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SLAVE LAWS, BARBADOES.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable the House of Commons,
dated 13 April 1831;—*for*,

COPY of a STATEMENT made by the AGENT of *Barbadoes* to
Viscount *Goderich*, on the 18th March, of the several PROVISIONS of the
Legislature of that Colony in relation to the SLAVE POPULATION.

Colonial Department, Downing-street, }
3 August 1832.

R. W. HAY.

LETTER from *J. P. Mayers*, Esq. to the Right Hon. Viscount *Goderich*,
&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I HAVE the honour herewith to enclose two Copies of an Abstract from the Laws of Barbadoes, in reference to the objects of Lord Bathurst's and Sir George Murray's recommendation, and other Enactments in favour of the Slaves of that Island; to which I have taken the liberty of adding some Observations, which I hope will meet with your Lordship's approbation. And with great respect,

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

No. 60, St. James's-street, }
March 18th, 1831.

(signed) *J. P. Mayers*,
Colonial Agent for Barbadoes.

LETTER from Viscount *Howick* to *J. P. Mayers*, Esq.
&c. &c. &c.

SIR,

I AM directed by Viscount *Goderich* to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter, dated the 18th instant, with two Copies of an Abstract from the Laws of Barbadoes, in reference to the subject of Slave Amelioration.

I am, &c.

Downing-street, }
31st March 1831.

(signed) *Howick*.

PAPER RELATING TO THE

PROVISIONS under Six different HEADS proposed in Lord Bathurst's

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.	SLAVE EVIDENCE.	MARRIAGE.	MANUMISSIONS.	SALE OF SLAVES.
Sunday Markets to be abolished when Religious Instruction shall have been provided.	-- To be received if the Slave produce a certificate from the Parochial Clergyman or Religious Teacher, that he has been instructed in the Christian Religion, so as to understand an oath. <i>Exception.</i> — Where the life of the Master or a white person is concerned.	-- To be confined as much as possible to Slaves on Plantations, and with <i>consent of Master.</i> To be registered in Parish Church, and if refused by Master, the grounds to be stated to the Parochial Clergyman. Mothers of a given number of children born in wedlock, to be exempt from field labour.	-- Taxes on Manumissions to be withdrawn. Bond to be given that the Slave shall not become chargeable if under 6 or above 50 years old, or labouring under sickness, disease or infirmity. Mortgaged Slaves to be valued by appraisers, and manumitted, and produce paid into Treasury. Manumissions to be registered.	-- Land Slaves, and Plantation plant or utensils, to be sold in one lot. Husbands and wives not to be separated, nor children under 14 from parents, and that they be sold to one Proprietor if the husband and wife belong to two separate parties.

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in EIGHT BILLS sent out to

No Slave to be hired except for domestic purposes on Sunday, under a penalty. Prohibition not to extend to usual employment for domestic purposes. No Slave to be employed against his will in field labour on a Sunday; if employed on a Sunday, to be paid for it.	-- Admission of Slave Evidence in Civil and Criminal cases.	-- Clergymen may solemnize marriage without consent of Master.	-- Slaves under certain restrictions to be enabled, <i>invito domino</i> , to purchase their freedom and that of their families and relations.	-- Slaves not to be separated under sales by <i>judicial</i> process.
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ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS contained in Sir George Murray's

Slave should not be compelled to labour for his subsistence on a Sunday to supply him for the rest of the week.	-- Unlimited Slave Evidence in Civil and Criminal Cases.			
Act for observance of the Lord's Day: § 1 & 3. provide for the baptism and religious instruction of Slaves. § 4. 5. No market or shop shall be open, except as in England for the sale of medicines or perishable food, on Sunday, Christmas-day, or Good Friday, under penalty of forfeiture of goods, and fine of 5 <i>l.</i> § 6. No Slave shall be set or allowed to labour on Sundays under penalty of 5 <i>l.</i> to 10 <i>l.</i>	-- Consolidated Slave Act. § 3. admits the evidence of Slaves in actions of trespass, assault, and in cases of misdemeanor, murder, felony or other offences except forgery, against any person whatever, requiring only a certificate of baptism and religious instruction, and that such testimony against free persons be corroborated by circumstantial evidence, unless when such free person be an accomplice. Owner refusing to produce a Slave as witness, to forfeit 10 <i>l.</i>	-- Sunday Act: § 3. Clergy shall solemnize matrimony between Slaves, with Owners' consent; and registers of baptisms, marriages and burials of Slaves shall be duly kept.	-- Consolidated Slave Act: § 1. repeals all former Acts restricting the manumission of Slaves, and Owners may now manumit their Slaves without paying any sum to the Treasurer or Churchwarden.	

