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SLAVE LAWS, WEST INDIES.

RETURN to several Addresses to HIS MAJESTY, dated 24 & 25 March 1831 ;—for,

— 1. —

COPIES of the CORRESPONDENCE between the Secretary of State and the Agent for the Colonies of *St. Christopher* and *Dominica*, respecting the ABSTRACTS of SLAVE LAWS referred to in the Resolution of this House, dated on the 24th instant.

— 2. —

RETURN of ABSTRACT of SLAVE LAWS of *St. Vincent*, *Dominica*, *St. Christopher*, *Nevis*, *Tobago*, and the *Virgin Islands*, and of other Documents transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 7th March 1831, under the following heads :

I.—ST. VINCENT.—

No. 1.—Showing the Abstracts of the Slave Law passed by the Legislature of *St. Vincent* previously to 1823.

No. 2.—The Provisions enacted in conformity with the Recommendations sent out by the Secretary of State in 1823.

No. 3.—Provisions enacted previously or in addition to those enacted in consequence of those Recommendations, and in force.

No. 4.—Remarks and Observations.

Documents annexed :

No. 5.—Copy of a Petition for Inquiry into the Condition of the Slaves, compared with that of the Poor Whites and Free People of Colour, dated 9 May 1826.

No. 6.—Copy of a Petition for Inquiry, dated 23 June 1828.

No. 7.—Ditto, dated 23 November 1830.

II.—DOMINICA.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4, similar to those for *St. Vincent*.

III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4, similar to those for *St. Vincent*.

IV.—NEVIS.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4, similar to those for *St. Vincent*.

V.—TOBAGO.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4, similar to those for *St. Vincent*.

VI.—VIRGIN ISLANDS.—Returns, Nos. 1, 2, 3 & 4, similar to those for *St. Vincent* ; also,

REPORT of a Committee of the Legislature of *St. Vincent*, appointed to inquire into the Financial, Commercial and Political State of the Colony ; and of the Appendix, dated 27 October 1830, (Copy transmitted to the Colonial Secretary of State on 23 December 1830.)

Colonial Department, Downing-street, }
26th March 1831.

HOWICK.

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

ENCLOSURE REFERRED TO.

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SLAVE LAWS, WEST INDIES.

No. 1.—COPIES of the CORRESPONDENCE between the Secretary of State and the Agent for the Colonies of *St. Christopher* and *Dominica*, respecting the ABSTRACTS of SLAVE LAWS referred to in the Resolution of this House, dated on the 24th instant.

LETTER from *James Colquhoun*, Esq. to Viscount *Goderich*,
&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

St. James's Place, 7 March 1831.

I HAVE the honor to enclose, for the purpose of being laid before Parliament, in conformity with the permission given by your Lordship at an interview granted to the Agents for the West India Legislative Colonies on the 1st instant, Copies of the Documents referred to in the Enclosure (*see opposite page*) herewith sent.

I have the honor to be, &c.

James Colquhoun.

LETTER from Lord *Howick* to *James Colquhoun*, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

Downing-street, 25 March 1831.

I AM directed by Lord *Goderich* to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter dated the 7th instant, inclosing various Documents "for the purpose of being laid before Parliament." His Lordship understands you to mean that some Member of Parliament will move in his place an Address to His Majesty for the production of the Documents in question; and I am to acquaint you that the Members of His Majesty's Government do not propose to offer any objection to any motion of that nature. Lord *Goderich*, indeed, is not aware that he could with propriety decline to receive this or any other communication which the Colonial Agents may think proper to address to him; and having received it, his Lordship has no motive for wishing to prevent its obtaining further publicity through any channel which the Authors of the Paper may think desirable.

It is necessary, however, for the prevention of any possible misconception, that I should distinctly apprise you, that Lord Goderich declines to express any opinion respecting the accuracy of the various Abstracts which you have thus transmitted. How far they faithfully represent the real effect of the Laws to which they refer, is a question upon which others must be left to form their own judgment, uninfluenced by any supposed authority of the Secretary of State.

Various observations are subjoined to the Abstracts in question, which partake very little of the character of those Documents, which it has been usual for the Executive Government to lay before the Two Houses of Parliament. In receiving them for that avowed purpose, Lord Goderich cannot too distinctly explain that they are invested with no official authority, but must be regarded only as expressing the opinions of the very respectable individuals from whom they proceed.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(signed) HOWICK.

P. S.—Since I received the directions of Lord Goderich to make the preceding communications to you, a copy has been received at this Department of a Resolution of The House of Commons, that an Address be presented to His Majesty for the production of the Papers in question. Lord Goderich was not previously aware that any Address of that nature had been moved.

I.—ST. VINCENT.

No. 1.—SLAVE MELIORATION LAW in force previously to the Resolutions of
The House of Commons in June 1823.

Religious Instruction.
Observance of Sunday.
Polygamy discouraged.
Marriage.

(Consolidated Act,
11th Sept. 1821.)

Food.
Clothing.
Lodging.
Labour and Holidays.
Rewards and Privileges.
Medical Treatment.
Manumissions.
Punishments.
Legal Protection.
General Regulations.

- s. 6. Slaves to be instructed in *Religion*.
s. 7. No Shop to be open on *Sunday*, and no work done on *Sunday*.
s. 8. No Mill to be put round after 7 P. M. on *Saturday*, and 4 A. M. on *Sunday*.

- s. 9. Half an hour allowed for *Breakfast*, two hours for *Dinner*, and three days at Christmas for *Holidays*.
s. 11. *Medical Attendance* compelled and regulated; 50*l.* Penalty for neglect.
s. 13. *Rewards* to Nurses and Mothers for rearing Children: average 1,000*l.* per annum.
s. 14. Women having six children to be employed in light work.
s. 15. No sum or security to be lodged for *Manumissions*, except for burthensome Slaves, for whom a sum of 200*l.* or an annuity of 20*l.* per annum shall be paid.
Punishments limited to ten stripes by Overseer; thirty-nine by Manager.
Barristers appointed to defend Slaves arraigned on criminal charges (20 March 1815.)
Confirms former Acts, making Slaves real property.
s. 16. Detaining Free Persons as Slaves—Fines. Murder of Slaves—Death.
s. 19. *Collars and Chains* prohibited.
s. 20. 22. Regulate Duties of Magistrates, as a *Council of Protection*.

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*No. 2.—PROVISIONS, under Six different Heads, proposed in Lord *Bathurst's*

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSIONS.
Sunday markets to be abolished, when religious instruction shall have been provided.	- -To be received, if the Slave produce a certificate from the parochial clergyman or religious teacher, that he has been instructed in the Christian religion, so as to understand an oath. <i>Exception.</i> Where the life of a Master or white person is concerned.	- -To be confined as much as possible to Slaves on plantations, and with consent of Master; to be registered in parish church; if refused by Master, the grounds to be stated to parochial clergyman. Mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock to be exempt from field labour.	- -Taxes on Manumissions to be withdrawn. Bond to be given that the Slave shall not become chargeable, if under six, or above fifty years old, or labouring under sickness, disease, or infirmity. Mortgaged Slaves to be valued by appraisers and manumitted, and produce paid into Treasury. Manumissions to be registered.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in Eight Bills sent out to - -

No Slave to be hired or employed, except for domestic purposes, on Sunday, under a penalty. No Slave to be employed against his will in field labour, and to be paid wages for it.	- - - - -	- - Clergymen may solemnize marriage without consent of Master.	- - Slaves, under certain restrictions, to be enabled, <i>invito domino</i> , to purchase their freedom, and that of their families and relations.
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ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in Sir *George Murray's* Letter to - -

Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on Sunday to supply him the rest of the week.	- - Unlimited Slave evidence in civil and criminal cases.— In the notes on Bill, No. 2, transmitted on 10 May 1826, it is observed, that the evidence of six Slaves in Demerara (where Slave evidence has always been received as unfettered as that of free persons) to a punishment, is considered as equivalent to that of a free person. (<i>See Order in Council</i> , 2 Feb. 1830, s. 22.)		
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s. 7. No shop or store shall be opened on Sunday, under penalty of £. 10, except as in England, for perishable articles of food, out of church hours. s. 8. provides for the religious instruction and baptism of Slaves, and registry of baptisms; penalty £. 10. s. 9. Sunday markets shall cease at 10 A. M., under forfeiture of goods, &c. s. 11. prohibits labour on Sundays, even during crop time, requiring that no sugar be boiled after 10 P. M. on Saturday, nor the mill put about, or any other kind of field or plantation work performed, between 7 P. M. on Saturday, and 4 A. M. on Monday. Penalty £. 50.	- - s. 1. Slave evidence admitted, except against owners. (Act passed 9 Sept. 1830.) s. 2. No Slave shall be prevented by his owner from giving evidence when required, under penalty of £. 50.	- - s. 10. Parish clergymen shall solemnize <i>matrimony</i> , without fee or reward, between such Slaves as, applying with their owner's or manager's consent, appear to be sensible of the obligation of the marriage vow.	- - s. 18. Facilitates manumissions, and punishes the unlawfully detaining free persons as Slaves, by penalty of thrice the value of such person's services. Any owner or manager manumitting an aged or infirm Slave, to avoid maintaining him, shall forfeit £. 200, from which £. 20 shall be annually paid to the person manumitted for life. Manumission fee, £. 4.
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Upon which Bill the Secretary of State for the Colonies made the following observations, in a letter to the Governor of St. Vincent, dated 3d April 1827. (*Vide Parliamentary Pap.*)
 " His Majesty has observed, with satisfaction, the progress made by these enactments
 " in the measures to be taken for the improvement in the state of the Slave population.
 " Upon a review of the whole of this law, I am commanded by His Majesty to express his
 " satisfaction with the general disposition of the Council and Assembly to adopt the re-
 " commendations addressed to them on this important subject."

SLAVE LAWS IN THE WEST INDIA COLONIES.

7

- - Circular to Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 9th July 1823.

SALES OF SLAVES.	PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY OF SLAVES.	PROTECTOR OF SLAVES.
<p>-- Land, Slaves and plantation, plant or utensil, to be sold in one lot; husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under fourteen from parents; and that they be sold to one person if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.</p>	<p>-- The flogging of women to be abolished; prohibits the use of the whip in the field, and any domestic punishment until the day following the offence, and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishments exceeding three lashes to be recorded, and record-book of offences and punishments sworn to quarterly. Traces of punishment not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.</p>		

- - Governors of Legislative Colonies, on the 11th May 1826.

<p>-- Slaves not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial process</i>.</p>	<p>-- Punishments of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited; various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.</p>	<p>-- Securing to Slave whatever property he may acquire, and Savings' Banks to be established.</p>	<p>-- Office of Protector and Guardian of Slaves to be instituted.</p>
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- - Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 3d and 15th September 1828.

<p>- - - -</p>	<p>-- s. 21. Limits punishment by inferiors to ten stripes at one time, by owner or manager to 39, for one offence, and within any one week, under penalty of £. 15. to £. 50. for every excess. Record of all such punishments to be kept and produced to any Justice of the Peace, under £. 20. penalty. s. 23. No superintending Slave shall, under a penalty as for a misdemeanor, carry the <i>whip</i> as heretofore, as an emblem of authority in the field.</p>	<p>-- s. 5. Secures to Slaves the possession of <i>personal property</i>, and guards against its invasion by a fine of £. 10. over and above the value of the property taken from them.</p>	<p>-- s. 25. Magistrate, a Council of Protection. On receiving information of ill treatment of a Slave, they are bound to inquire, and if complaint be founded, to prosecute offenders. The Attorney General is by law <i>ex officio</i> Protector of Slaves; the Magistrates equally <i>ex officio</i> Assistant Protectors of Slaves, <i>mutato nomine</i>. See Observations, Paper, No. 4.</p>

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*

No. 3.—PROVISIONS of MELIORATION LAWS either in force previously to The House of Commons' Resolutions in June 1823, and re-enacted, or enacted in addition to the Recommendation of the Colonial Secretary.

Rewards and Privileges—Food, Negro Days and Holidays—Medical Treatment—Sickness and Infirmary—Labour and Meals—Legal Protection—and, General Regulations.

Rewards and Privileges.—s. 16, 17. Assign to Mothers, Midwives and Nurses certain premiums in money for properly rearing infants, amounting to 4,000*l.* per annum, deducted from taxes; and exempt Mothers of six children from all arduous labour, at the same time secures to them an easy and comfortable maintenance, under 100*l.* penalty for each omission.

Food, Negro Days and Holidays.—All Plantation Slaves shall have assigned to them a portion of land fully adequate to their support, and shall be allowed twenty-six full working days in each year to cultivate the same: they shall likewise have for holidays, Good Friday, Christmas-day, and the two days following; 50*l.* penalty.

Medical Treatment.—s. 14. A qualified Medical Practitioner shall be employed to attend all Slaves who require medical or surgical aid, under penalty of 50*l.*, and shall keep a record of all patients and prescriptions.

Sickness and Infirmary.—Owners or Managers permitting sick or infirm Slaves to wander about, shall forfeit 5*l.* to 10*l.* for each offence.

Labour and Meals.—s. 12. Every Slave shall have half an hour for breakfast, and two hours for dinner; all manner of field labour before 5 A. M. or after sun set, except during crop, is prohibited, under 50*l.* penalty.

Legal Protection.—Slaves charged with grave offences shall be tried in all respects like Free Persons, with the exception of this superior advantage, that Counsel shall be assigned such Slaves at the public expense.

s. 20. Murder of a Slave is felony, without benefit of clergy.

s. 26. If any Owner or Manager shall wantonly or cruelly whip, maltreat, beat, bruise, cut, wound or imprison, or confine without sufficient support, any Slave, he shall suffer fine of 150*l.* or twelve months' imprisonment, or both, for each offence, and the Court are empowered to declare the Slave absolutely free, assigning him an annuity of 15*l.* for life.

