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SLAVE TRADE.

RETURN to an Address of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 8 March 1850;—for,

“ COPIES of all MEMORIALS transmitted to Her Majesty’s Government
from the *West Indies*, in the Years 1848 and 1849, relative to the
SLAVE TRADE.”

Colonial Office, Downing-street, }
18 March 1850. }

B. HAWES.

(*Sir Thomas Acland.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
18 *March* 1850.

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JAMAICA.

— No. 1. —

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the Inhabitants of the Parish of Portland. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 13, 15 February 1848, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* Appendix to Seventh Report from Select Committee on Sugar and Coffee Planting, 1848, Sessional Paper, No. 245, page 237.

No. 1.
Memorial from the Parish of Portland.

— No. 2. —

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the House of Assembly, dated 24 December 1847. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 17, 7 February 1848, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* Appendix to Third Report from Select Committee on Sugar and Coffee Planting, 1848, Sessional Paper 167, page 374.

No. 2.
Memorial from the House of Assembly.

— No. 3. —

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the Council of Jamaica, dated 19 September 1848. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 79, 20 September 1848, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 19, House of Commons Paper, No. 111, 1849.

No. 3.
Memorial from the Council.

— No. 4. —

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the Assembly of Jamaica, dated 16 November 1848. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 6, 22 January 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 85 of House of Commons Paper, No. 280, 1849.

No. 4.
Memorial from the Assembly.

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ADDRESS to Her Majesty from the Inhabitants of Spanish Town, dated 24 May 1849. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 58, 8 June 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 142, Papers relative to Jamaica, presented by Command, 31 January 1850.

No. 5.
Address from Spanish Town.

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MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the Inhabitants of the Parish of Clarendon, dated 16 June 1849. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 65, 4 July 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 142, Papers relative to Jamaica, presented by Command, 31 January 1850.

No. 6.
Memorial from Parish of Clarendon.

— No. 7. —

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from the Inhabitants of the City of Kingston, dated 25 June 1849. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch, No. 69, 7 July 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 143 of Papers relative to Jamaica, presented by Command, 31 January 1850.

No. 7.
Memorial from the City of Kingston.

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No. 8.

Memorial from the
Parish of St. David.

MEMORIAL to Her Majesty from small Settlers and Labourers of the Parish of St. David, dated 13 July 1849. Enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch No. 75, 4 August 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 144 of Papers relative to Jamaica, presented by Command, 31 January 1850.

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No. 9.
Two Memorials
from the Parish
of Trelawny.

Two Memorials to Her Majesty from Labourers and Inhabitants of the Parish of Trelawny, dated 2 August 1849, and enclosed in Sir C. Grey's Despatch No. 80, 7 September 1849, already printed for Parliament.—*Vide* page 145 of Papers relative to Jamaica, presented by Command, 31 January 1850.

— No. 9. —

BARBADOS.

BARBADOS.

— No. 1. —

[Enclosed in Sir *W. Colebrooke's* Despatch, No. 12, 22 November 1848.]

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The Humble Petition of the Council and Assembly of the Island of Barbados.

No. 1.
Petition of the
Council and
Assembly.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Council and Assembly of this your Majesty's Island of Barbados, in behalf of ourselves and the inhabitants of this ancient colony, approach your Majesty's sacred person with the utmost reverence and respect, and most humbly venture, in defence of ourselves and in the cause of humanity, to draw your Majesty's attention to the Treaties entered into by your Majesty's predecessors with the Crowns of Spain and Brazil, for the abolition of the African Slave Trade by those powers; and we humbly beg to represent to your Majesty, that hundreds of thousands of Africans have been imported into the Spanish colonies and Brazil as slaves, in violation of these Treaties; that these importations continue to be made to the present time, and that within the last two years upwards of 100,000 of these unfortunate creatures have been imported into Cuba and Brazil, notwithstanding these Treaties.

That these slaves have been employed chiefly in the production of sugar, which has increased in the Spanish colonies and Brazil, from 93,000 tons in the year 1828, to 417,000 in the year 1847; and this great increase has been owing entirely to the slave labour thus obtained by this illicit traffic in slaves, in violation of the Treaties entered into by Spain and Brazil with Great Britain for the suppression of the African Slave Trade.

