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JAMAICA.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,  
dated 15th December 1830;—*for*

C O P I E S

OF ALL

COMMUNICATIONS relative to the reported Maltreatment  
of a Slave named *Henry Williams*, in *Jamaica*.

Colonial Department, }  
Downing-street, }  
23 December 1830. }

HOWICK.

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,*  
*23 December 1830.*

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SCHEDULE.

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## COPIES

OF ALL

COMMUNICATIONS relative to the reported Maltreatment  
of a Slave named *Henry Williams*, in *Jamaica*.

— No. 1. —

Wesleyan Mission House, 77, Hatton Garden,  
February 12, 1830.

To the Right Honourable Sir *George Murray*, one of His Majesty's principal Secretaries of State for the Colonies, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

THE Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society having received intelligence that the clauses affecting the religious liberty of the Wesleyan societies in the island of Jamaica, which were inserted in the Consolidated Slave Law of 1826, have been again enacted by the Assembly and Council of that island, and that the Bill in which they are contained has received the assent of the Governor of the island, have directed me to bring this case of injustice and religious intolerance again under your notice, and most earnestly and humbly to solicit from His Majesty's Government that protection for their missionaries in Jamaica, and for the societies among whom they labour, which has on every former application been liberally and promptly granted, when, by the proceedings of the colonial authorities, they have been subjected to unjust aggressions. It is not necessary for the Committee to repeat the arguments which, in their former communications with the Colonial-office on the subject of the Consolidated Slave Law of 1826, they urged against the allowance of the clauses in question. These clauses have been inserted in the last Bill in what is called an amended form; but the clause respecting the religious instruction of slaves by slaves already instructed acting as catechists, and that respecting voluntary contributions from slaves for religious and charitable purposes, the Committee are informed remain unaltered; whilst that which relates to the holding of evening services is made still more rigid, all religious meetings, except when held between six o'clock in the morning and six in the evening, being by the new Bill absolutely and universally prohibited. As far as the Committee are informed, the chief amendment which has been adopted is to be found in the clause last-mentioned, and that it consists in extending the prohibition to all religious assemblies of slaves, without excepting those of the Established Church, an extension of the enactment which affords no relief to the societies under the care of Wesleyan missionaries, and which the Committee doubt not was adopted in order the more plausibly to carry it through the House against those whose labours it was originally designed exclusively to obstruct. In every respect, therefore, the present law is more objectionable and more oppressive than the former.

With respect to the preambles of all these objectionable clauses, (which they understand are still retained in the new Bill,) the Committee complain that, as far as their missionaries and their subordinate agents are concerned, they rest on no credible evidence, and go to inflict a most unmerited odium upon men who have disinterestedly and usefully laboured for many years to promote the religious instruction of the slave population, and whose orderly and peaceable management of the societies and congregations committed to their care, have entitled them to approbation, not to censure. The Committee feel also that such aspersions imply

## 4 JAMAICA:—COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THE

an illiberal and unjust libel upon themselves, and the society at home for whom they act.

To the Committee is confided the management of all the Wesleyan foreign missions; they assign to each missionary, therefore, in Jamaica, his field of labour; he is accountable for his conduct to them, and their systematic discipline brings that conduct, in all its parts, under periodical review. The salaries of the missionaries are all fixed by the Committee; for all voluntary contributions by collections in the island-congregations the missionaries and the stewards are accountable to them; and the Committee alone have the power to direct the application of those receipts, which are appropriated to meet, in part, an annual expense of several thousand pounds, for which the Jamaica missions are dependant upon the mission-fund at home. The Committee, in the management of this work, have no personal interest; they are but the agents of the benevolence of the body of contributors to the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and they are bound to see, therefore, that the expenditure incurred on every station is as economical as is consistent with the efficiency of their missions; that no one station may bear more heavily upon the general fund than its real necessities demands, and that its local resources may be faithfully applied to meet its expenses as far possible. No Wesleyan missionary can therefore raise money from the people for *private* purposes; the charge of "extortion" urged against these disinterested and frugal men, the Committee have the means of knowing to be utterly unfounded, and they therefore give to it the most unequivocal contradiction.

Nor is the Committee's control over the doctrines taught by the missionaries less absolute than over the conduct of the missionaries and the finances of the foreign societies. The Committee trust that they are neither of a rank in society, nor of so small an acquaintance with the duties of civil life, nor so regardless of religious and moral principles, as to be supposed incapable of feeling their responsibility to His Majesty's Government, and to society at large, for the peaceable demeanor of those who act under their direction; and yet if the Wesleyan missionaries, or any one of them, in the island of Jamaica, has either occasionally or habitually preached the doctrines of "liberty and equality," as charged upon them, or any other doctrines contrary to that right and faithful discharge of duty which the Committee hold to be imperative upon every Christian slave, the weight of this charge lies upon the Committee itself, who know certainly what doctrines are in fact taught, and who have the power of censure and control, of recall or dismissal, as to their missionaries, in their own hands. The Committee may therefore affirm, not upon its *belief* only, but upon its own *knowledge*, that all such allegations are the shameful and gratuitous aspersions of violent and prejudiced men.

It is very true that the Committee, in their private capacity, in common with the rest of His Majesty's subjects, claim to form their own opinions on the evils of slavery, and other subjects connected with the amelioration of the condition and the ultimate emancipation of the colonial slave; yet even in their personal character they regard these matters as determinable only by the wisdom of the British Legislature, and the progress of opinion. But, as a Committee, their attention is directed solely to the moral improvement of the slave population; and their printed instructions to their missionaries (the observance of which by every missionary is the condition of his remaining employed) show that to this simple object they are most strictly confined; nor have they ever discovered the least disposition in this respect to offend against their instructions.

The Committee are aware that, since the clauses of which they complain were first passed in Jamaica, the House of Assembly has obtained evidence, before a Committee, on the conduct of "the sectarians," so called, and that the Report of this Committee contains the most infamous charges against all sectarian teachers without exception, and consequently, that the Wesleyan missionaries are included in this wretched and absurd libel. But His Majesty's Government is no doubt fully aware of the fact, that this criminatory evidence was given chiefly by three persons, one of whom had previously distinguished himself as a zealous persecutor in those violent proceedings in the parish of Saint Ann's, which resulted in the unlawful imprisonment of three Wesleyan missionaries, and for which certain of the magistrates were afterwards so justly visited; that a second was a contractor for public buildings; and the third a tavern-keeper, living in the immediate neighbourhood of the House. Two of these witnesses at least, if their evidence could be considered as unbiassed, were not persons whose occupations

occupations fitted them to give an opinion on the effect of the instructions of the missionaries upon the slaves; and the third had already sufficiently declared himself to be a violently prejudiced party. But although the evidence was drawn from such sources as to give little weight to the Report itself, and to confer little honour upon the House of Assembly for acting upon it, the Committee beg leave humbly to suggest some additional considerations, which they conceive wholly take off the weight of those calumnious imputations which that Report contains, as far at least as the Wesleyan missionaries are concerned.

The first is that Mr. Barry, one of the Society's missionaries, immediately after the "Report of the Sectarian Committee" was made to the House of Assembly, publicly offered to produce evidence at the bar of the house, which should wholly disprove the allegations of that Report; but of this application no notice was taken. The second is, that so little has public opinion been affected by the "Report of the Sectarian Committee," in the island of Jamaica itself, or rather so generally have its alarming charges against missionaries been disregarded, that the disallowed clauses in the Consolidated Slave Law which are now inserted in the Bill just sent home for the Royal Assent, were carried through the House of Assembly by exceedingly *small majorities*; and that an amendment which would have exempted all "*religious meetings*" from the operation of the 84th clause, was lost only by a majority of six votes; so that even in the House of Assembly itself, the effect of the Report of its own Committee had manifestly been to create an improved feeling in favour of the very men whom that Report designed to crush beneath the weight of public odium. The third is, that, as the Committee are credibly informed, Mr. Batty, the framer of the original clauses, himself proposed the amendment which went to exempt all "*religious meetings*" from the operation of the clause which prohibits assemblies of slaves before six o'clock in the morning and after the same hour in the evening, and proposed to expunge its calumnious preamble, in which he was supported by Mr. Marshall. The Committee here beg the liberty to observe, that Mr. Batty was a member, and Mr. Marshall the chairman, of the "Sectarian Committee:" and they therefore humbly conceive that they are entitled to ask, with confidence, whether it be possible to conclude that those gentlemen do now attach the least credit to the evidence upon which the Report of the Sectarian Committee was grounded, when, by the amendment which they introduced and supported, (and which was lost only, after a violent debate, by a majority of six votes) they disclaimed all those injurious aspersions upon missionaries which the preamble of that clause contains, and not only proposed that the preamble should be expunged, but that all meetings of slaves of a religious kind should be permitted as usual, without being restrained by the times of sunrise and sunset?

The Committee have in their possession testimonies, recently received from respectable planters and other persons in Jamaica, to the good conduct of their missionaries in that colony, and of the moral improvement and good behaviour of the slaves under their instruction; but they think that the evidence which arises from the facts above stated, will be thought more conclusive by His Majesty's Government than any other which they could offer.

The Committee take the liberty further humbly to state that, from the information they have received from Jamaica, it is the decided opinion of many respectable persons there, who attended during the debates in the House of Assembly when the clauses above-mentioned were under consideration, that even the small majorities by which they were adopted would not have been obtained but by an artifice of a Mr. Beaumont, who dared to abuse the name and authority of His Majesty's Government in a very unwarrantable manner, in order to influence the votes of the members upon the clauses in question. The Committee's information is, that this Mr. Beaumont, who took the most zealous part in carrying the clauses through the House, stated, in his place there, that he had high authority for asserting, that if a mere verbal alteration only were made in them, His Majesty's Ministers would advise His Majesty to give His Royal Assent to the whole law, and that he then read a letter, purporting to be from the island agent, which stated in substance that, "in an interview he had had with Sir George Murray, he, Sir George, had observed, that if the House of Assembly would make but a few verbal alterations, so as to save the Government from appearing inconsistent, the Bill would be allowed." This the Committee humbly beg pardon for mentioning, but they do it in further proof that so little conviction had been produced in the minds of the members of

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the Jamaica House of Assembly, by the Report of its own Committee, that manœuvre and falsehood were, by the advocates of the intolerant clauses, felt to be necessary in order to secure a majority in their favour.

The Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society knowing, therefore, that no well-founded charges lie against the conduct or doctrines of their missionaries, or the peaceable demeanour of the societies under their care, again appeal to the justice of His Majesty's Government for protection against the operation of this calumnious and persecuting law. Why this hostility should exist in the island of Jamaica, when in almost every other West India colony their missions (which are all conducted upon one system) are not only tolerated, but encouraged by the colonial authorities, it is not for the Committee to attempt to explain; such however is the fact, and in Jamaica that hostility has assumed an aspect of malignity which would bring great guilt upon the Committee if they did not most strenuously implore from His Majesty's Government that protection for their missionaries, which their perfect innocence of all the allegations urged against them, and their zeal and devotedness to their spiritual calling, entitles them to, as well as their common participation in the rights and liberties of all loyal subjects. One murderous attempt was made, but three years ago, in the parish of St. Ann's, to assassinate one of their missionaries, his wife and child, by firing a volley of balls into his bedchamber, in the night, by a party of the island militia (all whites) after an inflammatory sermon preached against sectarians by the Rector; another missionary fell a victim, in 1827, to harassing persecutions and illegal confinement in a most loathsome prison; another who suffered imprisonment at the same time, and in the same abominable dungeon, which itself outrages humanity, has perhaps for ever lost his health, and is now an invalid in England, but willing to answer any interrogatories to which His Majesty's Government may think it right to subject him.

The Committee have before them the case of a slave, of excellent character, who but a few months ago was almost flogged to death, and is not yet recovered from this barbarous treatment, for no other cause than attending at the services of a Wesleyan chapel. They have a still more recent account of another slave who was seized, when passing the house of the Rector of St. Ann's, and laid down and flogged, by that reverend gentleman's orders, because he was a notorious Methodist; an outrage which, upon the complaint of the owner of the slave to the Custos, the Rector was obliged to compromise, thereby rendering the fact indubitable. And since this feeling exists, in some parts of Jamaica, and persons in respectable, and even sacred rank in life, are not ashamed to perpetrate these atrocities, the Committee humbly and confidently trust that no law may be recommended by His Majesty's Ministers to receive the Royal Assent which shall leave their missionaries and people at the mercy of men so predisposed to harass and persecute them. Were the number of the Wesleyan missionaries and congregations in the island of Jamaica much smaller than it is, the reasons for their protection by a just and liberal government would remain in the same force: the weight of these reasons is not surely lessened by the consideration, that the Wesleyan Missionary Society have stations in almost all the most populous parts of the island, and that the number of persons attending their ministry there, whites, colored persons, and negroes, is not fewer than twenty thousand; to which the Committee may add a very large property vested in chapels, built chiefly by the voluntary subscriptions of the inhabitants, several of which chapels are of a large size, capable of containing each from 1,000 to 3,000 persons, a property which must be rendered, in many instances, comparatively useless, if religious services in the evenings, from seven to eight o'clock, were not allowed to be held, as, on the Sunday forenoon and afternoon the greater number of slaves are not, from various causes, able or permitted to attend. Nor could the Bill, which has lately passed the Jamaica Legislature, if allowed to become law, produce any other than agitating effects. That the religious slaves will assemble for religious worship, though deprived of the presence of the missionaries, is most probable, and thus an irritating struggle would be kept up between proprietors who are hostile to religious persecution, and those who would be always ready to enforce the restrictions. Nor is it at all probable that the missionaries themselves would forsake their charge through fear of fines and imprisonment, unless directed so to do by the Committee, a direction which, powerfully as the Committee feels itself bound to respect all  
lawful

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 7

lawful authority, would originate a case of conscience with them not hastily to be determined. From a most painful alternative on either side, the Committee therefore most earnestly entreat His Majesty's Government to preserve both them, and the missionaries labouring in the island of Jamaica, and by disallowing the clauses referred to in the Slave Law last sent home, to continue to them, unimpaired, that freedom of religious worship which, so far from having been ever abused, has only been employed in the West Indies for the promotion of the moral improvement of the negro population, and the peace and security of society.

I have the honour to be,

&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *James Townley, D. D.*

— No 2. —

Wesleyan Mission House, 77, Hatton Garden,  
February 25th, 1830.

To the Right Honourable Sir *George Murray*, His Majesty's Principal Secretary  
of State for the Colonial Department, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

ON the 13th instant I transmitted to you, by order of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, a Memorial, praying for the disallowance of those clauses in the Consolidated Slave Act, recently passed by the General House of Assembly in Jamaica, which affect the religious instruction of the slave population of that island.

No information having been received of the receipt of that Memorial by His Majesty's Government, the Committee humbly beg leave to inquire whether it has been received or not, as from the prompt acknowledgement with which His Majesty's Government have honored their former communications, they have been led to fear it may not have come into your hands.

The Committee have also authorized me to state that, having referred to certain cases of cruelty exercised upon slaves for attending the religious worship of the Wesleyan Methodists, they are prepared to transmit such particulars of those cases as they have received from their correspondents, if it be the wish of His Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.

(signed) *James Townley.*

— No 3. —

Downing Street, 5th March 1830.

SIR,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir George Murray to acquaint you, in reply to your letter of the 25th ult. that the Memorial to which you advert has been received, and is under consideration.

With respect to the cases of which you complain, it will be for the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society to exercise their own discretion as to making them the subject of representation. The Secretary of State will give due attention to any statements which shall be received from the Committee.

I have, &c.

Rev. Dr. Townley.

(signed) *Horace Twiss.*



## 8 JAMAICA:—COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THE

—No 4.—

Wesleyan Mission House, 77, Hatton Garden,  
March 10th, 1830.

SIR,

I BEG to acknowledge, in behalf of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, your note of the 5th instant. The cases of the punishment of slaves in Jamaica for attending the mission chapel in St. Ann's parish, were not made specific matters of complaint to His Majesty's Government in the Committee's Memorial, but were mentioned to show the hostile feeling of a number of persons in that island to the labours of missionaries, and that the allowance of the clauses affecting missions in the New Slave Act would expose the Wesleyan congregations and their ministers, in Jamaica, to the harshest opposition. I am, however, directed by the Committee to send, for the perusal of Sir George Murray, such extracts (A.) from the letters of Mr. Whitehouse to the Committee, as relate to the cases referred to, which are not, however, the only instances which have occurred of the punishment of slaves for attending the ministry of our missions; and as these instances have chiefly occurred in the parish of St. Ann's and its neighbourhood, they have also appended to these extracts, copies (B.) of a few testimonials in favour of the Wesleyan missionaries, which were given to Mr. Whitehouse after the calumnious Report of the Sectarian Committee appointed by the House of Assembly.

Should Sir George Murray wish to make any inquiries on any points relative to our missions, the Committee wish me to say, that they will, at any time which may suit Sir George Murray's convenience, appoint a deputation to wait upon him.

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

Horace Twiss, Esq.  
&c. &c. &c.(signed) *James Townley.*

(A.)

Extract of a Letter from Mr. Whitehouse to the Committee, one of the Society's Missionaries stationed at St. Ann's, Jamaica; dated July 1st, 1829.

I LATELY fixed on Henry Williams for a leader or catechist, on account of his being reputed to be eminently pious, and from finding him to be of a superior mind; and now we have on this circuit six zealous slave catechists.

Henry Williams is attached to a property in this parish called Rural Retreat. The owner of this property is a lady who has been for many years in North Britain, and who has employed a Mr. Betty, a magistrate of this parish, to manage her business as attorney. Henry has all along had nearly the sole management of the property. A few days since Mr. Betty said to him, "I hear you are becoming a great preacher at the chapel, but if I hear that you ever go there again, I'll send you to Rodney Hall Workhouse." This is a place of extraordinary punishment, and negroes are sent from different parts of the island to this seat of darkness, because it is generally known that they are treated with the greatest severity. Henry replied, "Master, I am no preacher, but I have been attending the Wesleyan chapel for many years, and have received great good there. Before I went to the chapel I did all that was bad, but by going there I have learnt my duty to God, and my duty to you, master." Mr. Betty said, "I understand you are taking all the people with you to the chapel, and that you are ruining them as well as yourself." Henry admitted that after he had found benefit at the chapel he thought he could not do a better thing than to advise all the people to go too, and said, "Master, I assure you that if it was not for that chapel, people would never mind their business in the way that they are doing." On the following day Mr. Betty visited the property, and had up all the negroes, and threatened them with the severest punishment if he ever knew them to go to the chapel again. One of the women, Henry's sister, heaved a sigh, and was heard by Mr. B., who said, "Who is that groaning?" and perceiving it to be Henry's sister, said, "Lay her

