's Bay, a Letter has been received from Mr. Townson, stating that the individual, Nicholas, who was apprenticed to him, has for many years acted as a butler in a gentleman's family, and is perfectly able to support himself. Mr. Townson, who is a very respectable merchant, also states, that he knew Antonio when he lived in Saint Ann, and he is positive, if the Officers of the Customs reported faithfully, they must say that he was a nuisance, and in any other country would have been hanged for one half of the roguery and theft he committed.

I have already, in my communication to your Lordship of 10th ultimo, stated, that the Africans at Port Maria were entirely out of the reach of any assistance from the Army Medical Department; indeed, the only place where they can have the benefit of advice is in Kingston, and I shall make the necessary communication to the Officer commanding the Forces, in the event of the female, whom I have stated to be the only person likely to be found, requiring medical advice.

I, of course, suppose, that as your Lordship's instructions impose no restraint upon the apprenticed Africans and their descendants, but that they are at once to be granted unrestricted freedom, Sir George Murray's Despatch of 16th October 1828, with respect to the future disposal of these persons, is not to be attended to.

I have the honour to be, My Lord,

&c. &c. &c.

(signed) Belmore.

SIR,

Custom House,
Port Maria, 16th May 1831.

WE have to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter, dated the 6th instant, and now give the information required concerning the Eighteen Negroes reported by Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Cox and Mr. M'Dowall Grant. In the enclosed List are their names. Eleven of the number we have examined, and find them capable of maintaining themselves; and also learn from them, that the remaining six (one being dead) are doing well. We have not sent for them, as the distance from hence to where they reside is great, and their journey here would be attended with labour and expense. We therefore trust that the Report we have received will be satisfactory to his Excellency.

We are, &c.

(signed)

J. Graham, Collector.

B. W. Smith, Controller.

William Bullock, Esq.

Custom House, Port Maria, Jamaica.

LIST of NEGROES reported by Mr. Hodgson, Mr. Cox and M'Dowall Grant, in 1828.

1.—Judith Gordon	- - -	Two Children, reported well.
2.—Clementina, now Charlotte Fuller	- - -	One Child, reported able, &c.
3.—Bell Innes	- - -	Dead.
4.—Amy Gordon	- - -	Reported well and able, &c.
5.—Maria Green	- - -	ditto - - ditto.
6.—Clarissa Harlow	- - -	ditto - - ditto.
7.—Margaret Ridal	- - -	ditto - - ditto.
8.—Eliza Stanley	- - -	Reported, 1 Child, well and able, &c.
9.—Mary Henrick	- - -	Well and able, &c.
10.—Ann Thomson	- - -	Two Children, well and able, &c.
11.—Eliza Bennet	- - -	One Child, well and able, &c.
12.—Frances Greenland	- - -	One Child, well and able, &c.
13.—Johanna Walker	- - -	Well and able, &c.
14.—Isabella Walker	- - -	ditto - ditto.
15.—Susanna Walker	- - -	ditto - ditto.
16.—Polly	- - -	Two Children, reported well and able.
17.—Mary Bennet	- - -	Able to support herself.
18.—Amelia Warehouse	- - -	ditto - ditto.

(signed)

J. Graham, Collector.

B. W. Smith, Comptroller.

Custom House, 6th May 1831.

JAMAICA.

S I R,

Custom House, St. Ann, 11 May 1831.

WE have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of 27th ultimo, enclosing a Return, to be filled up for the Colonial Office, and beg leave to acquaint you, that Mr. Barnett, the Collector, was only appointed to this port in February last, consequently we shall be obliged to send the Report to Mr. Forbes, (his predecessor, who at the same period was appointed to Port Antonio;) as we are not acquainted with the particulars of his appointment, &c. enclosed, you will please receive a statement of duties, &c. received at this port for the year 1830.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of two other Letters from you, per last post, one respecting the state and condition of two Africans, who were condemned to the Crown; the one, Nicholas, was apprenticed to Mr. Townsend, now of the firm of Forsyth & Townsend, merchants, Kingston, (when he was Deputy Marshal for this parish,) and of whom we beg leave to submit you had better make inquiry, as we cannot ascertain from any one here, what has become of him since Mr. F. left this. The other, named Antonio, was apprenticed to Mr. Edward Scott, a blacksmith of this town, who is since dead; after his decease the unexpired term of his articles of indenture was made over to Mr. Campbell, also a blacksmith, who is likewise dead; and what has now become of him we cannot ascertain, but will bear the same in mind, and give you the necessary information as soon as possible. We beg leave to remark, that the latter Negro having been taught the business of blacksmith, cannot be in indigent circumstances if he attends to his trade, which is a very lucrative business in the country parishes. The other Letter respecting what has been, or is likely to be the largest amount of balance in each Officer's hands, in reply thereto we have to acquaint you, that the Collector has entered into bond with two sureties to the amount of 1,000*l.* sterling each, and the Controller with one surety of 1,000*l.* currency; the largest sum we observe by the books, that has been in the chest for several years past, has not amounted to more than two or three hundred pounds sterling, and as regards the present receipts they will not amount to 20*l.* sterling per annum.