That without the constant introduction of fresh supplies of slaves from Africa, sugar cultivation would not have been extended in those countries, but, on the contrary, would have diminished, as has been the case in other foreign colonies producing sugar by slave labour.

That slave-grown sugar being now permitted to enter the markets of the United Kingdom for consumption, has been imported to an extent which has caused the price of British plantation sugar to fall so low as to ruin numbers of your Majesty's subjects in, and connected with your Majesty's colonies.

That sugar cultivation is that which alone renders your Majesty's West India colonies valuable; but it is very evident it cannot be carried on in competition with slave-grown sugar so long as fresh supplies of African slaves continue to be imported into the Spanish colonies and Brazil.

That whilst declining to express any opinion on the general question of free trade, your petitioners would draw a marked distinction between states holding slaves, and those which are dishonestly carrying on a cruel slave trade, and venture to submit to your Majesty's gracious consideration, that it is no departure from the principle of free trade, but a special exception necessarily following upon the unjustifiable conduct of the parties concerned; that the benefits of such trade should be withheld from those who persist in evading the most solemn engagements with Great Britain, violating both natural laws and international Treaties for the iniquitous purpose of carrying on their traffic in human life.

That

RELATIVE TO THE SLAVE TRADE.

5

BARBADOS.

That all Africans so illegally imported into the Spanish colonies and Brazil, in violation of the Treaties between Spain, Brazil and Great Britain, are entitled to their freedom.

Your petitioners, therefore, most humbly implore your Majesty to cause all practicable measures to be taken for speedily and effectually preventing the further importation of African slaves into the Spanish colonies and Brazil, and for restoring to freedom those Africans who are now illegally held in slavery in those countries, and in the meantime your petitioners humbly pray that your Majesty will take into your favourable consideration the distressed state of your Majesty's subjects in this part of your Majesty's dominions, and grant unto them such relief as your Majesty, in your wisdom and benevolence, may deem proper.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

(signed) *John S. Gaskin, President:*
J. Thomas, Speaker.

7 November, 1848.

— No. 2. —

[Enclosed in Sir *W. Colebrooke's* Despatch, No. 12, 20 February 1849.]

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

The humble Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Island of Barbados.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's dutiful subjects, inhabitants of your Majesty's ancient and loyal colony of Barbados, numbers of whom were once slaves, and many besides are of African descent, venture to lay before your most gracious Majesty a cordial tender of our earnest and reverend affection for your Majesty's sacred person, combined with a grateful acknowledgment of the blessings of freedom and christian civilization, which, through the just munificence of the mother country in the abolition of slavery, we now enjoy, by the mercy of Divine Providence, under your Majesty's benignant rule.

No. 2.
Petition of Inhabitants of Island.

Whilst deeply thankful for these blessings, we reflect with pain and horror on the detestable Slave-trade, by which Africa is still debarred from civilization, and multitudes of her children deprived of liberty; whilst their lives are sacrificed without scruple to a cold-blooded avarice, and unheard-of cruelties are perpetrated on them, in contemptuous defiance of the most distinct and solemn engagements entered into with your Majesty's Royal predecessors to discontinue altogether the nefarious traffic.

Amongst us are some who were once themselves owners of slaves; but equally with the rest of your Majesty's petitioners they now feel and acknowledge the enormity of the traffic in which such property was founded, and from their hearts rejoice in the utter extinction of Slavery within your Majesty's dominions; and being confidently persuaded of your Majesty's pity for the miseries of Africa, as well as of your Royal sympathy with the feelings of your subjects of African descent, so numerous in these colonies, we do all most humbly and most earnestly solicit your Majesty not to discontinue or relax, but graciously to redouble your Royal exertions for the suppression of this remorseless system of wholesale oppression and murder.

And we venture most respectfully to submit to your Majesty's just consideration, that whatever claims to compete with your Majesty's free colonial subjects other nations may be considered to possess, such claims cannot be otherwise than forfeited by those who support their competition by wrong and robbery and unparalleled devices of the most revolting cruelty, insolently and flagitiously trampling under foot the laws and treaties by which they stand pledged to your Majesty to a course of justice and humanity.