her down, she is one of the preachers too." She was immediately laid down and received a very severe flogging. Mr. Betty afterwards went to the Rev. Mr. Bridges's residence, which is near to Rural Retreat, and, it would appear, told him what he had done; for when Henry, in attending to his business, had occasion to pass Mr. Bridges the next morning, he, Mr. B., came out and inquired of him "Why it was that he did not bring the people to church to be instructed, instead of taking them to that place?" meaning the chapel. Henry replied, "Sir, I have nothing to say against the church; I was christened in the church, and attended it for a long time, but since I have gone to the chapel I have got great good." Mr. Bridges said to him, "Can you read?" Henry answered, "I can read the Scriptures a little, Sir." "Do you ever read the newspapers?" said his reverence. "No, Sir," replied Henry. Mr. B. said, "There is an account in the last week's papers of the Methodists in England having been hanged by hundreds!" After a good deal more from the clergyman, he closed the conversation by informing Henry that his master had told him (Mr. B.) that he had ordered Henry to bring the people there to be instructed, and that if he did not attend to it he must prepare for consequences. After the toils of the day were over, and the shades of the evening rendered it practicable for Henry to come to Bellemont without detection, he did so, for the purpose of informing "his minister," as he said, "of the trouble he was in, and of asking his advice." I felt much for the poor man, but I could not advise him to leave the society, nor would he have been disposed to have done so had I given such advice. He said, "my dear minister, I feel the comforts of religion, and I would rather suffer death than give up my religion." At about half-past eight, p. m. he left the mission premises, after having conversed with me about half an hour, and said, "he would go and do all he could to please his master, but he would not give up his soul to be lost." I felt exceedingly distressed, and was scarcely able to rest through the night. I thought I would rather, if I could have my choice, be lying in a jail as I was last year, than hear as I now do from day to day of the sufferings of the poor defenceless negroes. On Sunday last, the 28th ultimo, I preached at Ocho Rios; on the Monday I went to St. Ann's Bay, where I was informed by some of our friends that a man named Henry Williams had been down from the mountains, desiring to see me; that he was in great trouble, because he expected he was about to be severely punished for not giving over coming to chapel on a Sunday. Almost immediately upon this a person called in and said, "Henry Williams is sent to Rodney Hall Workhouse, to be punished for not promising to give over visiting the chapel." I thought it was my duty to make inquiries into this matter, and on my way to Bellemont this morning I called at several places, and at three of them I was met with the question, "Do you know that Henry Williams is sent to jail because he will not promise to leave the chapel?" I inquired what were the circumstances which immediately preceded his being sent off, and found that, as the church at St. Ann's Bay was undergoing some repairs, Mr. Bridges had been prevailed upon to hold service at his residence in the mountains. Of this Henry had been apprized by Mr. Betty, who had ordered him to attend there with all his people, instead of going to the chapel. Mr. B. also informed him that he himself would be there. At the time appointed Henry was present at Mr. Bridges's service, and so was his master, who, after the service, asked Henry where the people were, and if he had not given orders to bring them all with him? Henry said, the people had said the Sunday was theirs, and that some had gone to chapel, and some in other directions, and informed him that he himself should have been at his chapel but he wished to show his master how desirous he was to obey his orders, adding at the same time that he could not give up the chapel. "Very well," said Mr. Betty, "you come to Cressant Park (Mr. Betty's residence) to-morrow morning, and I will send you to Rodney Hall Workhouse." After this the poor man rode down to St. Ann's Bay; I say rode down, for he is in very respectable circumstances, and I am told was so great a favorite of his old master, the father of the present owner, that he has never been punished before now. I am also told that his intention in going to St. Ann's Bay on the Sunday was to ask my opinion as to the order he had received from Mr. Betty; however, as he did not see me, he concluded that it was his duty to obey the command he had received, painful as he might feel it, and accordingly went to Cressant Park. On his way to this place he called on Mr. Martin, one of our local preachers, and stated all the particulars of the case. The next thing I heard was that one

of Mr. Martin's servants had met him in the custody of another individual, who was conducting him to Rodney Hall, and although he was ready to go unbound, he was lashed round, and had his arms fastened with new ropes. I felt how necessary it was to act with prudence, but as I am fully satisfied in my own mind that one poor man in the course of the last year died from punishment which he received in the St. Ann's Workhouse for coming to our chapel, I felt it to be my duty to endeavour, at least, to prevent a second death of this kind, and therefore rode off to Cressant Park, determined to ask Mr. Betty for what offence he had sent Williams to the House of Correction, and intending to inform him that when any of the members of our society committed themselves, we were ever ready to show our disapprobation of their conduct, but in the event of his professing to have sent Williams to jail because he would attend our chapel on a Lord's-day, that I would inquire into the legality of his conduct. Mr. B. was from home.

Extract of a Letter from the same; dated July 2d, 1829.

THIS morning I was visited by a female named Sarah Atkinson, a sister of Henry Williams, mentioned in my letter of yesterday. She was kept by her master during his life-time, and by her he had several children, one of whom is still alive. Her master gave her her freedom, and at his death left her an annuity of ten pounds sterling for her life, and to her daughter, now living, he left ten acres of land and a house. I mention these things to show why it is that she is still allowed to remain on the property Rural Retreat, and to come to the chapel without being liable to be punished for so doing. The following is copied from a statement I have just received from her. "Yesterday morning," said she, Mr. Bridges sent a brown girl, a slave of his named Rachael, to me, to inform me that her master, Parson Bridges, wanted to see me. I asked the girl what her master wanted, and she said she could not tell. I went down immediately, and found Mr. Bridges in the Hall, with two gentlemen, Messrs. Hilton and Steer. Mr. B. said to me, as soon as I entered the room, "you see what Henry has brought himself to." I replied, "why, what is the matter, Sir?" he said, "Mr. Betty ordered him to come to service at my house on Sunday, and bring the people with him, and not take them to chapel; but Henry told Mr. Betty that he could not bring the people, as they would go to their own chapel on a Sunday, and that he himself could not give up his religion, but would attend my service as often as he found it convenient." Mr. Betty said to him, "you tell me to my face you will not give up your religion, do you? you come to me to-morrow morning, and I will send you to Rodney Hall Workhouse." Henry went, and is now sent to be punished. "I understand (said Mr. Bridges) that you are constantly going to the chapel; and though Henry is sent to the workhouse for an example, I suppose that you will continue to attend there and take the people with you. I frequently see you pass through my place to go to the chapel." I said, "Sir, I do'n't hide it, I do go to the chapel, and Mr. Betty knows that I go." Mr. Bridges then said, "Mr. Betty has desired me to inform you, that if you will not leave off going to chapel he will dismiss you from the property entirely." I said to him, "Sir, if Mr. Betty will provide for my child, he is heartily welcome to take my house from me, for there is no property in this world that shall make me give up my religion." Mr. Bridges said, "if you continue to talk in that way, Mr. Betty will be sure to trouble you." I answered, "it is in Mr. Betty's power to trouble me; I am a poor woman; and Mr. Betty is a great fish, and might swallow me up; but I will not leave my religion." He said, "I suppose you will be going to see Henry, but I assure you if you are caught doing so you will be prosecuted; I am sorry for Henry, the dismal place he is in is not fit for such a sensible fellow as he is, but he is sent for an example, and I advise you to go to all the people and persuade them to give over going to the chapel, and come and attend the church. Mr. Betty pays taxes to support the church, and the people ought to attend there." I said, "Sir, they are to do as they like; I shall never tell them to leave the chapel, and I shall never leave it myself."

From the above, as well as from my previous remarks, you will perceive what an active part the Rev. Mr. Bridges takes in the opposition we meet with; may I not say he is the main-spring in this machine? He says he is sorry for Henry Williams to be in such a dismal place as the Rodney Hall, *alias* St. Thomas-in-the-Vale Workhouse; and yet this reverend gentleman has two slaves at this moment in this wretched place.

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 11

Extract of a Letter from the same ; dated November 4th, 1829.

IN my communications of July 1st and 2d, I informed you of the persecutions endured by a poor man, a slave, a leader in our society at Bellemont, of the name of Henry Williams ; I had expected ere this to have informed you of his death ; but he still lives. Such was his punishment in the Rodney Hall Workhouse, that in a few weeks he became so ill that the manager had the chains taken from him and placed him in the hospital, where it was expected he would give up the ghost. Mr. Betty became exceedingly angry that the manager of the workhouse had released him from his irons, said that his sickness was feigned, and that he would remove him to the workhouse at St. Thomas in the East. His poor wife came to me, almost distracted, and begged that I would undertake the cause of her nearly murdered husband ; and I myself was distressed beyond description. My instructions prevented my interference, and yet I knew of a friendless individual who was being literally butchered for no other offence than that of coming to our chapel. After thinking on the subject a considerable time, I sat down and wrote a letter, which I addressed to the editor of the Watchman, under the signature of a subscriber. The subject of this letter was religious intolerance, and though names were omitted, it was couched in terms which could not be misunderstood, as it directly applied itself to the parties accused. This letter was immediately published, and the conduct of the offending individuals severely censured in an able article, written by the editors of the " Watchman and Jamaica Free Press." This letter, and the article alluded to, had the desired effect ; and in a few days Henry was let out of prison ; but, poor man, he was so cut up with the severe floggings he had received, that his life was despaired of after his return to the property. For several weeks he was confined to his bed, and obliged to lie upon his stomach day and night, his poor back being a mass of corruption. I have some reason to conclude that Mr. Betty suspected me to have been more or less concerned with the above-mentioned letter, as a few days ago he met my servant between St. Ann's Bay and Bellemont, carrying provisions to the latter place. He inquired where she came from, and if she had a passport. Now it is not customary to give passports to servants who travel only where they are well known. But Mr. Betty is a magistrate, and he thought he had an opportunity of doing me a trifling injury, consequently he sent my servant immediately into the charge of a workhouse driver, also the goods she had in charge, and ordered the driver to put an iron collar and chain about her neck ; this was on the Saturday morning early, and the poor woman was kept in close confinement until the Tuesday morning following.

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Extract of an Entry in the Journal of the same, under the date of  
9 September 1829.

TO day I have been visited by an elderly white lady (Mrs. S.) who, in the course of conversation, said she had called on Mr. Betty, of Cressant Park, on her way to Bellemont, and that he had asked her if she allowed her negroes to come to our chapel ; to which she replied in the affirmative. He inquired why she permitted them to attend, adding, they are ruining the negroes. She said, she herself was in the habit of attending our services, and was perfectly satisfied, from what she saw and heard, that if all the negroes in the neighbourhood would attend to our instructions, they would be greatly improved by going to chapel. He then spoke to her of Henry Williams, and said he was determined to remove him from Rodney Hall Workhouse, to St. Thomas in the East, and, alluding to a negro man belonging to Mrs. S. of the name of George, he said, I intend to subpoena George to prove that this fellow has been in the habit of holding meetings in his house. She informed him that he might do as he pleased about calling up George to give evidence against Henry, but she could give him (George) as good a character as could be given to any negro in the parish, and said she had not punished him for these last sixteen years, not having had occasion to do so. Mr. B. said, he hoped she would not consider what he had said as proceeding from any disrespect either to her or to George, and added, he could prove that Henry had been guilty of stealing pimento. So, after the poor man has been enduring punishment in the Rodney Hall

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Workhouse, since the 29th of June, and has become so ill that it is considered necessary to remove him, Mr. B. talks of proving that he has holden illegal meetings in his house, and, if this will not do, he will try to show that he has been guilty of theft! George, belonging to Mrs. S., is a member of our society at Bellemont, and has been so for several years. He is a man of an excellent character, as is known to the white people in this neighbourhood, but his offence, like that of Henry, is coming to our chapel. Not long ago he happened to be passing the residence of the reverend rector of this parish, who ordered him to be laid down and flogged; the order was obeyed, and he received such a severe flagellation that it was with great difficulty that he walked home afterwards, which was not more than a mile distant. Mrs. S. became indignant at this abominable conduct of the parson, and some time after, as soon as George was able to leave home, she sent him to his honour the Custos, with a letter of complaint against the Rev. Mr. Bridges. His honour wrote a letter to Mr. Bridges on the subject, and appointed a day for inquiring into his conduct. The day arrived, and several gentlemen were assembled, whose professed object was to investigate the business, but the reverend gentleman employed a friend of his to compromise the matter with George, which he did, by giving him a trifling sum of money, which he told him he was to consider as satisfaction for the injury Mr. Bridges had done him. This happened but a short time before this reverend gentleman was publicly tried by a special vestry for maltreating a female servant.