William Bullock, Esq.

We have, &c.

(signed)

J. Barnett, Col.

S. W. Rose, Contr.

Port of Kingston, Jamaica.—A RETURN of all NEGROES now alive who may have been forfeited to the Crown, under the Abolition Acts and Apprenticed; stating the Age and Sex of such Individuals, whether their Apprenticeship has expired, and whether they are in a condition to maintain themselves.

NAMES.	AGE.	SEX.	When Apprenticeship Expires.	REMARKS.
Duchess - -	50	Female -	Not apprenticed	-- Was seized in or about the year 1809; has been living for many years as free; is still able to maintain herself.
Abraham - -	44	Male -	1 January 1823	-- Absconded from his master in 1818; was reported to have been sold out of Manchester workhouse as a slave, in the year 1822; every inquiry has been made into the truth of the report, but nothing certain can be learnt respecting him; he was a very indolent Negro.
Edward - -	44	ditto -	22 March 1832	-- Was tried at Morant Bay in 1814, and found guilty of practising Obeah and sentenced to transportation for life; in place of being transported according to such sentence, he was exported from Kingston to Belize, Honduras, from whence he was sent to Jamaica to be seized, by directions of Lord Bathurst to Lieut.-Colonel Arthur, H. B. M. Superintendent at Honduras, dated 30 April 1816; has for many years been a wandering vagabond about the country, and supports himself by deprivations committed upon the public.
James - -	38	ditto -	10 January 1830	-- Was apprenticed to a shoemaker; but having been detected thieving in 1826, his master refused to retain him longer in his possession; he has supported himself as a seaman between Great Britain and this island.
Marico, baptized Maria Hibbert	36	Female -	Not apprenticed	-- Not apprenticed, as from the general bad conduct of the Negroes heretofore condemned to the Crown, no person of respectability will receive such as apprentices. Able to support herself.
Sybelle, baptized Elizabeth Cavera	30	ditto -	- - ditto -	-- Married in 1829 to a slave, named Joe Bayan, belonging to J. Byar, fisherman, and is maintained by her husband.

Custom-House, Kingston, Jamaica, }
9 May 1831.

(signed)

D. M'Dowall Grant, Col.
J. G. Swainson, Compt'.

CROWN SLAVES IN THE COLONIES.

11

— 9. —

DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to the Earl of *Belmore*.

MY LORD,

Downing-street, 2d September 1831.

I HAVE received your Lordship's Despatch of the 4th of June last; your Lordship appears to have misapprehended the scope of my Circular Despatch of the 12th of March. That Despatch directed the liberation of the Negroes held in Slavery, as the property of the Crown, not of those who had become forfeited to the Crown under the Abolition Act, for the purpose of barring any other title to them. The liberation of the latter class of Negroes had been directed, under certain limitations, by Sir George Murray's Circular Despatch of the 16th October 1828. It was presumed of course, that those instructions had been obeyed; and that long before I addressed to you my Circular Despatch of the 12th March, the Negroes forfeited under the Abolition Act, had obtained their freedom. It is therefore with surprize, that I find some of them at least, were still without the certificates of freedom, which your Lordship expresses an intention of granting them, in supposed conformity with my Despatch of the 12th March, directing the liberation of Crown Slaves.

JAMAICA.

From this, and from the concluding paragraph of your Despatch, I doubt whether either the Instructions conveyed in Sir G. Murray's Despatch of the 16th October 1828, or in mine of the 12th March, have been correctly understood. In the latter, it was not my intention to supersede in any particular, the directions previously given; on the contrary, these were adverted to as exemplifying, by their result in the West India Colonies generally, the practicability of enfranchising considerable numbers of Negroes similarly situated to Crown Slaves, without detriment to themselves or to the Colonies; the fact having been ascertained, that in the islands where the greatest number of the captured Africans had been domiciled, their conduct had given rise to no complaint since their liberation in 1828.