Of the many peculiar evils accruing to these colonies from the continuance of this piratical Slave-trade, more especially in the discouragement of lawful industry, with the consequent obstruction of social improvement, and the prevention of a reciprocally beneficial intercourse between Africa and the West Indies, we are by no means unmindful; but great as these evils are, we feel them to be almost trivial in comparison with the enormous crimes and cruelties to which we have alluded, and for the suppression of which we all, in the name of justice and humanity, and many of us in behalf of our kindred, again with the utmost respect and deference, but with reiterated earnestness, humbly implore from your Majesty a still more effectual interference.

And your Majesty's petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

[1,658 Signatures.]

GRENADA.

G R E N A D A.

— No. 1.—

[Enclosed in Sir *W. Colebrooke's* Despatch, No. 13, 27 March 1849.]

TO HER MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

THE humble Petition of the President and Members of Your Majesty's Council and the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly of the Island of Grenada and its Dependencies.

No 1.

Petition of the
Council and House
of Assembly.

WE, your most dutiful and loyal subjects, the President and Members of your Majesty's Board of Council, and the Speaker and Members of the House of Assembly, beg leave, on our own behalf and on the behalf of our fellow inhabitants, humbly to lay before your Majesty the present ruinous state of this once prosperous and flourishing colony.

Before entering on this subject, we would express our gratitude to Almighty God for the signal mercies vouchsafed to your Majesty's Government in the preservation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in comparative tranquillity, while commotion and discord have so generally prevailed in the other Kingdoms of Europe.

In common with the inhabitants of the other British West India colonies, your petitioners and their fellow colonists have, within the last few years, endured the greatest hardships, arising from the produce of their industry being subjected to a competition with slave-grown produce in the markets of the United Kingdom, a circumstance which has operated most injuriously upon the British colonies, and will be the cause of their irremediable ruin, unless your Majesty be graciously pleased to interpose your protection in their behalf.

Your petitioners further humbly represent to your Majesty that they are not at the present time, and cannot hope to be, in a position successfully to compete with the sugar planters of Brazil and the colonies of Spain, whilst slavery continues to exist in those countries, and whilst their Governments continue to violate the solemn Treaties entered into with your Majesty's royal predecessors for the abolition of the African slave trade.

Your petitioners would respectfully submit, for the consideration of your Majesty, that the ruinous state of agriculture in Grenada and the other colonies causes proprietors to feel more than ever the very heavy duties imposed by your Majesty's Government upon their staple product, sugar, amounting, in most cases, to more than that which is received by the producer, and by which they are placed in a disadvantageous position as compared with your Majesty's subjects engaged in agricultural pursuits in other parts of your Majesty's dominions.

Your petitioners humbly submit to your Majesty's notice the implied pledge of the Parliament of Great Britain fully to compensate the late proprietors of slaves in these colonies for the loss they might sustain from the measure of emancipation, which measure, although praiseworthy in a national and benevolent point of view, has occasioned great loss and distress to a large portion of your Majesty's loyal subjects; and your petitioners therefore approach your Majesty with humble confidence that their claim for further compensation will be graciously considered.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray, that your Majesty will be graciously pleased to cause the adoption of every practicable measure to enforce the fulfilment of the respective Treaties entered into with other governments relative to the abolition of the slave trade.

Your petitioners also most humbly pray, that your Majesty will be pleased to take the present distressed condition of your Majesty's subjects in this colony into your favourable consideration, and grant them such further compensation and relief as to your Majesty may appear just and reasonable.

And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(signed) *William Darnell Davis*, President.
W. A. Horne, Speaker.

ANTIGUA.

A N T I G U A.

ANTIGUA.

— No. 1. —

[Enclosed in Governor *Higginson's* Despatch, No. 3, 23 February 1849.]

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

THE humble Memorial of the Board of Council and House of Assembly of the Island of Antigua.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE, the members of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of this your Majesty's island of Antigua, pray leave, with the utmost expression of our duty and loyalty, to represent the evils which threaten the existence of this ancient colony.

No. 1.
Memorial of the
Council and House
of Assembly.