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(B.)

Copies of Letters from several respectable Planters in the Parish of St. Ann's,  
Jamaica.

To the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse.

SIR,

I HAVE the pleasure to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, to which I am happy, indeed, to be called upon to answer so great and important a question, as it regards the integrity and usefulness of the Wesleyan missionaries in Jamaica, to whom the community at large stands much and highly indebted for their mission upon the free and slave population, to which I have experienced, and am eye-witness to, of those that attend their ministry.

I have, &c.

(signed) *J. R. Coombs,*  
Planter.

Mount Pleasant, Oct. 3, 1829.

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To the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse.

REV. SIR,

I DULY received your note of the 30th ult., and observe its contents. I have had the pleasure of being acquainted with four or five ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist persuasion in Jamaica, whom I have carefully observed, and found to be persons of worth and integrity. It is my firm opinion that the ministers of your persuasion are well calculated to benefit the colony by their pious endeavours and exemplary conduct; and am certain, were they further encouraged, so that a wider field of usefulness might be opened, would be eminently useful to all classes of society.

The beneficial change in persons (both free and bond) attending their ministry is evident to every unprejudiced mind. I have frequently conversed with many, and seen the consistency of their characters.

A striking alteration is perceptible, especially in many of the slave population, who, from being openly immoral, debauched and slovenly, are now honest, upright and cleanly. The disobedience and discontent, which were formerly traits of their character, have greatly given way to obedience and attention to their owners; and of course that coercion which existed, no longer is exercised by those who perceive such beneficial results.

Being

MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 13

Being an old inhabitant of Jamaica, this moral change of the generality of persons who attend your ministry has not escaped my notice, and I ascribe it to the benevolent exertions of the Wesleyan ministers.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *H. V. Martin.*

Brood, St. Ann's, Oct. 9, 1829.

To the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse.

SIR,  
YOUR letter, dated the 30th of September, I received, and observe its contents. With respect to the Wesleyan missionaries in Jamaica, I think they have done *good* to the slaves, so far as I have seen, in those that have attended their ministry.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *Robert F. Coombs,*  
Planter.

Oct. 3, 1829.

To the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse.

REV. SIR,  
I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and wish I could do justice in stating the effects of the labours of the missionaries, for they certainly are entitled to it. The good they have done in this parish, particularly among the negro population, is incalculable; I speak of what has come under my own knowledge, and I feel confident that if they were allowed to extend their labours to all the properties, the proprietors would benefit by it as much as the moral and spiritual improvement of the slaves, and I sincerely hope that the time is not far distant when they will be permitted to accomplish so desirable an object.

I remain, &c.  
(signed) *W. Watkiss,*  
Planter.

Mount Pisgah, St. Ann's,  
Oct. 6, 1829.

To the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse.

SIR,  
I RECEIVED your letter of the 30th ult., to which I feel happy in answering the question, as it regards the usefulness of the missionaries in Jamaica, which I must confess myself and family have experienced, and notice, from their ministry upon the free and slave population, the great change it has made throughout the island at large, particularly upon those of my friends and neighbours, as well as upon those of my slaves, that attend their ministry, and in the society, that I must confess that the community at large stands greatly indebted to them, to whom I am not able to do justice,

And remain, &c.  
(signed) *Richard Coombs,*  
Planter.

Orange Hill, Oct. 3, 1829.

To the Rev. Isaac Whitehouse.

SIR,  
I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your favour, dated on the 30th ult., and, in answer to inquiries therein, I cannot in justice deny the very great usefulness and strict integrity of the missionaries in Jamaica, as to my certain knowledge the slave population have been much improved, as also many of the free people with whom I am acquainted.

You have my best wishes, and may God of his infinite mercy strengthen and prosper you in his good word and work, and believe me to

Remain, &c.  
(signed) *W. Foreman.*

Prospect Hall Pen, St. Ann's,  
Oct. 9, 1829.

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— No. 5. —

Downing Street, 6th May 1830.

MY LORD,

I TRANSMIT to you the enclosed Extract of a Communication which I have received from the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

Your Lordship will perceive, in the statements which have been made to the Missionary Society by Mr. Whitehouse, one of the missionaries, that Mr. Betty, who is represented to be a magistrate in Jamaica, is accused of extreme oppression and cruelty towards a slave named Henry Williams, attached to an estate called "Rural Retreat," of which Mr. Betty has the charge, as attorney of the proprietor. The statements also imply that Mr. Betty's conduct was in some degree instigated by the Rev. Mr. Bridges; and this latter gentleman is himself accused of having caused a slave named "George," who was a member of the Wesleyan society, to be flogged, although this slave was not the property of Mr. Bridges, but of a person who is described as "Mrs. S."

It would be with great regret and reluctance that I would admit the supposition that any foundation exists for attributing to either of these gentlemen the proceedings or the motives thus imputed to them. But I feel it impossible, in justice to them or to the colonial magistracy, of which one or both of them are members, to receive these statements without apprising them that such have been made, and giving them an opportunity to vindicate their conduct. Your Lordship will therefore transmit copies of the enclosed papers to each of the parties accused, together with a copy of this despatch, and acquaint them that you are ready to receive any communication which they may wish to make upon the subject. If your Lordship shall in consequence receive explanatory statements from them, you will, with the assistance of your confidential legal advisers, examine these statements for the purpose of ascertaining whether it be necessary to inquire further into the truth of the account given by Mr. Whitehouse, and to call upon him to substantiate it; and you will, so far as may appear to you to be requisite, communicate the answers of each party to the other, for the purpose of enabling yourself to judge between them, and to transmit to me your Report and opinion, together with the materials on which they shall have been founded.

I have, &amp;c.

The Earl of Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) G. MURRAY.

— No. 6. —

King's House, Jamaica, 10th August 1830.

SIR,

REFERRING to your despatch of 6th May, I have the honour to inform you that I have received the answers of Mr. Betty and Mr. Bridges to the charges preferred against them by one of the Wesleyan missionaries.

These papers have been placed in the hands of the Attorney-General, for the purpose of considering whether any, and what further investigation may be necessary in regard to Mr. Whitehouse's statement.

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

(signed) *Belmore.*

Right Hon. Sir George Murray, G. C. B.  
&c. &c. &c.

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 15

— No. 7. —

Downing-street, 30th September 1830.

MY LORD,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir George Murray to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 10th August last, in which you report that answers to the charges preferred against Messrs. Betty and Bridges have been received, and placed by your Lordship in the hands of the Attorney-General of Jamaica, for the purpose of considering what further investigation may be necessary in regard to Mr. Whitehouse's statement. As it is desirable that this Office should be in full possession of the circumstances of this case, I am to request that your Lordship will cause copies of these papers to be transmitted to this Department.

The Earl of Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *H. Twiss.*

— No 8. —

King's House, Jamaica, 27th August 1830.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to enclose, for your information, the copy of a Report from the Attorney-General, founded on the accompanying answers of the Rev. Mr. Bridges and Mr. Betty, to the charges preferred against them by Mr. Whitehouse. And I shall, in compliance with the Attorney-General's recommendation, call upon Mr. Whitehouse to substantiate his complaint against Mr. Betty, by transmitting authentic documents, verified on oath, to the Crown-office, when proceedings will be adopted, consonant with the principles of British judicature, to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal.

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

(signed) *Belmore.*

The Right Hon. Sir George Murray, G. C. B.  
&c. &c. &c.

Spanish Town, 27th August 1830.

SIR,

I BEG leave to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing copies of a despatch from the Colonial-office of the 10th of May, and of communications from Mr. Betty and the Rev. G. W. Bridges, and requesting that I would take the same into consideration, and report to his Excellency the Governor my opinion whether any and what further proceedings are necessary to be adopted.

Adverting to that part of Sir George Murray's letter to the Earl of Belmore in which he states that, should his Lordship receive explanatory statements from Messrs. Betty and Bridges, he was to examine them, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it were necessary to inquire further into the truth of the account given by Mr. Whitehouse, and to call upon him to substantiate it; and as both Mr. Betty and Mr. Bridges decline to enter into any discussion whatever, with Mr. Whitehouse, on the merits or demerits of the complaint preferred by him against them, I am unable to form any opinion on the statement of Mr. Whitehouse, uncorroborated, as it were, by the oath of the accuser himself, or by the testimony of others who are competent to substantiate the same before the ordinary tribunals of this country.

I take the liberty, therefore, of recommending, to his Excellency the Governor, to direct a communication to be made to Mr. Whitehouse, that if he be prepared to substantiate the complaint which he has made against Mr. Betty, that his proper course to pursue is, to lay authentic documents, verified by oath, in the  
Crown-office,



Crown-office, where proceedings will be adopted, consonant with the principles of British judicature, to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal.

As far as the Rev. G. W. Bridges is implicated, it is justice that I should convey to his Excellency my humble opinion, that he has refuted the charges which tend to cast a reflection on his character as a clergyman, by the unjust insinuation of harshness and severity of the confinement of two of his domestics in the Rodney Hall Workhouse, which is designated by Mr. Whitehouse as the "Seat of Darkness;" whereas it appears that one is a criminal sentenced by the laws of the island to imprisonment for life, and the other is employed as a hired domestic by her own free will and consent.

The alleged punishment of a slave not the property of Mr. Bridges is distinctly denied, and relates to an occurrence which took place several years back, when he was ordered off the property, where he had been detected trespassing on the provision grounds of Mr. Bridges's servants, since which period, Mr. Bridges states, he has evinced towards the same individual trifling acts of kindness, which Mr. Whitehouse has illiberally converted into measures of compromise to avert a persecution.

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

W. Bullock, Esq.

(signed) *Hugo James.*

St. Ann's, July 25th, 1830.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the copies of a despatch from the Colonial-office, and of certain documents accompanying the same, transmitted to me by your Lordship's Secretary, with a letter of 16th instant, stating that your Lordship would be ready to receive any communication which I may wish to make upon the subject.