In order to prevent any further misapprehension, I have to request that your Lordship will have the goodness to inform me what steps were taken, upon the receipt of Sir George Murray's Despatch, before referred to; and also, whether there are any Slaves the property of the Crown, in Jamaica; and if so, what measures have been adopted for their liberation.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Goderich*.

— 10. —

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from Sir *C. F. Smith*, dated Trinidad, 18th April 1831, to Viscount *Goderich*.

“ IN reply to your Lordship's Circular, I have the honour to report that there is but one escheated Slave, with an infant daughter, in this Colony; and as she is capable of maintaining herself and child by means of industrious labour, she shall forthwith receive her freedom, subject to the conditions contained in Sir George Murray's Circular of 16th October 1828.”

TRINIDAD.

— 11. —

DESPATCH from Sir *C. F. Smith*, to the Right Honourable Viscount *Goderich*, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

Trinidad, 7th June 1831.

I HAD the honour of reporting in my Despatch of 18th April, that the escheated Slaves in this Colony, consisted only of one woman and an infant daughter. My information was derived from the returns of the Escheator General and the Registrar of Slaves.

Your Lordship's Circular Despatch of 12th March last, caused me to inquire minutely into the description of all the persons composing what is termed the Colonial

TRINIDAD.

Colonial Gang; when I discovered, that in the year 1819, the late Sir Ralph Woodford had, unknown to the Escheator General, attached to that body certain Slaves who had then escheated to the Crown. Some have since died, and two of the females have families. Their present state being, one man, three women and seven children, all of whom I have this day liberated; subject to the conditions of Sir G. Murray's Circular Despatch of 16th October 1828.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,

C. F. Smith.

—12.—

DESPATCH from Sir *C. F. Smith* to the Right Honourable Viscount *Goderich*, &c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

Trinidad, 8th June 1831.

(105 in number.)

Minutes of Council,
4th and 6th June.

HAVING reason to apprehend that the situation and condition of the Slaves, the property of the Colonial Government of Trinidad, are not generally understood, I called upon the Council, with reference to the Circular Despatch of 12th March, for a detailed Report, which I have now the honour of forwarding for your Lordship's information.

The services of the gang cannot well be dispensed with. The individuals composing it are in the enjoyment of the requisites and comforts of life; whilst on the other hand, I have taken care, during the last twelve months, that there has not been any misapplication of the moderate labour they are expected to perform.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient humble servant,

(signed) *C. F. Smith.*

EXTRACT from Minutes of Council of *Trinidad*, dated 4th and 6th June 1831.

4th June 1831.

"His Excellency read a Circular Despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated the 12th March 1831, desiring his Excellency to proceed to manumit all the Negroes belonging to the Crown, within one month from the date of the receipt of that Despatch.

His Excellency said he was desirous of being informed what was the particular class of persons alluded to in that Despatch, and whether the Board conceived that the Colonial Negroes were comprized therein.

The Board were decidedly of opinion, that the Colonial Negroes were by no means the property of the Crown; upon which his Excellency adjourned the Board until 12 o'clock, Monday, the 6th instant, when his Excellency requested that the Board would furnish him with the information necessary to enable him to acquaint His Majesty's Secretary of State with the exact position of the Colonial Gang.

6th June 1831.

With reference to the question submitted by his Excellency the Acting Governor, at the last meeting, when his Excellency laid before the Board a Despatch, dated 12th March 1831, from Lord Viscount *Goderich*, in which his Excellency was directed to release from Slavery all the Negroes held as the property of the Crown, and had requested the Members of the Board to inform him, "What was the particular class of persons alluded to in that Despatch, and whether the Board conceived that the Colonial Negroes were comprized therein."—The Board begged leave to represent to his Excellency, that there existed certain classes of Slaves in the Colony, such as the escheated Negroes, and the forfeited Africans, which the Crown had the power to manumit, or otherwise dispose of, as it might judge proper; but that the Slaves commonly known under the designation of the Colonial Gang, are the property of the Inhabitants of the Colony, and had been expressly purchased for the purpose of relieving the Planters from the inconvenient, expensive and inefficient plan, of furnishing a proportion of the gangs of their respective estates, whenever Slave labour was required on Fortifications, or other Public Works.

That further, a portion of this Gang had been purchased at the recommendation of his Excellency Sir Ralph Woodford, to assist in the erection of the Public Buildings, as a more certain and economical measure than the hire of Masons and Free Labourers, who were not always to be procured or depended upon; and that the Board had only consented to

to this purchase, under the express condition that these Slaves were again to be sold, and their proceeds lodged in the Colonial Chest, whenever the Public Buildings were completed.