Having of our own accord, 14 years since, led the way in the cultivation of sugar by free labour, then demanded by the British people, we lament to find ourselves, at this period, unable to contend against the production of sugar by slave labour, now introduced into the British markets.

We humbly venture to acquaint your Majesty, that our present distressed position is greatly owing to the violation of solemn Treaties, contracted by your Majesty's predecessors with the Crowns of Spain and Brazil, for the abolition of the slave trade by those powers.

That, according to the evidence given before a Committee of the House of Commons during the last Session of Parliament, by your Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, it appears no less than two-thirds of the slave population of Cuba have been illegally imported into that extensive island; and that the numbers of Africans brought into Brazil have been immense.

That your memorialists complain this mass of persons have been wrongfully employed in slavery, to the injury of your Majesty's free subjects in this Archipelago. Slave-grown sugar, of consequence, raised at a lesser cost than free labour, being at present unhappily favoured in the markets of Great Britain.

That your memorialists are advised, that by the Spanish law, all negroes brought from Africa to Cuba since the year 1817 are entitled to their freedom; and that this right has been formally claimed for them by the British, and not denied by the Spanish Government; and that all African slaves imported into Brazil since the year 1831, are also illegally held in bondage.

That your memorialists feel themselves unjustly dealt with, in being exposed to a competition with the slave force of Cuba and Brazil, and cannot but view it as a dereliction of the national faith.

That your memorialists most humbly entreat your Majesty to cause those Treaties to be respected which have been too long set at nought by Spain and Brazil, and thereby put an end at once to the miseries of the slave trade, actually increasing, in the contemplation of the downfall of your Majesty's West India colonies.

That your memorialists, in doubt as to the future maintenance of their civil and religious institutions, look with alarm at the declining state of this once flourishing colony; and feel it to be their bounden duty, under the accumulating distresses of all classes of the community, to bring their situation to your Majesty's notice before it be too late.

Your memorialists humbly pray your Majesty will take their case into your gracious consideration, and afford them such assistance as their necessities require.

And your Majesty's faithful and loyal memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

(signed) *Mearle H. Daniell,*
President of the Council.

Oliver Nugent,
Speaker of the Assembly.

Antigua, 15 February 1849.

DOMINICA.

D O M I N I C A.

— No. 1. —

[Enclosed in Governor *Higginson's* Depatch, No. 18, 13 August 1849.]

TO HER MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

No. 1.
Petition of Inhabitants.

Gracious Sovereign,

WE, the undersigned inhabitants of this your Majesty's island, desire to approach your Majesty with the assurance of our continued loyalty and devotion to your Majesty's Throne, and with this our humble petition, to represent, that at a public meeting held in Roseau, the capital town of the island, on Saturday, the 4th of the present month, and consisting of your Majesty's loyal subjects, planters, merchants, ministers of religion, mechanics, labourers and others, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

1st. That at this moment there are thousands of persons who are unlawfully and cruelly held in slavery in the Spanish colonies and in the Brazils, in contravention of Treaties in force between Great Britain and Spain and the Brazils, and contrary to the laws of the latter States, passed in furtherance of such Treaties.

2d. That Great Britain owes it to herself, and the high place she occupies among nations, to take measures for compelling Spain and the Brazils to observe the Treaties they have entered into with her.

3d. That Great Britain owes it to the great cause of humanity to exert her power in procuring the release of the Africans in the colonies of Spain and in the Brazils, who are detained in slavery there in defiance of solemn engagements to which she has been a party, and in compliance with which she has, on her part, paid vast sums of money.

4th. That the policy of Great Britain, having placed her sugar-producing colonies in a disastrous competition with the slave-labour countries of other States, Great Britain is bound, in common justice to those dependencies, to take all legitimate means for rendering such competition as little injurious to them as possible; and that she will materially contribute to this object when, in regard to what is due to herself and to the urgent demands of humanity, she requires Spain and the Brazils to liberate the freemen they wilfully detain in slavery.

5th. That Her most gracious Majesty and the two Houses of Parliament be addressed by the inhabitants of this island in humble petitions, inviting Her most gracious Majesty and the Imperial Parliament to take such measures as will enforce a strict observance on the part of Spain and the Brazils of the Treaties and laws referred to, in so far as may ensure the liberation of those unfortunate persons who are now held in slavery, in opposition to such laws and Treaties.