The gross calumny heaped upon me, by a person of the name of Whitehouse, designating himself as a Dissenting preacher in my parish, resolves itself into three specific charges, in reply to which, I beg leave to submit the following remarks to your Lordship's consideration.

I am first charged with having encouraged Mr. Betty, a magistrate of my parish, in his alleged severity against a negro, who belongs to a property adjoining my residence, because that negro was a sectarian.

I undoubtedly did use all my power to rescue that negro from the trammels of sectarianism, and as he appeared an intelligent person, I felt a particular interest in the success of my exertions, especially as I know that it was the anxious desire of his manager that he should not continue to attend these itinerant preachers. During the time my church was under repair I performed Divine service, sometimes to very large congregations, at my own house, to which I invited all around me, and amongst others, the slaves belonging to Rural Retreat; but I used no threat, no compulsion, nor indeed could I use any with those who were not under my control.

The next charge preferred against me is that of having severely punished an inoffensive negro belonging to a stranger.

The fact is, that the negro in question was in the habit of trespassing on my premises, and my own servants having been continually preferring complaints of depredations committed by him, I certainly, on one occasion, several years ago, and after giving him repeated warning, without effect, took the law so far into my own hands as to order them to drive him from their gardens where he was idling. When one of the cattle boys cracked a whip at him, and followed him running to the gate. But that he received any such flagellation as is malignantly described by this Methodist preacher, I absolutely deny; nor was I then aware, as is insinuated by that person, that he was under the influence of the sectarians. I have since married that man, and had the opportunity of rendering him trifling service, which, under that malicious influence, seems to have been construed into an anxious act of compromise.

With regard to my having two negroes in the St. Thomas in the Vale workhouse, a place which is described by Mr. Whitehouse as the last resort of human wretchedness, but which is generally esteemed the best regulated place of correction

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 17

correction in the island ; one of these slaves was no prisoner, she was hired there, and is so still, as a laundress, with her own free will and consent. The other was a prisoner, and has since been tried, and judicially sentenced to confinement for life.

I have thus, my Lord, as far as I conceive it necessary to notice the calumnies and dark insinuations of an artful sectarian, answered the charges preferred against me. But your Lordship will not fail to observe, that the head and front of my offending is embodied in the charge of Mr. Whitehouse accusing me of being "the mainspring of the machine" which counteracts the sectarians.

With the high law authorities of the colony officially arrayed against me, under the orders of the Colonial-office, unsupported by my Diocesan, persecuted and helpless, I am still proud to avow my conscientious opposition to the interference of these artful intruders, with which the island generally, and my own parish in particular, has lately become inundated. Need I assert that herein I have been solely influenced by a sincere conviction that their interference is uncalled for, their influence dangerous, and their doctrines utterly subversive of the peace and good order of this community. The great body of our population has yet no fixed principles of religion at variance with the sound doctrines or discipline of the Church of England, they therefore can require no such toleration of sectarianism as may tend to impress on their unoccupied minds false or even doubtful tenets, while our own extended Establishment is desirous of, and now quite competent to, the union of them all in one fold. The experience of an uninterrupted period of thirteen years residence as rector of two extensive parishes in this colony has taught me, that the mercenary persons who arrive here to make a trade of religion amongst the lower orders, instead of uniting with us in the dissemination of the universal principles of obedience and industry, find it to their own advantage to render the slaves dissatisfied with the allotment of Providence, by instilling into their minds gloomy sentiments which affect their happiness, while they facilitate the extortion of those resources which might be more usefully employed in providing for the comforts of their families, or preserved as the means of purchasing their freedom ; and this mercenary purpose they effect more easily through the pernicious doctrine that the more severe the privations, and the greater the troubles, which the slaves may bring upon themselves in this life, the brighter are their prospects of the next. When I observe around me many who were contented, now poor, spiritless, and dejected, I cannot, as a Christian clergyman, behold the progress of such extensive mischief without employing my humble but zealous endeavours to save my flock from wholesale misery ; but I have never controlled their religious feeling by unfair means ; my house is open to family prayers every evening, but I have confined my interference to inviting them there, and to the offer of my best advice ; I have not gone into corners to tamper with any, an unfair advantage which the sectarians take over the clergy, but what I have thought it necessary to say has been delivered from my own pulpit in the parish church.

In reference to that part of your Lordship's letter alluding to an interchange of communication with Mr. Whitehouse, I beg leave to state that I can never submit to such a degradation. My desire has been to live at peace with all people, whatever their religious persuasion ; and I have more than once endeavoured to conciliate the sectarian ministers in my parish to a joint effort in the common cause of Christianity ; but such union would interfere with their mercenary monopoly, and therefore I have been uniformly disappointed and wantonly interfered with, persecuted by artful malevolence and falsehood, and my congregation drawn from me by their seductive artifices. It has thus become my duty, as rector of this extensive parish, to use every effort to recal my alienated flock to the church ; and although, from sad experience, I have been made aware how much my own interest and peace have been sacrificed by so openly exposing myself to artful and prevailing misrepresentation, I find support in a just sense of that duty which is required of me as a minister of the Established Church.

Although overwhelmed by the violence of fierce and unrelenting antagonists, I have thus, my Lord, felt myself called upon, in justice to my own character, to avow these fixed principles, which, after a very long sacrifice of health and peace of mind in the prosecution of my arduous duties here, have now subjected me to

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the utmost efforts of sectarian malignity, as the supposed "mainspring" of the opposition to it, to the artful accusation of my own suborned slave, defeated only by the fortunate circumstance of my possessing European domestics, to the great prejudice and injury of my professional character in England, and to the entailing upon me expenses well nigh to the ruin of my family.

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

(signed) *Geo. W. Bridges.*

His Excellency the Earl of Belmore.

St. Ann's, 5th July 1830.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, through your hands, a reply to the communication of his Excellency the Governor of 16th ultimo.

I have, &c.

W. Bullock, Esq. &c. &c.  
King's House.

(signed) *James Betty.*

St. Ann's, 5th July 1830.

MY LORD,

I HAVE had the honour to receive, through the channel of your Lordship's Secretary, a copy of a despatch from Sir George Murray, together with a representation from an itinerant preacher, that, being a magistrate of St. Ann, I had treated with improper severity a slave under my charge, and who belongs to the fraternity over which Mr. Whitehouse presides.

In the first place, I solemnly deny ever having exercised any authority over a slave under my charge, in my character as a magistrate. Had any case occurred which called for the interference of the civil power, it is reasonable to suppose (and it requires all the suspicion and bad feeling of a sectarian to insinuate to the contrary) that I should have appealed to some other magistrate. Whenever I have found it necessary to punish slaves under my charge, I have done so according to the provisions of the Slave Code. This charge seems to have acquired greater importance from my having presumed to chastise a slave who holds some official situation under Mr. Whitehouse; I was certainly not aware that these preachers possessed any power to transfer to the tabernacle the obedience which slaves owe to their masters; but if this be the case, it would be only fair that some public notice should be given, so that persons in ignorance, like myself, may be able to avoid interfering with such hallowed characters. Hitherto slaves, when they had suffered any grievance from their overseers or others, have appealed to their master or his representative, and from thence had a further appeal to the magistracy, and their complaints were often carried to the Governor. But now there appears an attempt to interpose a new authority, superceding all others, and one of a most mischievous tendency; when, instead of negro complaints receiving a sober and dispassionate consideration, they are to be disposed of according to the caprice of some low ill-disposed fanatic. If such doctrine be not put down, there is an end of that control without which slavery cannot exist. The statement of Mr. Whitehouse is such a compound of the grossest falsehood and misrepresentation, mixed up with a very slender portion of truth, that it is difficult to separate the ingredients. I certainly did confine Henry Williams in the St. Thomas in the Vale workhouse, for disobedience of my orders, in fact openly setting me at defiance before the rest of the slaves; I had an undoubted right to do so; and I do not consider myself responsible for that act. That the slave became sick there, and that I removed him, is equally certain; and had he died in confinement, these canting hypocrites would have reproached me with having been the cause of his death, although an able medical person regularly attends the establishment; and they would have done so with the same justice with which Mr. Whitehouse has cast a foul aspersion upon the parish of St. Ann, stating that a slave had died in the workhouse from excess of punishment. That is a charge from which it belongs to the parochial authorities to exonerate themselves.

Referring

## MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 19

Referring to the melancholy picture which Mr. Whitehouse has drawn of the St. Thomas in the Vale workhouse, I preferred that place of confinement because I know that it is under very judicious management, that proper and sufficient food is supplied, and, whether the prisoner be poor or rich, they have nothing but the prison allowance; whilst at St. Ann's Bay the discipline is more relaxed; the friends and acquaintances of the prisoners have access to them, and, what is still more objectionable, they are exposed to the mischievous councils of canting Methodists. I am sorry to speak with harshness of any set of men, and until the present time I have never come into contact with sectarianism; but twenty-three years experience, and the visible alteration in the manners and habits of the slaves within the last ten years, teach me that these dissenting preachers will inevitably bring the country to ruin; especially if their most improbable calumnies are countenanced by the highest authorities in the State.

As far as my name is implicated with Mr. Whitehouse, I can appeal with confidence to all those who have witnessed my conduct from the time of my arrival in the island, whether they have ever known an instance of my having treated either my own slaves, or those of others under my charge, with harshness or severity. It is with great reluctance that I am induced to speak of myself; but were I disposed to enter into particulars, I could easily prove that I never was harsh or severe with the slaves under my charge; one convincing instance to the contrary is, that the slaves of every property under my management have increased in number. This is seen by any one who wishes a reference to the public records of the parish. I'll instance the property I have resided on for twenty-one years, as the most proper, (Cressant Park): when I first took charge of it as overseer, the number of slaves was eighty-nine; shortly after the proprietor sold three and removed five, for improper conduct, and the number at the present time is one hundred and two, and which increase is without any accession by purchase or transfer.

Conscious that I have done nothing deserving reproach, I am ready to meet any charge which may be preferred against me in a court of justice, where my actions will be investigated before a legal tribunal of twelve honest men; but with all the deference I feel for the Colonial-office, I never will consent to answer interrogatories.

I beg leave, my Lord, to add, in allusion to that part of Sir George Murray's despatch which anticipates the possibility of some further reference to Mr. Whitehouse, that I will enter into no controversy with that man. I am perfectly indifferent to his assertions or denials; and I humbly hope that your Lordship will be pleased to consider this letter as the only answer I feel myself called upon to make to Sir George Murray's despatch.