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That the Colonial Gang had, up to the present day, been kept in regular employment on the aforesaid Works, on the Public Quarries, repairs of Roads, Bridges, &c.; and that the practical consequence of their gratuitous Emancipation would be, immediately to saddle the Colony with the expense of furnishing labour for those particular services, the avoiding of which was the express object of the original outlay of the Colonial money in their purchase, whilst in principle, it would be equivalent to instructions from home, directing a Governor to appropriate the Colonial Funds, which are specially pledged for internal services, to objects foreign to the interests of the Colony.

Under these circumstances, the Board of Council respectfully represent, that the Colonial Gang is the property of the Colony alone. They are held by the Inhabitants of this island under a title as valid as that by which any other Slaves are owned by individuals. They are subject to the same Laws and Regulations which govern the Slave Population generally, and possess the same privilege of purchasing their manumission, the proceeds of which, when effected, are invariably lodged in the Colonial chest, showing the same to be the property of the Colony, and not of the Crown.

The Honourable Mr. Johnston and the Honourable Dr. Llanos proposed the omission of the words, "They are held by the inhabitants of this island under a title as valid as that by which any other Slaves are owned by individuals;" but the sense of the Board being taken thereon, it was decided that those words should remain as they were.

The Honourable Mr. Burnley, professing his entire ignorance of the law, took the liberty to inquire of the Professional Members at the Board, whether, if the Colonial Government sold one of these Slaves, the purchaser would not hold him by a good and legal title? because under these circumstances, he conceived that the purchaser could only hold by the same title as the party who conveyed the Slave to him; and consequently if the purchaser held a good and legal title, the party selling must have held by an equally good and legal title.

The Honourable Mr. Fuller, in reply, said that he had no hesitation, as Attorney-General, to state that his legal opinion was, that a purchaser of a Slave from the Colonial Government would hold him by as good and legal a title as if he had purchased him from an individual; and that a slave manumitted by the Colonial Government would hold as valid and good a title to his manumission, as though he were manumitted by an individual."

— 13.—

DESPATCH from Viscount *Goderich* to Major-General Sir *Lewis Grant*,
&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

Downing-street, 3d October 1831.

I HAVE received Sir Charles Smith's Despatch of the 8th of June last, with reference to the Emancipation of the Slaves in Trinidad, who are the property of the Crown.

The Council of Government, in answer to certain enquiries proposed to them by Sir Charles Smith, have reported their opinion, that "there exist certain classes of Slaves in the Colony, such as the escheated Negroes and the forfeited Africans, which the Crown had power to manumit; but that the Slaves commonly known under the designation of the Colonial Gang, are the property of the Inhabitants of the colony."

Assuming the accuracy of this distinction, and of the inferences drawn from it, it would yet remain to enquire, who the Slaves are whom the Council admit to be at the absolute disposal of the Crown; what is their number; and whether, as far as they are concerned, my instructions, of the 12th of March last, have been carried into effect. Upon these questions, Sir Charles Smith is silent. Should any Slave, the property of the Crown, and not forming part of the Colonial Gang, be still remaining in Slavery, when you shall receive this Despatch, you will proceed without further delay to execute in His Majesty's name the proper deed of manumission on behalf of every such Slave.

With regard to that body of persons who constitute what is called the Colonial Gang, I am not unwilling to admit that the objection raised to their manumission presents a question of considerable difficulty. In their discussion of that question, the Council have, however, assumed certain general principles in which I cannot acquiesce. Thus they declare these Slaves to be "the property of the Inhabitants of the colony." They speak of the purchase of them, as having been made with what is termed "colonial money," employed for that purpose with their consent. The Slaves are said "to be held by the Inhabitants of the island, under a title as valid as that by which any other Slaves are owned by individuals."