General Regulations.—s. 24. Prohibits the placing an iron collar round the neck, or chains on the body, of any Slave, unless by permission of a Magistrate, as an incorrigible runaway, under penalty of from 5*l.* to 50*l.* Justice of Peace to remove such on information, under 100*l.* penalty.

s. 2. Declares Slaves to be real estate, and not chattels.

s. 80. Capital Punishments as in England.

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*

No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed Acts of the Legislature, from Official Documents.

THE REPORT of the Council and Assembly, dated 17th August 1826, commenting on the eight Bills sent out by Lord BATHURST in 1826, states very forcibly the Reasons why they were uncalled for in that Colony, under their respective Heads : they are briefly as follows :—

Protector of Slaves.—The Attorney General, by law, is the Protector of Slaves, and the Magistrates are Assistant Protectors [see 25th and 26th clauses of Slave Act], they are as much bound by law to execute the duties of Protectors as if they legally and officially bore this title.

Slave Evidence.—The Slave Act of St. Vincent reflects less on the moral character of the Slave, and is more in consonance with the commentary of Sir G. Murray's Letter of 15th September 1828, than the Order in Council for the conquered Colonies, dated 2d February 1830, issued fifteen months after. The St. Vincent Act goes beyond the recommendation of Lord Bathurst of 9th July 1823, as it excludes evidence against the owner and his representatives, while Lord Bathurst's Letter extends the exclusion to white persons generally. But the Order in Council places the evidence of the Slave very low in the scale, for it estimates the evidence of a Freeman as equal to that of six Slaves ; the fractional portion of belief due to a single slave in the Crown Colonies, is almost of no value or nugatory under this restriction, if the old Dutch law had not made it admissible as that of Free Persons. The recommendation, therefore, of Sir G. Murray (15th September 1830), to the Legislative Colonies, goes far beyond what has been lately enacted for the Crown Colonies, which, as they are to be the examples, is at variance with Mr. Canning's recommendations.

Compulsory Manumission.—The Legislature is quite willing to make this concession when Free Negro labour shall be proved to be equally advantageous as Slave labour. At present they see in it only a premium for indolence, and consequent retardment of civilization, morality and religion. The Report is very explicit on this subject.

Separation of Families by Judicial Sale.—There has not been a Marshal's Sale separating agricultural Slaves from the soil for many years. *In a small island* the members of a family are never separated more than in England, when seeking service or employment in the same parish. Once a month, or even once a week, they may exchange personal intercourse and kindred offices by journeying a few miles.

Marriage with or without consent of Master.—The feeble state of intellect and judgment of the Slave renders the interposition of the master as *pater familiæ* as useful in disposing of his Slaves as of his children under age in marriage. The interest and happiness of the Slave are the primary object of the master, and therefore no other authority can be so beneficially interposed at the present time. With the Negro's marriage is a mere church junction, unaccompanied by moral or religious ties.

Abolition of Sunday Markets—is conceived a vexatious breach of privilege by the Slaves in colonies where it is the law, and defeats the object in view. The Slaves do not go to church in such numbers as formerly in Trinidad, for example, since the inducement to go to market has ceased by its abolition ; but by limiting the market to an hour before the church service, the Negroes accomplish both objects, and religion is promoted.—(See Bishop of London's pamphlet.)

Punishing of Females by Whipping.—A tread-mill has been substituted for the punishment of Female Slaves (in lieu of whipping, seldom practised), and has proved beneficial. The Committee forcibly observe,—“ That one of the objections to these Bills is, the relentless rigor exercised towards the master—the everlasting infamy and ruin made to attach to offences of a very venal nature, the vexations and perplexing character of the clauses, showing that an unworthy and unfounded prejudice is operating against the proprietor where his character and interests ought to be better understood and appreciated.” This Colony has contributed £. 5,000. sterling for building a church at Kingstown, has endowed the parish churches, with stipends to the clergymen, to the extent of £. 2,500. currency per annum. The Colony has not discouraged sectarians while they confined themselves

themselves to religious duties, although it is scarcely a questionable policy and duty to do all that is possible to attach the Slaves to episcopacy, that the master and Slave may belong to the same church, and thus prevent the seeds of polemical controversy being sown, the fruits of which may be wars in aftertimes, combining perhaps religious fanaticism with African ferocity. Schools are established, and education is making progress, among all classes, under the protection of The Negro Conversion Society. The Planters of St. Vincent resident in England petitioned the Parliament in 1826 and 1828 for inquiry into the condition of the Slaves; their Petitions were not entertained. Was it because their opponents knew they could prove nothing in support of their assertions? that the theory of the abolitionists could not withstand the facts of the planters, and the evidence of disinterested persons?

The Legislative Committee observe, in a Report, dated 27th October 1830, that the Colonists are assailed by a "furious political party, bent on their destruction; that the Government hitherto have not given that countenance and support to them which their distant and disjointed situation, their want of political influence to explain their case, their contributions to the taxes (greater in proportion, and collected with less expense, than those paid by any class of His Majesty's subjects), imperatively require; and that unless a speedy remedy be found for these evils, the trade of the West Indies will be annihilated, and their ruin completed."

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS :

It can be proved, from the best authorities, that the Slaves are well housed, fed, clothed and attended in sickness; that their condition is superior to that of many of the agricultural and manufacturing classes here or in Ireland, and their labour less; they are contented and happy: why are they so? simply because they are well treated, their wants supplied, their property and rights respected and protected. If they refuse or neglect to work, or commit offences against each other, they know they will be punished, as society requires they should be: their hours of labour, and negro-days are regulated by law; their complaints are attended to by the proper authorities. There are, however, exceptions in all communities: whenever they have been discontented or rebellious, the excitement has been traced to the intemperate zeal of persons in this country.

The Legislative Colonies have been repeatedly told by His Majesty's Minister, from Mr. Canning to the Duke of Wellington (19th July 1830), that the new measures introduced into the Crown Colonies would be first tried there, before it could be expected they should be adopted in the Legislative Colonies. It is necessary to observe, that these measures were introduced into the Crown Colonies in February 1830, and that it would be breaking faith with the Legislative Colonies, to urge the adoption of them until some years shall have elapsed, and then only when it shall have been proved that these measures have been beneficial to the Slave, and not injurious to the master, according to the tenor of the Resolutions of 1823.

On the 23d November 1830, the Planters, Merchants and others resident in London petitioned Parliament for inquiry into the condition of their Slaves. The prayer of the Petition is as follows:—"That, for the satisfaction of the country, Your Honourable House will be pleased to institute an inquiry into the condition of the Negroes, and into the state of Slavery as it now exists in the West Indies, which inquiry Your Petitioners feel assured will relieve both their fellow-colonists and themselves from the obloquy under which they now labour."

Note.—In this country the great desideratum now is to give the labourer a provision ground similar to that enjoyed by the West India Slave, to emancipate him and his family from the poor-rates. The infant schools here, with an old woman to take care of the children while their mothers are at work in the fields, are but imitations of the like establishments in the Slave Colonies, where the Slaves in many cases keep cows and even horses on their masters' estates, can afford to drink wine, and even to lend their masters' money, to give balls and masquerades, and enjoy themselves far beyond the lower classes here, as has been proved by unquestionable authority.—*Barclay's Jamaica.*

(See annexed Extract from Evidence on oath laid before Parliament, 1827, p. 11.)

EXTRACT from Examination on oath.—Parliamentary Paper, 1827.
No. 479.

“ THE Negro balls take place by permission of the master, and the driver or
“ headsman attends to keep order.—How often do they occur on your estate?
“ Once or twice a month; but when not on my estate, on that of one of my
“ neighbour’s; so that every Saturday night there is a Negro dance.—Are they
“ not frequently too much fatigued, from the labour of the week, to be able to
“ dance on Saturday night? Never; but I have frequently known them to be
“ too much fatigued on Sunday morning to go into their grounds.—In what
“ stile are these entertainments generally given? In a general way; they dress
“ in their best clothes, dance both Creole and African dances, drink lemonade,
“ and rum and water; but on particular occasions they have subscription balls,
“ or what they call bouquet balls, so named from the king and queen of the
“ night wearing a nosegay, which they present when leaving the table to two
“ others, who preside at the next entertainment in the same capacity; on which
“ occasion each person pays on entering two or four bits (10*d.* to 20*d.*) sterling,
“ for the general expenses. On these occasions they have roast pigs, roast fowls
“ and capons, sometimes hams, a great variety of cakes and fruit, rum and claret,
“ coffee and chocolate, sugar and syrup, as much as they can eat and drink.
“ These entertainments begin with a dinner, and last until day-break the next
“ morning, being from twelve to eighteen hours, during which time some of the
“ Negresses will go to the expense of changing their dresses two or three times;
“ they wear muslin gowns, India smonckers, Madras handkerchiefs, ear-rings
“ and necklaces in profusion, and many dress in shoes and stockings.—Do not
“ the regulations restrict dancing beyond nine o’clock at night? They do; but
“ on common occasions you cannot restrict them to that hour, unless you leave
“ your bed yourself; and on the particular occasions I allude to, they would
“ be so *discontented if not permitted to follow their usual custom, that no master*
“ *would venture to prevent it.*” It is an axiom in the Colonies, that a discon-
“ tented is always a disorganized and unproductive gang.

The Slave cards of invitation are folded in various forms, and often tastefully embossed and ornamented. These parties are common from Jamaica to Demerary, and prove how absurd and mischievously untrue is the assertion that these people consist of 800,000 human beings, driven like cattle, under-fed and over-worked, and in the most degraded state of misery. The Colonists only desire to be permitted to prove the truth of the case, and that the Slaves are as happy a population as exist in any part of the world. In thus petitioning The House of Commons, the Planters here do not mean to moot any constitutional question of right in Parliament (in which the Colonists are not represented having Island Legislatures) to interpose, but merely as a channel through which His Majesty may obtain the means of undeceiving the people here, and doing justice to the Colonists.

The Bishop of London, in a Pamphlet on the Observance of Sunday, published in 1830, remarks,—“ The first offence against public decency which I shall notice,
“ is the traffic which is carried on during the greater part of the day in all the
“ different articles of food. In spite of prohibitions which are almost forgotten,
“ and of penalties which are now oftentimes too trivial to be worth enforcing,
“ the markets are full of buyers and sellers; a few shops are partially closed in
“ some of those places of resort, but in Clare-market there is not the least show of
“ respecting the day. An unusual degree of activity seems to prevail in the public
“ streets; also nearly every shop which is occupied by a butcher, a baker, a cook, a
“ confectioner, a green-grocer, is open during the whole morning of the Sunday, and
“ many of them throughout the day, and all this in defiance of the laws, which
“ either prohibit or restrict the carrying on of trades or callings during the Lord’s
“ Day. But the irregularities of this kind which occur within the limits of London
“ and Westminster are trivial, compared with the shocking profanation of the
“ Sabbath which goes on in the populous suburbs of the metropolis. The vast
“ parishes to the east and north-west of London in particular, where there is but
“ a scanty provision for the religious instruction of the people, where there are
“ few persons of property resident, and where the parish officers are quite unequal
“ to the superintendence of their respective districts, present the most frightful
“ scenes of depravity and ungodliness upon the day which the Lord calls his own.
“ In the neighbourhood of the New Cut, on the Surrey side of the Thames, the
“ sale

“ sale of provisions on Sunday is one of many open violations of decency which
 “ have called forth from several respectable inhabitants an earnest representation
 “ to the Secretary of State of the evil which results from the want of power in the
 “ Magistrates. A gentleman who had personally inspected various streets and
 “ public avenues to the north-west of the metropolis, counted no less than
 “ 473 shops of various trades open for business on the Lord’s Day, besides stalls
 “ for fruit and other articles of consumption, and this in the chief city of a Chris-
 “ tian nation, the Legislature of which has solemnly declared, ‘ that the keeping
 “ holy of the Lord’s Day is a principal part of the true service of God,’ and that
 “ ‘ no tradesman, artificer, workman, labourer, or any other person whatsoever,
 “ shall do or exercise any worldly labour, business or work of their ordinary
 “ callings on the Lord’s Day, or on any part thereof, works of necessity and
 “ charity only excepted.’ To this I may add, that on the Paddington Canal
 “ business is carried on at the wharfs, and the boats are loaded and unloaded
 “ upon the Sunday as upon the other days of the week, and the excuse alleged by
 “ the masters is, ‘ that their workmen are thus kept out of mischief.’” This
 quotation is inserted here to show how difficult it is in a more civilized population
 to enforce the religious observance of Sunday. In a country where Slavery has
 ceased to exist for several centuries, the law (and practice) of punishing women
 by public whipping was abolished only a few years ago. The Colonists should
 not be blamed for delay in the backward state of civilization of their popula-
 tion, and some time should be allowed for a moral position (in the language of
 Lord Dudley) to find its way across the Atlantic. The Colonists have trodden fast
 on the Legislature of the Mother Country ; they have passed in most of the Colonies
 Catholic Emancipation Bills; and in others the Free-coloured population have
 been put on the footing of the Whites. These observations might be prolonged to a
 volume, by inserting a detailed comparative statement from authentic documents,
 showing the distressed condition of the English poor, receiving about seven mil-
 lions sterling from the poor-rates to assist in supporting them ; or of the Irish poor
 dying from starvation, and to contrast their state with that of the mass of the Slaves
 in the Colonies ; but the fear of making longer a paper already too long, and not
 the absence of proofs, is the apology. It is impossible to omit stating the fact, that
 the total admissions into the shelter for the houseless in London were 18,965, and
 the rations issued 49,405, a distress unknown to Slaves, who often support the poor
 Whites, and poor Free People of Colour.

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*

No. 5.—COPY of a PETITION for inquiring into the Condition of the SLAVES,
 compared with that of the poor Whites and Free People of Colour, dated
 9th May 1826.

To the Honourable The Commons of the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Ireland.