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

(signed) *James Betty.*

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

— No. 9. —

Downing Street, Dec. 9th, 1830.

MY LORD,

YOUR despatch, dated the 27th of August last, enclosing a copy of a Report from the Attorney-General of Jamaica, founded on the answers of the Rev. Mr. Bridges and of Mr. Betty, to the charges preferred against them by Mr. Whitehouse, has been received at this Department.

I observe that your Lordship entertained the intention of calling upon Mr. Whitehouse to substantiate his complaint against Mr. Betty, by transmitting authentic documents, verified on oath, to the Crown-office, "when," your Lordship adds, "proceedings will be adopted, consonant with the principles of British judicature, to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal."

Your Lordship will do me the justice to believe that I am not less zealous than yourself to maintain, in all the acts of the executive Government, a steady adherence to those principles of impartial justice of which the "British judicature"

ture" is the great security. I am bound to add, that I cannot discover in the conduct of my predecessor in office, in this case, any indication of a disregard of that principle. The constitutional rights of every class of His Majesty's subjects in Jamaica are, I cheerfully admit, not less sacred than those of the corresponding classes of society in Great Britain; and His Majesty will not, upon the advice of his Ministers, ever assume any authority over the colonial magistracy which he is not entitled to exercise over the magistrates in England. The office, both in the colony and in the mother country, being gratuitous, and attended as it is in both with much inconvenience and even risk, the thanks of His Majesty's Government, and of the public at large, are justly due to those gentlemen who undertake, and faithfully execute, so onerous a duty. It must not, however, be forgotten, that the magistracy is a trust, of which the Crown, through its proper officers, is entitled to demand an account. A justice of the peace may often make an improper use of his powers without exposing himself either to an action or an indictment, or he may, by personal misconduct unconnected with his judicial duties, render himself unfit to bear His Majesty's commission. When such cases occur in England, either the Lord Chancellor or the Secretary of State for the Home Department habitually demands from the magistrate accused an explanation of his conduct; and such applications are never, so far as I am aware, resented by the gentlemen to whom they are addressed as injurious or unconstitutional. I do not perceive, therefore, with what propriety Mr. Betty, while professing deference to the Secretary of State, can peremptorily refuse to answer his inquiries.

Mr. Betty can scarcely mean to represent that the charge preferred by Mr. Whitehouse was of so insignificant a nature that even if true it should not have attracted the attention of His Majesty's Government. He was accused of threatening to send his slave to gaol if he continued to teach among the Methodists, and with repeating that threat to the whole body of his negroes. He was represented as having inflicted a very severe flogging on the sister of his slave Henry Williams, because she sighed on hearing this threat addressed to her brother. He was reported to have carried his threats against Henry Williams into execution by imprisoning him in Rodney workhouse, in chains, until he was at the point of death. The slave was said to have been so cut up with severe floggings that for several weeks his life was despaired of, and he was "obliged to lie upon his stomach day and night, his back being a mass of corruption." Mr. Betty was further accused of having ordered the confinement in prison of a female slave of Mr. Whitehouse's, with an iron collar about her neck. Lastly, he was said to have preferred against the slave Henry Williams a false and calumnious charge of theft. Your Lordship will not understand me as intimating any opinion of the truth of these imputations; but if, for the sake of argument, they were supposed to be true, Mr. Betty's dismissal from the magistracy would of course be inevitable. It is evident, therefore, that their truth or falsehood was a fact into which Sir George Murray was not merely entitled, but was strictly bound to inquire.

Mr. Betty professes his readiness to meet any charge which may be preferred against him in a court of justice, where, he says, his actions will be investigated before a legal tribunal of twelve honest men. I cannot admit, in the present case, the validity of this excuse for declining to give the explanations required by my predecessor in this office. Your Lordship will observe that Mr. Betty is not so much accused of acts positively illegal, as of a cruel and unjust use of his legal powers. I am not aware that he could be put on his trial in any court of justice for the threats which he is said to have addressed to his slaves respecting their religious observances. In his own domestic establishment he is, I apprehend, by the colonial law, a judge without appeal of the faults imputed by himself to his slaves, and if he really thought fit to flog a woman because she sighed at hearing her brother threatened, such an act of power, revolting though it may be to every just feeling, would hardly constitute an indictable offence. Even the imprisonment and the severe floggings of Henry Williams are matters not cognizable, to any practical effect, in the courts of Jamaica, because the master's right to whip, and even to imprison his slaves, is undisputed, and because every court must, in such a state of law, presume that the punishment inflicted was really deserved, unless the contrary can be shown. It is not said that Henry Williams ever received a greater number of stripes than the law allows; and

and to prove that no offence was committed justifying severe punishment, would be to establish a negative, in its own nature scarcely susceptible of proof. The shocking consequences which resulted from his punishment might, obviously, in a man of delicate health, be produced by a whipping which should not exceed the legal limitation. Mr. Betty's appeal to the legal tribunals of the colony, in justification of his silence on this occasion is, I therefore think, not fairly made.

It must further be remembered that the court and jury before whom alone Mr. Betty will submit to have his conduct tried, could not fairly investigate the case, because the law of the island has disqualified the only persons to whom the facts are intimately known, from giving evidence respecting them. So long as the legislature of the colony shall maintain the distinction between the evidence of slaves and of free men, the gentlemen of Jamaica must be content to bear the inconvenience to which such a state of law must subject them. They must not be surprised if the acquittals of the colonial courts fail to convince mankind of the innocence of the accused party : and persons invested with any public trust must be called upon for exculpations which, under a different system of law, it might be unjust to require.

It is further to be noticed, that the Secretary of State has no power to compel Mr. Whitehouse to prosecute Mr. Betty, and there may be very sufficient reasons why Mr. Whitehouse, without any impeachment of his character, might decline the office of prosecutor. With the most conclusive moral evidence, he might be defeated, if his witnesses were slaves ; or in the humble condition of life to which he belongs, Mr. Whitehouse may not have the funds necessary for conducting a prosecution. I therefore cannot concur in the accuracy of your Lordship's judgment that this case was sufficiently disposed of by requiring Mr. Whitehouse to send depositions on oath to the Crown-office.

I have entered thus largely into this subject from my anxiety to place your Lordship in full possession of the principles by which the conduct of His Majesty's Government will be guided in the present and in every similar case. While, on the one hand, they will never attempt to withdraw from the established courts any question properly falling within their cognizance, or to anticipate the judgment of those tribunals, they will, on the other hand, demand from every person holding a commission from the Crown, an answer to any specific charge preferred by a responsible person, and which, though not capable of a satisfactory investigation in a court of law, may seriously affect the reputation and character of the public officer so accused.

Above all, as the only means of mitigating in any degree the evils inseparable from the existence of slavery, they will in no case consent to the authority of a magistrate being suffered to remain in the hands of any person who cannot satisfactorily show that no ground exists for imputing to him a want of humanity, either in his official capacity or as a proprietor of slaves. It is to the magistrate alone that the latter have to look for protection from the abuse by their masters of the almost unlimited power they possess. This protection it is his first duty to afford, and if, instead of doing so, he is himself under just suspicion of undue severity, he is evidently unfit for his situation.

Your Lordship will have the goodness to communicate to Mr. Betty a copy of the preceding parts of this despatch, acquainting him that I earnestly hope he will retract his determination to withhold any answer to the charges of Mr. Whitehouse, and fixing a time within which that answer will be received, but at the same time apprising him that if he should see fit to persist in maintaining silence on this subject, his name will be erased from the commission of the peace, not indeed as a man guilty of the offences laid to his charge, but as a magistrate who deliberately withholds from the King's Government that vindication of himself which it is at once their right and their duty to require. Your Lordship will, without further reference to this Office, erase the name of Mr. Betty accordingly, if unfortunately he should not give the required explanations.

Of course if any legal proceedings should have been taken against Mr. Betty, no explanation must be demanded from him by which he could be prejudiced in his defence, or which would involve any question which may be awaiting the decision of any legal tribunal. The preceding instructions have been given on the supposition that Mr. Whitehouse would be unable or unwilling to prosecute, or even that a prosecution may have failed owing to the reasons already adverted to.

## 22 JAMAICA :—COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THE

I concur with your Lordship in opinion that the answers given by the Rev. Mr. Bridges, as far as respects the punishment of his own slaves, and the case of the slave named "George," are satisfactory. Yet even with reference to these cases, I cannot exclude the remembrance of the fact that the alleged sufferers can neither sue for damages, nor be heard as witnesses in a criminal prosecution, a state of law which renders it impossible for the most innocent man effectually to relieve himself from all suspicion when accused of injustice or oppression towards persons in a state of slavery.

I have not succeeded in discovering whether Mr. Bridges intends to admit that he encouraged Mr. Betty to send Henry Williams to gaol for attending a Methodist meeting. If Mr. Bridges did really promote or countenance any such proceeding, he must allow me to remind him that his laudable zeal for the interests of the Church of England might be much more usefully and effectually exercised in endeavouring to bring back Dissenters to her communion by gentleness and persuasion. The inutility of all opposite methods, and the certainty with which persecution counteracts its own design, are truths which I had hoped it was quite superfluous to inculcate in the present age of the world.

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

The Earl Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

— No. 10. —

King's House, Jamaica, 6th Oct. 1830.

SIR,

REFERRING you to my despatch of 27th August last, on the subject of the charges preferred against Mr. Bridges and Mr. Betty by Mr. Isaac Whitehouse, I have now to acquaint you that all further proceedings against Mr. Betty have been rendered unnecessary by the unfortunate event of that gentleman's death.

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

The Right Hon. Sir George Murray, G. C. B.  
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) *Belmore.*

— No. 11. —

Downing-street, 14th December 1830.

MY LORD,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 9th instant, respecting the case of Mr. Betty, I have received your Lordship's despatch of the 6th October last, announcing that gentleman's death. This event supersedes the necessity of carrying into effect the instructions contained in my despatch of the 9th instant respecting Mr. Betty, which, however, I do not deem it necessary to cancel, since it will serve to explain to your Lordship the views I have taken of the general questions connected with this subject, and may, therefore, be not without its use on a future occasion of a similar nature, if any such should unhappily occur.

I have, &c.

The Earl Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

— No. 12. —

77, Hatton Garden, London, Dec. 8th, 1830.