Throughout this argument it is taken for granted, 1st, That the Council of Trinidad, when these Slaves were purchased, possessed and were entitled to exercise such a control over His Majesty's revenue in that Island, that no public money could without their consent be applied to any specific object. How totally at variance with the real state of the case this assumption is, it would be quite superfluous to show. The want of such a control on the part of the Board of Council, or of some other more popular body, has been not only stated in petitions presented to His Majesty and to Parliament, by large bodies of the Colonists, as a ground of complaint, but the fact of the Governor's being responsible to His Majesty's Government alone, for the right employment of the Colonial Revenue, is noticed in the report of the Commissioners of Legal Enquiry, and in almost every official document which treats of the constitution and laws of Trinidad. I advert to this fact, neither to justify nor to condemn the existence of such an unrestricted authority; the discussion of that question, would require some fitter occasion; but to observe, that at once to complain of the absence of any check on the Governor's financial operations, and to argue as if such a check existed in full force, is a manifest inconsistency. Especially is it difficult or impossible to ascertain upon what valid grounds the Board of Council could assume to themselves the exercise of any such controlling authority. They derive their political existence and their powers entirely from the terms of the Royal Instructions to the Governor, and those instructions certainly never constituted them arbiters of the mode in which His Majesty's colonial revenue was to be appropriated. Whether it was, or was not, fit that they should have such powers, it is at least clear that they had them not in point of fact, and could not claim them in point of law. For these reasons, I cannot think it material to the present question, whether the consent of the Council to the purchase of the Colonial Gang was given or was wanting. They were purchased and paid for by the produce of public taxes, and of other revenues, over which the Governor was both entitled and accustomed to exercise an absolute authority, controlled only by this Department and by the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

In the Minute of Council, the "Colony" in one place, and the "Inhabitants of the colony" in another, are mentioned as the proprietors of these Slaves. Here again is the assumption of a principle, which is at least as questionable as it is important. Property can be vested only in individuals or in corporate bodies, whether the corporation be composed of a single person or of many. I must understand, therefore, that "the Colony," or "the Inhabitants of the colony," are considered by the Council as invested with some corporate character, in respect of which they may collectively acquire and hold property. I know not on what this pretension is founded. Certainly not on any royal charter, and as certainly not on any general principle recognised by the law or practice of this kingdom. If, however, such a corporate body as "the Colony" is to be recognised, it is unavoidable to enquire who are the corporators? and how their decision or their votes upon any question are to be taken? Whether their property is unalienable, or if otherwise, who must consent to the alienation of it? and, Slaves being as capable of holding property as though they were free, whether it is to be understood that the Slaves constitute part of the supposed corporation, and are entitled to a voice respecting the employment of its property? I can of course anticipate the answer to these and similar enquiries. It will be said, that they show merely that the Inhabitants of the Colony are not incorporated in the strict and technical sense of the expression; but that it is useless to explore such technicalities, for that the common sense and ordinary apprehension of mankind are sufficient to explain the proper meaning, in which a right of property is attributed to the Colony collectively. With the utmost desire to place this question upon just and large grounds, and with a great indisposition to attach undue importance to distinctions derived from subtle and arbitrary rules of law, I cannot in the present case perceive, how the substantial question in debate can be effectually separated from the technical question to which I have adverted. For, if it be indeed true, that the Colony collectively are the owners of this gang, it follows that they can never be forfeited for ill-usage or cruel treatment; that there is no person responsible for the penalties consequent upon their being inadequately fed, clothed or maintained; that there is no person who could give a valid consent to a marriage which any one of them might contract; that they could not be manumitted by a compulsory process, the owner being neither unknown nor absent, nor labouring under any other of the legal incapacities mentioned in the Order in Council,

Council, and yet having no power to receive any legal notice of the intended process; and that they could not receive a voluntary manumission, since no corporate act can be done, unless the corporate character rest upon a legal foundation.

It follows, that to pass over as immaterial the technical difficulty to which I have adverted, would be to consign these Slaves to a condition of peculiar and unjustifiable hardship. They would have to bear all the burthens, and to perform all the duties of Slaves, without having any owner bound by reciprocal obligations to them. Their servile condition would be irremediable; and the legal securities taken for the protection of other Slaves against oppression, would have no application to their case.

It is for these reasons, and not from a blind deference to any arbitrary rules of law, that I have thought it right to protest against the assumption, for the inhabitants, of any corporate character, in respect of which they could claim a property in these Slaves. They are and can be only the property of the King. That which is loosely termed public property, is really vested in Him alone. On what trusts and for what purposes His Majesty is invested with the property in question, is the real and only proper subject of enquiry.

It appears to me, then, in the first place, that in becoming the owner of these Slaves, His Majesty assumed a trust for the benefit of His subjects in Trinidad; and contracted an obligation to dedicate the labours of the gang exclusively to such works, as tended to promote the general interest or convenience of the Colonists of all classes. No man will hesitate to admit, that the revenue of the Crown in the Colonies, and that the property, of whatever nature, purchased by the Crown with that revenue, constitute a fund, which cannot justly or even lawfully be diverted from the public service of the Colony in which it is raised. Therefore, while I deny that the money with which these Slaves were bought, was derived from the grant or benevolence of the Council—and while I maintain that it must be regarded simply as the produce of a direct tax—I do not on that account claim, but entirely disavow for the King's Government, the right to employ such property in an arbitrary or capricious manner.