The Petition of the undersigned Planters of the Colonies of
St. Vincent and Dominica, resident in Great Britain ;

Humbly Sheweth,—

THAT your Petitioners possess land, buildings, machinery and Slaves in His
 Majesty’s Colonies of St. Vincent and Dominica :

THAT their lands were, in very many instances, *purchased by your Petitioners
 from the Crown* at various prices, according to their value, on the express con-
 dition of their being cultivated by Negro Slaves imported from Africa :

THAT these Slaves and their issue have been secured to your Petitioners, in
 their characters of owners thereof, as their hereditary property, by the British
 Laws :

THAT your Petitioners have ever evinced an unceasing regard to the wants,
 comforts and progressive improvement of their Slaves, proportioned always to
 the means of the masters ; that debts have been frequently incurred, to insure to
 them a continuance of these advantages, which they are prepared to prove at
 the Bar of Your Honourable House, or before any Commission which may be
 sent out to the West Indies, for the purpose of investigation into the actual
 condition

condition of the Slaves, or before any competent authority Your Honourable House may select for such object :

THAT there exists an unquestionable and earnest desire on the part of the Colonists further to improve and meliorate the condition of their Slaves, as they advance in civilization—to add to their temporal comforts—and to pursue such gradual measures as shall, by raising their moral character, encourage habits of steady industry, and, by regulating their religious feelings, fit them for the enjoyment of more extensive civil rights, is proved by the zealous co-operation of the Colonists in promoting the views of the Episcopal Establishment provided by His Majesty.

In further confirmation of this disposition Your Petitioners would appeal to the Legislative Acts lately passed in the Colonies, in which their estates are situated, for the melioration of the condition of the Slave population, in conformity with the Recommendations of His Majesty's Government.

Your Petitioners do not prefer any claim to merit or precedence on behalf of the Legislatures of these Islands, for enacting the existing customs and usages into law ; the Legislature of each Colony, in the exercise of a heavy responsibility, being, in their opinion, solely competent to decide on what is safe and practicable, according to the circumstances of the Negro population therein.

Your Petitioners are fully convinced that it may happen hereafter, as it has happened before, that a difference in opinion may prevail here and in the West Indies, as to the moment when it may be politic or safe to enact, by legislative authority, in the Colonies, all the usages and customs by which the Slaves are generally protected at present (as persons and property are by the operation of the common law in this country, where it has not been deemed necessary, for ages, to convert such common law into statute law); and because in the opinion of Your Petitioners, the effect of any further general or sudden change in the local administration of these Colonies, would, by inducing the Slaves to look to a new authority in all cases, thereby loosen the existing patriarchal bond of union between Master and Slave, of protection and allegiance; and by transferring the power in so great a degree to the Legal Authorities, would dissolve various reciprocal kindly feelings, which now can be proved to exist in that probationary state of society, by which labour is enforced with more effect and less severity, than mere legal enactments could accomplish, as long as the population bears so small a proportion to the wealth which the Colonies are capable of affording, when labour is steadily and properly applied; and because any further sudden or general innovation in the present system, might, by creating a misconception in the minds of the Slaves, lead, as similar misconceptions have done before, to acts of rebellion and outrage, to the entire destruction of property, and even to the extermination of the White people from the Colonies, where their numerical strength is so inferior to that of the Slaves.

Your Petitioners conceive that the degree to which the public feeling has been excited and deluded on the subject of Slavery, as shown by the mode in which calls have been made on Your Honourable House for its early extinction, has arisen mainly from a misconception *as to the actual condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, and the principles which influence labour in the Torrid Zone—in consequence of misrepresentations, widely and industriously disseminated in this country—from the want of authentic details, confirmed by the authority of Parliament, as to the progress made since the Abolition of the Slave Trade in civilization and habits of steady industry by the Slave population—from an ignorance or disbelief of the protection they enjoy de facto—from the operation of the present state of the relation of master and servant—of the property they do possess and may require—of the gradations in society on the Plantations—of the Police Regulations thereon, by which the punishments for offences committed on one another are inflicted—and from an ignorance or disbelief generally of the customary rights, privileges, advantages and comforts secured to the Slaves by the usage of the Islands*; the people of England being led to believe, that the whole system of Slavery consists in driving 800,000 human beings like cattle to the field, and that they are worked and treated like them—which Your Petitioners are prepared to prove is not founded in fact.

Your Petitioners cannot conceal from themselves, and ought not to conceal from Your Honourable House, however unpopular the cultivation of sugar and some other articles requiring the combination of machinery and steady labour, by means of Slaves, may have become in these days, that a conviction exists in their minds, and in those of all practical men, that neither emancipated Slaves, nor

any other persons, will labour steadily in sugar and certain other kinds of cultivation, unless subject to coercion, to be defined and regulated by Local Enactments, until density of population shall produce the same effects as coercion; for Your Petitioners are not aware of the population of any country in the lowlands of the Torrid Zone working with steady industry in agricultural pursuits, combined with the aid of much machinery, where the wants of a year may be supplied by the labour of a month or two; in other words, where the population does not press on the means of subsistence. Your Petitioners, therefore, apprehend, in the exemption of the Negroes from compulsory labour, the extinction of all their capital vested in lands, building and machinery, because they cannot derive any income therefrom, without the aid of that steady labour which men in the lowlands of the Torrid Zone have never given for wages in any age of the world, but under circumstances of greater density of population than exists with them; and they appeal to Your Honourable House as to what must be the condition of Your Petitioners, as *White* capitalists, whose property has been embarked in tropical cultivation, under the sanction and encouragement of British Laws, in a country where Your Petitioners themselves cannot labour personally in agriculture, as in Europe or in North America, and therefore must entirely depend on the steady exertions of Negroes, who are able to cultivate the soil under the peculiar circumstances of the Colonies; but who, when free, will not voluntarily work for such wages as Your Petitioners can afford to give, under the competition with the producers of Sugar by Slaves in South America and other Foreign Colonies, as well as the East Indies, where the institution of caste and density of population, as well as of Slavery, renders the rate of agricultural wages much lower than the expense incurred for feeding, clothing, and medical attendance on Negro Slaves in the West Indies.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray, That Your Honourable House will take into your consideration (previously to any further innovations on the lawful property of Your Petitioners, in deference to popular clamour, founded on a total ignorance of the truth, being sanctioned by Your Honourable House) such information as you may command, from authentic and impartial sources, collected on the spot by competent Commissioners, who have had experience in the control of labour, as to the actual condition of the Slave Population in the Colonies, in which their estates are situated; that such Commissioners be appointed to inquire into and report on the comparative productiveness of Slave and Free Labour, by Africans and their descendants generally, in the lowlands of the Torrid Zone; and particularly into the progress of civilization, and of cultivation of land by steady agricultural industry during the last twenty years in Sierra Leone, by the Nova Scotia and other Emancipated Negroes; the articles of agricultural produce raised by them, and exported to Great Britain during that period; and further, to ascertain the exportable products raised by the steady labour of Free American Negroes in Trinidad, and by the apprenticed Africans in Tortola and the other West India Colonies, in order that Your Honourable House may be possessed of sufficient facts and details on which to form a correct judgment as to the practical effect of free labour (as well as it regards the value of their property to Your Petitioners, as that of the British West Indies, commercially and politically considered, to Great Britain), when the Negro population shall have been relieved from coercion to insure the cultivation of the soil; and moreover, that Your Honourable House will be pleased to appoint a Committee of the same, to inquire into and report on the accuracy of the information so communicated; and finally, that, in the exercise of the wise and cautious deliberation which Your Honourable House always applies to every question affecting rights and property, the privileges of Colonial Legislatures, on which local knowledge and experience Your Petitioners have entire confidence for the protection and security of their property, may be preserved; and the provision be further made, that neither directly nor indirectly, the property which the Colonists hold under the sanction of law, may be invaded without full compensation.

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*

No. 6.—COPY of a PETITION for Inquiry, dated 23d June 1830.

To the Honourable The Commons of the United Kingdom of *Great Britain and Ireland*, in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the Planters, Merchants and others, in the City of *London*, connected with His Majesty's *West India Colonies*; of *St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Christopher, and Nevis*;

Humbly Sheweth,—

THAT Your Petitioners are proprietors of, or deeply interested in, Estates in His Majesty's West India Colonies, cultivated by Negro Slaves :

THAT Your Petitioners cannot allow that they are justly chargeable with any neglect of that attention to the wants and comforts of their Slaves to which they are called by the dictates of self-interest as well as humanity; nor yet with opposition to any prudent measures, having in view their religious, moral or physical improvement; in confirmation of which assertions, Your Petitioners appeal to the Acts passed by the Legislatures in the Colonies, in which their estates are situated, in conformity with the recommendations of His Majesty's Government :

THAT Your Petitioners have reason to complain of the manner in which the public feeling in this country has of late been excited and deluded on the subject of Slavery; that the actual condition of the Negro population has been grossly misrepresented; that the resident Proprietors, and those to whom Your Petitioners have entrusted the charge of their property, have been calumniated; and that Your Honourable House has been called upon to sanction measures tending, not only to the ruin of Your Petitioners, but to the ultimate loss of the West India Colonies to the British Empire :

THAT, under these circumstances, Your Petitioners are anxious to vindicate their own conduct, and maintain their own just rights before an impartial and competent tribunal, and, to the satisfaction of any such, they pledge themselves to prove the falsehood of the representations alluded to.

Your Petitioners therefore do humbly pray, That if the information officially communicated to His Majesty's Government by the Bishops, Governors, Naval and Military and Civil Officers in His Majesty's Service, and others, in addition to the statements on this subject laid before Parliament, showing the improvements which have been progressively introduced, the laws passed, and fairly executed, and the advantages secured to the Slave Population, should not be sufficient to satisfy His Majesty's Government as to the comforts enjoyed by this class of persons, Your Honourable House will be pleased to take into consideration such information as may be collected on the spot, by Commissioners impartially chosen by the Executive Government, and practically acquainted with tropical agriculture, and the control of agricultural labour in the Colonies, and sent to these Colonies, for the purpose of ascertaining the actual physical condition of the Negroes, compared with that of the poor Whites, and poor Free People of Colour, as well as the progress made in their moral and religious state; and that the said Commissioners be instructed to make up the Report respecting each Colony within the same, and to submit such Report to the Governor and Council thereof, for their perusal, and attestation that it has been so perused.

I.—ST. VINCENT—*continued.*

No. 7.—COPY of PETITION for INQUIRY, dated 27th November 1830.

To The Right Honourable the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and The Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom, in Parliament assembled.

The Humble Petition of the undersigned Planters, Merchants and others interested in the British West-India Colonies ;

Sheweth,—

THAT Your Petitioners and their ancestors acquired their property in the West India Colonies with the sanction and under the direct encouragement of the British Legislature, and Your Petitioners claim for it that protection which the British Constitution affords to the property of all other His Majesty's subjects :

THAT a combination of persons has been formed, the direct tendency of whose proceedings is the destruction of that property :

THAT for a series of years this Society of Persons has, in utter ignorance of the actual state and condition of Slavery in the West India Colonies, endeavoured, by misrepresentations, to prepare the minds of men for that violation of the rights of property which they are desirous of accomplishing, and they have succeeded in producing the greatest depreciation of its value ; not contented with resorting to the most unfounded calumnies against the Colonists, for the purpose of influencing the return of Members to Parliament, they have procured petitions to be addressed to Your Lordships, praying for the early and utter extinction of Slavery in the Colonies, and they have not scrupled to dictate and furnish the very form and substance of the Petition to be addressed :

THAT Your Petitioners are prepared to establish the falsehood of the representations which have been made to their prejudice, and to prove that they and their fellow Colonists are keenly alive to the amelioration of the Slave population, and have been and continue to be actively engaged in promoting it :

THAT Your Honourable House, by its Resolutions of 15th May 1823, and The House of Lords, by similar Resolutions of 7th May 1826, did expressly declare, That the period when a change was to be effected in the civil rights of the Slave population should be that which would be " compatible with the well-being of the " Slaves themselves, with the safety of the Colonies, and with a fair and equitable " consideration of the interests of private property ;" but the Petitioners before referred to, now ask Your Lordships to pass a law for the " early and utter extinction of Slavery," and deny to their fellow-subjects, whom they would thus deprive of their property, the full and complete indemnity and compensation, without which the law of the land will not allow the property of any man to be taken from him, whatever may be the purpose for which it is to be applied :

THAT Your Petitioners rely with confidence that Your Honourable House will, by denying the prayer of such Petitions, refuse to sanction so direct a violation of the first principles of justice, which, whilst it involves Your Petitioners and their fellow Colonists in utter ruin, would afford a precedent justifying the invasion of every other description of property :

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray, That Your Lordships' House will refuse its sanction to any measure affecting the rights of Your Petitioners and their fellow Colonists in their Slaves, until the amount of that full and complete indemnity and compensation, to which Your Petitioners and fellow Colonists are entitled, has been ascertained, nor until an adequate fund has been provided and set apart, in order that the payment of the compensation and indemnity may be made contemporaneously with the adoption of any such measure.

And Your Petitioners further pray, That, for the satisfaction of the Country, Your Honourable House will be pleased to institute an Inquiry into the Condition of the Negroes, and into the State of Slavery, as it now exists in the West India Colonies, which Inquiry, Your Petitioners feel assured will relieve both their fellow Colonists and themselves from the obloquy under which they now labour.

II.—DOMINICA.

No. 1.—SLAVE MELIORATION LAW in force previously to the Resolutions of The House of Commons in June 1823.

Religious Instruction.

Observance of Sunday.

(Consolidated Acts,
22 April 1818,
5 August 1818,
2 June 1821.)

Food.

Clothing.

Lodging.

Labour and Holidays.

Punishments.

Legal Protection.