Barbadoes, October 1826.

OBSERVATIONS.

It may not be unnecessary to add a few Observations in proof that the usages of the Colony were humane and favourable to the Slaves before the receipt of Lord Bathurst's Circular of the 9th July 1823. With a view to refute certain calumnies circulated in this country respecting the treatment of Slaves at Barbadoes, a Commission issued from the Governor of that Island in 1823, authorizing the Council to examine on oath such persons as they might deem competent to judge of the condition and treatment of the Slaves. In a society constituted as that of Barbadoes, persons are not readily to be met with who are in no respect interested in the issue of such an examination, and who may also have had opportunities of observing upon the state of Slavery. Such persons, however, were fortunately met with, as appears by the Report of the Honourable Council, dated July 22d, 1823. Gentlemen of indisputable credit not only from disinterestedness, but high respectability of character and length of residence in the Colony, deposed to the apparent contentment and happiness of the Slaves, and the great humanity and consideration with which they were treated by their Owners. More minute details, however, respecting the domestic economy and management of Plantations were obtained from three Gentlemen of the highest integrity and reputation; and by their concurrent testimony it is proved, that the Slaves are regularly served with a daily allowance of food, more than sufficient for their personal uses, which enables them with the superfluity to provide comforts and even luxuries for themselves: that those allowances never vary under any circumstances, it being a striking peculiarity in the condition of the Slave that he is in a great measure exempt from the contingencies

SLAVE LAWS OF THE ISLAND OF BARBADOES.

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CIRCULAR to GOVERNORS of LEGISLATIVE COLONIES, dated 9th July 1823.