MY LORD,

IN behalf of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, I take the liberty to transmit to your Lordship, copies of correspondence between William Bullock, Esq., Secretary to the Governor of Jamaica, and Mr. Whitehouse, one of the Society's missionaries in that island. In explanation of this correspondence, it may be necessary to state to your Lordship that, on the 12th of February 1830, the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society addressed a memorial to Sir George Murray, praying His Majesty's Government to disallow certain clauses in a Consolidated Slave Law recently passed by the Jamaica Legislature, and which contained clauses injuriously restrictive upon the religious liberties of the missionaries and their congregations. As an additional reason why the liberties of the missionaries and the religious slaves should not be left at the mercy of the planters of Jamaica, some cases of harsh and cruel treatment inflicted upon religious slaves on account of their religion, which had recently occurred, were also stated to Sir George Murray, not as complaints, or as calls for interposition as to those cases of oppression, but as showing the *animus* of leading persons in that colony towards the missionaries and their people, and as reasons why our religious liberties should not be left in their hands. One of these cases was that of a slave, a member of the Wesleyan Society, who was most cruelly treated by a Mr. Betty, a magistrate and an attorney for the estate to which the slave was attached. In this memorial the cases were stated in brief, and without names; but at Sir George Murray's request, extracts from Mr. Whitehouse's journal, sent home to the Committee, (as is done by all our missionaries), for the Committee's information, but without any view on his part to publication, were transmitted to the Colonial-office.

The copy of this communication, it appears, was sent by Sir George Murray to the Governor of Jamaica, with directions to make inquiry into the case; and Mr. Betty's defence, in a letter to the Governor, has already appeared in the Jamaica papers, which consists of general assertions of his own humane habits, and of illiberal attacks upon the sectarians; but contains, in fact, no disproof, or even specific denial of the facts. Whether Sir George Murray intended the inquiry which he directed to be instituted in Jamaica to be simply into the facts, as matters of information, or that it should be a judicial process, is not for the Committee to determine. The issue, however, has been, that an attempt has been made to put Mr. Whitehouse into the position of a complainant to the authorities of the island, and to require him to give legal evidence to the facts, which, as resting upon the testimony of slaves, he is not, of course, able to do. He has therefore declined the affair in the form in which it was attempted to lay it upon him, although he stands prepared to do all in his power to forward any inquiry which may be instituted by the Council of Protection, or the legal authorities of the island. The Committee regret to be obliged to conclude, that the whole proceeding in Jamaica, in consequence of Sir George Murray's despatch, appears to have been an unworthy manœuvre to bring Mr. Whitehouse into discredit, as not being able to prove the charges upon legal evidence, which he never professed to have power to do, and to exculpate Mr. Betty at his expense. The Committee have therefore thought it right to transmit the copies of the correspondence on this affair, which they have received from Mr. Whitehouse, for your Lordship's information.

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

(signed) *James Townley, D. D.*The Right Hon. Lord Goderich,  
&c. &c. &c.



## 24 JAMAICA :—COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THE

Copy of a Letter from William Bullock, Esq. to Mr. Whitehouse.

King's House, August 31st, 1830.

SIR,

HIS Majesty's Attorney-General having recommended His Excellency the Governor to direct a communication to be made to you, that "if you are prepared to substantiate the complaint which you have made against Mr. Betty, the proper course to pursue will be to lay authentic documents, verified by oath, in the Crown-office, when proceedings will be adopted, consonant with the principles of British judicature, to obtain full and impartial investigation of the matter, so as to ensure a legal conviction or acquittal," I have been commanded by the Governor to make such communication to you accordingly.

I am, &c.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

Copy of Mr. Whitehouse's Reply.

St. Ann's Bay, 15th Sept. 1830.

MY LORD,

I HAD the honour of receiving, on the 9th instant, in St. Ann's, a communication from your Lordship's Secretary, bearing date the 31st ultimo. In reply to this communication, I beg leave to assure your Lordship of my firm belief of all that I wrote concerning Mr. Betty. But your Lordship must be aware that I am not possessed of that judicial authority necessary to procure evidence of the nature required, and without the exercise of such authority, the evidence which I can lay in the Crown-office would amount (as may easily be perceived from the nature of the statements I have made) to nothing more than a general expression of my belief in the truth of the charges. If your Lordship will take the trouble of adverting to the extracts sent to you from my letters, you will at once perceive that I have not advanced one allegation of my own personal knowledge, that I had no communication whatever with Mr. Betty, and that the whole case, as stated by me, rests on the evidence of other persons, over whom I have no control. This will more clearly appear by an analysis of the case with reference to the evidence bearing on its several parts.

The substance of the charge against Mr. Betty, as deduced by Sir George Murray from the plain facts detailed by me, is, that he sent the slave Henry Williams to the workhouse of St. Thomas in the Vale, had him severely punished, and kept him there for upwards of two months and a half, and that all this severity was exercised towards him because he refused to promise to refrain from attending the Methodist chapel on Sunday. The additional circumstances alleged, such as the anger expressed by Mr. Betty at the relief afforded to the slave during his illness by the manager of the workhouse, and his threat to send him to St. Thomas in the East workhouse, while sick, by way of further punishment, tend to show the spirit with which Mr. Betty was actuated; but as the menace was not carried into effect they are not otherwise material. The fact, then, of the punishment having been inflicted by the order of Mr. Betty, its nature and extent, and the illness of Henry Williams caused by it, are all capable of proof by the manager of the St. Thomas in the Vale Workhouse, in 1829. The motives which actuated Mr. Betty, and the causes which induced him to resort to such severity, can of course be best collected from his own declarations; and, indeed, if the punishment in itself was within the limits assigned by the law, it is obvious that this is almost the only kind of proof which the case, as one of alleged cruelty, would admit of on this point; accordingly, if my statement is referred to, it will be seen that evidence of this nature is to be found,

1st. In the threats held out to Henry Williams, on two occasions, the latter occasion being in the presence of all the negroes on the property, that, "if he went to chapel again he would send him to Rodney Hall Workhouse." As I believe that none but slaves were present, and their testimony would not be received, I should not advert to this as part of the evidence, did I not conceive that Mr. Betty has admitted the fact in his letter to your Lordship, to which I shall presently have occasion to allude more particularly.

2nd. In

MALTREATMENT OF A SLAVE, HENRY WILLIAMS. 25

2nd. In the statement made by Mr. Betty to Mr. Bridges, as detailed by the latter to Henry Williams, that "he had ordered Henry to bring the people to church to be instructed, and that if he did not attend to it, he must prepare for consequences." Here Mr. Bridges is the witness.

3rdly. In the discussion which took place on the following Sunday between Mr. Betty and Henry Williams, when Mr. Betty expressly said that he would send him to Rodney Hall Workhouse the next day, because "he would not give up his religion," as related by Mr. Bridges to Sarah Atkinson, in the presence of Messrs. Hickling (called by mistake Hilton) and Steer. Here again Mr. Bridges is the witness.

Lastly. In the conversation which occurred between Mrs. Simpson and Mr. Betty, relative to Henry Williams, a few days before he was released from the workhouse, when Mr. Betty evidently showed the motives which influenced his conduct, and threatened to use greater severity towards the unfortunate being placed under his control. Here Mrs. Simpson is the witness.

But, my Lord, the case does not rest here. You have in your possession, as I contend, the virtual admission, by Mr. Betty, of the charges brought against him. I allude to his letter addressed to you, and although not furnished to me officially, as contemplated by Sir George Murray, I conceive I have a right to allude to it, since the writer has chosen to publish it in the newspapers of the island.

I pass by with pity the virulent abuse and the unfounded calumnies towards Dissenting Ministers, with which he has attempted to veil the real character of his "answer" to the charges made against him, and I proceed to the only part of his letter which is not beside the question. He says, "I certainly did confine Henry Williams in the St. Thomas in the Vale Workhouse for disobedience of my orders, in fact openly setting me at defiance before the rest of the slaves. I had an undoubted right to do so, and I do not consider myself responsible for that act. That the slave became sick there, and that I removed him, is equally certain." If, then, my Lord, Mr. Betty, in answer, admits that he inflicted the punishment "for disobedience of his orders" before the rest of the slaves, without stating the nature of the orders which he gave, is it not a plain inference that their nature had been correctly stated in the documents transmitted to him, and that the cause assigned for the punishment of Henry Williams was the true one? How materially this admission bears on the main facts of the case, the slightest reflection will suffice to show, since the chief point is that the punishment was wanton and uncalled for.

I have now, my Lord, gone through the details of the case as presented in the documents before your Lordship, so far as was necessary to point out the bearing of the evidence; and having shown on whose testimony it rests, I would particularly advert to the "course" which the Attorney-General has prescribed for my adoption, in order "to obtain a full and impartial investigation of the matter." I am required "to lay authentic documents, verified by oath, in the Crown-office." But, my Lord, admitting for a moment, in its fullest extent, the great authority with which Mr. Betty appears in his letter to have invested me as a Dissenting Minister, Mr. Attorney-General cannot really imagine that I have power to call the manager of St. Thomas in the Vale Workhouse, and Mr. Bridges, and Mrs. Simpson, before me, examine and cross-examine them, take down their depositions in writing, and compel them to swear to the truth of the facts they depose to. If I were even disposed to attempt this exercise of judicial authority, is it likely, my Lord, that Mr. Bridges, in particular, after what has passed, would obey my summons, and submit, at the beck of a "canting hypocrite," and "an ill-disposed fanatic," to be confronted with Sarah Atkinson and Messrs. Hickling and Steer? Yet I would appeal to your Lordship's judgment, to decide whether or not I could otherwise procure the necessary documents on oath, to be laid in the Crown-office, for substantiating the case. My Lord, I beg to remind the Attorney-General, through your Lordship, that in strict consonance with the principles of British jurisprudence, nay more in accordance with the express enactments of the Jamaica Slave Code, there are "proceedings to be adopted" by Magistrates and Councils of Protection, before documents on oath can be laid in the Crown-office, especially in such a case as this; and it should be his care that this essential preliminary to "full and impartial investigation" is not wanting.

## 26 JAMAICA :—COMMUNICATIONS RELATIVE TO THE

If the proper measures are adopted in that respect, I have not the slightest doubt that every part of the case, as I have represented it, will be substantiated, and on evidence even more conclusive than that I have referred to.