Slave Evidence.

s. 5. Not to labour on *Sunday*. No Shop to be open during Divine Service.

s. 9. *Religious Instruction* to be promoted. Curate appointed, at £.200 per annum, to attend to Religious Instruction of Negroes, baptize and marry them. Not to labour for Master on Sundays or Holidays.

s. 1-4. *Food, Clothing and Lodging* regulated—(£.50 penalty). Land to be allowed, and one day in the week to cultivate it. If clothed and fed, twenty-six days in the year, besides Holidays and Sundays, to be allowed.

s. 17. *Punishments* regulated; twenty stripes at one time for one offence by Manager, and five by Overseer in absence of Manager; and in no case more than thirty-nine—Penalty.

s. 10. Unserviceable Slaves to be provided for.

s. 12. Murder of Slave—Death.

s. 13. Punishment of persons maltreating Slaves.

s. 14. Slave Evidence admitted where Slaves have been baptized, in case of maltreatment, or depriving Slaves of their property. Contumacy of White Persons to be construed into guilt.

s. 16. Collars and chains prohibited.

II.—DOMINICA—*continued.*

No. 2.—PROVISIONS, under Six different Heads, proposed in Lord Bathurst's - -

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSIONS.
<p>Sunday markets to be abolished when religious instruction shall have been provided.</p>	<p>-- To be received, if the Slave produce a certificate from the parochial clergyman or religious teacher, that he has been instructed in the Christian religion, so as to understand an oath. <i>Exception.</i> Where the life of a Master or white person is concerned.</p>	<p>-- To be confined as much as possible to Slaves on plantations, and with consent of Master; to be registered in parish church; if refused by Master, the grounds to be stated to parochial clergyman. Mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock to be exempt from field labour.</p>	<p>-- Taxes on manumissions to be withdrawn. Bond to be given that the Slave shall not become chargeable if below 6 or above 50 years old, or labouring under sickness, disease or infirmity. Mortgaged Slaves to be valued by appraisers, and manumitted, and produce paid into Treasury. Manumissions to be registered.</p>

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in Eight Bills sent out to - - -

<p>No Slave to be hired or employed, except for domestic purposes on Sunday, under a penalty. No Slave to be employed against his will in field labour, and to be paid wages for it.</p>	<p>- - - - -</p>	<p>-- Clergyman may solemnize marriage without consent of Master.</p>	<p>-- Slaves, under certain restrictions, to be enabled, <i>invito domino</i>, to purchase their freedom, and that of their families and relations.</p>
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ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in Sir Geo. Murray's Letter to - - -

<p>Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on Sunday to supply himself the rest of the week.</p>	<p>-- Unlimited Slave evidence in civil and criminal cases.— In the Notes on Bill, No. 2, transmitted on the 10th May 1826, it is observed, that the evidence of six Slaves in Demerara (where Slave evidence has always been received as unfettered as that of free persons) to a punishment, is considered equivalent to that of one free person. (See Order in Council, 2 Feb. 1830, s. 22.)</p>		
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<p>s. 7. No market or shop shall be open during church service, under penalty of £. 10. s. 2. No Slave shall be put to any labour on Sunday, except domestic duties, or in case of accidents. s. 6. Slaves to be encouraged to receive baptism, and afforded every reasonable facility to attend divine worship; penalty £. 5.</p>	<p>-- Evidence of baptized Slaves understanding nature of an oath; to be examined separately, and two Slaves to agree in consistent testimony. (26 January 1826.)</p>	<p>- - - - -</p>	<p>- - - - -</p>
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On 3d April 1827, Lord Bathurst makes the following remarks to Governor Nicolay respecting the above Bill :

“ His Majesty is graciously pleased to acknowledge with commendation the disposition which the Legislature of Dominica have manifested in many of the provisions of these Acts to improve the condition of the Slave Population ; and considering that they are framed in general in such a manner as to promote the well-being of that class of society, His Majesty has been pleased, with the advice of his Privy Council, to confirm them,” &c.

DOMINICA ACT, passed 26 January 1826.

Circular to Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 9th July 1823.

SALES OF SLAVES.	PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY OF SLAVES.	PROTECTOR OF SLAVES.
-- Land, Slaves and plantation, plant or utensils to be sold in one lot; husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under 14 from parents; and that they be sold to one proprietor, if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.	-- The flogging of women to be abolished; prohibits the use of the whip in the field, and any domestic punishments until the day following the offence, and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishments exceeding 3 lashes to be recorded, and record-book of offences and punishments sworn to quarterly. Traces of punishment not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.		

Governors of Legislative Colonies, on the 11th of May 1826.

-- Slave families not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial process</i> .	-- Punishments of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited; various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.	-- Securing to Slave whatever property he may acquire; and Savings' Banks to be established.	-- Office of Protector and Guardian of Slaves to be instituted.
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Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 3d and 15th Sept. 1828.

-- s. 15. No Slave under 12 years of age shall be sold separate from its mother; and by an Act passed in 1829, it has been decreed that no Slaves shall in future be sold separate from the estates to which they belong.	-- s. 18. The whip, commonly called the cart-whip, shall never hereafter be employed, either as an instrument of punishment or emblem of authority; the only instrument of correction shall be the Cat used in the British Army. s. 33. Restricts punishments to 6 stripes by inferiors, 10 by an Overseer, 20 by Manager, and 39 by Owner under grave circumstances; prohibits the infliction until the effects of any former punishment be thoroughly cured; and permits no punishment to exceed 10 stripes at the time of the offence, or during that day; guards punishment of females against any indecent exposure; penalty, £. 5. to £. 30.	-- s. 13. 16. Protects the property of Slaves by penalty of £. 20. on any person infringing it, or refusing to pay them any just debt. Right of action vested in Master.	

 II.—DOMINICA—*continued.*

No. 3.—PROVISIONS of MELIORATION LAWS, either in force previously to the House of Commons' Resolutions in June 1823, and re-enacted, or enacted for the first time, in addition to the Recommendations of the Colonial Secretary of State

Food, Clothing, Lodging, Medical Treatment, Negro Days, Holidays, Labour and Meals.

s. 1. Every Owner or Manager shall provide for his Slaves a sufficient quantity of good and wholesome food, dry and comfortable lodging, suitable clothing, and medical aid, and comfortably maintain old, infirm, and diseased Slaves on his estate. The whole under penalty of £. 100. for each omission.

s. 2. Each Slave shall be allowed half an hour for breakfast; and out of crop, two hours for dinner; during crop, one hour and a half. No Slave shall be required to work before five A. M., nor after seven P. M., except during crop, and then not later than nine. Good Friday, Christmas day, and day following, and New Year's day shall be allowed as holidays; and if either of these fall on a Sunday, then the next Wednesday in lieu of it. Penalty, £. 50. for breach of any of these provisions.

s. 3. Where Owner allots provision ground instead of food, each Slave shall have half an acre, and be allowed one day in every week to cultivate it, except during crop, when the owner shall distribute food in lieu of such day. Still not less than twenty-six clear days in the year shall be allowed, under penalty of £. 10. for each omission. Every Owner required, under £. 50 penalty, annually to make oath, that he has strictly complied with all the provisions in Clauses 1, 2, and 3.

Legal Protection and General Regulations.

s. 10. Wilful murder of a Slave is capital without benefit of clergy, and manslaughter punishable as in England.

s. 11. Any person who shall mutilate, wantonly or cruelly whip, or cause to be whipped, beat, bruise, cut, wound, or imprison or confine without sufficient nourishment, any Slave, shall on conviction suffer fine of £. 200, or imprisonment for six months, or both, and the Slave be transferred to another Master.

s. 12. Any person wantonly beating or striking the Slave of another to forfeit £. 50.

s. 17. The trial of Slaves for capital offences shall be similar to that of free persons.

s. 34. Prohibits the use of collars and chains, except upon notorious runaways, when such may be applied, provided they in no case exceed four pounds in weight. Penalty £. 20.

 II.—DOMINICA—*continued.*

 No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed Acts of the Legislature,
 from Official Papers.

THE Report of the Committee of the Legislature, in June 1823, goes much into detail as to the state of the population. In this Colony, an overwhelming majority is composed of Catholic Slaves belonging to French Planters. The Catholic priests confine their labours to religious duties, and enforcing obedience to those in authority over them. Cases of complaint against priests are attended to by their chief; or the priest, being an alien, usually, can be removed without difficulty. It would be extremely desirable that the whole population, Master and Slave, bond and free, for obvious reasons, should be of one church; this, however, is impracticable. Wesleyan Missionaries are permitted to visit estates where the Slaves are not Catholics; but the interests and safety of society require that any attempts at conversion by Missionary interference would be put down. A Branch Society of the Church Missionary Society has been established there, and has experienced the support of all respectable classes. The Negroes are yet incapable of appreciating the advantages of the married state, and if it were generally urged, would only extend the crime of adultery. The Report further details the contented condition of the Negroes, and the comforts they enjoy, freed from the possibility of feeling the pangs of poverty, (unless indeed they are made free,) inasmuch as misery in slave countries begins with the master, in free countries with the labourer, whom it can never reach till the master is ruined. Well, therefore, might Sir Robert Peel (20th February 1831) contend, "that the best way to secure the comfort and "happiness of the Slave, was to promote the prosperity of the Master, to enable "him to continue to the Slave the advantages he enjoys." If the Colonists have been tardy in converting their usages into laws, it is because they feel that a class of their countrymen at home have dealt dishonestly with them; they would not believe the evidence of impartial persons as to the conduct of the Planters; they found them guilty of cruelty, not only without a trial, but in the teeth of the testimony of many disinterested witnesses of the highest character. It is not meant to be denied that insulated cases of cruelty have occurred in the West Indies as well as *elsewhere*; and it may be fairly contended that, from the nature of a Slave Government, they are more likely to escape detection; but they are exceptions to the rule of treatment. It is admitted that the Executive here had a difficult task to perform to allay the fever of prejudice, and it is conscientiously believed they did what prudence suggested at the time to stem the torrent; their policy was to moderate the zeal of the Abolitionists, while they shielded the Colonists, by inducing them to yield something to popular clamour, and induce the sober-minded in the mother country to investigate the merits of the case. The *Legislatures* could not perhaps, without trifling with their privileges, petition for an inquiry, on the part of the British Parliament, into the condition of those whom it was their duty to protect; but the *Planters* of Dominica and St. Vincent, resident here, petitioned the Parliament in 1826 and 1828, urging an inquiry into the religious, moral and physical condition of the Slaves; and the Parliament having neglected to comply with their petition, not only absolves the Planters from responsibility, but, if it proves any thing, proves that Parliament was satisfied that no inquiry was necessary to establish the case of the Petitioners; or in case of doubt, they should in justice

have put it to the proof by granting the inquiry. These charges against the Colonists were mere general assertions and statements, which would have been disproved and dissipated before an impartial Committee or Commission of Inquiry. Both were therefore resisted by the Abolitionists. The Colonists only want the truth to prevail. However irksome the restrictions to which the Slave is exposed might be to the English labourer, the Slave, from habit, feels them not; his home, his property, whether in Slaves or of any other description, is sacred. His Master, *on oath*, finds medical advice and food in case of need, if the Slave's provision ground fail; and he has no cares for the morrow. In respect to punishments, they are inflicted as measures of police, as in every other country, whether because he refuses or neglects to work, or for offences. Even here, a father deserting his family, or refusing to work, is sent to the tread-mill; and whipping, it appears from the Parliamentary Returns, is no unusual punishment in the prisons here for juvenile or incorrigible offenders. Some Slaves have purchased their freedom from their own industry; others prefer holding Slaves as property to purchasing their freedom. (See Dominica Committee's Report, June 1823.)

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

See ST. VINCENT'S, - - Paper, No. 4.

III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER.

No. 1.—CONSOLIDATED MELIORATION LAW of 21st April 1798, passed at St. Christopher by Delegates from Leeward Islands, and still in force.

Religious Instruction.
Baptism.
Polygamy Discouraged.
Food.
Clothing.
Labour.

Rewards and Privileges.
Medical Treatment.
Legal Protection of Slave Persons
and Property.
Council of Protection.
General Regulations.

21st April 1798.—s. 26. *Religious Instruction* promoted. Owners prohibiting slaves from attending church or chapel, or from receiving baptism, to forfeit 5 *l*.

Baptism.—Clergyman refusing or neglecting to baptise slaves without fee or reward, to forfeit 30 *s*.

Polygamy Discouraged.—Rewards for slaves cohabiting as man and wife (not yet capable of understanding the religious contract of marriage, or if married, preserving the marriage vow.)—s. 22. Four dollars premium for each child born in faithful connection with one man as husband and wife.—s. 23. One dollar per annum while they live together faithfully as husband and wife.

Food.—s. 1. Specified quantity of provisions for each negro; penalty 10 *s*. per head.—s. 2, 5, 6. Land to be allotted for cultivation.—s. 3, 4. Money given in lieu of provisions.

Clothing.—s. 7, 8. Specified quantity of clothing to be given on oath of manager.—s. 12. Accounts to be kept of clothing and provisions furnished to slaves.

Labour.—s. 9. Half an hour at breakfast; two hours for dinner; ten hours of labour, 5 A. M. till 7 P. M.

Rewards and Privileges.—s. 37. Women five months with child not to be employed in labour.—s. 38. Women pregnant, and having one child, to have a separate house of two rooms.—s. 24. Women having six children to be employed in light work; penalty 20 *l*.

Medical Treatment.—s. 19. Medical aid is to be immediately supplied; penalty 50 *l*.—s. 27. Medical man to visit and give physic.—s. 28. Attendance at least twice a week.—s. 29. To attend within eight hours.—s. 30. Hospitals to be established on estates.—s. 31. Prescription book to be kept.—s. 32. Entry to be made of attendances.—s. 33. Medicine chest on estate.—s. 34. Medical man to be hired by the year.—s. 35. Return of deaths and medical treatment.—s. 36. Causes of deaths.

Legal protection of Persons and Property of Slaves.—s. 15, 16. Slaves maltreated by owners may be sold to other masters, and owners subject to action.—s. 20. Murder of a slave, death; coroner's inquest to be held.—s. 14. Persons who shall ill-use a slave of another master, or take from him any property, to be obliged to answer *on oath* before a magistrate any charge brought against him.

Council of Protection.—s. 17. Magistrates bound to proceed against offenders.