But, secondly, in the performance of the trust thus cast upon His Majesty, I apprehend that it belongs to Him, and to Him alone, to decide how it can be employed for the public service most advantageously. For the advice which any Minister of the Crown may humbly tender to His Majesty on this subject, that Minister is of course responsible (as for all his other public acts) to Parliament. In determining the question, it is of course necessary that the utmost circumspection be observed, to prevent rash and erroneous conclusions; and that counsel be taken with those who are best qualified to afford it. But still I must claim for the King's Government the ultimate authority to decide the question. I know not, indeed, what other body of men could lawfully compete with them for the exercise of this privilege.

The practical question which presents itself, therefore, is, Whether the general interests of the Colony, the only legitimate object of consideration, would be more advanced by the manumission of these Slaves, or by their continued detention in slavery. Were I to regard that interest as confined to the single question of profit and loss, I still entertain a strong belief, that it would be best promoted by the enfranchisement of the Slaves. The Council, in their Minute, have taken the question entirely for granted, and assume as incontrovertible, that the labour exacted of these persons could not be performed with equal economy, if free labourers were employed at wages fairly representing the value of their services. To the accuracy of this assumption I cannot, however, thus promptly subscribe. It is well worthy of a very close enquiry, whether in this particular instance it is really frugal to save the payment of wages by undertaking all the onerous obligations of a Slave Owner. Let it on the one side be ascertained what the average annual rate of wages would be, and then contrast with that charge all that must be expended for the food, lodging, clothing and medical care of the Slaves, if estimated on such terms as their necessities justly require. Add to this a fair allowance for the risk of life and health, and the necessity of replacing the dead or infirm by new purchases; with the probable charge of maintaining young children born of the female Slave, and such of the members of the gang as may survive their powers of labour. To all this let a further addition be made for the

16 PAPERS RELATING TO EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES, &c.

expenses of superintendence, and especially for the loss sustained by the torpid and inefficient exertions of men working without any other motive than the fear of punishment. A calculation from which any of these elements is excluded, must lead to fallacious results. A calculation which should fairly embrace them all, would, I believe, show that the employment of Slaves in any labour which does not impose the most extreme fatigue, is, even to private individuals, and when viewed only in the narrowest commercial light, much less advantageous than is usually supposed; and that the momentary saving in wages is, in the course of a very few years, more than compensated by losses and liabilities, which the Council in framing their Minute forgot to estimate. The labour of Slaves, when not under the superintendence of persons stimulated to vigilance by personal interest, is still less likely to be really economical; and experience has shown that public works are more cheaply executed by contract, than even by free labourers under the control of public officers. In our Penal Colonies, notwithstanding the apparent cheapness of convict labour, the scarcity of free labourers, and the difficulty of finding proper persons to undertake the execution of public works, these are upon the whole, in the opinion of the most competent judges, more economically performed by contract than by convicts in the immediate service of the Government. I have no doubt that the same principle would apply in Trinidad; and that without reference to any higher considerations than those of mere economy, the retention of the Colonial Gang would be injudicious.

For these reasons, I consider it expedient to relieve His Majesty's Trinidad Revenues from the burthen of supporting these Slaves; but in so doing, I cannot on the part of His Majesty consent to their being sold.

The Gang appears to have been purchased nearly fourteen years ago; and His Majesty could not be advised to refuse to these Slaves, if their servile condition were to continue, that asylum which after so long a service they would justly claim from any owner of common humanity, or to hazard their passing into the hands of Proprietors whose characters and mode of treatment might possibly render the change a serious evil to them; they must therefore be manumitted according to my instructions of the 12th of March last; and for that purpose you will execute, in the name and on the behalf of His Majesty, the necessary act of enfranchisement.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Goderich.*

SLAVE POPULATION.

AN ABSTRACT of the latest Returns received (since the 18th March 1830) from each of His Majesty's Colonies (including the *Cape of Good Hope* and the *Mauritius* and its Dependencies,) of the SLAVE POPULATION; distinguishing the Sexes, and specifying the precise date to which such Returns have been made up in each Colony respectively, and the date also at which they were received into the Registry Office in this country.

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
28 March 1831.*