My Lord, I have done my duty. I leave to the constituted authorities of the country the performance of theirs. I have laid the case of an oppressed and deeply injured slave before the body to which, equally with myself, he belongs. I laid it there because it bore directly on the interests of the cause in which we are engaged, and because it afforded a practical illustration of the difficulties which ministers of religion have to encounter in a land that boasts of toleration. As a man, and as a minister of religion, I was imperatively called on to act as I did; but I have no selfish interests to serve, no malignant feelings to gratify, by becoming the prosecutor of Mr. Betty; on the contrary, I sincerely pity him, and deplore the blind hostility to religion which has induced him to trample under foot the undoubted right of an unoffending fellow-creature to worship his Creator according to the dictates of his conscience.

Through circumstances over which I had no control, but which, as far as I am personally concerned, I do not regret, the case has been placed before your Lordship, and with you I would leave it, feeling confident that proper steps will be taken, and that at all events the local authorities will be exonerated from the imputation of sanctioning the offence and screening the offender, to which the extraordinary communication I have received might justly expose them.

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

(signed) *Isaac Whitehouse,*  
Wesleyan Missionary.

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Copy of a second Letter from the Governor's Secretary.

King's House, 25th Sept. 1830.

SIR,

MY absence from the seat of Government has prevented your letter of 15th instant, addressed to his Excellency the Governor, receiving a more immediate reply.

It is necessary you should be informed, that in official communications proceeding from the Governor's office, it is not usual to reply direct to the Governor, but through the channel of his Secretary, and his Excellency desires that you would in future pursue this course, which is acted upon by all principal civil officers of the Government.

You had two courses to pursue, had you been able to substantiate your charge against Mr. Betty. One would have been, by referring the case to a Council of Protection, for which you might have called all your witnesses, and their attendance would have been enforced by the magistracy. This course you did not think proper to adopt, and it is now too late to resort to it: and the other, by placing documentary evidence in the Crown-office. But you cannot be ignorant that it is not in the Attorney-General's power to adopt any criminal proceeding, unless the charge is preferred upon oath. It is unnecessary therefore to reply in detail to the diffuse and impertinent observations contained in your letter to the Governor, and which would seem rather for the purpose of drawing his Excellency into a correspondence which would be very unsuitable for His Majesty's representative to enter into.

When Sir George Murray's instructions were received, the Governor adopted the course pointed out to him, first by calling upon the parties charged by you to reply to your accusations; and then by referring the question to His Majesty's Attorney-General. I have already communicated to you the Attorney-General's opinion; and if you think it proper to proceed in your charge against Mr. Betty, you will strictly confine yourself to the course pointed out by the Crown-officer, by which means alone the case can be justly and legally disposed of.

I am, &c.

Mr. Isaac Whitehouse.

(signed) *W. Bullock.*

## Copy of Mr. Whitehouse's Rejoinder.

St. Ann's Bay, Sept. 29th, 1830.

SIR,

I HAVE received your letter of the 25th instant, and beg to assure his Excellency the Governor, that if I have committed a breach of etiquette in addressing my reply to him, and transmitting it, as I did, "through the channel of his Secretary," it was perfectly unintentional.

I should regret that any thing in my letter had been considered by his Lordship to be "impertinent;" and I disavow any intended disrespect; but I would fain hope, as you do not say so, that you had not his Lordship's commands to apply the term to me or my communication. However it may have originated, I beg to observe, that its use is scarcely consistent with civility, or the decorum of official correspondence.

I am glad to find that the possibility of referring the case to a Council of Protection, not at all adverted to in your former letter, has now been acknowledged; although I am unable to discover any thing in the laws, or the constitution of these courts of inquiry, which would render it "too late" for me, or any other person, even now to adopt that method of investigation if it were deemed advisable. I can therefore regard your decision, that it is "now too late for me to resort to it," in no other light than as a declaration, on the part of the Governor, that he would disapprove of my making the attempt; and that if I did apply for a Council of Protection, and the Magistrates of St. Ann's refused to enter on the case, (which you are well aware would be the result,) I could not expect any interposition of his authority to enforce the performance of their duty.

With regard to the course a second time pointed out by you, and to which I am directed "strictly to confine myself," I should have thought that the observations made in my letter would have been sufficient to demonstrate the unreasonableness of expecting me to do that which cannot be done without the exercise of judicial authority, which I do not possess and cannot command. I again repeat that my evidence would amount to nothing more than a statement of my belief of the facts, with the grounds I have for entertaining that belief. I am ready to make a deposition to that effect, if the Attorney-General wishes it, (although not as a prosecutor); but both you and he are well aware that it would not be legal evidence on which to ground a prosecution, and that the proper evidence is to be sought for elsewhere.

Your letter appears to me to leave the case very much where my answer placed it, without at all weakening the position taken. You are pleased authoritatively to point out to me a certain course of conduct, which "alone" must be pursued, while at the same time you avoid entering into the question whether it be possible to adopt it, and do not advert to the real situation in which I stand in relation to the whole case. At the hazard of being considered "diffuse," I beg leave again to remind you that I have not assumed, and have no intention of assuming the character of Mr. Betty's prosecutor. I did not call upon the Attorney-General for his opinion, or upon the Governor for his interference. It was the Colonial Secretary, Sir George Murray, who did so. I did not volunteer to furnish the evidence, on oath, of Mr. Bridges, and of all the other witnesses. I made to the Wesleyan body a simple statement of facts, exhibiting distinctly the authority on which my assertions were founded. Sir George Murray characterized the conduct of Mr. Betty, detailed in that statement, as "extreme oppression and cruelty;" and with the whole bearings of the evidence placed before him, required the Governor to investigate the case. Why then should I be called on, not only to assume the burthen of directing a prosecution, but also to procure evidence of persons in open and avowed hostility to me?

It is in vain to attempt to place me in the predicament of a prosecutor who has failed to substantiate the truth of allegations he has made. I disclaim the character. I have detailed the particulars of a case of oppression. I have pointed out distinctly the evidence to prove them. The documents have been laid before the Governor, the Chief Magistrate of the island, and the Attorney-General,

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also a magistrate of the whole island ; and if, in the face of a direction from the Colonial Secretary, and with the power of calling into exercise the judicial functions of the whole magistracy, it is thought consistent with their duty to shift the task and the responsibility of investigation to a private individual, in possession of no authority, it is clear inquiry must end.

I am, &c.

William Bullock, Esq.

(signed) *Isaac Whitehouse.*

— No. 13. —

Downing-street, Dec. 11th, 1830.

MY LORD,

SINCE writing my despatch, dated the 9th instant, in the case of the complaint of Mr. Whitehouse against Messrs. Betty and Bridges, I have received from Dr. James Townley, the Secretary, as I understand, of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, a letter, dated the 8th instant, with various enclosures, copies of which I have the honour to transmit for your Lordship's information.

Your Lordship will have the goodness to ascertain, and to report to me, whether the documents which Dr. Townley has transmitted are accurate copies of the correspondence between your Lordship's Secretary and Mr. Whitehouse, and whether they embrace the whole of that correspondence. Assuming (as I have no particular reason to doubt) the authenticity of these copies, I cannot conceal from your Lordship that I have read them with very sincere regret. They not only confirm the views which I had myself taken of the probable injustice of disposing of this case by a reference to the legal tribunals, on the responsibility of Mr. Whitehouse, but they show that the difficulties to which I have adverted in my despatch of the 9th instant were fully, though ineffectually, brought under your Lordship's notice by Mr. Whitehouse himself. I regret that the remarks of that gentleman, though very clearly and forcibly stated, failed to produce in your Lordship's mind a conviction of the unreasonableness of imposing upon him the character of public accuser, which he so distinctly disavowed, and that you were not satisfied of the weight of those reasons by which he urged a reference of the case, either to the Attorney-General, or to the Council of Protection, for further inquiry. The arguments of Mr. Whitehouse upon each of those topics do not, I confess, appear to myself susceptible of any satisfactory answer.

It would be exceedingly unjust were I to hold your Lordship responsible for the precise expressions of letters written, not by yourself, but by the Deputy Secretary of the island, in giving effect to your instructions : yet I cannot forbear suggesting to your Lordship the propriety of admonishing Mr. Bullock to avoid, for the future, in official communications, apparently written with your Lordship's sanction, the use of language calculated to inflict unnecessary, and I must think, in the present case, unmerited pain. Thus, for example, when Mr. Whitehouse's letter of the 15th of September was characterized as "diffuse and impertinent," Mr. Bullock justly exposed himself to the rebuke contained in Mr. Whitehouse's subsequent letter, in which that gentleman observes that the use of such terms is "scarcely consistent with civility, or the decorum of official correspondence." The word "impertinent" might have been possibly understood as synonymous with the word "irrelevant," rather than in its more harsh and ordinary sense ; and if such was the meaning, I can only regret that Mr. Bullock did not disavow the more injurious construction which Mr. Whitehouse very naturally gave to his language. If these remarks should appear needlessly minute, your Lordship will bear in mind that the weight of your own official and personal authority has been used, although probably without your immediate sanction, to give force to comments still more particular, on the language and style of address adopted by Mr. Whitehouse. My sense of what is due to a gentleman engaged in the highly meritorious and painful, though ill-requited, labours of a missionary, has drawn from me the preceding observations, which have not been written without much reluctance, because I feel that your Lordship may, perhaps, consider them as involving some disapprobation of your official conduct. I trust that your Lordship will believe that I am desirous and prepared on every occasion to afford you the utmost support and assistance in my power, and that I am fully alive to the difficulties

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difficulties in which you are placed, in the present times, in the discharge of the important and delicate trust with which you have been invested by His Majesty. But not even my disinclination to augment the embarrassment inseparable, in the present state of public opinion, from the Government of Jamaica, is sufficiently strong to prevent my pointing out to your Lordship, in the most distinct manner, the necessity of your affording your countenance and protection to the ministers of religion, while conducting themselves inoffensively, and the still more urgent necessity for a rigid and impartial scrutiny into every such abuse of the owner's power as was brought to your notice by Mr. Whitehouse in the case of Mr. Betty's slaves.

I have, &c.

The Earl of Belmore,  
&c. &c. &c.

(signed) GODERICH.

JAMAICA.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of  
Commons, dated 15th December 1830;—*for*

COPIES of all COMMUNICATIONS relative to the  
reported Maltreatment of a Slave named *Henry*  
*Williams*, in *Jamaica*.

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,*  
*23 December 1830.*

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