General Regulations.—s. 11. Public to support diseased and aged slaves without owners.—s. 18. Iron collars and chains prohibited; penalty 100 *l*.—s. 12. £. 300 currency for support of aged and infirm slaves.

III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER—*continued.*

No. 2.—PROVISIONS, under six different Heads, proposed in Lord Bathurst's Circular

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSIONS.
<p>Sunday markets to be abolished when religious instruction shall have been provided.</p>	<p>To be received if the slave produce a certificate from the parochial clergyman or religious teacher, that he has been instructed in the Christian religion so as to understand an oath.</p> <p><i>Exception.</i>—Where the life of a master or white person is concerned.</p>	<p>To be confined as much as possible to slaves on plantations, and with consent of master, to be registered in parish church. If refused by master, the grounds to be stated to parochial clergyman. Mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock to be exempt from field labour.</p>	<p>Taxes on manumissions to be withdrawn. Bond to be given that the slaves shall not become chargeable, if below 6 or above 50 years old, or labouring under sickness, disease or infirmity. Mortgaged slaves to be valued by appraisers and manumitted, and produce paid into treasury. Manumissions to be registered.</p>
Additional Provisions contained in Eight Bills sent out to Governors of Legislative -			
<p>No slave to be hired or employed except for domestic purposes on Sunday, under a penalty.</p> <p>No slave to be employed against his will in field labour, and to be paid wages for it.</p>		<p>Clergymen may solemnize marriage without consent of master.</p>	<p>Slaves, under certain restrictions, to be enabled <i>invito domino</i> to purchase their freedom and that of their families and relations.</p>
Additional Provisions contained in Sir Geo. Murray's Letter to Governors of Legislative -			
<p>Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on Sunday, to supply him the rest of the week.</p> <p>s. 1. Limits Sunday markets to 11 A. M.; penalty, forfeiture of goods and fine of 9s.</p> <p>s. 3. Prohibits all kind of labour on Sundays, except domestic affairs and potting of sugar. No mill shall be put about between 10 on Saturday night and daylight on Monday morning, under penalty of 50<i>l.</i></p> <p>s. 8. All owners and managers to instruct their slaves in the Christian religion; to have all children baptised within six months of their birth, and all adults who can be made sensible of religious duty, which ceremony the parish clergyman shall, in all cases, perform and register, and give to each slave a certificate thereof, and shall administer spiritual consolation when required, in each particular, gratis; penalty 10<i>l.</i></p>	<p>Unlimited slave evidence in civil and criminal cases. In the notes on Bill N° 2, transmitted on 10 May 1826, it is observed, that the evidence of six slaves in Demerara (where slave evidence has always been received as unfettered as the evidence of six slaves) to a punishment is considered as equivalent to that of one free person.</p> <p>See Order in Council, 2 Feb. 1830; s. 22.</p> <p>Slave evidence admissible in civil and criminal cases, except against owner or his representative. Slave to have certificate from clergyman that he understands the nature of an oath.</p>	<p>s. 8. Clergyman shall solemnize matrimony between slaves applying with their owner's consent, or if owners refuse, the slave may, through the Attorney-general, move the Court of King's Bench, which, the owner failing just cause of objection, shall grant the application.</p>	<p>Mr. Secretary Huskisson made the following remarks on the above bill to the officer administering the government, in a letter, dated 7th March 1828:</p> <p>"I am commanded by the King to convey to the Legislative Council and Assembly of St. Christopher, the expression of his gracious and high approbation of the measures which they have adopted for improving the condition of the slave population of the island." "This Act is remarkable for the wisdom and humanity of the greater part of its provisions, and it is peculiarly gratifying to find that the legislature of this ancient colony have given the full sanction of their authority to measures which have elsewhere excited so much alarm, and called forth such urgent remonstrances."</p> <p>After noticing some of the enactments, Mr. Huskisson concludes with the following paragraph:—"Having thus drawn your attention to the various provisions of this law, which have appeared to me to have required any particular remark, I cannot conclude this despatch without renewing the expression of the very sincere satisfaction with which His Majesty's Government have regarded the cordial acquiescence of the colonial legislature in so many of the suggestions which were made to them by Lord Bathurst, in obedience to His Majesty's commands."</p>

SLAVE LAWS IN THE WEST INDIA COLONIES.

25

to Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 9th July 1823.

SALES of SLAVES.	PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY of SLAVES.	PROTECTOR of SLAVES.
<p>Land, slaves and plantation, plant or utensils, to be sold in one lot. Husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under 14 years from parents, and that they be sold to one proprietor, if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.</p>	<p>The flogging of women to be abolished. Prohibits the use of the whip in the field, and any domestic punishment until the day following the offence, and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishments exceeding three lashes to be recorded, and record book of offences and punishments sworn to quarterly. Traces of punishment not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.</p>		
-- Colonies, on the 11th of May 1826.			
<p>Slave families not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial process</i>.</p>	<p>Punishments of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited. Various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.</p>	<p>Securing to slave whatever property he may acquire, and savings banks to be established.</p>	<p>Office of protector and guardian of slaves to be instituted.</p>
-- Colonies, dated 3d and 15th September 1828.			
<p>s. 16. Prohibits the separation of families by sale under <i>judicial process</i>; viz. husband and wife, or reputed as such, and child under 12 years of age.</p> <p>s. 11.—Limits punishment of slaves to twenty-five stripes in any one day for any offence whatever. Forbids any punishment until offender be recovered from any former chastisement. Restricts to twelve stripes on the day when any offence is committed, and to the like number unless in the presence of another free person, under penalty of fine and imprisonment, and prohibits any indecent exposure of females under punishment. Record to be kept for inspection of magistrates of all punishments exceeding twelve stripes, or forty-eight hours confinement. Penalty 5 l. to 50 l.</p>	<p>s. 14.—No person shall use, for the purpose of impelling or coercing labour, or carry as an emblem of authority the instrument called the cart whip, under penalty of 100 l. or six months imprisonment, or both.</p>	<p>s. 9, 17.—Slaves may acquire, hold, enjoy and dispose of property; viz. money, cattle, household goods and the like, and may bring, prosecute or defend suits or actions in respect of the same. Persons invading it to pay 10 l. over and above its full value.</p> <p>s. 18.—Slaves may deposit their money to the extent of 9 l. at one time, or any one week, in the public treasury, at interest at 5 l. per cent. per annum, and bequeath such property at discretion, the same descending in the event of intestacy to the next of kin.</p>	

III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER—*continued.*

No. 3.—CONSOLIDATED MELIORATION LAW of 21st April 1798, passed at St. Christopher's by Delegates from the Leeward Islands, and still in force.

Religious Instruction.
Baptism.
Polygamy discouraged.
Food.
Clothing.
Labour.

Rewards and Privileges.
Medical Treatment.
Legal Protection of Slave Persons
and Property.
Council of Protection.
General Regulations.

21st April 1798.—S. 26. *Religious Instruction promoted.*—Owners prohibiting slaves from attending church or chapel, or from receiving baptism, to forfeit 5 *l.*

Baptism.—Clergyman refusing or neglecting to baptise slaves without fee or reward, to forfeit 30 *s.*

Polygamy discouraged.—Rewards for slaves cohabiting as man and wife, (not yet capable of understanding the religious contract of marriage, or if married, preserving the marriage vow).—S. 22. Four dollars premium for each child born in faithful connexion with one man as husband and wife.—S. 23. One dollar per annum while they live together faithfully as husband and wife.

Food.—S. 1. Specified quantity of provisions for each negro; penalty, 10 *s.* per head.—S. 2, 5, 6. Land to be allowed for cultivation in lieu of provisions.—S. 3, 4. Money given in lieu of provisions.

Clothing.—S. 7, 8. Specified quantity of clothing to be given on oath of manager.—S. 12. Accounts to be kept of clothing and provisions furnished to slaves.

Labour.—S. 9. Half an hour at breakfast, two hours for dinner, ten hours of labour, 5 A. M. till 7 P. M.

Rewards and Privileges.—S. 37. Women five months with child not to be employed in labour.—S. 38. Women pregnant, and having one child, to have a separate house of two rooms.—S. 24. Women having six children, to be employed in light work; penalty, 20 *l.*

Medical Treatment.—S. 19. Medical aid to be immediately supplied; penalty, 50 *l.*—S. 27. Medical man to visit and give physic.—S. 28. Attendance at least twice a week.—S. 29. To attend within eight hours.—S. 30. Hospital to be established on estate.—S. 31. Prescription-book to be kept.—S. 32. Entry to be made of attendances.—S. 33. Medicine-chest on estate.—S. 34. Medical man to be hired by the year.—S. 35. Return of deaths and medical treatment.—S. 36. Causes of deaths.

Legal Protection of Persons and Property of Slaves.—S. 15, 16. Slaves maltreated by owners may be sold to other masters, and owners subject to action.—S. 20. Murder of a slave, death; coroner's inquest to be held.—S. 14. Persons who shall ill use a slave of another master, or take from him any property, to be obliged to answer *on oath* before a magistrate any charge brought against him.

Council of Protection.—S. 17. Magistrates bound to proceed against offenders.

General Regulations.—S. 11. Public to support diseased and aged slaves without owners.—S. 18. Iron collars and chains prohibited; penalty, 100 *l.*—S. 12. 300 *l.* currency for support of aged and infirm slaves.

III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER—*continued.*No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed ACTS of the LEGISLATURE, from
Official Papers.

THE Leeward Island Act of 1798, passed upwards of *thirty years ago* is an important proof of Lord Eldon's declaration being true *, that if the Legislatures had been left to themselves, they would have done more to meliorate the condition of the slaves, than if goaded by a party at home, whose object is believed in the Colonies to be to render the planters odious in the eyes of their fellow countrymen, to afford them, by raising a clamour, to obtain for themselves political power.—See ST. VINCENT Report.

The excellent law above quoted proves that the Colonial Legislatures may safely be trusted to legislate for their slaves. There is scarcely an important suggestion since made which has not been anticipated and practically attained by it or by its influence, which gave a character to and produced the existing usages of the Colonies. By that law, the master is the guardian of the slave and protects his property. It is true that the law did not provide against the master taking the property of the slave, because such an offence had been and is to this day unheard of, and would place the master out of the pale of society. The term "maltreat" has been considered by the best lawyers as a protection which, on all occasions, has enabled the Attorney-general, or any magistrate, to prosecute in any cases of alleged cruelty, and convictions have followed. It has no doubt happened in the West Indies, as in England, that persons have been acquitted from defects in the law, or indictment, or evidence, or from one or more perverse jurors, as has occurred here where persons have been acquitted of an offence of which they had been convicted some time before on the same or similar evidence. These cases, however, form the exception, not the rule. It is notorious, that although the law did not forbid the separation of slave families, families are not separated in this island and sold, nor indeed in any other. It is moreover the interest of the master not to separate the husband and wife, or reputed husband and wife, or the children from the parents; they have the opportunity, if they were separated, of seeing each other as often and oftener than domestic servants in this country. Lord Bathurst's circular letter of the 9th July 1823, recommended certain measures which the Colonists had practised, and which they would probably have adopted at once as laws, if they had not felt sore at having been caluminated here. The law of 1828 only converted a portion of their usages into laws; and it does not really appear that the actual condition of the slaves, generally speaking, has been improved by them. It must be admitted on all hands, that nothing could have been more conciliatory or more courteous than the course adopted by the Colonial Secretaries in conducting this delicate and difficult negotiation. Time is the only beneficial innovator and

* 7th March 1826:—"My *fixed opinion* is, that these great and desirable objects, viz. those contemplated by the Resolutions of 1823, have been more retarded by the intemperate zeal of those who have been the advocates of those measures, than they had been or could be by any direct opposition on the part of those who opposed them."

 III.—ST. CHRISTOPHER—*continua* ↻ ·

improver of society. It is too much to expect to change the confirmed habits and usages of a people by mere legislative enactments. Free labour therefore must be the result of experience. The report of the Branch Association of St. Christopher, made up from the reports of the clergymen of the different parishes, shows that the education there of the free and slave children to be making most satisfactory progress. Indeed the numbers educated there in proportion to the population, exceed the numbers educated by the national schools in England, in proportion to the population of this country.

The planters of St. Christopher resident in England, petitioned the House of Commons for inquiry; as the prayer of that petition has not been complied with, it is evident the House acquiesced in the statements made by the religious, civil, military and naval authorities as to the condition of the slave being good, otherwise the House would have been doing great injustice to the Colonists, by refusing to them the opportunity of disproving the charges against them made by the anti-colonists, by which their characters have been traduced and vilified.—*See St. VINCENT, No. 6.*

For General Observations, *see St. VINCENT, No. 4.*

IV.—N E V I S.

See ST. CHRISTOPHER, No. 1.

LEEWARD ISLAND MELIORATION ACT, 1798, at present in force in

ANTIGUA,
ST. CHRISTOPHER,
NEVIS,
MONTserrat, and
THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

IV.—NEVIS—continued.

No. 2 —PROVISIONS under Six different Heads proposed in Lord Bathurst's

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSIONS.
Sunday markets to be abolished, when religious instruction shall have been provided.	To be received if the slave produce a certificate from the parochial clergyman, or religious teacher, that he has been instructed in the Christian religion, so as to understand an oath. Exception; where the life of a master or white person is concerned.	To be confined as much as possible to slaves on plantations, and with consent of master, to be registered in parish church; if refused by master, the grounds to be stated to parochial clergyman. Mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock, to be exempt from field labour.	Taxes on manumissions to be withdrawn. Bond to be given that the slaves shall not become chargeable, if below six or above fifty years old, or labouring under sickness, disease or infirmity. Mortgaged slaves to be valued by appraisers, and manumitted, and produce paid into treasury. Manumissions to be registered.

Additional Provisions contained in Eight Bills sent out to Governors of Legislative --

No slave to be hired nor employed, except for domestic purposes, on Sunday, under a penalty. No slave to be employed against his will in field labour, and to be paid wages for it.