PUNISHMENTS.	PROPERTY OF SLAVES.	PROTECTOR OF SLAVES.	PROVISIONS enacted in addition to those recommended by the SECRETARY of STATE.
<p>-- The flogging of women to be abolished. Prohibits the use of the whip in the field, and any domestic punishment until the day following the offence, and then to be performed in the presence of a free person. Punishment exceeding 3 lashes to be recorded, and book kept of offences and punishments, and sworn to Quarterly. Traces of punishments not duly registered to be presumptive evidence of breach of law.</p>			<p style="text-align: center;">HEADS OF ENACTMENTS.</p> <p><i>Legal Protection; Clothing; Rewards and Privileges, and General Regulations.</i></p> <p><i>Legal Protection.</i>—§ 13. Provost Marshal to furnish Slaves committed to prison with sufficient food; penalty, 5 l. § 6. Magistrates to visit Slave Prisons. § 32. If Slave commit theft from want of food, and it should appear that Owner had the means of providing it, but withheld the same, Owner to be indicted at Court of Grand Sessions, and on conviction fined and imprisoned. Acting Protector to take Slave out of Owner's possession; Owner being tenant for life in such Slave, to forfeit his estate, and Remainderman to take possession. § 40. Murder of Slave, death without benefit of clergy. § 44. Persons committing cruelty on a Slave by beating, &c. fined not less than 25 l. and not exceeding 100 l. § 45. White or free person maiming Slave, to be fined not less than 100 l. and be imprisoned six months, and ever after incapable of holding or having control over Slaves. § 47. Persons fixing collar, chain or iron on Slave, to be indicted at Grand Sessions, and punished with fine and imprisonment.</p>
GOVERNORS of LEGISLATIVE COLONIES, on the 11th May 1826.			<p><i>Clothing.</i>—§ 5. Owners of Slaves shall, under penalty of 1 l. to 2 l. 10 s., furnish them annually with decent and sufficient clothing, suitable to age, sex and condition.</p>
<p>-- Punishment of children under a certain age by whipping not prohibited. Various punishments substituted for the flogging of women.</p>	<p>-- Secures to Slave whatever property he may acquire, real as well as personal. Savings Banks to be established.</p>	<p>-- A Protector and Guardian of Slaves to be appointed.</p>	<p><i>Rewards and Privileges.</i>—§ 47. If a Slave give information of rebellion or purpose of insurrection, he shall be freed at public expense, and be paid 10 l. per annum. § 50. Slave behaving well in battle, to be rewarded by Legislature. § 24. Restrictions from Slaves cultivating Cotton and Aloes removed; the same however to be reaped under the eye of a white person. § 33. Slaves charged with capital offences shall be tried at the Grand Sessions, in like manner as white and free coloured persons. § 20. Coroner to return copies of depositions, &c. on Inquests to the Governor, within five days; penalty, 10 l.</p>
LETTER of the 3d and 15th September 1828.			<p><i>Rewards and Privileges.</i>—§ 47. If a Slave give information of rebellion or purpose of insurrection, he shall be freed at public expense, and be paid 10 l. per annum. § 50. Slave behaving well in battle, to be rewarded by Legislature. § 24. Restrictions from Slaves cultivating Cotton and Aloes removed; the same however to be reaped under the eye of a white person. § 33. Slaves charged with capital offences shall be tried at the Grand Sessions, in like manner as white and free coloured persons. § 20. Coroner to return copies of depositions, &c. on Inquests to the Governor, within five days; penalty, 10 l.</p>
<p>-- § 46. Slaves shall be whipped with the like instrument and in like manner as practised in His Majesty's Army and Navy, except when a milder instrument may be preferred. Female Slaves to be punished in a private and decent manner, and when pregnant, to be punished by confinement only. Penalty, 10 l.</p>	<p>-- § 7. secures to Slaves the absolute right of <i>personal property</i>, and subjects Owners of Slaves, or other persons, depriving them of their personal property, to forfeit double the value of such property to the use of the said Slaves; the Acting Protector to prosecute offender.</p>	<p>-- § 2. The Governor, Senior Members of Council, Speaker of the House of Assembly, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and Attorney General, appointed a Committee of Protection of Slaves, with power to appoint an Acting Protector, at 400 l. per annum.</p>	<p>In a Despatch, dated the 18th October 1827, the late Mr. Huskisson remarked, that "The above Act contains unequivocal advances to a better system of Law, of which His Majesty is graciously pleased to mark his approbation by its allowance."</p>

contingencies of bad seasons and short crops, which although frequent, and causing great embarrassment to the Master, are never considered sufficient to justify him in withholding or even diminishing the allowances of the Slave; it having been hitherto customary, under such visitations of Providence, for the Planters to obtain a loan from their merchants to enable them to purchase food for the Negroes. And inasmuch as the measures which have been adopted in this country to promote the speedy abolition of Slavery, have a tendency to destroy the credit of the Planter, it is much to be apprehended that on future occasions of a scarcity, the former source of relief will be cut off, and the starvation of the Negroes involved in the exigencies of the Master.

It is also proved, on the same authority, and confirmed by the testimony of several highly respectable and regularly educated men, that in sickness the Slave is received into a wholesome well-arranged Hospital, where he is regularly attended by a medical man, and where all the necessaries and comforts which his case may require are abundantly supplied; and when the aid of a Physician, or Surgeon, or Accoucheur may be required, the same who would be employed to attend the family of the Master is always called in. The most decisive proof, however, of a cordial disposition on the part of the Planters to promote the happiness and to confer rights and privileges on their Slaves, is exhibited in the annexed Acts; and although the Legislature of Barbadoes may not yet have acquiesced in all the recommendations of His Majesty's Ministers, every reasonable excuse will no doubt be admitted in their favour, when it is considered that Enactments upon subjects so comprehensive and important require much time and great deliberation.

SLAVE LAWS, BARBADOES.

COPY of a STATEMENT made by the AGENT
of Barbadoes to Viscount Goderich, on the
18th March, of the several PROVISIONS of
the Legislature of that Colony in relation to
the SLAVE POPULATION.

(*Mr. Bunge.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
16 August 1833.