6th. That a committee be appointed to carry out the object of this meeting, as expressed in the foregoing Resolutions, and that the following gentlemen be requested to act as such committee; namely:—The President of Her Majesty's Council, the Honourable James Garraway, and Theodore Gordon, members of the said Council; his Honor the Speaker of the Assembly; the Rector of St. George, the Roman Catholic Minister, the Wesleyan Minister; and William Davies, Charles Leatham, Theodore Lockhart, Samuel Henry Frederic Abbott, Casimer Birmingham, and Joseph Fadelle, Esquires.

Deeply impressed with the views and sentiments contained in those Resolutions, we crave permission to fulfil the mission entrusted to us, by laying them before your Majesty, and by further praying that your Majesty will deign to take them into favourable consideration, and will fulfil the united wishes of your people of Dominica, or grant such relief as in your Majesty's wisdom may seem meet.

And we, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

(signed) *Thomas Bell*, President of Her Majesty's Council.
James Garraway, Member of Council, and of African descent.
Theodore Goram, Member of Council.
George Garraway, Speaker of House of Assembly.
George Clarke, M.A., Rector of Roseau.
Edward Smith, D.D., Administrator, and Rector of the R. C. C., Roseau.
William Fidler, Wesleyan Minister.
William Davies, Principal Landed Proprietor.
Charles Leatham, Merchant and Landed Proprietor.
Theodore Francis Lockhart, Chairman of the House of Assembly, and of African descent.
S. W. Frederic Abbott, Barrister-at-law, Member of the Assembly, and of African descent.
Cassimer Birmingham, Member of Assembly, and of African descent.
Joseph Fadelle, Member of Assembly, and of African descent.

Dominica, 8 August 1849.

TRINIDAD.

T R I N I D A D.

TRINIDAD.

— No. 1.—

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY,

The humble Petition of the Inhabitants of Trinidad.

Most gracious Sovereign,

WE, your Majesty's loyal subjects, inhabitants of Trinidad, beg most humbly to approach your Majesty, and to represent the alarming extension of the slave trade to the Spanish Colonies and to Brazil, since the opening of the British market for slave-grown sugars, in the month of August of 1846, by which measure the interests of your petitioners continue to be most seriously affected.

No. 1.
Petition of Inhabi-
tants.

We have long deplored the ineffectual attempts made to suppress the slave trade, and are led to believe that, had the provisions of the Treaties which subsist between your Majesty and foreign powers been more strictly enforced, the immense population of slaves in Cuba, Porto Rico and Brazil, could not have been so cruelly augmented.

If any evidence were wanting to prove the enormity of the evil, we have it in the declaration of your Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, before the Committee of the House of Commons recently appointed to inquire into the causes of distress in your Majesty's East and West Indian possessions, wherein he replies to Question 17th, that "there is a Treaty which binds the Spanish Crown to prevent the importation of Negroes; and there is a law of Ferdinand the 7th, by which it is illegal to import slaves into any Spanish colony, and by which, moreover, any slave imported in violation of that law is *ipso facto* entitled to his freedom, so that in truth, if the thing were minutely investigated, I doubt whether one might not say that at least two-thirds of the Negroes of Cuba are, by the Spanish law, freemen; it is only those who were born in the country who would ever be liable to servitude."

On the score, therefore, of humanity, on the plighted faith of sacred Treaties, hitherto contemptuously disregarded, and, in justice to British interests at stake in the East and West Indies, we humbly entreat your Majesty will be graciously pleased to command that such steps be forthwith adopted as will best ensure the prompt suppression of the trade in slaves, and the speedy liberation of those unfortunate Africans now brought under your Majesty's special notice, as being illegally and unjustifiably held in the most cruel slavery. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[The original, numerously signed, forwarded by the present packet to Lord Brougham, to be by him presented to the Queen.]

5 June 1848.

SLAVE TRADE.

COPIES of all MEMORIALS transmitted to Her Majesty's Government from the *West Indies*, in the Years 1848 and 1849, relative to the SLAVE TRADE.

(*Sir. Thomas Acland.*)

*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
18 March 1850.*

149.

Under 2 oz.