Clergyman may solemnize marriage without consent of master.

Slaves, under certain restrictions, to be enabled *in-vito domino* to purchase their freedom, and that of their families and relations.

Additional Provisions contained in Sir George Murray's Letter to Governors of Legislative --

Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on Sunday, to supply him the rest of the week.

Unlimited slave evidence in civil and criminal cases. (In the notes on Bill No. 2, transmitted on 10 May 1826, it is observed, that the evidence of six slaves in Demerara, where slave evidence has always been received as unfettered as the evidence of free persons, the testimonies of six slaves to a punishment are considered as equivalent to that of one free person.)

See Order in Council, 2d Feb. 1830; S. 22.

Act 4. Sunday markets and shops to be closed at eleven A. M. except druggists, and for the sale of perishable food out of church hours, as in England. No person shall employ slaves in any kind of labour, except domestic affairs, or in cases of accident or emergency on Sunday. Penalty, 1*l.* to 10*l.* for each offence.

Act. 2. Slave evidence admitted, except against owners and managers in capital charges. (2d Oct. 1828.)

Act 3. An Act for regulating the solemnization of marriages among slaves, and for declaring such marriages valid and effectual in law. Clergymen to celebrate without fee or reward. Owners refusing permission, or not giving sufficient reason, the ordinary may authorize the solemnization of the marriage.

Act. 7. An Act mere effectually to facilitate the manumission of slaves.

S. 1. If a manumitted slave be likely to become chargeable to the public, from inability to support himself, his owner shall enter into suitable recognizance to defray his maintenance.

Circular to Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 9th July 1823.

SALES OF SLAVES.	PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY OF SLAVES.	PROTECTOR OF SLAVES.
<p>Land-slaves and plantations, plant or utensils, to be sold in one lot. Husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under 14 from parents, and that they be sold to one proprietor if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.</p>	<p>The flogging of women to be abolished, prohibits the use of the whip in the field, and any domestic punishment, until the day following the offence; and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishments exceeding three lashes to be recorded, and record-book of offences and punishments sworn to quarterly. Traces of punishment not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.</p>		

-- Colonies, on 11th May 1826.

<p>Slaves not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial process</i>.</p>	<p>Punishments of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited. Various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.</p>	<p>Securing to slave whatever property he may acquire, and savings banks to be established.</p>	<p>Office of protector and guardian of slaves to be instituted.</p>
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-- Colonies, dated 3d and 15th September 1828.

<p>Act 6. An Act to prevent the separation of slaves by sale or transfer. Father, mother or children under 12 years shall on no account be sold under legal process, otherwise than together, unless with their own free will and consent. Any sale to the contrary of these provisions is null and void, and the offender punishable by fine of 50<i>l.</i> and imprisonment.</p>	<p>Act of 1826, s. 16, prohibits the carrying the cart-whip, either as an emblem of authority or instrument of punishment, allowing only some moderate and innoxious substitute. s. 17. No female slave shall be otherwise chastised than with a bunch of rods, not exceeding twenty stripes, over back and shoulders. Indecent exposure of person prohibited.</p>	<p>Act 5. An Act to enable slaves to acquire, possess and alienate property; also to bring, maintain, prosecute and defend any suit or action in respect thereof, as fully and amply and to all intents and purposes as if such person were of free condition, such property, in case of intestacy, shall go to the next of kin.</p>	<p>Act 1. Establishes and vests in the magistracy of the island the protection and guardianship of slaves, requiring of each to hear and investigate all complaints made by slaves; to issue warrant against and prosecute offender under penalty of 200<i>l.</i></p>
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IV.—NEVIS—*continued.*No. 3.—LEEWARD ISLAND MELIORATION ACT, 1798, in force.—
See ST. CHRISTOPHER, No. 3.

1818, 22 May.—*Religious Observance of Sunday.*—Shops to be shut; no work to be done, except domestic work.

Legal Protection.—In case of severe ill treatment master to be punished and slave made free, with 20 *l.* per annum from owner, through the public treasurer.

Punishments limited to 10 lashes by an inferior agent, and to 39 by order of owner or attorney.

No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed ACTS of the LEGISLATURE, from Official Papers.

THE Leeward Island Act of 1798, passed upwards of 30 *years ago*, is an important proof of Lord Eldon's declaration being true*, that if the Legislatures had been left to themselves they would have done more to meliorate the condition of the slaves than if goaded by a party at home, whose object is believed in the Colonies to be to render the planters odious in the eyes of their fellow countrymen, to afford them means by raising a clamour, to obtain for themselves political power †. The excellent law above quoted proves that the Colonial Legislatures may safely be trusted to legislate for their slaves. There is scarcely an important suggestion since made which has not been anticipated and practically attained by it or its influence, which gave a character to and produced the existing usages of the Colonies. By that law the master is the guardian of his slave, and protects his property. It is true the law did not provide against the master taking the property of the slave, because such an offence had been and is to this day unheard of, and would place the master out of the pale of society. The term "maltreat" has been considered by the best lawyers as a protection, which has on all occasions enabled the Attorney-general or any magistrate to prosecute in cases of alleged cruelty, and convictions have followed. It has no doubt happened in the West Indies as in England, that persons have been acquitted from defects in the law, indictment or evidence, or from perverse jurors, as has occurred here, where persons have been acquitted of an offence of which they had been convicted some time before on the same or similar evidence. These cases, however, form the exception, not the rule. It is notorious, that although the law did not forbid the separation of families, they are not separated and sold in this island, nor indeed in any other. It is moreover the interest of the master not to separate the husband and wife, or reputed husband and wife, or the children from the parents; they have the opportunity, if they are separated, of seeing each other oftener than domestic servants in this country. Lord Bathurst's circular (9th July 1823) recommended certain measures which the Colonists had practised, and would probably have at once adopted as laws if they had not felt sore at having been calumniated here.

In 1828 the planters of Nevis then resident in England, petitioned Parliament for inquiry into the condition of their slaves (for Petition, *see* No. 6, ST. VINCENT); as the prayer of that petition has not been complied with, it is to be inferred that the House acquiesced in the statements made by the religious, civil, military and naval authorities, that the condition of the slaves generally was good; otherwise the House would have been doing great injustice to the Colonists, by refusing to them the opportunity of disproving the charges made against them by the Colonists, by which their characters have been traduced and vilified.

For General Observations, *see* ST. VINCENT, No. 4.

* Lord Eldon's speech in the House of Lords:—"My fixed opinion is, that these great and desirable objects, viz. those contemplated by Resolutions of 1823, have been more retarded by the intemperate zeal of those who have been the advocates of these measures, than they had or could be by any direct opposition on the part of those who opposed them."

† *See* St. Vincent Representation, 27th October 1830.

V.—TOBAGO.

- No. 1. FOOD.
 CLOTHING.
 MANUMISSIONS.
 LEGAL PROTECTION.
 PUNISHMENTS.
-

5th March 1794.

Food.—s. 17. One acre of provision-ground for every five slaves. Two freeholders to inspect grounds.

Clothing.—s. 17. Sufficient clothing once a year.

Manumissions.—100 *l.* to be deposited on Manumission. Slave to be allowed 8 *l.* per annum.

Legal Protection.—s. 7. Slave evidence against slaves.—S. 18. Slaves cruelly whipped, offender to be prosecuted. Killing a slave, murder.

Punishments.—s. 18. Slaves to be moderately whipped.

TOBAGO—continued.

No. 2.—PROVISIONS, under Six different Heads, proposed in Lord Bathurst's

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSION
<p>Sunday markets to be abolished, when religious instruction shall have been provided.</p>	<p>To be received if the slave produce a certificate from the parochial clergyman or religious teacher that has been instructed in the Christian religion, so as to understand an oath. <i>Exception</i>, where the life of a master or white person is concerned.</p>	<p>To be confined as much as possible to slaves on plantations, and with consent of master. To be registered in parish church. If refused by master, the grounds to be stated to parochial clergyman; mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock to be exempt from field labour.</p>	<p>Taxes on manumissions to be withdrawn; bonds to be given that the slave shall not become chargeable, if below 6 or above 50 years old, or labouring under sickness, disease or infirmity. Mortgaged slaves to be valued by appraisers and manumitted, and produce paid into Treasury. Manumissions to be registered.</p>
<p>Additional Provisions contained in Eight Bills, sent out to Governors of Legislative --</p>			
<p>No Slave to be hired or employed except for domestic purposes, on Sunday, under a penalty. No Slave to be employed against his will in field labour, and to be paid wages for it.</p>		<p>Clergymen may solemnize marriage without consent of master.</p>	<p>Slaves, under certain restrictions, to be enabled <i>invito domino</i> to purchase their freedoms, and that of their families and relations.</p>
<p>Additional Provisions contained in Sir G. Murray's Letter to Governors of Legislative --</p>			
<p>Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on Sunday to supply him the rest of the week.</p> <p>s. 14.—No market or shop shall open on Sundays, otherwise than for the purchase of articles of food, under penalty of seizure of goods, and fine of 5<i>l</i>.</p> <p>s. 15.—No slave shall be employed in labour on a Sunday, except on domestic business, sudden accident, or potting of sugar, under penalty of 5<i>l</i>.</p> <p>No mill to be put about between eight on Saturday night and four on Monday morning, under like penalty.</p> <p>s. 11.—Owners or managers to promote baptism and religious instruction; the former within 6 months of the birth of infants, and on all adults as soon as they can be made sensible of religious duties.</p> <p>Clergymen or Dissenting preachers required to perform the duty without fee or reward.</p>	<p>Unlimited slave evidence in civil and criminal cases. (In the Notes on Bill N° 2, transmitted on 10th May 1826, it is observed that the evidence of six slaves in Demerara, (where slave evidence has always been received as unfettered as the evidence of free persons,) to a punishment, are considered as equivalent to that of one free person.</p> <p>See Order in Council 2d February 1830, s. 22.</p> <p>s. 5.—The evidence of slaves shall in all cases, civil or criminal, be received and admitted precisely as that of free persons, without any other restriction or exception whatever.</p>	<p>s. 12.—Clergymen to celebrate matrimony gratis, between parties applying with owner's consent, and appearing sensible of matrimonial obligation.</p>	<p>With regard to this Island, Earl Bathurst, in a despatch dated the 25th July 1824, writes that "the Legislature of Tobago, previously to the suggestion which I had the honour to communicate to the Governors of the Colonies in the West Indies, has evinced their anxiety for the improvement of their slave laws, by their favourable reception of an Act which they have since passed, and which it is impossible not to view as comprising many humane and judicious enactments, very materially contributing to such improvement."</p>

Circular to Governors of Legislative Colonies, dated 9th July 1823.

SALES of SLAVES.	PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY of SLAVES.	PROTECTOR of SLAVES.
<p>Land, slaves and plantation, plant or utensils to be sold in one lot. Husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under 14 from parents, and that they be sold to one proprietor, if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.</p>	<p>The flogging of women to be abolished. Prohibits the use of the whip in the field; and any domestic punishment until the day following the offence, and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishments exceeding three lashes to be recorded, and record-book of offences and punishments sworn to quarterly. Traces of punishments not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.</p>		
<p>-- Colonies on 11th May 1826.</p>			
<p>Slaves not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial process</i>.</p>	<p>Punishments of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited. Various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.</p>	<p>Securing to the slave whatever property he may acquire; and Savings Banks to be established.</p>	<p>Office of protector and guardian of slaves to be instituted.</p>
<p>-- Colonies, dated 3d and 15th September 1828.</p>			
<p>s. 13.—Absolutely prohibits the separation by sale, <i>judicial or private</i>, of father mother or child, or children under 12 years old, such sale, if attempted, declared null and void.</p>	<p>s. 19.—Strictly prohibits exposure of females under punishment. s. 20.—Prohibits any kind of punishment by driver unless under express order of owner or manager. s. 21.—Limits overseers to infliction of six stripes; owner to 12, except in presence of other free person, not to exceed 20 under any circumstances, and not more than 12 on the day when offence is committed, nor a second punishment, although for a second offence on the same day, nor until recovered from effects of any former chastisement. s. 22.—To exceed those limits, or to wantonly or cruelly cut, wound, maim, or mutilate, or confine without sufficient support, shall be prosecuted as a misdemeanor, and punished by fine or imprisonment or both. Magistrates appointed guardians, and required to investigate complaints, and direct prosecution of offender.</p>	<p>s. 17.—Empowers slaves to purchase, acquire, possess and dispose of <i>real and personal</i> property to any amount, and to bring and maintain suits in respect thereof, as full and amply in all respects as persons of free condition.</p>	<p>s. 10.—Justices of the Peace are a council of protection; they are to be held responsible to owners carrying into execution the melioration provisions with respect to the food, clothing and general treatment of slaves; and in case of owners neglecting to feed and clothe slaves, justices are to see it done at owners' expense.</p>

V.—TOBAGO—*continued.*

No. 3. FOOD.

CLOTHING.

LABOUR AND HOLIDAYS.

LEGAL PROTECTION.

Food and Clothing.—s. 9. Every owner or manager shall allow to each slave sufficient land, adapted to the growth of provisions, for his or her support and maintenance; each slave shall be allowed every Thursday, during seven months in the year, to cultivate the same; but where an owner has not suitable land, he shall make ample provision for each slave in lieu thereof; and he shall provide for every family a good and comfortable house; and give to each slave, when practicable, a weekly allowance of salt fish, or such other food as their ages and state of health may require; and give to each sufficient and suitable clothing and blankets; to slaves unattached to any estate the owner shall also give comfortable lodging, sufficient food, and decent clothing. Penalty, 2*l.* sterling for each omission. Justices shall, on complaint made, investigate the case, and provide each slave with adequate food and clothing at owner's cost.

Labour and Holidays.—s. 19. No slave shall leave home for labour before day-break, nor work after sunset, except in particular cases requiring night work; and each slave shall have time, for breakfast forty minutes, and for dinner one hour and forty minutes.

Legal Protection.—s. 2. Slaves accused of higher crimes than misdemeanour shall be tried in all respects like free persons, and shall, when required, have counsel assigned them at the public expense, in sufficient time to instruct, whom shall be a reasonable cause for deferring the trial to the following session.

No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed ACTS of the LEGISLATURE, from
Official Papers.

Sunday Markets.—The Legislature of Tobago has done itself great credit in the abolition of Sunday Markets, and the due observance of Sunday, as well as the regulations as to religious duties.

Evidence.—This colony was the first to introduce unlimited slave evidence; and it does not appear as yet to have proved prejudicial to the interests of the master.

The Marriage of Slaves is encouraged with the consent of the master. This limitation is introduced for obvious reasons, the control of the estate, and because the slave is not mentally fit to be released from that parental jurisdiction exercised by a father towards children under age.

The now separation of families has been provided for. At twelve years of age, the children are physically matured, and therefore that age is fixed when they feel themselves independent of their parents, and act accordingly.

Punishments.—Females are not punished by whipping so as to occasion an exposure. It is to be observed, that among the African and other women their dispositions are so obstinate, that the fear of punishment is the only check and security for their obedience. The punishment of the male slaves is regulated only with a view to enforce obedience and discipline.

Slave Property.—They have all the privileges of whites in this respect.

Council of Protection.—The Attorney-general is considered the protector of slaves, and the magistrates a council of protection; besides, the Governor entertains and investigates all applications from slaves, and orders prosecutions in case of the charge being established.

VI.—THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

No. 1.

For No. 1, containing Slave Melioration Provisions passed previously to the Year 1823, see ST. CHRISTOPHER, No. 1, containing the Leeward Island Slave Law of 1798, which Slave Law is in force at present in the Virgin Islands.

No. 2.

Note.—AS the Legislature of the VIRGIN ISLANDS has not passed any Provisions in conformity with the recommendations of the Secretary of State, the Paper No. 2, comprehending these Enactments for other Colonies, does not exist for the Virgin Islands, the Leeward Island Slave Law of 1798 being in force there as in the Colonies of ANTIGUA and MONTSERRAT.

TORTOLA AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

No. 3.

For Enactments now in force for Slave Government, see ST. CHRISTOPHER, No. 3, containing the Leeward Island Slave Law of 1798.

No. 4.—REMARKS on the annexed ACTS OF THE LEGISLATURE, from Official Papers.

THE Leeward Island Act of 1798, passed upwards of 30 years ago, is an important proof of Lord Eldon's declaration * being true, that if the Legislatures had been left to themselves, they would have done more to meliorate the condition of the slaves than if goaded by a party at home, whose object is believed in the colonies to be to render the planters odious in the eyes of their fellow-countrymen, to afford them means, by raising a clamour, to obtain for themselves political power.† The excellent law above quoted proves that the colonial legislatures may safely be trusted to legislate for their slaves. There is scarcely an important suggestion since made which had not been anticipated and practically attained by it or its influence, which gave a character to and produced the existing usages of the colonies. By that law, the master is guardian of his slave, and protects his property. It is true that the law did not provide against the
 master

* 7th March 1826.—My fixed opinion is, that these great and desirable objects, viz. those contemplated by the Resolutions of 1823, have been more retarded by the intemperate zeal of those who have been the advocates of these measures, than they could be or had been by any direct opposition on the part of those who opposed them.

† See St. Vincent representation, 27th Oct. 1830.

master taking the property of the slave, because such an offence had been, and is to this day unheard of, and would place the master out of the pale of society. The term "maltreat" has been considered by the best masters as a protection which has on all occasions enabled the Attorney-General or any magistrate to prosecute in cases of alleged cruelty, and convictions have followed.

It has no doubt happened in the West Indies, as in England, that persons have been acquitted from defects in the law, or indictment, or evidence, or from one or more perverse jurors, as has occurred here, wheresoever persons have been acquitted of an offence of which they had been convicted some time before, on the same or similar evidence—these cases, however, form the exception, not the rule. It is notorious, that although the Law did not forbid the separation of families, they are not separated and sold in the Virgin Islands, nor indeed in any other. It is moreover the interest of the master not to separate the husband and wife, or reputed husband and wife, or the children from the parents; they have the opportunity, if they are separated, of seeing each other oftener than domestic servants in this country. Lord Bathurst's letter of the 9th July 1823 recommended certain measures which the colonists had practised, and which they would probably have adopted at once as laws, if they had not felt sore at having been calumniated here. In a Report of a Committee of the Legislature, dated 23d December 1830, one of the Wesleyan missionaries states, "that since 1814, at which time he arrived in the island, he had observed a gradual progress in moral and religious improvement, in the white, free coloured and slave population; that, in consequence, less necessity exists to use coercive measures towards the slave, and that such measures had died a death from which he hoped they might never rise. With respect to himself personally, he had met friendship, encouragement and attention: he felt it his duty, however, to state, that the practice lately adopted of importing persons from Europe, taken from the plough or similar labours, to serve as managers or overseers on estates, was of evil tendency, as such persons, unaccustomed to command, were put in authority over hundreds of their fellow-creatures, whose character they were unacquainted with. The Committee have much satisfaction in referring to the documents annexed, No. 3 to 7, by which it will be perceived that much has been done in the Virgin Islands for improving the condition of the slave, and towards meeting the views of Government, not indeed arising out of the legislative enactments, but adopted under the influence of feelings of the purest humanity; measures of common consent, free from all compulsion. From the materials laid before the House the Committee feel themselves borne out in asserting that none of the charges in the Resolutions of the Methodist Conference, under consideration, attach themselves to the Virgin Islands, and they cannot but regret that the Christian ministers assembled at that Conference had not more regard to the Christian virtue of charity than to have involved in one general calumny every West Indian, without any regard to individual merit."

For General Observations, see No. 4.

SAINT VINCENT.

REPORT of a COMMITTEE of the LEGISLATURE of *St. Vincent*, appointed to inquire into the Financial, Commercial, and Political State of the Colony; dated 27th October 1830.

THE COMMITTEE appointed by the Legislature, to inquire into the Financial, Commercial, and Political State of the Island of *St. Vincent*, have examined the matters to them referred; and have agreed to the following REPORT:

YOUR COMMITTEE thought it their duty in the first place, to frame a series of Interrogatories, which they circulated among the principal proprietors, merchants, and attorneys in the Island; and from these sources, as well as the general information obtained from other persons, they have been enabled to state the following results, which they propose to take nearly in the order stated in the agent's communication.

It appears that the Cost of production of one cwt. of Sugar on large estates, is 20*s.* 2*d.* sterling, but on those not exceeding 100 hogsheads, it must be estimated at 30*s.* Now the average value of the very best sugar (the produce of a few estates,) for the last three years, has been 62*s.* 2*d.*, which includes the duty of 27*s.*, and the other charges 8*s.* 10*d.*, from which, if the cost of production is taken, an apparent profit of 6*s.* 2*d.* remains; but it must be borne in mind these prices are for the best sugars produced in the Island on few estates only; the general average during that period was only 55*s.* and the present general average value cannot be rated at more than 50*s.*, which, at the same expenses, (except the 3*s.* abatement of duty,) gives a loss of 3*s.* per cwt. to the planter.

It will be seen, by a reference to the Appendix (A.) from the statements of the value and expenditure of different estates, that the planter has been and is now carrying on his cultivation at an absolute loss, on a species of property, which it is distinctly proved ought to produce ten per cent. at the least, to be deemed fairly productive, on the capital invested and the risks encountered.

It appears from the fairest average that can be deduced from the various estimates we have obtained, that 28*s.* 6*d.* per cwt. for sugar, 1*s.* 10*d.* per gallon for rum, and 13*s.* per cwt. for molasses, are fair remunerating prices for the planter, after deducting all charges, which on sugar are at present 33*s.*, on rum 7*d.* and on molasses 17*s.*

Rums should be admitted at the same as other British Spirits; these duties on sugar fall on the planter in the proportion to the gross sales, at 62*s.*; the duty may be said to be divided between the planter and consumer, but in any decreasing series the loss is the planter's.

If a bounty on the exportation of sugars were given to the refiner, so as to enable him to export to the amount of the surplus not consumed in England, the planter would obtain remunerating prices, but as long as the heavy duties are exacted, the prices will be too high to favour a large consumption by the general population.

As to the "ad valorem" question, it appears wholly impracticable, and would be an oppressive rate on the old colonies and the growers of the finer qualities of sugar, because the inferior qualities which are produced in new lands, such as Trinidad and Demerara, are exported in double the proportion, and consequently at half the expense of the finer sorts, and yet they would pay the lowest scale of duty.

The next and most material point is the mode of transacting business in the sugar market, which may be stated in general terms to be decidedly against the fair rights of the planter on every point, but particularly the selling at the long price calls for unqualified revision. The planter now pays the duties and freight on sugars previous to their quitting the docks, looking to the purchaser when the time of payment comes for his reimbursement. If by insolvency or any other accident within the period of two months in London and four months in the Out Ports, the contract is not fulfilled, the planter loses not only his sugar but the duties and freight

freight besides. Thus the 64 hogsheads referred to in Appendix (A.) produced net £.896; the duty, freight and charges on them is £.1,568. If, therefore, a sale were made to a bankrupt, the planter loses not only his sugar which has cost him in this case 30s. to produce, but double its value in cash advances, besides merchants and lawyers charges in attempting to procure a dividend from the insolvent. Sugars ought in common justice, to be sold like rum, when the duties are paid by the purchaser on delivery from the docks.

The introduction of Foreign and Mauritius and East India Sugar, has in fact overwhelmed the market beyond its demand; and the protecting duties are not sufficient to give that priority and preference to the West Indies, which their importance to the State imperatively demands.

The Anti-colonial party, also encourage the sale of these Sugars, upon the pretext of their being produced by free labour; a statement already sufficiently refuted in many well-authenticated publications.

COMMERCIAL.

AS the Expenses of an Estate ought to be nearly defrayed by the offal crop of Rum and Molasses, any deficiency in the value of these falls heavily on the Sugar. In the present state of things, the offal crop is of very low value; and it will be an important benefit to the planter, if the Canadian and the other British Provinces in America, could consume this produce at fair and reasonable rates. But it appears, from the heavy duties and various restrictions, the produce enters these markets at great disadvantages; while on the contrary, the Canadian produce is admitted into the West Indies free of every expense; hence, a valuable line of trade with the United States is wholly abandoned, for there can be no doubt if the duties were lowered, the exports, to the back settlements in particular, would be immense.

In Canada, the tax on Rum is 6*d.* sterling and 6*d.* currency, the gallon, which sells for 2*s.* 8*d.* per gallon, currency.

Molasses are taxed at 7*d.* sterling and 5*d.* currency, and sell at from 1*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.*

These duties are required to be immediately paid, and in Spanish dollars, which bear a premium of from seven to eight per cent. also a drawback is allowed to Canadian registered vessels carrying the produce.

At Halifax the duties are, on Rum 1*s.* currency, Molasses 1*d.* sterling and 1*d.* currency; these are paid the same as in Canada.

At Newfoundland, Rum pays 6*d.* sterling, and Molasses 1*d.*

Emigration to Canada is increasing, and it must be the policy of Government to encourage that province, which can supply every thing to the Colonies, (except pitch, pine and rice, and for the one hardwood may be substituted, and the other can be got from Africa,) and in return can take the produce which would find its way to the States in every direction.

Your Committee anxiously submit, that the improvement of Trade with the British Provinces in America will be attended with the greatest possible advantage to the Planters and Merchants, in not only employing British capital and ships, but a Nursery for Seamen, an aid that should always be kept in view.

If this desirable object be accomplished, there can be no beneficial results from a direct trade with the United States, because they have hitherto disdained the true principle of trade, which is reciprocity; they sell all and buy none. During the occasional intervals of trade their charges were enormous in their own ports, (see Appendix (B.)) and they completely stripped the Colonies of their specie, which is only obtained from the issues to the troops, and of course much limited under the Peace establishment; and opened a vent for frauds of various kinds by buying indiscriminately old copper, brass and lead, which caused great depredations on estates; and by covertly introducing their salted provisions at such a low rate as to supersede the Irish supplies; if, however, their trade is thrown open, it ought to be under such Restrictions as will insure the barter of a certain proportion of colonial produce in exchange for their own.

The Exclusion of American Fish is a wise and politic regulation, not to be departed from; yet considerable improvements may be made in the British Fisheries, which will

will tend to the advantage of the West Indians. Newfoundland fish has been reduced in quantity and quality; the neglect of the selectors of fish has been such of late years, that it will not keep half the time in this climate it used to do, while it has risen one-quarter in price, which arises from the dearth of population. The fishermen, after the season is over, have no resources, as at Halifax and other ports, where they are employed in agriculture and wood-cutting. If settlers were encouraged by a moderate bounty, this colony would improve, and the market for produce would consequently increase.

In closing their Remarks on this head, the Committee remark, that the various Changes which are constantly made and making in the regulations of Trade, are attended with the most serious Disadvantages, and operate as a great discouragement to capitalists; time is not given for the developement of any one plan; and before any commercial adventures can properly be established, some new and contradictory system is introduced. Nothing can be more injurious to the best interests of Great Britain, and requires immediate correction.

As to the Custom-house Establishment, the Legislature has been willing that it should be defrayed out of the duties (as long as they are available) on imports, aided by a tonnage on the shipping; but they prudently declined to pass a perpetual Bill for the payment of the officers' salaries from a fluctuating, and at present deficient fund. This measure may still be adopted, provided no part of the salaries be paid out of the Island taxes; but your Committee submit, the establishment might be very considerably reduced, without injury to the Revenue, both in numbers and remuneration, for the very limited duties that are required to be performed.

POLITICAL.

THE most important point on this head is the influence of Party on West India property, on which your Committee have bestowed the greatest care, and after the most minute investigation, they are enabled to state the unanimous opinion:—

That the influence of the Anti-colonial Party in and out of Parliament, has depreciated the value of the West India estates one half in value; and the other property, such as houses, trades, &c. in a greater proportion. The confidence of the British merchant in the planter is destroyed; a simple consignment of goods to a merchant is made with hesitation and doubt, and the exchange on England is enormous. All this has been effected by a party without a legitimate object; they wish to obtain Political Power, and found their opposition on a popular question. They have no real desire to benefit the Slaves, but Philanthropy is a deceptive word to the multitude, and if place and power were conceded to them, their outcry against the colonial system would cease.

But His Majesty's Ministers would do well to consider, when the Colonies are ruined—and the work is advancing fast—where will the Chancellor of the Exchequer look for the Deficit of five millions, which will be occasioned by submission to a party of private moralists little heard of, and less attended to, till within these very few years, whom, in consequence of political assistance, they are not disposed effectually to resist, although the sacrifice may be the West Indies.

Respecting the Slave Trade Abolition Laws, your Committee particularly notice one great source of their misfortunes, arising from the neglect of the Government in not enforcing the observance of them by Foreign Powers; hence the French, Spanish and Brazilian glut the European market with produce made by illegally imported slaves, of course at lower rates, to the detriment of the English colonist. This traffic is too notorious in Martinique, Guada'oupe, Cuba and the Brazils, to be disputed, and a degradation to the first Naval power in the world.

Your Committee remark with great satisfaction the amended Bill introduced by His Majesty's Government last session, by which foreign runaway slaves will be restored, and the removal of slaves to other colonies partially admitted; but they consider many of the restrictions very burthensome, particularly the renewal of the license annually, the equality of sexes, and the number of domestics, which are fewer in number than those actually employed in families.

The principal point is, Will the Government confine Slaves to starvation in an exhausted island, when by removal, with their own consent, to more fertile soils they will enjoy abundance? The present system is fraught with insubordination of every description.

The Anti-slavery party have constantly held a most erroneous opinion, that the planters are opposed to the celebrated resolutions of 1823. The reverse is the fact; this Colony had anticipated them in practice long before by several legislative enactments; one, in particular, giving slaves the right of trial by jury, and being defended by counsel in all cases; a step beyond the jurisprudence of Great Britain. Also they are desirous of carrying the last resolution into effect, at the earliest period compatible with the well-being of the Slaves, the safety of the Colonies, and the fair and equitable consideration of the interests of private property. But your Committee observe, that the Legislatures can be the only judges of the well-being of the one and the safety of the other, and they must proceed, as they have done, with caution; and, as they have repeatedly expressed themselves at the expiration of each period of the Slave Act, they are prepared to grant such extended benefits as the state of the moral and intellectual improvement of the slaves will allow. The long agitated question of evidence they have granted in the fullest extent, with only one solitary restrictions. See Appendix (C.)

It must be borne in mind, as a positive fact, that the West Indians are not willing holders of slaves, or even colonial territory; every present proprietor would cheerfully abandon the Colony, if he could obtain a very reduced value for the capital which he has embarked, and which is only continued because purchasers cannot be obtained.

As to the African Apprentices they are so few, and without much chance of increase, little need be said—with very few exceptions they are decided outcasts of society, and give a fine practical illustration of how Liberty may be abused by persons unqualified for the acceptance of it.

The Religious Instruction of slaves is slowly progressive, but in due time we hope such an alteration may be made in the slave population, as to qualify them for admission into a higher scale of society. As a proof of the sincerity of the Legislature in promoting this inestimable benefit, they have voted 5,000*l.* sterling for the erection of churches and parsonage houses, of which, above 6,000*l.* currency has been expended, besides charging the colony with an additional perpetual annuity of 2,500*l.* currency, for salaries to rectors, &c. within the last three years; but if the party in England is to poison the minds of the slaves by their baneful misrepresentations, these benefits will have been thrown away.

The Legislature has now pending a Bill for removing the Disabilities from persons of colour. The only restrictions contemplated are, the magistracy, grand jurors, and members of the assembly. The establishment of this Island is comparatively of such recent date, (1763,) that this class of society has but lately risen sufficiently in property and education to use or enjoy the privileges now conceded to them. See Appendix (D).

The Committee are not aware of any alterations required in the department of Civil and Criminal Justice, which the Legislature is not competent to effect for themselves; but they greatly feel the want of learned and independent Judges in Law and Equity, to carry the laws into execution. The Law Courts have now been closed twelve months, waiting an appointment of Judges, to the great injury of all classes.

To sum up the whole, your Committee have clearly ascertained, that the Colonial Produce is overtaxed in all parts of the world; that at present estates are cultivated at a loss to the planter; that all property is depreciated fifty per cent. in value; that the Colonists are assailed by a furious Political Party, bent on their destruction; that the Government hitherto have not given that countenance and support to them which their distant and disjointed situation; their want of political influence to explain their case; their contributions to the taxes, (greater in proportion, and collected with less expense than those paid by any class of His Majesty's subjects,) imperatively require; and that unless a speedy Remedy be found for these evils, the Trade of the West Indies will be annihilated, and their ruin completed.

Dated at the Court-house, Kingstown,
St. Vincent, 27th October 1830.

(signed)

JAS. GRANT, President, *pro. tem.*
J. P. ROSS, Speaker.

Appendix (A.)

A WINDWARD ESTATE of 300 Slaves, with Water Mill, making 300 Hhds. of
15 Cwt. Estimated at £.60,000. sterling value.

	Currency.	Sterling.
Charges for Fish, Lumber and Staves, in cash - - - -	£. 1,600	
Salaries, Medical Attendance, Agency and Taxes - - - -	2,070	
Pitch Pine, Lumber, Shingles, Cedar Posts, Hardwood, Flour, Rice, &c. -	350	
	Exchange, £.240 - - - -	£.4,020
		1,675
Drogherage, £.270; Mules and Cattle, £.100 - - - - -		370
English Invoice - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -		1,000
	£.	3,045
Deduct 150 puncheons Rum, at £.7; and 50 puncheons Molasses, at £.4 -		1,250
	£.	1,795
300 hogsheads Sugar, at £.19. 15. - - - - - - - - -	£. 5,925	
Less, Bills drawn on Sugar - - - - - - - - - - -	1,795	
	£. 4,130	
5 per cent. on £.60,000. is £.3,000 - - Gain - - - - -	£.	1,130

A LEEWARD ESTATE, making from 60 to 80. Hhds. of Sugar, valued
at £.12,000. sterling.

	Currency.	Sterling.
Manager's Salary - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	£. 300	
Attorney's ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	100	
Overseer's ditto - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	150	
Medical Attendance - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	40	
Taxes -	60	
12 hogsheads Fish, at £.20 - - - - - - - - - - -	£. 240	£. s. d.
4,000 Staves, at £.30; 5,000 f' Boards, £.20 - - - - -	220	
Lime, Bricks, and Repairs of Buildings - - - - - - -	200	
	£. 1,310	530 - -
Invoice, £.250; Mules and Stock, £.120 - - - - - - -		370 - -
Christmas provisions, £.20; Blacksmith's, £.20 - - - - -		40 - -
		940 - -
<i>Creditor.</i>		
64 Hhds. of 14 Cwt. at 55 gross, 20 net - - - - - - -		896 - -
1,260 Gallons Rum, at 2/2 } - - - - - - - - - - - { £.137 10 - }		
2,310 ditto Molasses, at 1/6 } - - - - - - - - - - - { 173 5 - }		134 18 2
		1,030 18 2
Balance in favor of Estate - - - - - - - - - - -	£.90 18 2	
5 per cent. on value, is - - - - - - - - - - - - -	600 - -	
	Loss to Planter - - - - - - - - - - -	£. 509 1 10

Appendix (A.)—continued.

The Net Proceeds of a Leeward Estate for the last Three Years.

		Sterling.	
		£.	s. d.
1827	- 146 Hogsheads, at 62 s. 4 d. - - - -	1,742	- -
1828	- 169 ditto 58 s. - d. - - - -	1,245	- -
1829	- 161 ditto 51 s. 6 d. - - - -	498	- -
		<u>£. 3,485</u>	<u>- -</u>
Average, One Year - -		£. 1,162	- -
The appraised Value in 1812 was £ 28,000. at 5 per cent.		1,400	- -
Loss on Vested Capital, per Annum - -		£. 238	- -

AN ESTATE in BEGINA, one of the GRENADINES, with 165 Slaves, appraised in 1813, at £. 24,000.

Charges.

	Currency.		Sterling.
The Average of Three Year's Expenses	- £. 2,327	or	£. 1,163 10 -
Interest on appraised Value, 5 per cent.	- - -		<u>1,200 - -</u>
			<u>£. 2,363 10 -</u>

Credits.

138 Hogsheads of Sugar, average 14 cwt. 3 qrs. } at £. 11. 4. 7. - - - - - }	£. 1,549 12 6		2,001 2 6
56 Puncheons of Rum, at £. 5. - - - - -	280 - -		
49 ditto - - Molasses, at £. 3. 10. - - - - -	<u>171 10 -</u>		
			<u>362 7 6</u>

Appendix (B.)

SALES in the UNITED STATES, of a Cargo of 20 Hogsheads 6 Barrels of Sugar, 50 Puncheons of Rum, and 45 Puncheons of Molasses.

	Dollars.
The above produces - - - - -	\$ 7,611 $\frac{66}{100}$
Charges 5 \$ per cent. on Sugar, 4 s. 8 d. per Gallon on Rum, } 1 s. per Gallon on Molasses - - - - - }	<u>4,727 $\frac{92}{100}$</u>
Net Proceeds - - - - -	<u>\$ 2,883 $\frac{67}{100}$</u>

Appendix, (C.)

WHEREAS it is expedient for the better and more impartial administration of justice in St. Vincent, that the several Laws now in force regulating the admission of the evidence of Slaves should be revised and other provisions substituted in lieu thereof; We, therefore, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, Sir William John Struth, knight, President, commanding in chief for the time being, in and over the Islands of St. Vincent, Bequia and its Dependencies, and the Council and Assembly of the same, pray Your most Excellent Majesty, that it may be Enacted, and be it and it is hereby Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the publication of this Act, the 66th and 67th Clauses of an Act, intituled, "An Act to repeal an Act, intituled, An Act for making Slaves Real Estate;" and the 1st Clause of an Act, intituled, "An Act to appoint Commissioners for the purpose of obtaining an exact Account of the number of Coloured Free People and number of Negroes within this Government and its Dependencies, and to ameliorate the condition of Slaves, and for other purposes;" and also An Act, intituled, "An Act to alter and amend an Act, intituled, An Act for making Slaves Real Estate;" and the first Clause of an Act, intituled, "An Act to appoint Commissioners for the purpose of obtaining an exact Account of the number of the Coloured Free People and number of Negroes within this Government and its Dependencies, and to ameliorate the condition of the Slaves, and for other purposes," shall be and the same are hereby repealed accordingly. Clause 1.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no person shall henceforth be rejected as a witness or considered incompetent to give evidence in any court of civil or criminal justice in St. Vincent, by reason of his or her being in a state of Slavery: Provided always, That no Slave shall be admitted to give evidence in any civil suit or action in which his or her owner is directly concerned, nor in any court of criminal justice where his or her owner may be charged with or prosecuted for any offence whatsoever: And provided also, That nothing in this Act contained shall extend to render any Slave competent in the law to give evidence in any case in which such Slave would be incompetent to give evidence if he or she were of free condition. Clause 2.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in all cases where the evidence of Slaves is required to be given in any court or courts of justice in this Island, a writ of subpœna shall issue under the hand of the Secretary of this Island, or his lawful deputy, and under the seal of the court, in the usual manner, upon the application of any person or persons requiring the testimony of such Slaves, directed to the owner or possessor of such Slave or Slaves, or in his absence, to the person under whose immediate charge such Slave or Slaves may be, requiring him; her or them, under the penalty of Fifty pounds, to bring and produce or cause to be brought and produced in court, such Slave or Slaves for the purposes aforesaid; but before the said Slave or Slaves shall give evidence, the party prosecuting or requiring testimony, shall tender to the proprietor or his or her representative, or pay into court for his or her use, the sum of Twenty shillings per day, for such time as the witness shall be absent from the duty of his master or employer. Clause 3.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That in case any Slave or Slaves shall wilfully or corruptly give false evidence in any trial had under this Act or any other Act, such Slave or Slaves being thereof convicted, shall receive such punishment as the court trying the cause shall think proper to direct. Clause 4.

And be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That this Act shall be in force during the continuance of the said first hereinbefore recited Act, and no longer. Clause 5.

Published, 10th September 1830.

Appendix (D.)

WHEREAS, by various Acts of the legislature certain restraints and disabilities are imposed on the free persons of colour in this Island and its Dependencies, which with certain exceptions it is expedient to remove, We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the President, commanding in chief for the time being, and the Council and Assembly of the said Island of St. Vincent and its Dependencies, humbly pray Your most Excellent Majesty, that it may be Enacted, and be it and it is hereby Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That from and after the publication of this Act, all Acts and such parts of Acts as impose any restraints or disabilities whatsoever on the free persons of colour who are natives of this Island and its Dependencies, and subjects of His Majesty, and their descendants shall be, and the same are repealed; save and except that such persons shall not serve as Magistrates, Grand Jurors, or be capable of being elected Members of the House of Assembly.

And whereas the removal of such restraints and disabilities will impose the performance of certain duties on the before-mentioned persons, Be it further Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all fines and penalties imposed on white persons, for any refusal or neglect, either in the performance of duties or the execution of offices, shall be and the same are hereby extended to the said free persons of colour. Clause 2.

And be it further Enacted, by the authority aforesaid, That nothing in this Act shall extend or be construed to extend to any Carraibs, or their descendants remaining in this Island, under the Act passed the 18th day of May 1805. Clause 3.

SLAVE LAWS, WEST INDIES.

RETURNS relating to the SLAVE LAWS of
Saint Vincent, Dominica, Saint Christopher, Nevis,
Tobago, and the Virgin Islands.

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